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# Unrestricted Access To Knowledge: A Bibliographic Instruction Program For Small Sectarian Liberal Arts Colleges

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"UNRESTRICTED ACCESS TO KNOWLEDGE:"

A BIBLIOGRAPHIC INSTRUCTION PROGRAM FOR

SMALL SECTARIAN LIBERAL ARTS COLLEGES

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BY

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the theoretical and philosophical constructs for implementing a program of bibliographic instruction at small sectarian liberal arts colleges, using Ouachita Baptist University in Arkadelphia, Arkansas as a case study.   It examines the historical and philosophical reasons for the lack of such instruction, then proposes a program based on four principles:   the efficacy of course-related, written-product instruction; the significance of locale in program design; the potential of variety as a key element; and the value of repetition.   The program is competency-based with three major components (pre-test, test, and post-test), each of which have a variety of sub-components.   It utilizes existing courses where possible (in Freshman English for example) and existing programs (the Honors and Academic Skills Development programs) as a rubric for bibliographic instruction.   The program aims to instill in students the instinct to seek information as a natural course of events, and to provide them with the necessary skills through initial instruction and repetition.

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When J. Robert Oppenheimer, in his 1953 book Science and the Common Understanding, wrote that "the unrestricted access to knowledge . . . may make a vast, complex, ever-growing, ever-changing, ever more specialized and expert technological world, nevertheless a world of human community," (p. 95) he echoed a philosophical position as ancient as the Greeks and as fundamental as the American Constitution's First Amendment. He also represented the growing awareness among Americans that the old verities faced the challenge of what we have come to call "the knowledge explosion" which ushered in an "information age." It was no accident that he voiced his belief in the midst of the library profession's similar avowals. In the 1948 "Library Bill of Rights," librarians affirmed that libraries are forums for information and ideas, and that neither materials nor patrons should be excluded from the forum because of their viewpoint. The year Oppenheimer's book appeared, librarians adopted "The Freedom to Read" statement founded on the proposition that such a freedom is essential to democracy. All three writings appeared,

as the Statement notes, in a time of "uneasy change and pervading fear."

Oppenheimer's admirable sentiment ignores two realities of the post-World War II era. First, the rapid increase in the volume of information available has obviated simplicity as a characteristic of unrestricted access.    Not since Albert Einstein's day, for example, has it been possible for a single individual to encompass knowledge in the discipline of physics--or any other. Alvin Toffler's Future Shock (1970) spoke for his era when he observed the overweening and overwhelming presence and rate of change.   In the 1960s, libraries believed it possible to own all the resources their patrons would find necessary; the founding of consortia and emphasis on sharing which marked the next decades evidenced the impact of this new reality.

The second reality of the new era prompted the flurry of statements defending unrestricted access.    That reality was that rapid change and the resulting instability in society prompted a social reaction to all that was strange or different.    It was the era of Joseph McCarthy and the House UnAmerican Activities Committee, Sloan Wilson's The Man in the Gray Flannel Suit (1955) and William H. Whyte's The Organizational Man (1956), and Superman and Herbert A. Philbrick's "I Led Three Lives" on television.    Conformity was the byword of a generation recovering from the Depression and World War II in the shadow of the mushroom cloud, a generation which had been told how conformity could be elicited by "hidden persuaders" relying on psychology and reverse psychology.    The new era would be an active one, and the passivity of Oppenheimer and the librarians would be poorly served in its face.    Having information available for use in a forum would not be enough; librarians would have to actively pursue all sides of issues, and teach patrons how to find those disparate voices amidst the call to conformity.

The realities of the knowledge explosion and the pressure toward conformity made active bibliographic instruction imperative.    Nowhere was that imperative more strongly felt than in the academy, for the scientific method in a university setting demanded bibliographic skills of students for which they were ill prepared.    Librarians would have to be advocates as well as purveyors of bibliographic competency.    They would have to assume the role envisioned for them by Melvil Dewey almost a century before.

Despite these realities, the educational scene did not necessarily reflect them.    The "ivory tower" concept at which insiders scoff is a popular representation of the truth that individually and in groups, we live according to our perceptions (Snyder, 1984; Koffka, 1935).    In many small sectarian liberal arts colleges the educational perceptions of reality did not match the world.    A case in point, which serves as a case study for this paper, follows in outline as introduction to this study, which proposes a program of bibliographic instruction to remedy the lack of unrestricted access to information in small liberal arts sectarian colleges.

<u>The School</u>

Ouachita Baptist University, a small denominational liberal arts college in Arkadelphia, Arkansas, opened as Ouachita Baptist College in the fall of 1886 with 166 students.    The school was designed to meet advanced educational needs in the southern part of the state and especially among Baptists statewide (although the institution bragged from the first that it would never deign to discriminate against potential students on the basis of creed).    Baptists planned to educate their ministers, provide educated lay leadership, and extend denominational influence against all rivals, whether other denominations or society's increasing secularism.

Inclusion of primary as well as preparatory and collegiate departments in the school's initial organization indicates the anticipated level of "advanced education."    In part this viewpoint emerged from the necessity to survive and to prepare students for their later studies.    In part, this viewpoint reflected the denomination's redemptive mission and the application of that mission to the educational arena.

The institution adhered to a collegiate tradition which eschewed the newly imported university concept best exemplified by Johns Hopkins University, founded a decade earlier in Baltimore, Maryland. As implemented in the United States, this university concept was urban in setting and ratiocinative in outlook. The concept's cornerstones were a curriculum which centered on the scientific approach in all areas and a library which could provide the research facilities to support such a curriculum. Its theory released students to find their own way through independent research. The new Baptist school chose an earlier model, one typified by Mark Hopkins' experience and the 1828 Yale Report, that official imprimatur which served as the documentary basis for such an educational philosophy (Rudolph, 1956). Arkansas Baptists preferred a "safe" rural setting and a paternalistic approach to education. They predicated their school's existence on a traditional atmosphere respectful of the past, of family life, and of a religious faith as the social glue which bound American life together and to God.

