

Guest Editorial

Reshaping ACRL

Like all good membership organizations, ACRL used some of its energies in the 1980s to develop a mission statement, goals, and objectives and to form a five-year strategic plan, focusing on both the needs of the membership and the critical issues of the times. This plan, implemented in 1987, was not replaced immediately by a successor in 1992. Rather the leadership of the association has been working to carefully study ACRL's membership needs, and the changes in the environment within which we operate, to restate the ACRL mission, and to identify a vision and set goals for the organization.

At the recent American Library Association (ALA) Midwinter Meeting in Philadelphia, a new mission statement, vision, and goals were presented in draft form to the ACRL Board by the Interim Planning Committee. With the suggestions from that discussion, the committee will continue its work at the National Conference in Pittsburgh, and expects to present a completed set of statements to the Board of Directors for ratification at the Annual Conference in June.

Because this process and its results are so important for the membership of ACRL, I want to describe briefly the level of involvement of the membership, the techniques that have been used to gather information and feedback from ACRL members and leaders, and to give you a sense of the documents as they currently stand.

For an afternoon prior to each conference of the ALA, since Midwinter 1993, ACRL has held a Leadership Planning Session. The participants at these meetings are the Board of Directors, the elected officers of sections, divisional

committee chairs, Chapters' Council chair and vice-chair, Budget and Finance Committee members, and Planning Committee members. In addition to responding to the membership survey of 1992 (a sample—not the entire membership—was surveyed), these sessions have identified key ACRL values, opportunities, and threats; they have focused on issues of communication, member services, and the role of ACRL in the national higher education community; they have identified diversity and the "graying of academic librarianship" as human resources issues of concern to the association on behalf of its membership.

In September 1994 an Interim Planning Committee was formed, composed of the ACRL Planning Committee and the Executive Committee of the board. This group has worked diligently to mold the output from the Leadership Planning Sessions into series of documents that will reshape and guide ACRL for the coming five years.

The draft mission statement as currently conceived is: "The mission of the Association of College and Research Libraries is to provide leadership for development, promotion and improvement of academic and research library services in order to enhance learning, research, scholarship and service. The Association strives to promote the highest level of professional excellence for librarians in order to serve the users of academic and research libraries." The two-pronged focus on library services and librarians is deliberate, and the vision and goals follow from this mission in a logical sequence.

Key to the successful implementation of the new plan is a change in the way

the Board of Directors operates. A task force of the board, under the leadership of former president Jacqueline McCoy, recommended less micromanagement of association affairs, and more emphasis on "big-picture," policy, and strategic areas. The board has embraced this recommendation, and has agreed that its role in the ongoing planning process is to:

- Set overall direction and communicate that direction to the association;
- Assure that the plan is effective;
- Keep ownership of the plan;
- Assure alignment of overall and unit planning;
- Develop or reevaluate mission, vision, values, strategic areas, and goals; and
- Develop priorities for the coming year.

The operating arm for the board, in carrying out these functions, is the Planning Committee, which will become a committee of the board.

Why go through this process? ACRL, as a national membership organization, clearly has a responsibility toward its membership to serve its members in the best possible way. It is also a professional association and needs to have a more visible presence in the library and higher education communities of this nation, and indeed of the world. ACRL is the only organization that serves all academic

and research librarians and the institutions they represent; there are many issues we need to weigh in on, and we have not done so consistently in the past.

ALA's Goal 2000 and its elements are very consonant with the ideals that have been expressed over the years by ACRL's leaders. For this reason, ACRL has endorsed heartily both morally and financially the effort being put forth by ALA to enhance its representation in governmental affairs and in the rapidly changing environment of information technology policy. With this support, ACRL urges that there be specific and expert representation of libraries in higher education within the strengthened ALA Washington Office.

The reshaping of ACRL is vitally important to its continuing success, and to its future growth. The documents that describe the reshaping will be available to the membership on the ACRL listserver (acrl-frm@uicvm.uic.edu), which is intended to provide a forum for discussion of issues of common interest. I urge members of the association to subscribe to this listserver and join the conversation, helping the evolution of ACRL toward its new role in higher education in the information age.

SUSAN K. MARTIN
President of ACRL

IN FORTHCOMING ISSUES OF COLLEGE & RESEARCH LIBRARIES

Telecommuting for Original Cataloging
Leah Black and Colleen Hyslop

Requirements for the Digital Research Library
Peter Graham

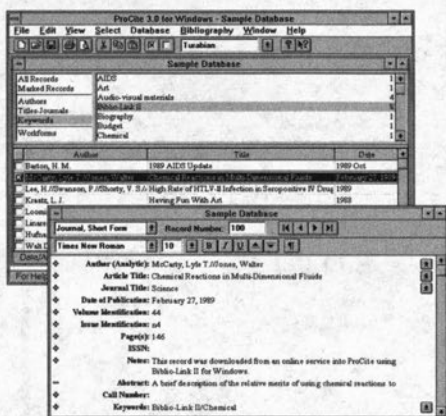
*Electronic and Print Information: Active Distribution and Passive Retention
in Relation to a Murder*
Frances Groen

Bibliographic Software Comes to Windows

Do you manage bibliographic references, or acquire, catalog, classify, and preserve materials?

Do you work with electronic information systems, or collect and manage rare books and special collections? If so, you need the power and versatility of ProCite, the leading bibliographic management software program.

ProCite offers a convenient way to manage, distribute, and print bibliographic information. ProCite handles the difficult layout and formatting of records, letting you concentrate on the task at hand.



ProCite®

For WINDOWS™

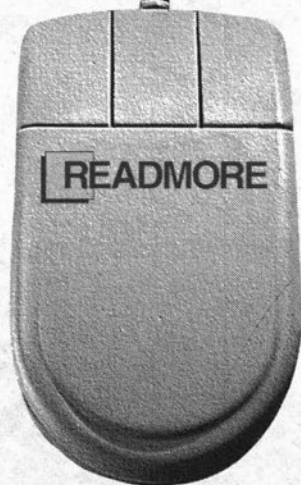
*The Software Solution to Managing
Bibliographic References*

Personal Bibliographic Software, Inc.
P.O. Box 4250, Ann Arbor, MI 48106, phone (313) 996-1580 ext. 25, fax (313) 996-4672

PBS, Inc. offers the most comprehensive line of IBM PC and Macintosh software products for bibliographic management.

The State of the Art

...working
smart



Leaders in the Information Industry providing subscription services, article delivery and library automation software.

- **REMO** Mouse driven serials management system.
- **ROSS** Online ordering, claiming and searching of journal and publisher databases.
- **Renewal Express** PC-based system to analyze current serials holdings and plan for the future collection development.
- **Financial Planner** Lotus formatted worksheet to analyze previous spending history and plan future budget allocations.
- **UnCover** The fastest most comprehensive service for fax delivery of journal articles available today.
- **BACKSERV** An Internet list devoted to the informal exchange of serial back issues among libraries.

READMORE ACADEMIC SERVICES

700 Black Horse Pike, Suite 207

Blackwood, NJ 08012

Phone: 1-800-645-6595

Fax: 609-227-8322