

A R T I C L E S

THE DEAF COLLECTION AT THE GALLAUDET UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

by
Thomas R. Harrington

Abstract

This paper describes the special collection on deaf people and deafness in the Gallaudet University Library, Washington, DC. The collection's background, history, and scope are given. Its collection policy is covered, and the special classification system and subject headings developed for it are briefly described. Access to the collection's holdings via the library's online catalog and various periodical indexes are discussed, as are its reference aspects. The paper concludes with a description of the Gallaudet University Archives and access to other deaf information through the library's WWW home page and other Internet resources.

Introduction

To best understand the special collection on deafness (the "Deaf Collection") in the Gallaudet University Library, it is first necessary to understand a bit about the University itself.

Gallaudet University's roots may be traced to 1817 when Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet founded in Hartford, Connecticut, the first permanent school for the deaf in America. Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet was a young evangelical minister who one day encountered a little deaf neighbor, Alice Cogswell. Noting her lack of education, and out of concern for her soul, he decided to see if she could eventually be taught to receive the word of God. Gallaudet's success in teaching her the word "hat" led Alice's father, Mason Cogswell, backed by other wealthy Hartford residents, to request that Gallaudet travel to Europe to learn methods for teaching the deaf, and to establish a school upon his return.

In Britain, Gallaudet met rejection from the Braidwood family, which had a monopoly on deaf education in Britain and which refused to divulge its proprietary methods of oral deaf education. In contrast, the French Catholic-run school in Paris, the world's first public school for the deaf, founded in 1771, welcomed him and freely shared its successful method of instruction through sign language. Gallaudet eventually returned to Connecticut, bringing with him Laurent Clerc, a graduate of the Paris school. Clerc became America's first deaf teacher of the deaf in the newly established institution that today is the American School for the Deaf, in Hartford. Gallaudet later married one of the school's first female graduates, Sophia Fowler.

One of Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet's sons, Edward Miner Gallaudet (also hearing impaired), followed his father into the field of deaf education. He first became a teacher in the school founded by his father. Meanwhile, in Washington, DC, philanthropist Amos Kendall found himself the guardian of several indigent deaf and blind children, and sought help in opening and staffing a school for them. Kendall contacted the Connecticut school, and Edward was recommended to Kendall and his board. Edward accepted Kendall's proposal, and in 1857, when he was only 20 years old, he opened a school in a ramshackle building on Kendall's Washington estate, with his widowed deaf mother as matron. A few years later, the blind students were transferred to a school in Maryland, and the DC school was devoted exclusively to education of the deaf. Today, this school is the Kendall Demonstration Elementary School for the Deaf, which shares the Gallaudet University campus—the former Kendall estate—with its 1969 sibling, the Model Secondary School for the Deaf, as well as with the university proper. Edward saw the need to give deaf people not only the opportunity for a basic education, but for a collegiate education as well. After years of effort, he succeeded in getting a Congressional charter to open the National Deaf-Mute College, a liberal arts school which accepted its first students in 1864 with Edward himself as its first President.

Female students were first admitted in 1887, and in 1891 a graduate program was established. The college was renamed Gallaudet College in 1894 in honor of Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet. In 1987, by congressional legislation, the school became Gallaudet

University; essentially formally rendering a status it had had, *de facto*, for many years. The following year, national and international attention was riveted onto Gallaudet University for a week, when students took over the campus in a successful protest against the University's Board of Trustees appointing yet another hearing person as its president. The outcome of this protest was the appointment of Gallaudet's and the world's first deaf university president, and greater deaf representation in the university administration.

During most of the 135-plus years of its existence, Gallaudet University was the world's sole collegiate program for the deaf. Not until 1968 did an alternate technical-college open in upstate New York and also only in the 1960s and 1970s did regular colleges and universities begin to offer special support services to allow deaf people to attend their programs too. However, Gallaudet University remains the world's only accredited liberal arts university for the deaf, and continues to be a collegiate Mecca for the deaf, enrolling just over 2000 undergraduate and graduate students annually.

The student body comes from every state of the Union, represented in rough proportion to the relative populations of the states. In addition to scholarships and financial aid, many students obtain financial assistance from their state vocational rehabilitation agencies.

The ratio of undergraduate to graduate students is about 61% to 39%. The undergraduate program is restricted to deaf people only, but the graduate program is open to both deaf and hearing people. Over 25 undergraduate majors are available, master's degrees are awarded in 15 areas of study, and five doctoral degrees may be earned.