The result of this approach to education was a coeducational student body carefully monitored in educational, social, and religious activities by a small faculty of which the President was the leading member. An in loco parentis philosophy informed the milieu and produced a family atmosphere which stressed conformity and homogeneity rather than diversity, the certainty of shared suppositions rather than the questionable and questing search for novelty, and a lack of rigor in intellectual pursuits and academic standards. Discipline and guidance from a stern but kindly father-figure directed students on a curricular path which pointed them to an ethical, theocentric life constrained by the bounds of Baptist theology. The faculty knew what their charges should learn and pressed upon them the imprint of that carefully-circumscribed core of knowledge which was the domain of all educated and religious people (Arrington, 1985).

In the century since its founding, the premises of a Ouachita education have not changed officially. In structure and name, Ouachita has become a university after the fashion of so many small schools across the nation. As in most of these other cases, the name change did not signify a change in philosophy. After a fairly consistent tradition of very small to small enrollments, attendance burgeoned in the 1960s and 1970s, to peak just above 1700 at the decade's change to the 1980s before returning over the course of four years to a more "normal" level (about 1300), where it has remained. The increase in numbers, however, did not betoken a change in complexion. Faculty size also increased significantly during the enrollment jump, but like the student body its complexion did not change. Most faculty members were former students who had received advanced degrees and returned to keep the institution unchanged for succeeding generations. Most of the others were familiar with the institution's nature from their youth in the state, from their denominational background, or from both. The major qualification, beyond degrees and training, was the ability to "fit in" with those who maintained the tradition. This process of acculturation assured Arkansas Baptists of a continually "safe" institution at which to educate their children, a place where their religious and social beliefs would not be shaken (Arrington, 1985).

## The Library

The lack of change in philosophy has had distinct repercussions for the library. Almost exactly a decade earlier than Ouachita's founding, Melvil Dewey inaugurated The American Library Journal with an article on "The Profession." In it he noted the "largely prevalent" opinion that librarians were keepers only, whose sole duty was preserving books from loss and worms. The concept he delineated was that of library as museum, containing the wisdom of the ages and zealously guarded by "a mouser in musty books" (1876, p. 5-6). Ouachita's library conformed to that conception of library as warehouse. Until 1949, it shared a single building with other academic functions. A disastrous fire that spring hastened a change which had been planned since 1943. A fundraising campaign which had begun in 1943, been interrupted by World War II, then resurrected by the fire, culminated in a building which in layout closely resembled Carnegie libraries across the

nation.   The 1949 building reflected contemporary library philosophy and that of the school.   Its primary components were a large reading room and an adjacent tiered stack area.   Space was added a decade later in 1959, and campus crews in 1967 began a major addition which the library occupied two years later (Arrington, 1985; See Appendices 1-4 for floor plans).   Although the stacks were "open" after 1956, the operative approach still required that students retrieve a book from the stacks and read it in the reading room, studying there from a collection of materials checked out from the stacks or reserve collection, or brought from a dormitory room.   The library served as a warehouse for books and some periodicals, and as a monitored study hall in which students could do their lessons under a librarian's watchful eye.

The school's philosophy as it impinged on the library surfaced in more than the building. Staffing and operation reflected the dominant idea of education as something ordained by the faculty rather than sought by individuals, something which assumed that students were dependent rather than independent.   Collection development is a functional example of the operational reflection of official philosophy.   Faculty-driven and without an acquisitions policy to govern it, collection development has been at the mercy of non-systematic efforts to increase the book-stock. The institution's fight to achieve and maintain accreditation has meant that the collection has been augmented with texts and multiple copies which increase the volume count without cost to the institution.   A cursory examination in 1985, for example, revealed several areas in which successive editions of outdated textbooks composed the only holdings--and the latest edition was two decades old.

The staffing picture likewise reflects official policy.   Staffing has been limited in both quantity and quality.   The head librarian during the decades of growth, a Ouachita graduate named Juanita Barnett, assembled a succession of non-professionals, mainly faculty wives from the school or from a sister institution in the same town, as her staff.   Barnett held a library degree from Peabody, but collected around her a staff which contained only one other professional--the head of Technical Services, who gained her degree after a time of practical experience at Ouachita.   The staff's primary duty was to maintain library hours, ensure that books were properly shelved, and operate what was essentially a self-service facility for faculty and students.   Patrons were expected to know what they wanted and how to find it.   The administration's emphasis on the self-service nature of the facility can be inferred from the building's four means of entrance and egress and from the collection's unguarded nature.   The building's growth had been poorly planned for assistance to patrons either at the card catalog or in the stacks, both of which were invisible to a circulation desk which provided the only service point for the whole collection (See Appendices 1-4).

Reference services are rendered from the circulation desk rather than separately, and that desk is not manned by a trained librarian at all times.   Periodicals, the other major access point, is likewise not staffed by a professional during all library hours.   Technical Services is the only department which enjoys more than one non-student employee.   That disposition of manpower results from the institution's commitment to cataloging the collection in machine-readable form through OCLC, Inc., in conjunction with a cooperative union list venture with Henderson State University partially funded by a grant from a local philanthropic foundation.   Only within the past five years has the staff been professionalized, with department heads being hired for their credentials rather than for their proximity.

Professionalization of the staff has been more the result of a change in Directors than a change in official policy or even attitude toward the library and its use.   It has been recognized by the faculty through their extension of faculty status to these newly-hired professionals.   Educating faculty members and administrators to the capabilities and potential among trained librarians has been and continues to be one of the foremost challenges in considering a comprehensive program of bibliographic instruction.   To that end, professional librarians have cultivated opportunities to

interact with other faculty members as peers at faculty retreats, faculty colloquia, the Gutenberg Conspiracy (a faculty reading group), and faculty meetings.

Dewey's 1876 conception of librarians as educators who shaped the reading and thought of their milieu, who shared with the school "the education of the people," (p. 5) was not one which applied at Ouachita. Bibliographic instruction was not a matter for librarians, but was conducted by faculty members in their individual classes if at all. Entering students encountered library orientation only if they were traditional students, entering as freshmen directly after their high school graduation. Transfers from other institutions enjoyed no official orientation. Orientation for faculty members was limited to how to order materials, and where materials were housed in the building. No attempt at a systematic program had been made. The only important formal educational transactions which took place, by official view, did so in the classroom between student and teacher, with the teacher as authoritarian answer-giver rather than as guide and enabler directing the student to search for personal answers through personal study.

