New Databases

Milne Library is currently hosting three databases on a trial basis. These are databases that the publishers make available to us for a short period of time to evaluate so that we may make informed decisions on the quality and utility of these resources for our faculty and students. Faculty, students, and staff are encouraged to make use of these databases while they are available and to contact your department liaison or the Reference Department to express your opinions of these resources. Comments can be sent to Rick Uttich at uttichrm@oneonta.edu.

**Scopus**

Scopus is a database containing 27 million records covering articles from 14,000 peer-reviewed titles from more than 4,000 international publishers. Scopus contains abstracts describing the articles but does not provide the full text of the articles. Scopus is the most comprehensive scientific, medical, technical, and social science point of access for materials covering such disciplines as: Anthropology, Biology, Chemistry, Earth Sciences, Economics and Business, Geography, Health and Medicine, Mathematics, Physical Education, Physics and Astronomy, Political Science, Psychology, Sociology, and Women's Studies.

**Business Source Complete**

Business Source Complete includes content from several publishing partners including Kluwer Academic (Journal of Business Ethics, and more), John Wiley & Son's (Strategic Management Journal, and more), Berkeley Electronic Press, American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA), and Bernstein Financial (top ranked financial reports) plus hundreds of monographs.

**International Security & Counter Terrorism Reference Center**

This database offers information on virtually every dimension of security & counter-terrorism and is designed to inform the analysis process, as well as enhance the general understanding of security and terrorism-related issues. ISCTRC provides a comprehensive Open Source Intelligence Resource for analysts, risk management professionals, and students. Content includes hundreds of full text journals and periodicals, hundreds of thousands of selected articles, news feeds, reports, summaries, books, blogs, FAQs, and proprietary Background Information Summaries that pertain to terrorism and security. ISCTRC also combines deep background from scholarly writings with expert commentary from a variety of organizations, agencies and publishers, and timely reviews of recent developments across the international political, military, economic, social, and technical spectrum. The database is updated weekly via EBSCOhost.

Links to these three databases are provided on the library’s website, under the heading Free Trials in the New at Milne section.

Government Information is Ever Easier to Find

The federal government is a prodigious publisher and the information it compiles, reports, and analyzes infiltrates our lives via the news media, books, periodical articles, radio, TV, the web, and plain old word of mouth. For over 140 years the Government Printing Office (GPO) has been committed to making the data and information generated by the government readily available to the public. In order to do this, they created the depository library system, whereby selected libraries receive copies of some or all of the documents created by federal agencies. Milne Library has been a depository library since 1966, receiving about 33% of the documents made available to libraries.

Until about 15 years ago, every document arrived in a carton and was distributed to its resting place in the library: the documents collection area in the Periodicals

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**Volume 35, Issue 2**

**Inside this issue**

*New Databases* ..................................1
*Finding Government Info* ...............1
*New Fiction Titles* ...........................2
*Instructional Program* ..................3
*Exhibits* ......................................3
*Staff News* .................................4
*Library Hours* ..............................4
Room, the map collection on the 3rd floor, the reference collection, or sometimes the circulating collection. Locating the information embedded in this surfeit of printed material was done by using dozens of print-based finding aids and/or the card catalog. It was not, shall we say, a straightforward process.

The good news is two-fold. The federal government is committed to making larger and larger segments of its publications available in electronic form (however, the library still receives lots of print documents). Electronic form often means that it’s available over the Internet either in a PDF replica of the print version, or in a database version that can be searched and used to create reports. Nowadays, for example, anyone can find the text of a current Congressional bill, get an obscure IRS form, find a federal grant for a technology and education program, view a satellite image of New Orleans, or hunt down the number of 16 to 21 year old smokers in the state of Minnesota within minutes.

The second part of the good news is that there are many online indexes and portals for searching quickly through the massive bodies of federally-produced information. A useful portal for locating government web sites is FirstGov (www.firstgov.gov/). Another site, FedWorld (www.fedworld.gov) offers a combination of subject-based browsing and searching across agencies and types of information. GPO Access (www.gpoaccess.gov/) is the Government Printing Office’s approach to FedWorld’s similar purpose, but focuses more on locating specific documents (e.g. the Public Papers of the Presidents or the Budget of the U.S.) and is organized by the branches – legislative, executive, judicial. Another noteworthy gateway is THOMAS (thomas.loc.gov/) which focuses on legislative information.