Gallaudet University is unique in the world and about ten percent of Gallaudet students come from dozens of other countries all over the globe. International demand is actually higher than this, despite U.S. congressionally mandated and significantly higher tuition rates for foreign students. Nevertheless, the Congress has capped the foreign enrollment at that percentage.

Gallaudet University quickly gained worldwide renown as a center for research in deaf education and related areas, and its graduates were, and still are, prominent leaders in the American and worldwide deaf community and great contributors to society at large. The world today looks to Gallaudet University as a primary resource for education, research, information, and leadership for deaf people. It is in this background that the Deaf Collection was born, grew, and operates today.

Brief History of the Library and the Deaf Collection

Like any self-respecting college, Gallaudet University had a library from its start in 1864, though this had attained a size of merely 1021 books when it received its first dedicated home in 1876 (Atwood, 1964). Its original core was the professional reference collection transferred from the Kendall School Library, augmented as needed by additional book purchases to support the college curriculum. The main collection grew along conventional American College lines, and today has a fairly typical small liberal arts university collection. The library collection now totals about 234,000 books plus thousands of videotapes, microforms, and other media. The balance of this article is concerned only with that part of the library collection, which makes Gallaudet unique: the Deaf Collection.

Although the early professional reference collection undoubtedly contained a few books on deaf education, the Deaf Collection really began in 1873, when President Edward Miner Gallaudet learned of a special book collection put together by a British educator of the deaf named Charles Baker. This private collection was assembled during a period of over half a century and contained representatives of almost every book ever published in the world, in any language, and relating to deafness, from a very rare 1546 work up to that time, totaling some 533 books in all. Edward Miner Gallaudet scored a major coup when he was able to buy this collection from Baker's estate. Each title was proudly listed in the College's 1874 annual report (*Seventeenth Annual Report*, 1874). The astute reader will have noticed that the Baker Collection made up half of the College's entire library at that time!

Because of its value as a historical research collection, not only in deaf education and deaf history but also in related areas such as the history of early printed books, the history of certain religious orders, or medical history, arrangements were made many years later to have the Baker Collection microfilmed by University Microfilms, Inc. (UMI). This made copies of its rare books more readily available to others. The Baker Collection still forms almost all of the special catalog of deafness-related materials available on microfilm from UMI.

The original Baker Collection books today are preserved in a vault by the Gallaudet University Archives, with bound photocopies and microfilms of most volumes (made during the 1970s) available for circulation. About 5,300 additional rare tomes have joined the Baker Collection in the vault of the Archives; most of them published between 1870 and 1930.

A few selected treasures from the Baker Collection and the other rare books added over the years include:

Indagine, Joseph ab. *Chiromantia*. London?: Apud Petrum Drouart, 1546.

Bonet, Juan Pablo, *Reduction de las letras, y arte para enseñar a [h]ablar los mudos*. Madrid: F. Arbaca de Angulo, 1620.

Defoe, Daniel. *The history of the life and adventures of Mr. Duncan Campbell, a gentleman, who, tho' deaf and dumb, writes down any stranger's name at sight...* London: E. Curll, 1720.

Syle, Henry Winter. *A retrospect of the education of the deaf...* Philadelphia: W.R. Cullingworth, 1886.

A very few typical recent acquisitions include:

Baynton, Douglas C. *Forbidden Signs: American Culture and the Campaign against Sign Language*. University of Chicago Press, 1996.

Fleischer, Flavia. *Mom and Dad, Your Deaf Child is OK Only If...* [videorecording]. Pittsburgh, Pa.: DeBee Communications, 1997.

Kelly, Kitty. *The Royals*. New York: Warner Books, 1997. [Because Queen Elizabeth II's mother-in-law was deaf.]

Nihongo Shuwa Jiten [= *Japanese sign language*]. Tokyo: Zen Nihon Roa Renmei, 1997.

Over the years, the Baker Collection nucleus has continued to build to the point where, at over 91,100 volumes, Gallaudet's Deaf Collection is by far the largest of its kind in the world. It attracts scholars and researchers from around the globe as well as ably supporting the University's various programs in deaf education, deaf studies, audiology and speech/language pathology, sign language study and linguistics, and more.