The history of Ouachita's official attitude toward the library has been one of lip service to its importance, and recognition of its capabilities as a warehouse for materials and location for students to study in a monitored atmosphere. Its status has been that of a necessity--every college should have one. The Ouachita tradition of education has been collegiate rather than university, directive rather than enabling, and doctrinaire rather than questing. It has focused on telling students what they should know rather than how to discover what they want to know. This tradition has militated against providing library services directed at students working independently, and therefore against effective bibliographic instruction.

<u>The Students</u>

One of the first steps in determining what an effective bibliographic instruction program should be is a study of the students and their information-gathering patterns. In an attempt to provide a baseline for this assessment, a survey was conducted which questioned why and how students used the library at Ouachita Baptist University.

Their responses revealed an interesting pattern of materials use. 51.2% came to use library holdings; 28.8% to use their own materials; and 9.4% came to use a combination of their own and the library's materials. In short, nearly a third of the 361 patrons responding to the survey utilize the library as a study hall; 60.6% utilize the materials either alone or in conjunction with their own. Almost 14% use the library at least daily; another 19.7% use it every other day; another 27.1% use it once or twice a week; 76.8% use the library at least once per week. When they come to the library, most of them make good use of their opportunity: 76.7% spend an hour or more per visit. Almost another 16% venture inside for brief visits (average of 30 minutes each), probably between classes.

Once in the library, the students' self-reported success rate was creditable. Almost 10% reported totally adequate success in finding materials and information; another 47.1% found their success rate somewhat adequate. But 30.5% were somewhat inadequate in the self-reported success rate; 5% thought their success rate totally inadequate. So, over a third did not find their success rate adequate in some degree, and just over another 4% felt their success rate neither adequate nor inadequate. When asked if they felt free to ask for assistance, 59.8% said always and another 28.8% replied occasionally; 5.8% said rarely and 1.1% replied never. In short, almost 89% felt free to ask for help. When asked if they got the help they wanted, 66.5% reported always and 23.3% usually; 2.5% rarely and .3% never did.

The survey results indicated that about two-thirds of OBU students are accustomed to using the library as an information-gathering source, that three-quarters use it at least weekly, and usually for at least an hour per visit. Over half usually find the materials or information they want, but a third often do not. When they fail to discover what they need, almost nine-tenths feel free to ask for assistance; 89.8% (almost exactly the same who are willing to ask) get the help they need (see copy of survey and results in Appendix 5). Whether by familiarity, instruction or conditioning, patrons are most concerned with resources, and of those resources, with books. They are less concerned with the most current (periodical) information.

The ramifications for bibliographic instruction are that much of what is accomplished now is accomplished individually and informally, where patrons have individual problems and seek individual relief. The patron-librarian relationship is positive, and the opportunity for interaction at that level is consistently present. With a third of the patrons responding to the survey indicating that they fail to discover information or materials, and just over half finding materials most of the time, the need to provide effective bibliographic instruction as well as more materials is evident.

The last student characteristic which is germane to this study is the profile of the "average student." Ouachita's recruiting policy has been purposefully slanted toward the "traditional" student who will emerge from high school, pursue college immediately, and graduate four years later. While "nontraditional" older students are accepted, Ouachita makes no attempt to acknowledge their numbers, their needs, or even their existence. This official neglect includes transfers. All orientation is geared toward incoming freshmen; campus orientation for transfers does not exist. The average student is Arkansan (81%), with Texans being the next largest group (8.7%); 96.6% of Ouachita students came from Arkansas or its contiguous states. The homogeneity of the student body can be seen in the fact that 97.7% are from the Southern states. Ouachitonians are almost equally divided between the sexes--54.5% are female.

The ramifications for bibliographic instruction of the characteristics of the student body are that this homogeneous group is drawn almost entirely from the portion of the nation with the poorest educational systems.  Their experience with libraries can be assumed to be very limited, and very unsophisticated.  Bibliographic instruction will have to begin with the rudiments and assume little knowledge on the patrons' part.

<div align="center">The Faculty</div>

The last major part of the milieu equation, after the school and its history, the library and its history, and the students, is the faculty.  Any successful bibliographic instruction program will have to rely on the faculty in two main areas.

First, success depends on the degree of integration with the curriculum as a whole.  This faculty's mood at the moment is advantageous for such a move.  Two self studies undertaken in the last three years (one during the school's centennial to plan for the "next hundred years" and the other looking toward an accreditation visit) have produced curricular revision which, at least in part, reverses the direction of the past.  Such a change is especially noticeable in the English Department, in humanities program changes,  and in the faculty's implementation of a plan to encourage "writing across the curriculum."

The English Department for the past twenty years has been under the spell of "free writing" advocate Ken Macrorie and his Telling Writing and Uptaught (1970a; 1970b).  Their curricular plan in Freshman English eschewed formal research papers in favor of journals in which students recorded their thoughts.  Self-expression superseded content and organization.  A change in that position by the department began about five years ago, when new academic blood was horrified by the froth churned up by the journals, and by the lack of research skills with which students left the department.

The department's concerns finally meshed with those of a number of faculty members outside that discipline who deplored the lack of training in formal writing.  The coalition of those two groups produced a Centennial Goal of stressing the fundamentals of research and writing in all areas, with basic training to be done in Freshman English.  It will be possible to "piggy back" on that interest, for English Department members now come to the library in an unsystematic fashion for "library tours" for their classes and seem interested in utilizing whatever aids the library faculty can provide.

Curricular change at this point in the school's development is very favorable to the implementation of a sound bibliographic instruction program, and it seems to have the backing of the faculty if it can be tied to the research and writing goal.  The faculty seems favorably disposed. As it stands, however, that component of an undergraduate program is currently missing.

The nature of the faculty is the second element in the success of any attempt to implement a formal bibliographic instruction program.  The educational background of the faculty matches that of the student body.  All but one of the Administrative Council is composed of Ouachita graduates, and the exception is the product of the University of Arkansas and an Arkansas native.  A third of the faculty are Ouachita products, either gaining their bachelor's, master's, or both degrees from the institution.  An additional 9.3% graduated from Henderson State University, Ouachita's sister institution across the street, which was from 1889 until 1932 a Methodist college.  Thus, just over 42% are products of Arkadelphia institutions.  Almost 16% more are Arkansas graduates, most from the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville.  The faculty has remained largely stable over the last fifteen years.  Their conception of bibliographic instruction has been formed by the environment in which they now teach, and is very limited.

