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## Tom Gilson, Head of Reference Services, College of Charleston Libraries

Editor

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# Profiles Encouraged:

Tom Gilson



**Born:** Brooklyn, NY, December 21. I was just over 5 pounds, but you'd never know it now.

**Educated:** I got my BA in general history from St. John Fisher College, Rochester, NY. My library

degree came from SUNY Buffalo. I have a second masters in Public Administration which was a joint degree from the College of Charleston and the University of South Carolina.

**Jobs:** My first professional job was as a reference librarian at Greenville (SC) Public Library. Later I became Head of the Arts and AV department there and, still later, Director of Oconee County Public Library in the northern part of SC. When I moved to Charleston to get my MPA, I was lucky enough to become a reference librarian and then Head of Reference Services at the College of Charleston Libraries.

**After many years (23!) as a reference librarian:** I am struck by the dramatic increase in the required knowledge base to do an effective job. What we do is getting more and more complex and we are becoming more essential and valuable. But we still seem to be making the same salaries!

**Family:** A daughter (21) who is now in nursing school. Recently married to Carol, an accomplished artist who teaches language arts in middle school. Also a dog Sally and a cat Revis.

**Hobbies:** Back-packing and attempting to play the guitar. Also I get a dose of cross-country skiing every year when I visit my sister, husband and two kids in Denver, Colorado.

**Pet peeve:** The increasingly common notion that everything is on the Internet. People are forgetting the value of print and other electronic resources. When students say, "my professor told me to look on the Internet," that's not always the place I would start. The Internet is the "fast food" version of information retrieval.

**People would be surprised to know:** That I'm not as anal retentive as my staff thinks.

**New Year's resolution:** To exercise and eat right just like everybody. I'll have the same resolution next year.

## From the Reference Desk from page 34

An *Encyclopedia* is volume one of a projected series of encyclopedias dealing with the history of science and offers a promising start.

An area of increasing interest in the field of literary criticism deals with feminist theory. The *Encyclopedia of Feminist Literary Theory*, also published by Garland (1997, 0-8153-0824-8, \$75) gives students a convenient overview of this growing field of scholarship. The articles deal with important terms and concepts, individual feminist critics, and specific literary periods. Arrangement is alphabetical with an index at the end of the volume. Article content is scholarly but accessible. There are useful bibliographies with each article, and in fact many of

the articles are informed by a sense of bibliography. In many cases the authors highlight the significant literature in the field within the text of the article. In general, Garland should be complimented on the attention to bibliography in their one-volume encyclopedias. However, it would also be helpful to have a table of contents to assist readers in getting a better idea of the scope of the volume and a better developed "see also" cross referencing arrangement. The *History of Astronomy: An Encyclopedia* did not seem to have any "see also" references and the *Encyclopedia of Feminist Literary Theory* had some but they were in the index rather than conveniently placed with the articles themselves. Overall, however, both sources are worthwhile contributions which deserve consideration by reference librarians collecting in these areas. 🐾

## Letters from Oklahoma from page 36

in order to perform miracles to store away against beatification in the future. But a look at the titles in their lists and I am reassured that there are publishers in business who personally care about their authors and their books. I suspect that the same applies to the next two publishers, even though Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill is a division of Workman Publishing in New York, and the Historical Publications Section of the North Carolina Division of Archives and History is part of the Department of Cultural Resources. The lists of these two houses speaks well of Workman and the Tarheel State, sometimes known as the Old North State.

The North Carolina catalog is 1/2 inch narrower than Parkway's but standing up they are head to toe the same height. It contains sections on the Civil War (the War Between the States), rosters of North Carolina troops from 1861-1865 (both of my families are represented on those rolls), Coastal North Carolina (*Triumph at Kitty Hawk: The Wright Brothers and Powered Flight* by Thomas C. Parramore), North Carolina's African American Heritage (*The Black Experience in North Carolina* by Jeffrey J. Crow), and Life and Culture in North Carolina (*A History of Sports in North Carolina* by Jim L. Sumner and *The Textile Industry in North Carolina: A History* by Brent D. Glass) to name but a few.

In addition to its regularly catalog of publications, Algonquin Books also issues a wonderful series called *The Algonkian*. If you have never seen it, write to Algonquin Books at P.O. Box 2225, Chapel Hill, NC 27515-2225. "*The Algonkian* is a small periodical about books, authors, and publishing, prepared from time to time for the friends of Algonquin and any others who might take joy in it. ... *The Algonkian* is distributed gratis to such as care to receive it by Workman Publishing, 708 Broadway, New York,

NY 10003." Thank you, Workman Publishing. More about *The Algonkian* at another time.

The Algonquin catalog is 8 1/2' x 11' and features a cover illustration by Pat Scheible — an overflowing bowl of fruit with two trumpet blowing angels above and to either side. It looks like fall to me. You might expect to find books about North Carolina or by North Carolinians in this catalog and sure enough, the first book listed is Jill McCorkle's *Carolina Moon*. "Its geographical setting is the part of eastern North Carolina I grew up in, a town that is near both the ocean and a river." This is how Jill McCorkle describes her fifth (and latest) novel. For the full story and a picture of Ms. McCorkle, see pages 17-19 in the June 1996 issue of *The Algonkian*, the one with a picture of Blind Lemon Jefferson on the cover.

Algonquin also publishes the fiction of Chapel Hill resident Lee Smith and features her *The Christmas Letters: A Novella*, also described in the Blind Lemon Jefferson issue of *The Algonkian* and there is a picture of Ms. Smith there, too. In this same issue of the Algonquin fall catalog is another Christmas book, *Let Us Now Praise Christmas Cooking: A Reminiscence and a Recipe* by Camille Glenn. The catalog entry lists a few of the recipes by name only: Oyster and Clam Chowder, Easy Bread Sticks, Colonial Gingerbread, Tangerine Sherbet and Winter Crystal Cookies, Creole Shrimp with Rice, and New Orleans Madeleines. On page 31 of the June 1996 *Algonkian* there is a full recipe from the book, for "Four Star Cornmeal Butterflake Biscuits."

Algonquin's fall 1996 list also includes *Yak Butter and Black Tea: A Journey into Forbidden China* by Wade Brackenbury, *100 Flowers and How They Got Their Names*, by Diana Wells, Illustrations by Ippy Patterson, *Good Bugs For Your Garden*, written and illustrated by Allison Mia Starcher, and *The Emperor's Virtual Clothes:*

*continued on page 78*