Scope of the Deaf Collection

The Deaf Collection attempts to be comprehensive. As nearly as possible, copies of every deaf-related book or other item published anywhere in the world, in any language and any physical format, are obtained for addition to the collection.

The scope of the Deaf Collection includes works about deafness, deaf people, education of the deaf, sign language and other means of communication, assisting devices, legal aspects, and many other related fields within a "deaf" context. Books not entirely concerned with one of the above may still be added to the Deaf Collection if they contain a chapter or other substantial material not readily available elsewhere, as for example, a text on social work to minority groups that includes a chapter on serving deaf Hispanics. "Deaf" is loosely defined as any degree of hearing impairment that significantly affects a person's life, thus "hard of hearing" people and subjects are also included in the Deaf Collection.

Amongst the Deaf Collection as well are works by deaf and hard of hearing authors, whether or not the works themselves are deaf-related, and works about "hearing" people with significant ties to the deaf field, such as Alexander Graham Bell (originally a teacher of the deaf) and Amos Kendall (Postmaster General of the U.S. under President Andrew Jackson, and a philanthropist whose home estate eventually became the campus of Gallaudet University). Other related areas include, as examples, the use of deaf sign language in communication experiments with apes, and non-deaf sign languages from around the world such as those of the Plains Indians or of Cistercian monks.

Very technical medical works on the ear are not included, however. It is assumed that the thousands of medical libraries "out there" more than adequately cover this area.

Budgetary realities since the early 1970s, plus an explosion in the number of new works being published in the field, have meant the Deaf Collection has long been short of the ideal of comprehensiveness, but in the past couple of years the gap has begun to close slowly. Budgetary-driven compromises with the ideal of comprehensiveness have included, among other things, ceasing to purchase republished editions or foreign-language translations where there already is an English-language edition, or simply not purchasing very expensive items (notably films during the pre-video era), and slightly narrowing the scope of the comprehensive collection to exclude some peripheral areas not strictly related to deafness, such as acoustics or stuttering. However, works in these areas are still purchased as necessary to support audiology and speech/language pathology courses at the university.

Since the early 1960s if not before, there has been a policy of obtaining, if possible, two copies of every deaf-related book or other item. One copy, or the sole copy if no other is available, goes into a "Copy One" collection which is stored in closed stacks. This Copy One collection is to insure the preservation of a representative copy of that title. Second copies go into a separate circulating collection on open stacks, and may be borrowed like books in the general collection. Many titles also have third, fourth, etc., copies purchased for anticipated demand or obtained as a result of luck in materials donated to the library. Those additional copies also go into the circulating collection.

Funding for purchases of materials for the Deaf Collection is primarily through an allocation of funds from the library's annual budget, similar to the allocations made for purchase of materials in other subject areas for the general library collection. In each of the two most recent fiscal years, this Deaf allocation amounted to about 8 percent of the total library materials allocation, not including periodicals. An endowment fund especially for the Deaf Collection also exists, which provides some supplemental funds.

Should a library patron need to use a book for which the library has only a "Copy One", or for which all circulating copies are currently out, the patron may request the use of the "Copy One". A library staff member then fetches this copy, which may be used only within the library.

A general exception to the two-copy policy is with microforms, since it is assumed that replacement copies can be obtained from the microfilm vendor if necessary. The Deaf Collection currently includes nearly 4,000 monographic works on microfilm, mostly doctoral dissertations and masters' theses but it also includes a number of older deaf-related books long out of print and for which no original paper copy could be obtained. Not included in this figure are deafness-related periodicals on microfilm, which are discussed below. Also not counted are hundreds of deaf-related documents that are contained within the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) microfiche collection, of which Gallaudet has a full set.

Since the Deaf Collection is intended to serve as a historical resource in addition to its many other research functions, it is never weeded. The only time materials get withdrawn is when circulating copies become lost or so worn as to be no longer usable. "Copy One" books remain in the collection forever.

Because of the breadth of the Deaf Collection, it is constant and often difficult work to identify, order, and receive materials for it. Many materials, of course, are easily identified through clear and unambiguous titles. Others, though, are less apparent and additional research or detective work may be needed to determine whether or not an item "belongs" in the collection. Resources such as *Books in Print (BIP)* are frequently not specific enough; for example, there are several novels featuring deaf characters, but *BIP* does not indicate this fact. A similar problem exists for identifying books not on deaf-related topics, but written by deaf authors. Then there are misleading titles: a recent book called *Sign Language* turned out to be about autographs of professional athletes!