<div align="center">The Problem</div>

As noted above, no systematic formal bibliographic instruction exists at Ouachita Baptist University.  Samuel Johnson's biographer Boswell recorded Johnson's famous maxim that two

kinds of knowledge exist:    direct knowledge of the subject and knowledge of where to find information upon it (Boswell, 1791).    While the institution may be imparting knowledge about a subject to its students, if we are to take Johnson's dictum as gospel we must admit that their education is only half complete.    The problem is compounded by the fact that library orientation is the only facet of bibliographic instruction offered.    Professors call the Director of Library Services and arrange for a class to "tour" the library.    An hour (or less) offers little time for instruction; students merely receive an introduction to the building and to a few resources such as the card catalog and subject-specific reference materials.    All other instruction lies at the discretion of the individual professor or department, and risks under- or over-exposing any given student through its haphazard application.    Oppenheimer's truism about the modern world makes a change essential.

Library professionals, especially in academic circles, have likewise touted the importance of access as noted above, and cast their lot with Oppenheimer.    Library instruction has its roots in the inception of librarianship.    Melvil Dewey was not the only early proponent of bibliographic instruction; in 1905, William Harper observed that "the equipment of the library will never be finished until it has upon its staff men and women whose sole work shall be, not the care of books, not the cataloging of books, but the giving of instruction in their use" (Rice, 1981, p. 4).    More recently, a librarian wrote that "one of the most perplexing problems facing academic librarians [is] . . . teaching the public to make effective use of the library" (Schwarz, 1973, p.1).

The most common approach to bibliographic instruction has been library orientation, which seeks to introduce users to the physical facilities; the departments or service desks and appropriate staff members; specific services such as overdue procedures or hours of operation; and the organization of the collection with the specific goal of reducing user anxiety about locating materials. It likewise attempts to motivate patrons to return and use the resources, and to communicate an atmosphere of helpfulness and friendliness.    Yet this approach has caused difficulties.    As librarians increasingly became slaves of their burgeoning resources, the major thrust of their work became meeting the demands of the technical services function of librarianship:    to get materials onto the shelves and available to patrons.

Because of that thrust, library instruction has changed within the past fifteen years from building orientation to resources orientation.    Teaching students to use a library effectively has become part of the role of most academic libraries, an inseparable part of the reference function of any library which encompasses individual and group instruction, attention to signage, maps, classes and bibliographies as well as tours (Mertins, 1977).    Modern library instruction matured in the 1960s, when librarians began facing the knowledge explosion.    The 1962-3 volume of <u>Library Literature</u> contains 155 entries under the subject heading "Instruction in Library Use."    Within a decade, that number had increased over 50% to 281.    Ten years later, the heading contained almost exactly as many entries as it had in 1962-3, with three "see also" references.    After five more years, in 1988, the heading had changed (to "Bibliographic Instruction") though the number of entries and cross references had remained almost static.

Perhaps the best proof of the increased attention given the problem of insufficient library instruction by the library community was the formation of particular groups and publications devoted to that issue alone.    Most of those groups emerged at the beginning of the 1970s.    They began with the American Library Association's Committee on Instruction in the Use of Libraries in 1967, to be followed four years later by the Association of College and Research Libraries' Bibliographic Instruction Task Force and by Project LOEX (<u>L</u>ibrary <u>O</u>rientation <u>Ex</u>change) in 1972. The formation of <u>Research Strategies</u> and <u>The Journal of Academic Librarianship</u>, for example, both date in this era.    All this activity indicated a "widespread recognition" that bibliographic instruction should be "an integral part" of the educational process, that "the ability to find information is at least as important as the information itself," and that "we should demand that all students learn how

to continue to explore the body of knowledge and how to stay up-to-date as that body of knowledge increases" (Rice, 1981, pp. 4, 9-10).

<center>Review of Selected Literature</center>

The literature of bibliographic instruction has matured, as the wide base of writing in ERIC (Educational Research Information Center) and in the profession's own literature attests.   In addition, a new emphasis on learning and perception in psychology bodes well for those seeking effective means of inducting students into the intricacies of effective library usage as well as the general process of learning itself.

Some of the literature deals with the political considerations of implementing a bibliographic instruction program.   Writing in <u>RQ</u>, Ellen Broidy noted that the politics, problems and challenges one encounters are unique to each situation, although common features do exist.   One of the common features involved getting academic credit for such courses, which she called "no mean feat" (1988, p.163).   Often the solution to problems is the informal contact network which librarians build up.

The issue of teaching context as well as content, or process and facts, has been addressed increasingly in the last decade.   The first noted example of the juncture of critical thinking and library skills and the librarian's place in that nexus came in 1959, when Hazel Adele Pulling wrote "The Teacher and the Librarian in the Development of Critical Thinking" for the <u>California Journal of Secondary Education</u>.   As critical thinking has become a fad in educational circles, others have addressed that subject in relation to higher education.   Most recently, Mona McCormick's "Critical Thinking and Library Instruction" (1983), Nancy Anne O'Hanlon's "Library Skills, Critical Thinking, and the Teacher-Training Curriculum" (1987) and Eugene A. Engeldinger's "Bibliographic Instruction and Critical Thinking:   The Contribution of the Annotated Bibliography" (1988) have taken up the importance of that matter.   As Engeldinger noted, many professors have had no systematic training in library or systematic thinking skills, and teach as they were taught.   They assume that students will gain these skills in the same manner, or through osmosis or exposure to the library.   With the plethora of information available, the educated person must have a base of knowledge, the ability to update that knowledge with new information, and the evaluative skills to apply to the new information.   An interesting offshoot of this attention to value-loaded instruction is L. Peterson's "Teaching Academic Integrity:   Opportunities in Bibliographic Instruction" (1988), which offers the reader a look at this concern at Iowa State, and makes a plea for incorporating this value into traditional instruction.

