

A Guide
to
Sources of
Educational
Information



A Guide to Sources of Educational Information

MARDA WOODBURY

COMPLETELY REVISED
Second Edition



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The Author

Marda Woodbury has an unusual background combining education, writing, and librarianship. She has worked directly with students, teachers, educational researchers, and the general public (including parents) in libraries relating to education and the social sciences.

Her first two books, *A Guide to Educational Resources* and *A Guide to Sources of Educational Information* (first edition), are considered model guides. Another work by the author, *Selecting Materials for Instruction*, received the following accolade: "If awards are given for quality presentations of handbook information, this series, so far, should receive the blue ribbon." (Alice Naylor, in *Voice of Youth Advocates*.)

Originally trained at Bard College in chemistry and political science, Ms. Woodbury holds an M.S. in Library Science from Columbia University. She has more than 30 years of professional experience in a broad range of library and library-related positions and has done graduate work in education and journalism at the University of California (Berkeley). She is presently an information consultant and part-time librarian, and is on the board of EPIE (Educational Products Information Exchange) and on the editorial board of *Reference Librarian*.

Preface

With the advent of a new decade and a new Department of Education, it seems appropriate to launch a new edition of *A Guide to Sources of Educational Information*. Since the publication of the first edition in 1976, information resources in education—particularly reference books, clearinghouses, and computerized information systems—have been proliferating and improving. Increasing numbers of hybrid reference books (such as this one, which combines descriptive annotations with bibliographic and directory information) and source books that are part yearbook and part anthology, occasionally buttressed with statistics, have appeared.

The library profession now has a far more significant role in coordinating and disseminating educational information. The Education Division of the Special Libraries Association publishes the exemplary *Education Libraries*, whose topical issues clarify and organize education resources. The Curriculum Materials Committee of the American Library Association's Education and Behavioral Sciences Section has established a depository for and compiled a directory of curriculum center libraries. Between the first and current editions of the *Guide*, the Federal Government and private organizations have funded new information clearinghouses for educators.

These new resources are a response to the need for simplified information gathering. Undoubtedly, more will be developed in the next few years.

Education is still one of the largest enterprises in the nation, involving 60 million students and \$151 billion. Even with resource tools, it is an exceedingly difficult area to research. There is a plethora of documents that may or may not contain usable information. Approximately 50,000 or more new documents each year can be located through *Resources in Education*, *Current Index to Journals*

in *Education*, *Dissertation Abstracts International*, *Books in Print*, and other standard bibliographic guides. But other, equally valuable, documents may not be listed anywhere.

In the second edition of the *Guide*, I have cast a wide net, since education is affected by so many things that initially seem unrelated. For instance, I have noted studies or newspaper articles (not on education) dealing with

- The role of interferon in mental retardation
- The relationship between maternal nutrition and a child's ability to learn
- A hypothesis that the lower Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) scores (particularly in states like Utah with consistent educational environments) may be caused by *in utero* exposure to radiation from nuclear tests
- The effect of protein supplements on growth and the verbal abilities of preschool children
- Fluctuations in the market value of college endowment funds

The researcher or information seeker must be aware of other fields and their significance for children or adults engaged in learning. I have tried to include resources that provide information on many aspects of the lives and well-being of children. These must be prime concerns of the school system, considering the large number of working parents, especially working women, who now constitute the majority of women in this country over 16 years old.

Today, decisions involving education are made by executive fiat, by state and national legislators, by boards of directors and boards of education, and by voters in election booths who are concerned with retrenchment. Often these decisions are based on inadequate knowledge of what schools are doing and inaccurate or unproved assumptions on the nature of teaching, learning, and administration.

Because classroom education is increasingly affected by national elections, federal laws and regulations, reporting requirements of state education departments, and minimum competency laws, I have tried to include tools that will provide access to information on government and finance as well as education.

Although I do not have a crystal ball, my selection of reference books and information sources has been affected not only by what has been published but by my perceptions of significant trends in

American education during the next decade. Some trends that may affect the course of education and the nature of information resources are

1. The spread of fiscal containment policies combined with fixed or inflationary costs for schools, especially for energy and transportation, books, and paper goods
2. Increased use of electronics in schools
3. Increasing importance of parents' groups
4. Declining population and declining attendance in most large city school districts
5. Increased rural school populations (currently one-fifth of our school population is rural)
6. National population growth in the West and South
7. An increase in the private sector in education
8. Increased relative and total numbers of children under the poverty level
9. Increased number of working mothers
10. Projected decline in college enrollments
11. Projected increase in educational programs for the aged and in the number of elderly citizens (now 10 percent of our population)
12. Changing employment markets that require supplemental education related to employment or flexible skills for changing employment
13. Growth of adult education programs with increasing numbers of adults participating (in 1978, 18 million adults—more than 10 million of them women—participated in formal adult education activities, which is 40 percent greater than the number of full-time college students or high school students over 17)
14. Growth at all levels of education outside schools: libraries, park and recreation systems, museums, study groups and other autonomous groups, corporate courses, correspondence schools, proprietary and leisure schools, video courses, and so on (simultaneously, there is a growing—although somewhat underground—movement by parents to remove their children from the school system to educate them at home)
15. The concept of education as a life-long endeavor (some studies indicate that almost everyone undertakes several substantial self-education or learning projects in the course of each year, not necessarily with the help of educators)