Many foreign-language deaf books are found by scanning foreign-language deaf periodicals, which demands recognition of dozens if not hundreds of foreign terms referring to deafness and other concepts, as well as the bibliographic and vendor information needed to secure the item. In 1997, a new search resource became available in the form of a few foreign counterparts of *Books in Print* that have been posted on the World Wide Web. This has proved very helpful for discovering deaf-related Spanish, German and Dutch books, but other languages remain a problem, due either to the lack of available national databases on the Web, to linguistic barriers, or both.

Deaf Periodicals

The policy of attempted comprehensiveness includes periodicals. Over 1600 deaf-related periodical titles, from the early 1800s to the present, are held by Gallaudet University. In addition to the expected professional journals such as the *American Annals of the Deaf*, *Volta Review*, and *Acta Oto-laryngologica*, this collection includes a high percentage of small, obscure and local periodicals such as deaf school newspapers, deaf community club and church newsletters, and various national and international deaf organization bulletins. A few examples of the latter group include *Silent Sourdough* [Alaska Association of the Deaf], *Deaf Catholic*, *Silent Reminder* [from a deaf church in Dallas, Texas], and *Network: Newsletter of the National Association of Deafened People*. This helps explain why, out of the total number of titles, some 1153 are closed or "dead" titles, those types of serials having a high mortality rate.

Some periodicals not usually thought of as "deaf-related" are also included, one good example being *Gorilla: Journal of the Gorilla Foundation*, which is in the collection due to the Gorilla Foundation's use of American Sign Language to communicate with the famous Koko and other gorillas.

International deaf-related periodicals are also well represented. A few examples include *Das Zeichen* (Germany), *Otologia Fukuoka* (Japan), *Four Corners: Newsletter of the Western Australia Deaf Society*, *V Edinom Stroyo* (Russia), and *Kuurojen Lehti* (Finland).

Subscriptions to deaf-related periodicals consumed about 10.9 percent of the total Gallaudet University Library periodicals budget in the 1998 fiscal year.

Grant funds during the late 1970s and early 1980s were used to microfilm and preserve many old and rare deaf-related periodicals that were deteriorating from age and acidic paper.

Deaf Collection Cataloging

Since the Gallaudet University Library is often the first American library to receive a copy of a deaf-related work, particularly those published outside the U.S., it is more often than not the "cataloger of record" for a deaf-related work. The library contributed thousands of original catalog records to the old National Union Catalog, and continues to input thousands of original records into the OCLC network. Cataloging follows standard AACR2 rules, often with an added note to identify the "deaf" connection.

The large percentage of material in less-common foreign languages often requires requesting translation assistance from the University's foreign-language department and from cataloging

colleagues in other area university libraries and at the nearby Library of Congress. Several times over the years, the Library of Congress has contacted the Gallaudet University Library to solicit input on changes to LC cataloging practice on deaf-related matters. One example of this is the recent adoption of a new MARC language code for "sign languages"; other advice has concerned subject headings for various national and ethnic sign languages, and the issue of where to indicate in a cataloging record to the presence of captioning in a motion picture or videorecording.

Deaf Collection Classification System

As the Deaf Collection grew, in the 1950s it was recognized that no existing library classification system provided enough specificity or fineness of division to serve the need of the growing collection. One would have to be devised in-house, and this was done by a cataloger who had sole responsibility for the Deaf Collection. The first attempt at a classification system was a very simple one. In this system, all Deaf Collection call numbers began with the letter "D", separated from the rest by a space, to identify the Deaf Collection. This was followed by a single letter identifying a broad class, such as "B" for Biography or "E" for Education. This system did not attempt fine subdivisions at first, but allowed for future subdivision of classes by adding a number to the base letter. For example, the subclass "B1" separated collective biographies from standard one-subject biographies in "B". As it happened, this extension was seldom done, possibly because of the time and labor required to go back through a category and reclassify and relabel it and to change all the catalog cards. The system's creator had retired in 1968, and with the "information explosion" of the 1960s-1970s, her successors could not keep up with the continuing development of the system in the face of other cataloging demands.

The classification letter was followed by another space and then a Cutter number to organize the book by author and then title within each class (Turner, 1968).