How that teaching is to take place has increasingly become part of the bibliographic instruction literature, for librarians have found themselves thrust into the classroom setting without training but with at least some trepidation.   Sue Schub, in "Teaching Bibliographic Instruction" (1988), alludes to the fears of teaching which librarians face, and offers as an antidote not only her personal experience and assurance, but a promise that course objectives and a theoretical framework (she proffers her fourteen-point framework with the same assurance Woodrow Wilson must have felt) will see the neophyte through the "fifty-minute stand."   The increased emphasis on this phase of the bibliographic instruction problem has spawned numerous books recently.   University of Arizona librarian Mary Reichel teamed with Mary Ann Ramey to produce <u>Conceptual Frameworks for Bibliographic Education: Theory into Practice</u> (1987) while M.D. Svinicki and B.A. Schwartz produced <u>Designing Instruction for Library Users: A Practical Guide</u> (1988), to name two. D.N. King's multi-part series on "Creating Educational Programs in Libraries" (1987-1988) is an example of the lengthy attention paid this topic by several professional journals.   The most helpful short piece recently done is Marian I. Miller and Barry D. Bratton's "Instructional Design: Increasing the Effectiveness of Bibliographic Instruction" (1988).   In it, they note the five essential (key) elements of instruction (learners, objectives, subject content, teaching methods, and

evaluation), offer some suggestions for designing a successful program, and firmly conclude that while time-consuming, the effort is worth the trouble.

A third feature of the recent bibliographic instruction literature, and a subset of the teaching issue, lies in its attention to attitudes. L. Hardesty and J. Wright's early 1982 observations in "Student Library Skills and Attitudes and their Change: Relationships to Other Selected Variables" has been joined by such articles as C.A. Mellon's "Attitudes: The Forgotten Dimension in Library Instruction" (1988), T.B. Menshing's "Resistance, Empathy, and Technical Expertise" (1988), and M.C. Markman and G.B. Leighton's "Exploring Freshman Composition Student Attitudes about Library Instruction Sessions and Workbooks: Two Studies" (1987-1988). Even those articles not directly related to attitudes of students toward libraries and library instruction have begun to take note of the issue, as O.D. Popa and others did in "Teaching Search Techniques on the Computerized Catalog and on the Traditional Card Catalog" (1988).

The immediately-previous article indicates that bibliographic instruction has taken notice of the advent of online catalogs. B. Gratch's "Rethinking Instructional Assumptions in an Age of Computerized Information Access" (1988) gives the Bowling Green State experience. Kathleen W. Craver's article "The Influence of Online Catalogs on Academic Library Use by College-Bound High School Seniors" (1988), which followed her "Use of Academic Libraries by High School Students: Implications for Research" (1987), indicates the positive effect of online catalogs on bibliographic instruction.

A fourth feature of recent bibliographic instruction literature is its increasingly-narrow focus on specialty groups for instruction. International students, psychology students, English class students, education students, debaters--all have authors treating their special needs. For the purposes of this study, the most beneficial feature of this narrowly-focused literature is for example ideas. The most directly applicable recent article from this genre is M.C. Wilson and K. Mulcahy's article "To Better the Best and Brightest Undergraduates" (1987), which reports a Rutgers project with its honors students.

Students in general and at Ouachita in particular have not mastered the skills necessary to use the library effectively. They have neither pursued those skills on their own nor have their professors given them sufficient encouragement. The advances in knowledge and its dissemination demand a sophistication which was formerly a luxury. Students must develop attitudes and skills enabling self-education: "the proliferation of different forms and types of publications, innovations in means of access to library resources, and the growth of college library collections all make it less likely than in the past that the untutored student will be able to find the right books for his purpose and to select from among the best" (Rice, p.9).

The advent of computerized access to databases on CD-ROM and to the collection via computerized catalogs (either on CD-ROM or online [often called OPACs, or online public access catalogs]) has exacerbated this problem. Most patrons have some exposure to card catalogs; this knowledge transfers from one site to another. Computerized catalogs vary in operation between systems, and knowledge of one does not necessarily transfer to another site. This decrease in the "portability" or transferability of skills between sites can only increase the need for bibliographic instruction. Otherwise access to the materials in any given collection will be decreased by the advances in technology.

The most popular current method of bibliographic instruction involves teaching library skills for academic credit, either in a separate library course or an important part of another course. Proponents argue that academic credit should be awarded for this part of students' academic training just as it would for any other (Adams & Morris, 1985), and that it enhances the learning environment (Langley, 1987). The trend seems to be toward separate courses; Daniel Gore, in a 1964 article in the Library Journal, summed up the case for separate courses, citing the huge increase

in "the genre known as 'reference materials' in the twentieth century" and the necessity of training people in "the entire system of organized information" (Renford and Hendrickson, 1980, p. 121).

There are also articles on what students should know, such as M.W. George's "What Do College Librarians Want Freshmen to Know?  My Wish List" (1988) and books like C.E. Wolf and R. Wolf <u>Basic Library Skills</u> (1986).  Perhaps the best source of that information, however, lies in the great resources of ERIC.  Much, if not most, of the bibliographic instruction information contained in ERIC (perhaps because of its very nature) is in the form of instructional guides and workbooks.  If Sue Schub was correct in her assertion (noted above) that a card catalog and a good bibliographic instruction workbook are the only tools needed for successful bibliographic instruction, then ERIC's gold mine of specific examples from different locations would provide all the content information a teacher could desire.  The only <u>caveats</u> to their use would be the needs to adapt them for the specific site, to be aware that changes will have been made which will not be reflected in the published version, and to wade through the vast numbers of examples and glean appropriate samples for use.  A few examples of the better offerings (most from the 1970s, when attention first focused on the topic) are the U.S. Federal Library Committee's "Guidelines for Library Handbooks" (1972), B.L. Johnson's "Methods of Library Use: Handbook for Bibliography I" (1976), B.M. Toy's "Library Instruction at the University of California: Formal Courses" (1975), Richard H. Werking's "The Library and the College: Some Programs of Library Instruction" (1976) and especially the University of Texas at Austin's "A Comprehensive Program of User Education for the General Libraries" (1977).

For the purposes of this paper, effective bibliographic instruction will be defined as a process whereby patrons learn how to acquire the information they need.  It involves learning through understanding rather than merely by rote, for the principles of information collection remain regardless of the application.  It must, in short, combine Max Weber's concepts of actual and explanatory understanding (1962).  It is something to be learned experientially rather than vicariously, for information collection is a skill as well as a set of principles (Lakoff, 1987; Craik & Lockhart, 1972; Craik & Tulving, 1975).  Finally, it is to some degree site-specific, for it not only asks how one finds information, but also where one finds information in a particular setting.

CHAPTER 2

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to prescribe a program of bibliographic instruction for Ouachita Baptist University, and by inference for other small sectarian liberal arts colleges.  The procedure for establishing an effective comprehensive program of bibliographic instruction at Ouachita was based on a number of features.

