Enhancements and Partnerships

From the Director
Dr. Richard S. Ross, College Librarian

The BBC science fiction series Torchwood opens each week with the catchphrase, “It’s the 21st century, everything changes and we have to be ready.” The phrase is appropriate for libraries as well, and in the Trinity College Library, we continue to prepare for the 21st century, though we have not yet had to contend with “time rifts” and “aliens”.

Recently, Doris Kammrath, head librarian for collections, undertook an analysis of the total acquired content that the library is responsible for. Most of us think of the physical items in a library, items that have been collected over many decades, that are cataloged individually and can be retrieved from a physical space within the building. The number of physical items the library holds today is approximately 1,338,500, cataloged under 762,250 titles across multiple formats including printed volumes, microforms, audio-visual material and slides.

You will probably be surprised to hear that without adding additional staff and while dealing with shrinking budgets, the library has also over the last 10 years purchased or subscribed to nearly 1,305,500 online titles, again including the various formats of digital text, images, and audio-files in the count. We now manage almost twice as many titles on-

Advancing Students’ Research Skills

By Patricia Bunker—Reference Librarian/Reference Coordinator

As the availability of information has exploded with the development of online content, the library’s instruction program has responded to meet the more complex needs of identifying and navigating the many resources that are available to today’s students. Teaching has become a more central activity in the array of services that the library offers, as is evidenced by the fact that in the 2006-2007 academic year we taught more than 80 upper-level classes and 40 first-year seminars. Clearly, we have a flourishing instruction program, and we hope to continue to strengthen and improve it.

Class instruction has been offered by the library for many years, increasing in importance over time, but it has been only within the past six or seven years that it has been prominently featured as one of our services. This came about in 2002 when the CTW Consortium received a Mellon grant to incorporate information literacy skills into the curriculum. Briefly, these skills comprise the abilities to determine the extent of the information needed, and how to locate, evaluate, and use this information efficiently, effectively, and ethically.

Initially, we decided to focus upon the first-year students, and during the summer of 2002 the reference and instruction librarians designed an information literacy component that was embedded in the First-Year Seminar Program. In the fall, all the incoming students came to the library with their seminars for an introduction to using our catalog and core online databases and, in some cases, a session on evaluating Web sites. The program turned out to be very popular and successful, and, although we have had to make some adjustments because the program is no longer funded by grant money, it is nevertheless firmly established as an element of all the first-year seminars.

Information literacy doesn’t stop at the first-year level, however. As the students declare their majors and advance to upper-level courses, they need to develop their research skills and apply them to the fields in which they will be concentrating. Class instruction, therefore, continues to be important, and there are a significant number of professors who regularly schedule research sessions for their upper-level courses. For example, Dr. Dianne Hunter of the English Department always brings her classes on Shakespeare, Virginia Woolf, and Sylvia Plath to the library to ensure that her students are acquainted with the online databases for literature, and she reports that these sessions are helpful to her students. (See also the article

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Displays in the Scheuch Atrium

By Doris Kammradt, Head Librarian—Collection and Bibliographic Services

The two-sided display case in the Library’s Scheuch Atrium is a prime location to exhibit some examples of fine printing held by the Watkinson Library. The fall display featured the recently acquired *Alphabeticum* by Werner Pfeiffer (Pear Whistle Press, 2006) with its geometric transformations of each of the letters A-Z (see image). The alphabet theme is continued in the spring display with *An Odd Bestiary*, by Alan James Robinson (Chelonidae Press, 1982). On your next visit to the Library, stop to take a look at the delightful animal illustrations—from the Armadillo to the Dodo, the Griffin, Ibex, Loris, Ostrich, Sloth, Vampire Bat and Zebra!

![Alphabeticum on display, Fall 2007.](image)

Photo by: Jessica Smith

From the Director...

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line than in physical format, and even with some online content duplicating print, the total number of titles available to our users exceeds 2 million.