By the mid-1970s, this simple classification system had become too unwieldy as the Deaf Collection continued to grow. Each category had become too general, containing too many books for easy scanning and retrieval. An entirely new system was devised; this time based on the Dewey Decimal Classification System, which had already been in use for decades in the library's general collection.

This consisted basically of casting the entire existing Dewey system within a "deaf" context, with the word "DEAF" appended at the beginning of the number to distinguish it from a general

collection number. Thus, for example, a work on American deaf history is classified as DEAF 973, 973 being the regular Dewey class number for American history. Likewise, works about deaf education in Russia go into DEAF 370.974, that being the standard Dewey number for Russian education. Library services to the deaf goes into DEAF 025.5, etc.

However, even this principle was not adequate for certain categories. For example, standard Dewey jams all audiology-related works into 617.89 and 618.92, clearly inadequate for the thousands of audiology-related works in the Deaf Collection. It was necessary to rewrite the entire 610s (Medical) classification to expand the numbers available for dividing up the audiology works. Similarly, the existing 400s (Languages and Linguistics) did not allow enough detail to cover all the various methods of deaf communication. As one example, since American Sign Language and British Sign Language are totally different languages, they cannot be classed together, as Dewey does for American and British English (420s). American Sign Language consequently gets the DEAF 420s to itself, while British Sign Language finds itself displaced to the otherwise underutilized DEAF 480s. The rest of the DEAF 400s had to be rewritten to account not only for other national and ethnic sign languages, but also for other deaf communication systems such as pidgin sign languages, speechreading, cued speech, and others. Other Dewey classes likewise have had to be modified or expanded to accommodate the Deaf Collection with enough classification detail.

This modified Dewey system is created and maintained in-house by the Gallaudet University Library's Collection Management department.

Deaf Collection Subject Headings

Just as existing classification systems were found inadequate for the scope and detail of the Deaf Collection, so existing subject headings lists were grossly inadequate. Early efforts basically used then-existing Library of Congress (LC) Subject Headings, frequently with the subheading "—Deaf" appended. Some additional terms were borrowed from the subject headings list of the National Library of Medicine, especially for medical-related terms (Turner, 1968). This early list revealed its limitations after a couple of decades, and a new Deaf Subject Headings list had to be created in-house during the mid-1970s. The LC Subject Headings then being considered too obsolete in many ways, the new Deaf Collection Subject Headings drew heavily upon the "thesaurus" established by the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC), which had been established in the late 1960s for the

indexing and abstracting of hundreds of education-related journals, including several in the fields of deaf education and education of disabled persons. This ERIC thesaurus, not being bound by a century of "legacy" cataloging, was generally much more up-to-date in terminology and approach, and was adopted as the basis of the Deaf Collection Subject Headings. However, LC subject headings were often used where an ERIC term was just too different or too incompatible with the existing LC subject headings already used for the general collection.

Just as the Deaf classification system basically used the Dewey Decimal Classification System within a "deaf" context, the Deaf Subject Headings generally adopted ERIC or LC terms within a "deaf" context, usually adding the subheading "—Deaf" to distinguish them in the library catalog from similar subjects used for the general collection. Many deaf headings did have to be created from scratch, and still are as needed, to cover subjects not conceived of in ERIC or LC, or which are uselessly submerged under a broader term in those systems.

During the 1980s, ERIC made a major overhaul of its thesaurus, which generally made its subjects less precise and less useful for the purposes of the Deaf Collection. In the meantime, the Library of Congress finally began to update its subject headings as computerization made that effort more practical. As consequences of these two actions, the evolution of the Deaf Subject Headings has tended to converge back toward the LC model, especially after a mid-1990s revision.

In the Deaf Collection Subject Headings, the term "Deaf" is used for all degrees and types of hearing impairment or hearing loss. There is no subject heading for "Hard of Hearing" or any equivalent term; all are simply "Deaf". This avoids the ambiguity involved in trying to draw lines between "deaf", "hard of hearing", and "hearing", since each category shades into the other with no clear divisions, and different people draw the lines in different places.

ALADIN Access

Catalog access to the Deaf Collection, as well as the rest of Gallaudet's holdings, is through ALADIN, the joint online catalog of the seven-member Washington Research Library Consortium (WRLC), of which Gallaudet is a founding member. In-library access to ALADIN is through Endeavor Voyager software, running a Windows-based interface on dedicated telecommunications lines. Outside the library, access is available through a World Wide Web interface, either indirectly through the Gallaudet University Library's Web homepage or directly at <http://www.aladin.wrlc.org>. The library code "GA" identifies those items at Gallaudet, and it is also possible to restrict a search to Gallaudet holdings only.