1.  First among them was an understanding of the setting in which the program was to be inaugurated.  Any effective program must take into consideration the characteristics of its milieu. The background noted in Chapter 1 above provided the institutional setting and the parameters within which any proposed program would be effective in either inauguration or implementation.

2.  A second feature involved the nature of the students who would be the focus of instructional efforts.  A major component of the program had to be a method of baselining what students knew when they arrived at the institution.  That baselining had to be predicated upon an understanding of what to expect from the student body as a whole and from individuals.

3.  A third feature was a profile of what students in the setting should know.  What, in other words, would constitute "bibliographic competency" as far as this program was concerned. This feature included both the principles of information

gathering ("how do you find . . . ?") and site-specific procedures ("how do you find . . . in this location?").

      4.   The fourth feature was to be prescriptive methods for moving students from what they know to what they should know, and a testing program to judge the program's effectiveness.

      5.   The fifth and final feature was to be the implementation process for this program of bibliographic instruction.

      The methodology used to elaborate each of the five features is outlined in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 3
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the background material in Chapter 1 and the methodology described in Chapter 2, the set of results noted below was produced.

Setting

The setting for this endeavor was the denominationally-affiliated liberal arts school which is historically and philosophically profiled briefly above.   The current manifestation of the school has remained basically the same.   An intensive building program over the past twenty years has resulted in a campus of up-to-date buildings, including a two-year-old library which has been designed for functionality and boasts an integrated library system from CLSI, Inc.   The 1352 students and 83 full-time and 26 part-time faculty form only a portion of the library's patron pool; a cooperative arrangement opens its doors to Henderson State University faculty and students, and a commitment to community service (broadly defined) draws patrons from the town, county, and across the state. During the 1988-9 year, the library hosted 90,697 patron visits, during which it offered access to approximately 130,000 volumes, a periodicals collection of about 1,100 titles, some 150,000 items in its holdings as a select government depository, special collections which include rare books and the university's archives as well as those of the local historical association and state Southern Baptists, and about 8,000 items in its audio-visuals department.   Although rarely used except by a specific small clientele, the Clark County Law Library is accessible to patrons.   The curricular pattern has changed from a very eclectic one of areas of concentration and cores adopted for the 1952-3 school year to a more standard and departmentalized one of majors and minors readopted by the faculty thirty years later (Ouachita Baptist University, 1952-3; 1983-4).

Political Considerations

Curricular changes may be instituted in one of two ways.   The first is informally, by an addition to or restructuring of an existing course.   That change must take place at the pleasure of the instructor, for in this setting the instructor is sole judge of his or her course.   While that approach might be feasible, its informality and the possibility of an equally easy retrograde movement obviates its usefulness as the primary (or only) approach to providing bibliographic instruction.

The second, formal method of curricular change is through proposal to the faculty through the University's Academic Committee.   There proposals are judged by a committee of the Vice-President for Academic Affairs (ex officio but voting), six faculty members and two students. Committee terms are three years, and representation is divisional.   The institution's small size makes it possible to ascertain how favorably inclined individual members might be toward any particular type of proposal, to choose the year of submission with an eye to optimizing the proposal's chances, and to increase the proposal's chances through informal personal lobbying. Once a proposal is approved by the committee, it goes to the whole faculty in open meeting. While the faculty discusses each issue, reports possessing committee approval have the presumption of acceptability in their favor.   In this setting, where faculty meetings occur twice a semester and therefore tend to be lengthy, reports toward the end of the session have a great advantage in getting passed without inordinate scrutiny.   Careful work with the agenda will be helpful there.   Finally, the institution's size again makes personal, informal lobbying efforts most productive.   Once approved by the faculty in open meeting, changes in the curriculum enter the catalog and become official.   The spring faculty meeting generates some anxiety for those connected with the catalog,

for items must be approved in time to be entered for printing.   The spring meeting is therefore politically advantageous for those wishing to get items passed with a minimum of bother, for the faculty is conditioned to think in those terms. Max Weber's theories of social organization first systematized these formal versus informal (or, to use his words, rational versus paternalistic) facets of organization as the basis of organizational sociology, and political scientists use a variation of that thinking, primarily in the discipline's public administration area (Weber, 1947; Barnard, 1938).

The final political consideration in implementing a program of this nature was the willingness of the faculty to change, especially to add hours to the requirements.   Over the last decade, the curriculum has been restructured several times.   A sharp decline in enrollment over the four years beginning in 1982-3 resulted in polarization among the faculty, dividing it along the lines of liberal arts versus vocational training in emphasis.   Those who joined the "vocationalists" resisted any attempt to increase the core requirements while simultaneously opting for raised departmental requirements; the "traditionalists" stood opposed to that path.   The faculty currently remains deadlocked on the issue of apportioning available hours from a student's 128-hour graduation requirement between general and departmental requirements.   The two groups are at equilibrium.   A general requirement of additional hours for all graduates will not successfully pass the faculty.   Hence one of two approaches had to be selected.   One would build the bibliographical instructional program into the existing structure (with the inherent dangers noted above); the other would substitute a bibliographical instruction program for some other current requirement.   The key to all this is the Academic Committee, and the fact that the faculty has conferred voting status on all professional librarians, giving the library a block (if necessary) of 5% of the total faculty, and at least 10% of those who normally attend faculty meetings.

Implementing this program of bibliographic instruction, if it follows the pattern of most proposed changes, will take about three years.   The researcher's course of action will be to take it to the Library Committee first, perhaps through a study subcommittee, and gain their approval. Once they have "bought into" the program, the committee will hold open meetings of the whole faculty to gather information and suggestions.   In this fashion, it would be hoped that a reasonably large number of the faculty will have a stake in the outcome before the program comes to the Academic Committee, and the program will have been altered as necessary to give it optimum potential for approval in committee and on the floor of the faculty meeting.   The Library Committee will then forward the program to the Academic Committee with its request for affirmative action.   Each Library Committee member will be responsible for lobbying certain Academic Committee members and then other faculty members to maximize the chances for passage.

