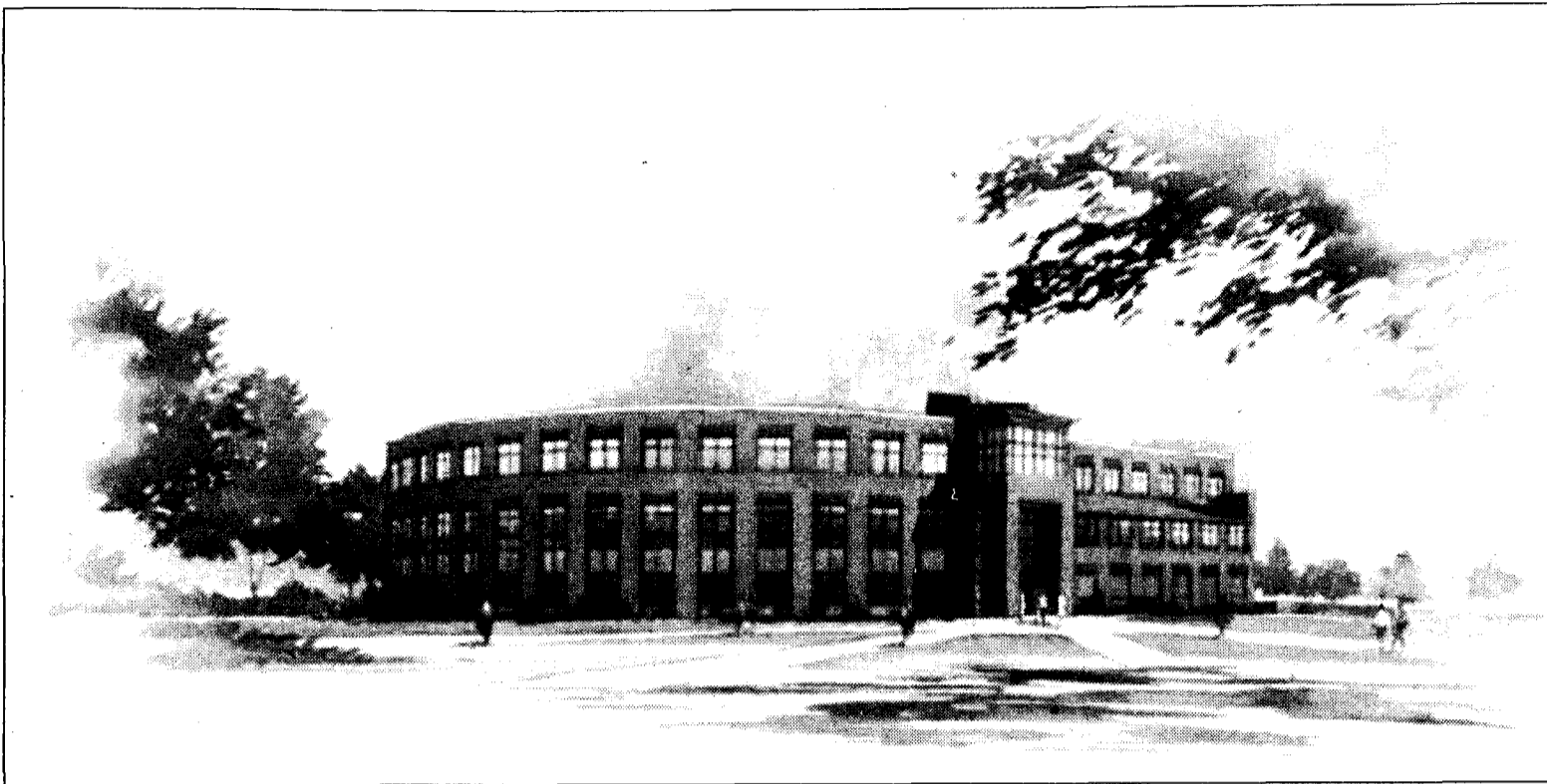


# Dr. Shill: The Man Behind the New Library



An artist's rendering on the new library.

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Carolina in political science in 1973 and received his Master of Library Science from the University of Maryland in 1975. He has worked in academia ever since.

Prior to joining Penn State Harrisburg, Shill was the head librarian at Evansdale Library at West Virginia University from 1980 to 1991. He was also an associate professor of library science at WVU.

Among other positions held while living in West Virginia,

Shill was a member of the West Virginia Library Association's Legislative Committee.

Through that position, Shill was able to meet that state's senators and congressmen. "That was interesting," Shill said. "I had contact with the entire West Virginia legislature."

That contact allowed Shill to share his insight on public information issues. He testified before Congress in 1986 regarding the possible privatization of the National Technical Information Service (NTIS).

The NTIS, a division of the

U.S. Department of Commerce, provides technical information to the public.

During the Reagan Administration, there was talk of privatizing the NTIS, something Shill testified against. "I find the public and business [community] was served by keeping it public," Shill said.

And keeping information available to the public is important to Shill now. He is concerned that as we move more into an electronic age that vital pieces of information, formerly recorded on paper or in journals,

will be forever lost.

Today, people communicate via e-mail or by telephone and do not leave a printed version of the information process behind.

"If information is maintained in electronic forms there is a danger of everything being wiped out," Shill said. He continued that this trend must be addressed now. "If not, in 10 years, what will there be?" Shill noted.

Although the electronic age may pose some dangers, Shill recognizes that it is a part of modern life. Because of that he wanted to create the new library with modern technology in mind. In fact, Shill said he sees the

new library as a "hybrid environment," where traditional books and journals are housed side by side with on-line journals and the Internet.

"A library is more important now than ever before," Shill said. "There's an awful lot of junk on the Internet," Shill continued. "People need systematic access to high quality information."

And people looking only on-line may not realize that a great deal of information is still available in printed form.

That's why Shill is pleased that, for the first time, all the library's books are housed under one roof.

Included are doctoral dissertations and scholarly journals, some of which are more than 100 years old.

Additionally, the Alice Marshall Women's History collection, regarded by many as the best private collection of women's history materials in the United States, is now in the new library.

It is located on the third floor and is housed in a special humidity-controlled room. That is a great improvement from its former home in the Swatara Building.

"We had plastic draped over the books," Shill said because the roof leaked.

Though a few minor details need to be completed, Shill is pleased with the success of the new library.

"It gives me the feeling of being in a research library again," he said.



Photo by Matthew McKeown

All new furniture can be found throughout the new library.



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