

## BRIEF COMMUNICATIONS

## APPENDIX 1 (Continued)

Interviewee	Reasons For Selection
Thomas P. Fleming	Librarian, Columbia University Medical Library; Teacher, Columbia University Library School; Member, Association of American Medical Colleges Committee on Guidelines for Medical School Libraries.
Bertha Hallam	MLA President; MLA Treasurer; active on MLA Committee to Establish Central Office.
Irene Jones	Author, first draft, <i>Handbook of Medical Library Practice</i> , first edition; in charge of modern subject cataloging, Army Medical Library.
Thomas E. Keys	MLA President; Librarian, Mayo Clinic; Officer in Charge, Rare Book Division, Army Medical Library.
Mary Louise Marshall	MLA President; Surveyor, Army Medical Library; Co-Editor, <i>Handbook of Medical Library Practice</i> , second edition.
William D. Postell	MLA President; Editor, <i>Bulletin of the Medical Library Association</i> ; active on MLA Committee to Establish Central Headquarters.
Frank B. Rogers	MLA President; first Director, National Library of Medicine; developer of MEDLARS.
Elisabeth D. Runge	Librarian, University of Texas Medical Branch, Galveston, circa World War I to 1965.
TO BE INTERVIEWED IN 1980/81	
Estelle Brodman	MLA President; Librarian, Washington University School of Medicine; President's National Advisory Commission on Libraries; consultant for United Nations and World Health Organization in Southeast Asia; Editor, <i>Bulletin of the Medical Library Association</i> .
Louise Darling	MLA President; Librarian, UCLA Biomedical Library; Editor, <i>Handbook of Medical Library Practice</i> , fourth edition; consultant to National Library of Medicine.
Seymour I. Taine	Librarian, National Institutes of Health; Librarian, World Health Organization; with Frank B. Rogers, principal investigator for Council on Library Resources mechanization project and developer of MEDLARS.

### The Application of Selected Evaluative Measures to the Library's Monographic Ophthalmology Collection

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IN THIS project, selected manual evaluative measures were applied to a defined segment of the Washington University School of Medicine Library's monographic collection. This pilot project was designed in part to identify the

measures that would prove most useful for larger, more comprehensive evaluative efforts appropriate to the library.

Many attempts at analyzing, measuring, or evaluating collections are cited in the literature [1-8]. The methods chosen for use in this project can be grouped into two categories: (1) retrospective measures, or techniques which evaluate in some manner the collection as it exists right now and (2) current measures, or techniques which evaluate in some manner how the collection is evolving to meet current and anticipated demands. The measures are described briefly and a summary of the findings follows each description. The subject area studied was ophthalmology; the Washington University Department of Ophthalmology is representative of the other departments in the large medical school-hospital complex, with interests in research, education, and patient care.

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## METHODS AND FINDINGS

*Retrospective Measures*

1. The recommended-titles technique—whereby the collection is compared to standard lists of recommended titles. The recommended lists used in this project were Allyn's "A library for internists III" [9]; Brandon and Hill's "Selected list of books and journals for the small medical library" [10]; and Sagall's "Attorney's guide to medical literature" [11]. Noting and checking each listed ophthalmology monograph showed that 100% of the recommended monographs are owned by the library.

2. The classic-text technique—whereby a well-recognized "classic" textbook is selected and the references in it are analyzed to determine if it could have been written using the collection being evaluated as the only or primary resource. The classic textbook selected for use in this analysis, Newell's *Ophthalmology: Principles and Concepts* [12], had appeared on all three of the recommended lists. All of the monographs cited in Newell's book were checked against the library's collection. One hundred monographic items were cited; 94 (94%) were owned by the library. One citation was not identifiable, and 5 (5%) were not owned. An owned rate of 94% would seem to indicate that this classic text could indeed have been written using the library's collection as the primary literature resource.

3. The monetary-expenditures technique—whereby the amount of money expended on the subject area in question is determined as a percentage of total monies spent. The library's "Recent Acquisitions" lists (produced as a by-product of the library's participation in the OCLC automated cataloging network) for the months July 1978 to June 1979 were examined, and each book classified in ophthalmology (WW in the National Library of Medicine's [NLM] classification scheme) was noted on a 3" by 5" card. These cards were verified against the library's shelf list, and cards representing items which had been recataloged or acquired as part of a special gift collection were set aside. Each remaining book was examined to determine if it had actually been purchased from regular library funds. For the few items which could not be examined directly, the acquisitions files were checked to determine the source of the book in question. Fifty-six (68.3%) of the 82 WW books were purchased from regular book funds. A total of \$1,844 was spent for these, representing 2.17% of the total book budget.

4. The size criteria—which can include such specifics as the number of titles and volumes in the subject being analyzed as a percentage of the total collection, and the number of items purchased as a ratio of the total number of items available. An examination of the library's shelf list for WW-Ophthalmology showed that there are 902 titles in WW, and 1,128 volumes. These figures represent 2.8% of the library's NLM-classed collection of approximately 32,000 titles or 40,000 volumes. Of the 2,875 monographs added to the general collection in the twelve-month sample, 2.85% were WW books. The number of staff members listed in the then-current *Bulletin of Washington University-Medical School* ophthalmology section was 75. This is 4.45% of the total of 1,685 staff members listed in the entire *Bulletin*.