The Plan

The bibliographic instruction plan envisioned as a result of the study is based on four limitations.   First, the method developed must be predicated upon the institution's structure and its nature as a small liberal arts college.   The school's attempt to integrate knowledge from disparate disciplines, and demonstrate its relational utility, will circumscribe what should and can be done. The plan must reflect the school's aims, and cannot be modeled solely upon that of a research-oriented institution.   It must be operated in a problem-solving, information-seeking manner rather than an in-depth research one.

Second, the plan must be predicated upon students' needs.   This limitation wars with the first, for students' needs for a specific class are often related to those of students at a traditional research-oriented university.   This limitation may necessitate a multi-tiered model, one capable of providing a variety of instruction at a variety of levels.   It also assumes that students recognize their needs, which is a dangerous assumption at best.

Third, the plan must accommodate the nature of any already-existing instructional program, and the expectations, already in place, of both faculty and students. Faculty expectations will be the more significant of the two, for most students come with very low expectations of bibliographic instruction.

Fourth, no ideal structure exists for all libraries, nor does one ideal method of instruction. The plan developed for any setting must fit the needs of the library as well as those of the academic community.

The faculty at Ouachita Baptist University has established in the curriculum the concept of area competency as well as levels of achievement. The grading system specifically provides a non-graded, or area competency, option for some circumstances. This "Satisfactory-Unsatisfactory Policy" enables students to explore certain areas of interest outside their area of concentration without feeling the pressure of competition for grades. A range of courses are also regularly offered on this basis, most of them outside the normal academic range: Honors Program studies, Physical Education activity courses, the Washington Seminar, and Academic Skills Development Program courses. When CLEP (College Level Examination Program) came to campus in the early 1970s, the faculty quickly embraced it and supplemented it with in-house credit examinations in subjects for which no CLEP test existed. The faculty also voted to accept Advanced Placement credits under the Advanced Placement program of the Educational Testing Service, and participate in the Proficiency Examination Program (PEP) from ACT (Ouachita Baptist University, 1988-1989).

For the purposes of this program, the most appropriate example of area competency written into the curriculum is that of the Sophomore Composition examination. Prior to their Junior year, all students are required to pass this examination on their first attempt or pass Intermediate Composition, a course designed specifically to remedy this deficiency (Ouachita Baptist University, 1988-1989). In short, the faculty has established a grammar competency program. Since the precedent for this approach exists, the intention is to inaugurate the bibliographical instruction program along the lines of a bibliographic competency program.

The first component of the bibliographic instruction program at Ouachita Baptist University would be a Bibliographic Competency examination which all students would need to pass prior to their Junior year. That examination would be composed of two parts--a written and a practical exercise--and would be constructed by a subcommittee of the Library Committee composed of the Director of Library Services, two public services librarians, and two regular Library Committee members (appointed by the Chairman), and would be graded by them upon its administration. The examination would be constructed from data gathered in a survey of faculty and students as well as from examples extant in the literature (See Appendices 6-7). The committee would work from a draft examination prepared by the Director and library staff.

To ensure that students would have an opportunity to acquire the knowledge they need to pass the competency test, the second major component of the program would be inaugurated--a multi-faceted, segmented, pre-test approach to bibliographic instruction through a variety of media. It would aim to acquaint students with methods and sources for acquiring information generally and specifically in this location. As the first segment, an introductory tour would be initiated as part of the freshman orientation program. Students would be brought into the library under arrangement with the Dean of Students' Office as part of their introduction to campus. That tour, conducted by the Director, would include the use of a handout giving location of materials and library rules and an introduction to the professional staff (Appendix 8). One reality of, and therefore one difficulty with, this setting is that the paucity of adult staff, especially professionals, forces the library to rely upon student workers for approximately two-thirds of its labor force. Students do not differentiate between workers in level of competence, and often assume that "Ask a librarian" applies to student

workers as well as to professionals.    The tour would be designed to reach two objectives:    an introduction to the facilities, and an introduction to the professional staff in an effort to at least begin the process of differentiation.

The second segment of the pre-test program component would be a system of printed bibliographic aids for different parts of the library.    These passive teaching devices would be designed to introduce students to the contents of the different departments: reference, periodicals, government documents, audio-visuals, general stacks/catalog, circulation (including interlibrary loan), and special collections.    They would range from a bookmark imprinted with circulation rules and inserted into every book checked out at circulation to a single-fold step-by-step brochure for government documents.

The third segment of the pre-test program would be a coordinated effort with content courses, especially Freshman English, during any research/ writing segments.    As J.E. Ford has noted in his "Natural Alliance between Librarians and English Teachers in Course-Related Library Use Instruction" (1982), librarians and English teachers are natural allies in this process of bibliographic instruction; that alliance would be formalized in this setting.    The system would follow Ford's model of a team-taught course that deals with process and usage rather than only content and location.    The team of librarian and teacher would be involved in all meetings at each location (classroom and library).    Since library professionals generally tout course-related bibliographic instruction as the ideal, and studies indicate instruction with a written product as the most efficacious method, this union is natural.    Since it is the most general and reaches the most students (all are required to take it unless they test out), Freshman English would be the focus of attention.    While there would be similar efforts to work with the departments which generally produce research papers (English, History, Political Science and Psychology on this campus), these departments generally conduct research papers in their upper-level classes; since students will be taking them after the Bibliographic Competency Test, those efforts would not reasonably be part of this component.

The final segment in this pre-test component involves the Academic Skills Development Program course called Resources for Learning.    Designed for students on academic probation and those whose test scores reveal significant academic weakness when they enter, Resources for Learning is also designed to help all students desirous of improving their academic skills.    It is taught on a modular approach, with modules on effective listening, note-taking, studying, and test-taking.    It currently has no module on library usage.    The program's director, Mr. Jack Estes, has indicated his willingness to remedy that lack.

Two post-test components round out the proposed bibliographic instruction program.    A remediation course for those who fail the Bibliographic Competency Test would be the first.    This issue has the greatest potential for disaster, for staffing will be the premier question for those voting on the program's approval.    Including such a course under the aegis of the Academic Skills Development Program would obviate the problem.    The remediation course would last a maximum of one semester, but would offer the student the option of suspending attendance after successfully completing the Bibliographic Competency Test.    In format, it would take any research/writing assignment the student has in any course for which he/she is currently enrolled and offer individualized instruction in completing that assignment.    If no research/writing assignment exists, the faculty would produce one, preferably from the student's past academic experience.    The course's guiding principle would be that effective instruction always rests on a course-related, written-product base.