Online Periodical Indexes

A major problem for researchers is that the vast majority of deaf-related periodicals lack any kind of indexing anywhere. Only a few professional journals have indexing, and that is often inconsistent or incomplete. For example, although *Psychological Abstracts/PsychInfo* includes articles from the *American Annals of the Deaf*, the *Volta Review*, and one or two other deaf-related professional journals, the indexing is not comprehensive. Only the psychology-related articles have been selected for indexing in that database.

The problem is particularly acute for the growing field of Deaf Studies, which still relies heavily upon articles published in the "popular" deaf periodicals. Unfortunately, these lack their own indexes and are invariably ignored by such regular commercial indexing services as H.W. Wilson and UMI's ProQuest, despite having larger circulations than many of the specialized journals covered in those commercial databases. Therefore serious researchers must be prepared to spend hours manually flipping through and scanning years of those deaf periodicals guessed to be most likely to contain desired articles.

To partially alleviate this lack of indexing, a "homegrown" PC-based index was begun in 1995 to give access to the articles in four of the most popular deaf periodicals: *Deaf Life* (1987-date), *Silent Worker* (1948-1964), *Deaf American* (1965-date), and *Deaf Nation* (1995-date). A subject-order printout is available for consultation at the reference desk, and there are plans to eventually mount the database for public searching via the Gallaudet University Library's World Wide Web home page. This index database continues to be expanded, and additional periodical titles will be added once indexing of the original four has been completed. Investigation is also proceeding on the scanning and conversion to machine-readable text of older deaf periodicals that are no longer covered by copyright.

As an additional search aid, a handout is available listing those deaf-related periodicals having complete or partial indexing, where this indexing can be found, and the years covered by the indexing.

Reference Librarian as Subject Specialist and Selector

The modest size of the Gallaudet University Library means that there are no full-time subject-specialist librarians as found in many larger universities. Rather, seven professional librarians who participate in general reference services also take on part-time "liaison" duties for different academic departments and fields, plus selection of materials for those areas. This author, one of those reference librarians, has the responsibility for the Deaf Collection and for related academic departments, including deaf studies, sign

language, general linguistics, interpreting, audiology, and speech/language pathology. This responsibility extends to handling the more difficult deaf-related reference inquiries from inside and outside the Gallaudet campus and around the world. He is also responsible for identifying and selecting all the deaf-related materials to be added to the Deaf Collection.

Deaf Reference

Deaf-related reference inquiries come into the Gallaudet University Library from all types of sources, from all around the world, by all kinds of means. They include walk-up inquiries by Gallaudet and visiting undergraduate students, graduate students, faculty and staff at the reference desk; letters and E-mails from around the U.S. and the world, from elementary school students to academic researchers; faxes, telephone, and TTY calls; and referrals from other campus departments, outside agencies, and individuals. All librarians and other library staff can and do routinely use sign language, and TTYs are used both by deaf and hearing library staff to receive telephone calls from deaf patrons and to call them back. All reference librarians take deaf-related questions and usually are able to answer them satisfactorily; however, roughly five percent require more in-depth knowledge to answer, and are then referred to the reference librarian with special responsibility for the Deaf Collection.

This latter librarian has also developed various aids to finding deaf-related information. In addition to research bibliographies and "pathfinders", these include an ongoing index to articles in four popular deaf periodicals, and a "Frequently Asked Questions" (FAQ) file at the reference desk to answer recurring deaf questions for which it is difficult to find the answers.

At Gallaudet, reference librarians are also responsible for bibliographic instruction (BI) of students. The "Deaf" librarian provides BI for courses in deaf studies, audiology and speech/language pathology, and other related areas, including "liaison" with faculty teaching in those areas, encouraging and facilitating library support of their courses.

The Gallaudet University Library has a good working relationship with the National Information Center on Deafness (NICD), also located on the Gallaudet University campus. NICD generally handles recurrent inquiries that can be answered by materials prepared in advance, while the library usually gets those inquiries that require some digging to answer. Information requests are often passed between library and NICD, depending on which is the most appropriate source for response to a given inquiry. Both units frequently make use of materials developed by the other.

