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Library Bestsellers: Emerson College Library Update on Top 40 Circulating Titles

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Library Bestsellers

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Emerson College Library Update on Top 40 Circulating Titles

by **Joanne Schmidt**
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The goal of this column is to share bibliographies of highly used items. If your library can produce any list, please contact one of the column editors.

This column is a look at what's changed at **Emerson College** since their top 40 circulating titles was published in the June, 1993 issue of *ATG*. In putting these facts together, I kept thinking about **Chuck Hamaker's** presentation at the 1994 Charleston Conference. Circulation rates do change!

In June, 1993, our small college library had over 155,000 volumes. It's grown to over 170,000, but size isn't all that's changed. In a year and a half, 14 new titles appear in our top 40 list. Surprisingly, 8 of the 10 most circulated titles didn't make the top 40 in 1993.

The most popular of the recently added titles are: *Enduring Issues in Mass Communications* (West Pub. Co., 1978) and *Process and Effects of Mass Communication* by **Wilbur Schramm** (University of Illinois Press, 1971). These are now the two most circulated titles in the collection. *Broadcast Century: A Biography of American Broadcasting* by **Robert Hilliard**, an Emerson faculty member, (Focal Press, 1992), *The Handicapped in Literature: A Psychosocial Perspective* (Love Publishing Co, 1980), *Telecommunications Management: The Broadcast and Cable Industries* by **Barry L. Sherman** (McGraw-Hill, 1987), *Anatomy for Speech and Hearing* by **John M. Palmer** (Williams and Wilkins, 1993), *Communication as Culture: Essays on Media and Society* by **James W. Carey** (Unwin Hyman, 1988), and *Mass*

Media and Society (E. Arnold, 1992) also made the top ten list of items with high circulations. They were in 5th through 10th place.

The top two items from the 1993 list made the new top ten in spots three and four. They were *World Drama; An Anthology* edited by **Barrett Harper Clark** (Dover, 1933) and *Effective Public Relations* by **Scott M. Cutlip** (Prentice-Hall, 1985).

What happened to the remaining top ten from 1993? *Gender Advertisements* by **Irving Goffman** (Harper and Row, 1979), which had been the 7th most-circulated title, fell off the top 40 completely. *The History of Broadcasting in the United States* by **Erik Barnouw** (Oxford University Press, 1966-70) formerly coming in third, fell to the 36th spot. Items once the fourth through sixth most used in the collection also fell further down the new top 40 list. *Early Window: Effects of Television on Children and Youth* by **Robert M. Liebert** (Pergamon, 1982) dropped 11 places to 15. *Public Relations Strategies and Tactics* by **Dennis L. Wilcox** (Harper and Row, 1986) landed in the 14th slot. *Organizational Communication* by **Gerald M. Goldhaber** (Wm. C. Brown, 1986) plummeted from 6th to 34th place.

The titles once holding the eighth through tenth positions fared as follows in the 1994 survey. *Stay Tuned: A Concise History of American Broadcasting* by **Christopher H. Sterling** (Wadsworth, 1978) didn't fall far from 9th to 13th place. **Dan Rather's** *The Camera Never Blinks: Adventures of a TV Journalist* (Morrow, 1977) comes in at number 11. His sequel, *The Camera Never Blinks Twice* is currently circulat-

ing heavily. *Instituto Oratoria of Quintilian* by **Quintilian** (Harvard University Press, 1921-1922) once in 10th place, now sits at number 37.

Any number of reasonable explanations exist for these changes. As faculty change, so do required readings, assignments, etc. Student populations change, too. This year, more books on Mass Communication made the top ten, while last year Communication Studies dominated the list.

Of the eight items that fell off the top ten, five were published before 1980. Our users are choosing more up-to-date works. Four of the items no longer in the top ten have new editions. This study uses cumulative circulation data. That is, circulation rates in 1993 and 1994 were measured from 1989 to date. Our automated system doesn't allow easy access to circulation statistics by user-specified time frame. We started using the system in 1989 and can only measure from start date to now. So, recently published works have a harder time making the most-circulated item list. Eventually these new editions should replace their older counterparts. ☞