

Resources

*Indexing the Islands: Creating a Pacific Periodical
Database*

KAREN M. PEACOCK

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Indexing the Islands: Creating a Pacific Periodical Database

For many years researchers and librarians involved in Pacific area studies have felt the need for an index that would adequately access periodical literature from the region. The University of Hawai'i Library has devised the Hawai'i Pacific Journal Index, which attempts to provide such a service, through keyword searching of titles of articles from major journals and periodicals.

In the past scholars relied on bibliographies that contained extensive citations from periodical literature and updated these sources through their own familiarity with recent publications. The Société des Océanistes' annual *Bibliographie de l'Océanie* provided the major attempt to regularly gather monographs and periodical article citations concerning the island nations, with a wide scope that included history, geography, archaeology, ethnology, linguistics, economics, politics, art, and literature. The last volume published appeared in 1982, and covered the period 1972–1976. Since then no one has undertaken the enormous task so ably done by Renée Heyum (Curator Emerita of the UH Library's Pacific Collection, formerly of the Musée de l'Homme). The *Journal of Pacific History's* annual bibliography includes books, articles, and chapters. Although this work is extremely useful, its scope does not permit comprehensive inclusion of articles from all major Pacific journals.

Regional efforts also have been

made to cope with the need for bibliographic control. In 1968, the University of Papua New Guinea began publication of the *New Guinea Periodical Index*, which continued in printed form until 1985, when it appeared on microfiche as the *New Guinea Periodical Database*, with an author and a keyword index section. The University of the South Pacific (USP) created the *Bibliography of Periodical Articles Related to the South Pacific* in 1975, originally compiled by Esther Williams, now head of the USP Library. The Pacific Information Centre at the university later assumed responsibility for the work, and in 1984 published a *South Pacific Periodicals Index* covering 1979–1981. The difficulty of keeping abreast of the explosive growth of periodical literature in the past decade doubtless contributed to the lack of subsequent volumes in the series.

Librarians concerned with Pacific research saw exciting developments in indexing as sources once available only in print, such as the *Social Sciences Citation Index* (with vast coverage of many journals that regularly include Pacific topics), became available as computer databases and, more recently, as CD-ROM products. Despite the usefulness of such tools, no service existed that included comprehensive coverage of the major Pacific journals. In 1990 the UH Library joined the Colorado Association of Research Libraries (CARL) network, whose many services include a keyword periodical

index called UnCover. The UnCover database was created by inputting the tables of contents of journal issues received in libraries in the Denver region. This service, available on the menu of terminals at UH Library, quickly became a popular item with students. Librarians found several important Pacific journals included on CARL's UnCover, in addition to articles on the region appearing in major scholarly journals. Under the direction of Associate University Librarian Gary Macmillan, the UH Library began to explore the possibility of creating an UnCover database for Hawaiian and Pacific titles.

The local database was originally envisioned as a source of information on business topics, but user needs enlarged the scope of planning efforts. Pacific Collection librarians provided a list of high priority periodicals for inclusion, and Macmillan began training staff to input tables of contents. Problems surfaced with regard to titles that did not indicate the nature of content. For example, the March 1992 issue of *Islands Business* contained an article by Don Bindmand titled "Crowded Atolls." To enhance access to the topics covered in such an article, a brief description of the subject of the article is included in the citation, thus providing keyword terms such as *pollution* and *environment*. The user looking for articles on pollution in an atoll environment will now be able to retrieve "Crowded Atolls." Titles of articles in scholarly journals, such as *The Journal of Pacific History* or *The Contemporary Pacific*, tend to specifically reflect content, but in the case of news magazines and other popular

periodicals, the inclusion of sufficient text to pinpoint subject nature becomes a vital factor in creating a usable database.

