

DOCUMENTS OF THE GENERAL FACULTY

**REPORT OF THE MEMORIAL RESOLUTION COMMITTEE FOR
WILLIAM VERNON JACKSON**

The special committee of the General Faculty to prepare a memorial resolution for William Vernon Jackson, professor emeritus, information, has filed with the secretary of the General Faculty the following report.



Hillary Hart, Secretary
General Faculty and Faculty Council

**IN MEMORIAM
WILLIAM VERNON JACKSON**

As an internationally renowned Latin American studies scholar and library science educator, William V. Jackson specialized in Latin American collections in the U.S. and Europe, as well as the development of libraries in Latin America. Dr. Jackson joined The University of Texas at Austin in 1976 serving as professor until 1986 in the Graduate School of Library and Information Science, and thereafter as professor emeritus in the renamed School of Information. Dr. Jackson was also appointed with the Texas Institute of Latin American Studies from 1976 to 2000.

During his career, Dr. Jackson made over one hundred trips throughout Latin America to lecture and consult at numerous institutions and to consult to the United States government. In 1994 alone, Dr. Jackson took nine trips spanning six countries in Latin America: Nicaragua, Guatemala, El Salvador, Mexico, the Dominican Republic, and Argentina. Although each country faced unique problems in improving library and information services, Dr. Jackson sought to discover common threads connecting nations that varied significantly in size, history, and socioeconomic conditions. Particularly notable that year were his three trips to El Salvador, where he talked to librarians and educators about how to rebuild library and information services after twelve years of civil war. Typical of his scholarship was his evaluation of the impact of the United States Information Agency (USIA), known overseas as the United States Information Service (USIS), which supported one hundred and sixty libraries and reading rooms in approximately eighty countries around the world. The libraries offered reading materials aimed at helping foreign audiences understand the U.S. through its people, history, culture, and current political policies. In a 1962 article reporting his evaluation, Dr. Jackson noted that the libraries provided "an example (sometimes the only one in a city) of a modern, well organized library with a liberal lending policy." Dr. Jackson's recommendations to the USIS at times resulted in U.S. scholarships for Latin American students to study librarianship in U.S. universities, exemplifying his commitment to supporting library development in countries having limited resources and few people with professional training.

In addition to his impressive and extensive work in Latin America, Dr. Jackson studied and wrote about American and foreign libraries. His major contributions in this arena included his planning and direction of the compilation of guides to the collections of the New York Public Library and Harvard University's libraries. He lectured on philanthropy, higher education, libraries, and cultural affairs, with seminars that covered international librarianship as well as great libraries of the world. His international interests were reflected in his two Fulbright awards to France and Argentina, the years of editorial oversight he provided to the journal *World Libraries* (formerly known as *Third World Libraries*), and his work as a field editor in Latin American studies for G.K. Hall & Co. publishers.

Dr. Jackson enjoyed a long and very productive professional career at distinguished universities where his work impacted the lives of many students and colleagues. For example, many students who went on to work in large libraries or to teach in library schools came under his influence by virtue of the fact that, at six accredited U.S. library schools, he taught "Seminar in American Library Resources," a course that he introduced at four of

those schools. After beginning his career at his alma mater, Harvard University, as a Teaching Fellow from 1948 to 1950, Dr. Jackson landed his first faculty position at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, where he would earn tenure as an associate professor of library science from 1952 to 1962. He then served as an associate professor and Research Fellow in Spanish and Portuguese at the University of Wisconsin at Madison from 1963 to 1965. In next joining the University of Pittsburgh, Dr. Jackson was promoted to full professor of library science, serving as director of its International Library's Information Center from 1966 to 1970. From 1970 to 1976, he served at Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tennessee, in joint appointments as a professor of library science and a professor of Spanish and Portuguese. Dr. Jackson left Vanderbilt University to join The University of Texas at Austin. His professional career culminated in his service as a visiting lecturer of library science at Dominican University from 1981 to 2005, where he was named a Senior Fellow in 1989.

Dr. Jackson earned his Bachelor of Arts degree with highest distinction at Northwestern University in 1945. His graduate studies at Harvard University included a Master of Arts degree from Harvard University in 1948 followed by a Ph.D. in 1952. While pursuing his Ph.D., Dr. Jackson also earned a master's degree in library science from the University of Illinois in 1951. Additional degrees included a certificate from Radcliffe Graduate School in 1949 and an honorary degree in 1968 from the Universidad Central de Venezuela.

William V. Jackson passed away on Saturday, May 16, 2015, in Northbrook, Illinois, at the age of eighty-eight. A memorial resolution by the American Library Association (ALA) honored and marked his character and many professional accomplishments, noting that, in the words of his doctoral institution, "he was an example of *Veritas* except when he would slightly shape his words to avoid giving hurt."

This memorial resolution was prepared by a special committee consisting of Professors Matthew Lease (chair) and Diane Bailey.

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