To enhance access and instruction for the library’s online content by now has become equally important as the care of our physical collections. In addition to a service that provides records in the online catalog for more than 12,000 online and print journals, the library has recently installed new software that directly links from citations to journal articles. We have also acquired software that permits federated searching across multiple databases. That service will be available later this spring.

Also, the library, in cooperation with the other CTW libraries as well as many other academic libraries, is engaged in looking into the future of the online catalog to determine how it can be transformed into a “discovery tool” for the students and scholars of the 21st century. If there is one thing librarians have learned it is that we do not have an exclusive path to scholarly information and, if the online catalog does not adapt, users will migrate to other more expansive search tools.

Increased partnership with other libraries and consortia is another hallmark of our new environment. Recently the Trinity Library signed up to shift our Springer science subscriptions online. For this we partnered with Colby, Bates, and Bowdoin, and now have access to all their subscribed titles at no additional cost. Also, as a member of WALDO (Westchester Academic Libraries Directors Organization), Trinity was able to get at very reasonable cost a subscription for over 350 Sage journals of interest primarily to the social sciences.

As a member of the CTW consortium, Trinity is currently engaged in developing a cooperative collection development and management program that will allow Trinity, Connecticut College and Wesleyan University to analyze all three collections, compare them to standard bibliographies and peer groups, and develop collection policies as well as an assessment document that will serve as the basis for developing future cooperative policies and decisions.

I would like to conclude by thanking the library’s staff for the ongoing commitment of their management, business, technology, and information skills that continue to move our resources and services in new directions. The support of the College administration and the faculty also has been invaluable as all of us are adapting to the changing information environment of the 21st century.

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**Advancing Students’ Research Skills**

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on page 3 in this issue on Prof. Barbara Benedict’s use of Eighteenth Century Collections Online.)

At the upper end of the research skills spectrum are students enrolled in senior seminars, senior thesis writers, and graduate students. They are expected to produce works of original research and therefore need to strengthen their skills still further. Librarians usually meet with these groups first in a class setting, and then schedule appointments to work with each student individually on his or her specific topic. The librarians are available for follow-up consultations as well, and are also happy to schedule individual appointments with any other students who need research help.

Use of primary sources is a special emphasis in many upper-level courses. In the Watkinson Library, which contains a rich collection of primary source material, librarians introduce students to working with rare and special items. Students from a variety of departments, including History, American Studies, Art History, Education, and Biology, regularly participate in instruction sessions in the Watkinson Library and learn to research and use its collections.

We always welcome the opportunity to work with classes or individuals who wish to advance their research skills, so please do not hesitate to contact one of the librarians in the Research and Instruction Unit or the Watkinson Library. We’d be happy to help!
Teaching with Library Resources—Eighteenth Century Collections Online

By Patricia Bunker—Reference Librarian/Reference Coordinator

Everyone knows that the library has many treasures that are located in the special collections of the Watkinson Library, but not everyone is aware that we also have treasures in digital format and accessible online. One of them is Eighteenth Century Collections Online—ECCO for short—a database that contains the texts of all English and foreign-language titles printed in the U.K., plus thousands of works from the Americas, published between 1701 and 1800.

One person highly aware of the value of this database is Dr. Barbara Benedict, Charles A. Dana Professor of English Literature and eighteenth-century scholar. Indeed, she was one of the professors who encouraged the library to purchase this resource so that she could use it in her teaching. She first introduced it to her “Curiosity and Literature” class and asked her students to search for the texts of poems other than the ones assigned to the class. Finding that the students enjoyed being set loose among the 18th-century texts, she resolved to make the database a more integral part of the course the next time she taught it. Accordingly, in the fall semester of 2007, Barbara brought her class to the library for a hands-on session led by an instructor librarian on how to search ECCO effectively. That day’s assignment was to search for a text on a topic in early modern curiosity, such as monsters or sea exploration, and be prepared to discuss it in a future class. Building on that introduction, as the semester progressed, Barbara had her students search for multiple additional texts, which they then used as the basis for oral presentations in class and written essay assignments. The students worked in pairs in their examination of the texts, and Barbara reports that the resulting class discussions were insightful and enabled the students to move to the theoretical level.