16. Legal requirements that the public schools meet the specialized educational requirements of groups such as the handicapped and the gifted

17. Drastic cuts in federal education spending combined with an attempt to obliterate the newly created Department of Education

Hopefully, this edition of the *Guide* will provide access to the major tools for locating information or researching education in the 1980s. It is not a mechanical updating, but rather a selection organized and annotated for use.

Although this book may not meet the needs of every individual seeking educational information, it should help educational policymakers, those facing the day-to-day problems of education, persons improving career skills in education or education-related areas, those involved in researching schools and learning, and, of course, parents of school children.

Essentially, my approach to gathering and disseminating information is the systematic, organized approach of a reference librarian, who looks for authoritative summaries and directories. This *Guide* considers only a few of all potential sources of information. Most of the sources listed herein are printed or computer access tools that consolidate information, keep information current, or lead to further sources of information. I have listed and described private organizations and government agencies that either answer specific questions, provide referral services, or publish question-answering materials. Some commercial bibliographic services that provide access to certain types of education-related information and a chapter on state library services for educators have also been incorporated. I have omitted names and descriptions of education libraries but have suggested directories for locating them.

In this time of change, reference books rapidly become obsolete. Although I have made a strenuous effort to keep abreast of current titles, services, and prices, portions of this book will undoubtedly be outdated before the book is in print. The coverage is largely current and American, but I have included some vintage materials and tools that access foreign or international sources. Because we share a common world and, indeed, can learn much from other nations, I believe we need some access to their publications.

I have selected the resource tools I thought most widely useful and frequently conferred with other librarians and educators, who helped immeasurably. As always, I owe a debt of gratitude to my col-

leagues in education libraries and information clearinghouses. Larry Oberg was kind enough to share his *Selected Reference Sources in Education* (Stanford, Calif., Stanford University Libraries, 1980). Barbara Minor of the ERIC Clearinghouse on Information Resources generously forwarded the current edition of *A Guide to Educational Resources*. Jan Littlefield of *American Reference Books Annual* apprised me of new education titles. Anne Johnson and Linda Breece of the Gutman Education Library at Harvard University candidly appraised the resources. John Peterson of the Resource and Referral Service of the National Center for Research in Vocational Education was patient and helpful throughout in responding to mail and telephone queries. I am also indebted to nearby libraries and librarians, especially Jennifer Futernick and Lillian Chinn of the Far West Laboratory, Joan Thornton of the California State University at Hayward, and the reference staffs of the downtown Berkeley library and the Education/Psychology Library of the University of California at Berkeley. Nancy Winchester, my editor at Information Resources Press, has demonstrated outstanding patience, calm, and flexibility—most especially in dealing with the changing scenes in Washington. Finally, a word of thanks to Dave Elliott for use of his Lanier word processor.

Acronyms and Abbreviations

The acronyms and abbreviations listed below may occasionally be used in this book without nearby references. Other acronyms and abbreviations, when used, will be preceded by the complete terms.

<i>AIM/ARM</i>	<i>Abstracts of Instructional and Research Materials in Vocational and Technical Education</i>
BRS	Bibliographic Retrieval Services, Inc.
CIS	Congressional Information Service
<i>CIE</i>	<i>Current Index to Journals in Education</i>
EDRS	ERIC Document Reproduction Service
ERIC	Educational Resources Information Center
ESL	English as a Second Language
ETS	Educational Testing Service
GPO	U.S. Government Printing Office
IAP	Information Analysis Product
NEA	National Education Association
NICEM	National Information Center for Educational Media
NICSEM	National Information Center for Special Education Materials
NIE	National Institute of Education
NTIS	National Technical Information Service
P.A.I.S.	Public Affairs Information Service
R&D	Research and Development
RCU	Research Coordinating Unit
<i>RIE</i>	<i>Resources in Education (formerly Research in Education)</i>
SDC	System Development Corporation
UMI	University Microfilms International
WEECN	Women's Educational Equity Communications Network

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PART I

*Effective
Research*

1 | *Research and Access*

Effective research can be divided into three parts: defining the question, locating materials, and, occasionally, preparing a report. This chapter focuses on the first two aspects.