5. The use criteria—which can include techniques as diverse as sampling books on the shelf to estimate the subject area's use, analyzing circulation records, and checking faculty publications to see if the authors are citing materials held in the collection. A manual analysis of the library's circulation records was conducted for a fourteen-month period. Of a total of 34,175 recorded monographic circulations, 926 (2.7%) were for WW books. An average of 66 WW monographs circulated each month. The average monthly WW circulation indicates that about 7.3% of the total collection of 902 WW titles circulates each month. To determine more specifically who used the circulated WW monographs proved difficult; circulation records were not routinely retained. Records for a three-month period were obtained, however. While an analysis of these records produced a limited sample, it was clearly shown that for the period studied residents (30% average), undergraduates (13% average), and graduate students including medical students (7% average) were the heaviest users of ophthalmology monographs. An average of 11% of the WW monographs listed as being in circulation each month were "missing" and "claimed returned". The remaining 39% of the recorded circulation was divided among the other classes of borrowers served by the library. A brief survey of the references written by selected ophthalmology faculty in current journals also showed that members of the ophthalmology faculty do not cite the library's monographic collection in the work they are publishing.

*Current Measures*

1. Interlibrary loan analysis—which was a survey of interlibrary loan requests for mono-

graphs being borrowed in ophthalmology. The requests for interlibrary loans for an eight-month period were examined. Of the 270 total monographs borrowed during this period, only 5 (1.8%) were for ophthalmology books. A five-year analysis of interlibrary loan statistics yielded an eight-month average of 312 monographs borrowed: the 5 items represent 1.6% of that average. One of the items borrowed was in French and was thus out of scope for the library, and 4 of the 5 were over 5 years old. Thus no current monographs in ophthalmology were requested on interlibrary loan during the project.

2. Analysis of book reviews—in which book reviews appearing in current issues of journals in ophthalmology were studied to determine if the library had the items being reviewed by the time the reviews were published. All the book reviews appearing in the *American Journal of Ophthalmology*, the *Archives of Ophthalmology*, and the *Annals of Ophthalmology* were examined for a six-month period. Seventy-three items appeared in reviews, of which 54 were unique (19 were reviewed in more than one of the journals). Since the appearance of items in reviews in more than one journal varied from 1 to 3 months according to the cover dates of the journals, the earliest-appearing review was used. Of the 54 unique items, 10 (18.5%) were judged to be out of scope for the library, either because the library handled them as journals or because they were in a foreign language. Of the remaining 44, 35 (79.5%) had been purchased or were on order at the time the review appeared. By the end of the project, 4 of the remaining titles had been acquired, bringing the total purchased to 39 (88.6%) of the reviewed items.

3. Collection of publishers' flyers—whereby all book flyers and ads for items in ophthalmology received in the library during the project were analyzed to see if and when the advertised item was actually acquired in relation to the time of receipt of the flyer. Although many such flyers for ophthalmology monographs were received during the study, frequently the flyer had been circulated either much in advance of the actual appearance of the book being advertised or considerably after the book had become available (as much as several years afterward), rather than representing newly-published works. It was thus deemed useless to attempt the planned analysis.

4. Suggestion-for-purchase cards analysis—in which patron suggestion cards received in the library were studied to determine how many

suggested materials in the field of ophthalmology, and specifically what materials were suggested. None of the suggestion cards received during the project period were for ophthalmology materials, however.

#### DISCUSSION

One of the evaluative techniques selected proved worthless—the collection of publishers' flyers—and will be eliminated or refined in some manner in future work. Three other measures (monetary expenditures, size, and use criteria) yielded results that are difficult to interpret: while they are thought-provoking and suggestive, published guidelines regarding these areas and previous similar work to which to compare the findings were not found in the literature.

The results of the recommended-titles and classic-text techniques, the interlibrary loan analysis, and book reviews in journals and suggestion-for-purchase cards studies indicate, on the other hand, that the library's ophthalmology monograph collection is indeed "good": the library owns 100% of the recommended titles; 94% of the cited works in the classic text are owned by the library; very few (1.6% to 1.8%) interlibrary loan monograph requests are for ophthalmology books; 79.5% of monographs appearing in reviews in current key journals are already owned or ordered at the time of the appearance of the review; and 88.6% of the reviewed items are owned within six months of the publication of the review. No requests for the purchase of any ophthalmology book were received during the project.

While a study of this nature produces much information that is useful and interesting in and of itself, its findings must also be placed in the context of what else is known about the library being analyzed: what the library's aims are, who its users are, what resources (money, facilities) are available to enable it to achieve its objectives, and what changes are imminent in the institution of which the library is a part that will affect the library. Only by integrating the findings of collection analyses such as this one into total planning for a library can they serve their purposes most effectively.

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