For the serious researcher, the place to start is the Catalog of United States Government Publications (MOCAT) (www.gpoaccess.gov/cgp/index.html). This is a more comprehensive finding aid than the other tools, essentially a catalog of all documents received by GPO from 1994 to the present. It can search across the full text of many key government documents, among them the Federal Register, the Congressional Record, the U.S. Code (1994), the Code of Federal Regulations, and Commerce Business Daily.

Many of these online search tools overlap in what they search, but provide very different ways of searching. Each portal or gateway will have its own search engine with varying degrees of searching sophistication. Although these search tools are probably the best way to search government information online, many people find it difficult to break the Google habit. For those addicts, try Google Uncle Sam (www.google.com/unclesam) which restricts searches to .gov sites (including federal, state, county, and city). And, of course, there is the tried and true method of finding what you need: contact the government documents librarian, Kay Benjamin, at 436-2791 or at benjamkd@oneonta.edu, or come to the reference desk.

New Fiction Titles
The library has acquired many new works of fiction, including bestsellers and prizewinners or nominees, which will be studied in literature classes and can also be read for enjoyment. Recent Pulitzer Prize winners, which are given out through Columbia University for distinguished fiction by an American author preferably dealing with American life, include the novels The Known World by Edward P. Jones and Gilead by Marilyn Robinson. Gilead, which won in 2005, is a novel which is in the form of a letter written by an elderly pastor in the 1950s to his young son, looking back over his life, covering the lives of his father and grandfather, also preachers, in the rural Iowa town of the title and in the surrounding areas. The grandfather was mixed up with John Brown and his almost mystical abolitionist philosophy, while the narrator is a calmer soul who concentrates on the smaller lessons of life. The low-key prose style of the author communicates a quiet and reverential quality that matches the themes of the novel perfectly. Edward P. Jones’s novel, the 2004 prize winner, is the story of a plantation in Virginia in the years before the Civil War owned by a freed black man and worked by slaves he has purchased. The novel tells the story of Henry Townsend, the slave-owning black, his parents’ history as slaves before they purchased their freedom, and the events following Henry’s death at a relatively young age. After his passing, his wife, children, and others struggle to maintain the farm and confront their unusual situation. Full of wonderful names and characters, this elegantly written novel has been hailed as a landmark of American literature by many critics.

Other highly regarded works recently added to the collection include Shirley Hazzard’s novel The Great Fire, winner of the National Book Award, and The Double by Jose Saramago, the Portuguese writer who won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1998. Also acquired were works by the 2004 Nobel winner, the Austrian

Portuguese writer who won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1998. Also acquired were works by the 2004 Nobel winner, the Austrian
writer Elfriede Jelinek, whose work is not widely available in this country, and the Hungarian author Imre Kertesz. This author's novels *Fatelessness* and *Liquidation* are recent translations. The records in the library catalog for both books contain a link to the Library of Congress website, which has a sample chapter of the book online.

On a lighter note, the novel *The Rule of Four* is now in the collection. This bestselling novel by two authors, Ian Caldwell and Dustin Thomason, is a kind of mystery story involving two Princeton University students. These two young men are trying to unravel the mysteries behind an obscure Renaissance publication entitled *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*, an actual text of which the Princeton library owns one of the few surviving copies. Another recent bestseller that was critically acclaimed is entitled *Jonathan Strange & Mr. Norrell* by Susanna Clarke, a British author. This story of magicians and English history is over 700 pages long, and has attracted a wide readership.

**Milne Library's Instructional Program**

One of the continuing goals of Milne Library is “to teach students to retrieve and evaluate information” for their academic work and personal pursuits. The library partners with teaching faculty both to help the College meet the information literacy standards set by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education and to further achievement of the information management competency infused throughout Oneonta’s General Education curriculum. The library has an extensive instructional program that includes a one-credit course, Library and Internet Research, and library seminars integrated at faculty request into undergraduate and graduate courses across the curriculum.

Over the years, instructional efforts have developed into increasingly more collaborative relationships between library and teaching faculty in a number of academic departments. Where these efforts have been most successful, library and teaching faculty have drawn upon their particular areas of expertise to plan classroom presentations and design student projects requiring the identification, location, use, and evaluation of information sources. In the most successful projects, librarians have also helped to evaluate student work.

Librarians continue to collaborate with members of the English Department in the development of a library component, recently expanded from one to two classes, in order to allow students to experience more fully the complexities of the research process. Because many students enroll in COMP100 during their first or second year of college, this component helps students meet future information needs by introducing basic library skills at an early stage. Other courses that regularly incorporate library seminars into their semester schedules include INTD110: Orientation to Higher Education, INTD133: College Life, and EDUC106: Issues in Education. For those who need additional help beyond the class period, librarians consult with students individually to offer guidance in refining topics, designing search strategies, and selecting quality sources.