As with other types of reference questions, those related to deafness run across a broad spectrum of topics, depth, and ease of answer. A few typical deaf reference questions from inside and outside Gallaudet University include:

"Is it true that the statue of Abraham Lincoln, in the Lincoln Memorial at Washington, is forming the manual alphabet letters 'A' and 'L' with his hands?"

"How many deaf people are there in the United States?"

"What information is available on the status of deaf women in Italy?"

"My Cub Scout pack wants to learn how to do *The Star-Spangled Banner* in sign language. Is there a book that shows how?"

"Where can I locate scholarly research on the sign language of Australian aborigines?"

"Can you find anything about deaf people who were sterilized or killed under the Nazi Germany policy of 'eugenics'?"

"Please send me everything you have about Helen Keller." (This one gets a form response gently redirecting them to their local libraries, to NICD handouts, and to their own on-line searching of the Gallaudet Library catalog).

Gallaudet University Archives

Although the University Library has had archival preservation responsibilities at least since the mid-1950s, it was not until the early 1970s that the Gallaudet University archives were established as a formal department of the University Library. It continues to be a separate department of the library, though budget cuts in recent years have forced a reduction in the archive staff to just two full-time custodians and one half-time cataloger. In addition to organization and preservation of manuscripts, photographs, artwork, realia, university publications, papers of the university administration, and other materials relating to the history of Gallaudet University, the archives also seeks, organizes, and preserves materials relating to the history of deaf people and deaf education in general. Many deaf people and hearing people working with the deaf have donated and continue to donate personal and official papers, photographs, artwork, and other artifacts to the archives. In 1995, the archives began a Deaf History Pilot "multimedia" project on the World Wide Web, putting online various original resource materials all related to one particular topic. This project may be visited online at <http://www.gallaudet.edu/~archives/dhpilot.html>.

Researchers often use copies of photographs from the archives' collection to illustrate published books. Photograph duplication is available for a fee, and publication permission for photographs and other original materials may be negotiated.

Due to its limited staff, the archives is only open during "business hours", far more limited hours than the rest of the library. However, with at least two week's advance notice, a researcher can make arrangements for a weekday evening visit.

World Wide Web

As with many other organizations these days, the Gallaudet University Library has its own home page on the World Wide Web. It can be reached through the University's general home page, or directly at <http://www.gallaudet.edu/~library/>. Through it may be found information on the library's hours of operation, policies, staff, and hints for visitors, as well as many online resources. These resources include bibliographies and research guides; links to information databases not available through ALADIN; online versions of many library handouts; links to other library catalogs and sites giving guidance in researching on the Web, and to other extensive lists of deaf-related sites; and the university's copyright policy, among other things.

Through the Gallaudet University Library home page, researchers may also link to and search the ALADIN catalog as well as the Web itself through the Infoseek search engine.

Summary

The Gallaudet University Library's Deaf Collection is a unique international resource, the world's largest research collection in the field of deafness, deaf people, and related areas. Its challenges have required the creating of its own classification system and subject headings, and to give best access to its riches, it is the specialty of one reference and instruction librarian. The Gallaudet University Archives contributes greatly to the Deaf Collection through its acquisition, cataloging, conservation and preservation of original source materials and rare publications. The Deaf Collection is open and accessible to all for research on all levels, through an online catalog as well as a walk-in service and through the World Wide Web.

Bibliography

- Atwood, Albert W. (1964). *Gallaudet College: Its First One Hundred Years*. Lancaster, Pa.: Intelligencer Printing Co., p127-128.
- Seventeenth Annual Report of the Columbia Institution for the Deaf and Dumb, for the Year Ending June 30, 1874* (1874). Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, p13-37.
- Turner, Lucile (1968). *Cataloging Materials on the Deaf in the Edward Miner Gallaudet Memorial Library: A Manual*. Washington, DC: Gallaudet College.

Thomas R. Harrington is a Reference and Instruction Librarian at the Gallaudet University Library, Washington, DC. A graduate of Gallaudet University, he was also the first deaf person to earn a M.L.S. from the College of Library and Information Services at the University of Maryland in 1974. He has worked in reference and media services at the Gallaudet University Library for over 25 years. He contributed a chapter entitled "Video Services for the Deaf" to Gary Handman's 1994 work *Video Collection Development in Multi-type Libraries*.

Fax: (202) 651-5213; E-mail: thomas.harrington@gallaudet.edu