The last post-test component would be a coordinated effort to provide library instruction to discipline-related (and therefore more specific) research projects and to work with the Honors

Program.    As noted above, four departments actively pursue library-related research projects with students.    Two major factors would determine the library's effectiveness in outreach to and coordination with those departments.    In a recent survey of the faculty, 58% said their assignments and 54.8% said their teaching methods were affected by a lack of library materials in their areas. Of those surveyed, 67.7% indicated that they planned new courses requiring stronger library resources in their area, but only 6% indicated that lack of those materials would hinder course implementation.    One great factor influencing the library's ability to work with the departments, then, is the library's ability to provide resources which each department needs.    The second major factor is the library's ability to engender the kind of professional relationship which would allow professors to feel comfortable having librarians share their classrooms.    Both of these factors demand attention and some discrete remedies.    The first must rely upon the budget and its allocation; a new budget allocation system, which will be discussed by the Library Committee this fall, is the secret.    The second depends upon continuing to build the informal bridges alluded to above.

The Carl Goodson Honors Program at Ouachita offers great hope for a significant addition to the bibliographic instruction program envisioned here.    Designed to further academic excellence and inspire intellectual curiosity, the Honors Program offers students independent study and small-group seminars.    Participation is voluntary and admission entails application by student petition after a personal interview by a committee of selected faculty members.    The Honors Program consists of Sophomore-level directed studies, Junior-level group seminars, and Junior-Senior-level independent studies.    An Honors Thesis under the direction of a three-member committee caps the program.    Honors Program participants are highly motivated and earn academic credits for their participation, although that participation is non-graded (Satisfactory-Unsatisfactory).    The plan would be for a bibliographic instruction unit as the inaugural work in the Sophomore-level directed studies and/or Junior-Senior-level independent study.    It would entail a group meeting of students enrolled in that/those course(s) at the semester's beginning, and instruction geared initially toward the general and later toward the specific areas of study.    The production of an annotated bibliography, like that envisioned by Engeldinger and cited above, would serve the dual purpose of bibliographic instruction and useful product in the process.

CHAPTER 4
SUMMARY AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The bibliographic instruction program recommended for Ouachita Baptist University, and by design for other small sectarian liberal arts colleges, is based on certain principles drawn from the recent bibliographic instruction literature and from the literature of related disciplines.   a.   First, course-related bibliographic instruction is most efficacious, an efficacy which improves with a written product as part of the design.   b.   Second, the characteristics of any given locale will determine the exact parameters of an effective program.   c.   Third, variety and an overall look at local possibilities will produce the best program.   d.   Fourth, repetition has long been regarded as a key to effective learning.

The specifics of the situation upon which the program is predicated are the school's educational philosophy (including its official commitment to liberal arts), the nature of the student body and its inferred characteristics and background, the school's history (including its curricular history), the faculty, the library and its history, the political ramifications and realities of the present, and the possible methods of implementing the planned program.

The program is designed with three basic components: pre-test, test, and post-test.   The pre-test component is the heart   of the program, for it is here that initial instruction will take    place.   That component involves librarians and other faculty members in educating students in library use through tours, printed aids, and lecture/demonstration situations in classrooms both generally and in specific disciplines.   As envisioned, the natural alliance between library use and Freshman English will form the core of this component.   Since other courses do not lend themselves as naturally to the design of this program, especially those departmental offerings in research which come at the higher levels, the natural alliance will be most advantageous.   As noted, the sentiment already exists for that move.

The test is an evaluation of students' training in one of the designed situations or in some other, and is an evaluation of competency.   Its intent is two-fold: diagnosis and verification.   It will allow the institution to ensure that all its students have bibliographic competency, either having acquired it prior to the test or in intensive study afterwards.

The post-test component likewise has two functions.   Part of the post-test component is an attempt at remediation in the event that the initial step in the program is not successful.   It is the institution's last effort to secure academic excellence in the area of information gathering and assessment.   The other function is to broaden the scope of bibliographic instruction from the basic and/or remedial to include more sophisticated issues in and means of information gathering and assessment.   Skills, once learned, increase with practice.   For bibliographic instruction to achieve its promise requires a dedicated effort to increase library usage among the student population. That increase must come through a joint effort by librarians, faculty and staff.   The ideal level of usage is a natural one, where patrons utilize the library out of habit rather than under duress. When and if that level is achieved, patrons will seek information on a wide variety of topics out of enlightened self-interest, doing it as a way of life rather than as an assignment.   If that habit is cultivated in its students, Ouachita Baptist University will have indeed achieved excellence in education.   It will have indeed offered its students unrestricted access to knowledge.

Suggestions for Further Research

The proposed plan has several possibilities for further research and publication.

1.   One of the important areas in psychology at the moment is the learning process and cognitive styles.   One area to be systematically explored is that of precisely what approaches to bibliographic instruction would be most effective in light of current knowledge about the way people learn this type of information, and whether the information bibliographic instruction seeks to impart is holistic or analytic in nature--or both.   If both types of cognition are involved, and if cognitive styles differ, then the instruction must recognize those differences to maximize effectiveness.

2.   A second possibility for further work lies in the area of value-laden instruction. Sectarian schools have been concerned with this issue since their inception; the cry from many in the teaching profession at the moment is for a movement from value-neutral to value-laden instruction. How to make this balance palatable in a variety of settings is one fruitful area for inquiry for this program.

3.   The tension between faith and reason, which has plagued believers throughout time and can be demonstrated forcefully by Galileo's experience, has great potential for continued study in a sectarian setting.   The issue of unrestrained access to information in a sectarian setting needs elaboration in the scholarly, popular, and sectarian media.

4.   The bibliographic component of an honors program is the final area for further study. As proponents of bibliographic instruction make their studies more and more specific for smaller and smaller groups of patrons, differentiation among bibliographic instruction work with these

groups will become pronounced.    The principles common to all bibliographic instruction must be reiterated to avoid their disappearance in the minutia of varying applications.

        5.    One long-term project which would be of interest is a continuing survey of student usage patterns of the library and their attitudes toward the facility, the contents, and the staff. Certainly one of the most effective means of documenting the need for increased staffing would be positive correlations between student requirements for additional reference help and their positive attitudes toward the people who help them.    And a successful bibliographic instruction program should generate both more and more sophisticated patronage of the facility and materials.