For each seminar, librarians provide bibliographies designed to help students select the information sources most appropriate for class assignments. These bibliographies are available in print and also in electronic form as cyberguides, under the heading “Library Instruction” on the library web site. The list is categorized by semester and by course number. Cyberguides offer a convenient way of searching the library’s electronic resources without having to return to the library’s home page.

Because of the extensive nature of the library’s instructional program, faculty members are encouraged to request seminars at least two weeks in advance. Arrangements for classes can be made through Mary Lynn Bensen, Reference/Instruction Librarian, either by phone (x2729) or by e-mail (bensenml@oneonta.edu). An electronic request form is also available on the library web site.

**Library Exhibits**

“Jürgen Habermas has justly inherited the title of the world’s leading philosopher”—Richard Wolin, “Jürgen Habermas and Post-Secular Societies”, The Chronicle of Higher Education: http://chronicle.com/weekly/v52/i05/05b01601.htm, from the issue dated September 23, 2005

For the duration of this semester Milne Library has installed an exhibit entitled: Jürgen Habermas: The Reconstruction of the Project of Modernity. This exhibit focuses on the philosophical relationships that have contributed to the formation of the philosophy of Jürgen Habermas. A rough sketch of the intellectual relationship of Habermas to such 19th and 20th century thinkers as Freidrich Nietzsche, the sociologist Max Weber, and the social theorists from the Frankfurt School of critical theory, Horkheimer, Adorno, Benjamin, Marcuse and others is presented. A series of
public philosophical disputes with such thinkers as the philosopher of science Sir Karl Popper, the hermeneutical philosopher Hans Gadamer and the post-modernists Michel Foucault and Jacques Derrida are also presented. Habermas developed a theory of rationality that escapes the pessimism of these earlier writers. Redeeming the emancipatory promise of the modern era, Habermas opposes the post-modernist rejection of the rational foundations of social life. The philosophical-historical context of the reconstruction of the project of modernity along lines of form of rationality inherent to communication and discourse ethics is the core theme of the library’s exhibit.

Coming Exhibits:

During January and February, 2006, an exhibit of African masks, statuary and other artifacts from the collection of Dr. Zanna McKay will be put on display. Prof. McKay spent two years teaching in Africa and the collection illustrates the history and culture of the people and the regions in which she taught and lived.

During March, an exhibit of the ecological research site of Prof. Tracy Allen will be displayed. Dr. Allen has been conducting research at New Island in Oneonta for a number of years and has developed an impressive and compelling chronicle of the changes that have taken place over time. You can visit his web site to preview some of what will be presented in the exhibit at: http://external.oneonta.edu/greenway/

Library Hours: Fall 2005

Regular Hours:
Monday–Wednesday........................................................................................................8 AM–12 midnight
Thursday................................................................................................................................8 AM–11 PM
Friday....................................................................................................................................8 AM–10 PM
Saturday.................................................................................................................................11 AM–10 PM
Sunday..................................................................................................................................12 noon–12 midnight

Extended Finals Hours:
Friday, December 9........................................................................................................8 AM–12 midnight
Saturday, December 10.....................................................................................................11 AM–12 midnight
Sunday, December 11.........................................................................................................12 noon–1 AM
Monday–Tuesday, December 12–13..............................................................................8 AM–1 AM
Wednesday–Thursday, December 14–15.................................................................8 AM–12 midnight
Friday, December 16........................................................................................................8 AM–6 PM

Intersession: Saturday, December 17–Wednesday, January 18
Monday, December 26.....................................................................................................Closed
Monday–Friday.....................................................................................................................8 AM–4:30 PM
Saturday–Sunday................................................................................................................Closed

Staff news:

Lyndsie Robinson resigned her position as cataloger in the Bibliographic Services Department in November. Heather Heyduk is currently working as a cataloger in Lyndsie’s position, since Lyndsie went on a leave of absence last year.

Connie Dalrymple has left her temporary position as a reference librarian. Lyndsie Robinson will work some hours replacing Connie in the reference department.

Kathy Franco and Mary Lynn Bensen attended the Fall Conference of the Eastern New York Association for College and Research Libraries, held at Vassar College on October 21. The title of the conference was Transitions: New Directions in Librarianship.

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