The students and faculty who search the Hawai'i Pacific Journal Index by means of keywords in titles obtain a list of citations, as shown in this sample of a search for material on suicide:

- 1 Hezel, Francis X. (Gakkaishi
09/01/92)
What can we do to prevent suicide?
- 2 Rubinstein, Donald H. (Pacific studies
03/01/92)
Suicide in Micronesia and Samoa:
A Critique of Expla . . .
- 3 Purcell, David C. (Pacific studies
03/01/91)
Suicide in Micronesia: The 1920s
and 1930s
- 4 Reser, Joseph (Oceania
12/01/90)
The cultural context of Aboriginal
suicide: myths, m . . .
- 5 Saipan: Suicide Island (Guam business
news 07/90)

A detailed display for a particular citation provides author, title of the article, title of the periodical in which the article appears, date of issue, volume number, issue number, the page on which the article commences, and the UH Library call number:

AUTHOR(S):	Rubinstein, Donald H.
TITLE(S):	Suicide in Micronesia and Samoa: A Critique of Explanations
In:	Pacific studies
	MAR 01 1992 V 15 N 1
Page:	51
ISSUE STATUS:	Published

The database can also be searched for titles of periodicals, for example, *Archaeology in Oceania*. The user can

then call up a list of holdings indexed, and go one step further, to a list of articles in a particular issue. While experience shows that keyword searching for a particular topic is the most heavily used function of the Hawai'i Pacific Journal Index, the capability to go directly to the contents of a specific journal issue is highly relevant for subject specialists. The holdings list that now exists in the Hawai'i Pacific Journal Index also provides information on missing issues, claims for same, and expected dates of publication for forthcoming issues of periodicals, all of which have proved valuable sources of information for both librarians and their patrons.

Currently the UH Library's Hawai'i Pacific Journal Index includes 28 Hawaiian and 43 Pacific periodicals. Retrospective holdings have been added for many of the periodicals covered, for example, the entire run of *Pacific Magazine* is indexed. Some idea of the growth of the database can be conveyed by citing the number of items found through a broad search using solely the name of a country: Fiji 1081 items, Tonga 295 items, Papua New Guinea 527 items, Guam 1643 items. With the added retrospective indexing project and current issues being input, the depth of coverage will grow. The library hopes also to continue to add ceased titles whose content is of value to research as well as new journals such as *Isla* (University of Guam). Following is a list of the Pacific Islands related periodicals presently found or about to be entered in the Hawaiian and Pacific UnCover database. (Note that articles have been omitted from the beginning of journal titles):

Archaeology in New Zealand
Archaeology in Oceania
Asian Pacific Economic Literature
Atoll Research Bulletin
Bulletin de la Société des Etudes Océaniques
Catalyst
Contemporary Pacific
Guam and Micronesia Glimpses
 (ceased)
Guam Business News
Guam Pacific Sports
Islands Business (Fiji)
Islands (California)
Journal de la Société des Océanistes
Journal of Pacific History
Journal of Pacific Studies (Fiji)
Journal of the Pacific Society
 (Japan)
Journal of the Polynesian Society
Man and Culture in Oceania
Melanesian Law Journal
Micronesian Reporter (ceased)
Micronesia
New Zealand Journal of Archaeology
New Zealand Journal of History
Newsletter (New Zealand Archaeological Association)
Oceania
Oceanic Linguistics
Pacific Economic Bulletin
Pacific Impact
Pacific Island Focus
Pacific Islands Monthly
Pacific Magazine (Honolulu)
Pacific Perspective (Fiji)
Pacific Review (Oxford, England)
Pacific Studies (BYU-Hawai'i)
Pacific Viewpoint
Pacifica (Anchorage, Alaska)
 (ceased)
Papua New Guinea Journal of Education

Review (USP)
South Pacific Bulletin (ceased)
*Yagl-ambu: Papua New Guinea
Journal*

Anyone with access to the UHCARL online public catalog can reach the Hawai'i Pacific Journal Index, thus users at UH Library, those who reach the system through office or home modems, and anyone who can connect to UHCARL through such systems as Internet or Bitnet, has a growing index to Pacific periodicals at their disposal. UH Library hopes that this major contribution to improved information retrieval will become available throughout the region, as has already

occurred at the University of Guam and the Northern Marianas College. Other local databases available through UHCARL include the full text of the *State of Hawaii Databook*, the *Hawaii Sheet Music Index*, and the *Trust Territory Archives Index*. Several major Bishop Museum databases are now online. The future may see cooperative ventures that would allow other libraries to add coverage to the Hawai'i Pacific Journal Index, and thus expand its usefulness. Developments such as the creation of this new index bring the dream of Pacific-wide information networks a step closer to reality.

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