As the title suggests, *A Guide to Sources of Educational Information* is essentially an introduction to some major features and sources of educational information, and this chapter suggests two approaches to locating and using the materials listed and annotated herein. The first approach, THE RESEARCH PROCESS, presents an outline for using the sources; the second, the CHECKLIST FOR RESEARCH QUESTIONS, helps clarify questions that lead to effective research.

Chapters 2–8 present categories of reference tools, such as directories and bibliographies, arranged in a research order—that is, the order in which one would most likely consult materials for research projects.

Ideally, the research process starts with these reference tools, which sometimes successfully organize large quantities of information for easy consultation and often lead to other sources of information. Reference books are especially important in education, since information in this field tends to be partial, scattered, and difficult to find. In information theory, reference works represent the end point on a bibliographic chain (see Figure 1). They often are pro-

Information obtained from human resources → information created by institutions → work in progress → unpublished studies → periodicals, reports, and monographs → indexing and abstracting services → annual reviews and state-of-the-art reports → bibliographic reviews → books → encyclopedic summaries

Figure 1 The “bibliographic chain.”

duced by individuals or institutions whose interests and responsibilities lead them to compile information or to prepare and commission studies.

Some useful information sources are categorized briefly in the following list. In all cases, there is constant interaction between the sources of information and the printed or nonprinted product.

FOR

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*Vocabulary and
Concepts, Single
Subjects, and
Summaries*

Dictionaries, Encyclopedias, Thesauri (Chapter 2): Provide information in context and relate it to other fields or areas that might furnish additional information. Although encyclopedias and dictionaries generally are produced by large institutions, some are produced by individuals who compiled information they could not locate elsewhere. Many of these resources are designed as operating tools for working groups that need common vocabularies.

*People and Institu-
tions (Who, What,
Where)*

Directories (Chapter 3): Compiled by professional directory makers or by groups or individuals who need to locate, contact, or promote specific types of individuals or institutions (such as state officials, music teachers, dissemination networks, or administration specialists). Directories serve as references to other information sources.

Directory and Institutional Information Sources (Chapters 14–19): These agencies, as well as the associations and individuals listed in directories, can often provide information on individuals or institutions working in their particular areas of interest.

*Special Subjects and
Summaries*

Monographs (Chapter 4): Short, one-subject booklets or bulletins that are an important source of information in education, emerging from a need for timely information. They are often produced or commissioned by institutions or individuals who are respected information sources. Books, libraries, associations, and periodical articles, as well as some information sources, can also provide information on specific subjects.

*Overviews and
Subject Summaries*

Overviews and Handbooks (Chapter 6): These cogent, authoritative summaries can serve as single-topic encyclopedias. They are most valuable when they include bibliographies, statistics, and current findings.

Yearly Summaries

Yearbooks (Chapter 4): Although declining in importance, yearbooks are convenient sources that provide continuity and serve as updating mechanisms. Although some are compiled by commercial firms and deter-

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mined individuals, they are often produced by organizations. Many contain statistical, directory, or bibliographic data.

Hot News

Newsletters (Chapter 4). Like monographs, newsletters result from the need for timely information. They are created and distributed by organizations that have something to tell. Commercially, they provide an information interface between a need for information and a bureaucracy that fails to provide it in usable form.

Newsservices (Chapter 4): Through various media—microfiche, microfilm, or published summaries of events in education—newsservices provide a means for keeping up with current events. Their value depends on their currency and coverage. They are often available at research institutions and large university or public libraries.

*Books, Articles, and
Printed Materials*

Bibliographies and Review Sources (Chapter 5): General lists are usually compiled by large bibliographic agencies, but special-subject lists, like directories, often are compiled by institutions or individuals who gather information to perform ongoing tasks. Annotated or subject-arranged bibliographies, published at intervals, are extremely useful for keeping up with significant works.

Library Card Catalog: The card catalog provides subject, author, and title access to published materials. It is increasingly available in print, computer, or microfiche format.

Books: Books are available from local libraries, bookstores, and publishers and through interlibrary loan. Addresses of publishers are available in library tools like *Books in Print*.

*Periodicals and
Periodical Articles*

Periodicals (Chapter 4): These are often produced by institutions, associations, and special-interest groups. A good way to stay informed in limited areas of education is to select one or two good publications and read them faithfully. The periodical directories and guides listed in this chapter can be helpful when making selections.

Abstracting, Indexing, and Current-Awareness Services (Chapter 7): Indexing and awareness services provide ongoing subject access to current and past periodicals. Some provide access by authors and/or organizations. Generally, address and purchase information is pro-