All of the texts in ECCO are reproduced with the original spellings and typography, including the long esses that resemble efs. Asked if reading the old typefaces represented a stumbling block for students, Barbara responded that, on the contrary, being able to view the texts as they were originally printed gave students a “vivid sense of the quiriness of the 18th-century sensibility, and a rare experience of encountering historical material.” In short, she said, “ECCO represents a good marriage of 20th-century technology to 18th-century texts. Students like the freedom to explore the database on their own, but the fact that ECCO is a photographic reproduction of the original books gives them a real sense of handling those books.”

Barbara encapsulates her enthusiasm for ECCO by stating that “It makes the 18th-century a field for [students] to revel in. Since 18th-century authors included pirates, liars, jokes, and frauds, as well as serious scholars and moral and literary thinkers, the students have an exciting challenge facing them: to figure out what texts to trust, what they really mean, and how to interpret them. ECCO provides a wonderful chance to blend history and literature, research and analysis. Most of all, it allows students to forage to find their own text—not one assigned by the teacher. They enjoy that.”

CTW Mellon Grant for Collaborative Collection Projects

By Doris Kamrardt, Head Librarian—Collection and Bibliographic Services

In summer 2007, the CTW consortium received a $350,000 grant for the development of collaborative collection projects. During the fall semester, librarians from the three CTW schools conducted a search to fill a three year grant-funded position for a librarian to coordinate the various collection projects we are hoping to accomplish. We are delighted that Lorraine Huddy, former reference librarian at Trinity College, has accepted the position. Most recently, Lorri has been the Electronic Resources Coordinator for iCONN, an online service of the Connecticut State Library. She brings the professional experience as well as organizational and interpersonal skills that will help the CTW consortium in defining and achieving the goals of its collaborative collection projects. Lorri started her new CTW position in mid-January and currently has an office in the Raether Library, though she will also travel regularly to Connecticut College and Wesleyan University. Welcome (back) to a former and new colleague!

Enhancing Access to Journal Literature

By Doris Kamrardt, Head Librarian—Collection and Bibliographic Services

To provide more direct access from citation databases to full-text articles, the library recently purchased and implemented “360 Link,” a tool that helps users link to or otherwise locate full-text content anywhere in the collection and beyond. For articles that are available online in one of the numerous databases subscribed to by the library, a link to full-text appears directly at the bottom of the citation. A click on the “Get-It” button opens a window showing availability of the article in all of Trinity’s collections, online as well as print. If an article is not a part of any of the resources held at Trinity, a link into ILLiad allows for seamless placement of an ILL request. This new technology greatly reduces the complexity of navigating from citation to content and is a major enhancement of access to journal articles.
Watkinson Library Spring Programming
By Dr. Jeffrey Kaimowitz—Head Librarian, Watkinson Library

EXHIBITION
The Watkinson Library at Trinity College, Hartford, Connecticut, is exhibiting "Where Late the Sweet Birds Sang": Bird Extinctions Around the World Since 1600, from February 8, 2008, through June 9, 2008. Drawing on the resources in the library's nationally recognized Enders Ornithology Collection, the show features beautiful ornithological publications from the 18th century to the present, along with original paintings, to illustrate a selection of 31 extinct birds from around the world with a brief discussion of each bird and an explanation of its extinction when ascertainable. The exhibition, arranged geographically, begins on the coast of Africa, continues in Australasia, Asia, and Hawaii, and finishes in North America and the North Atlantic. Also on display is a small exhibition on endangered felines. The exhibitions were arranged and described by Dr. Jeffrey H. Kaimowitz, Curator of the Enders Ornithology Collection.

LECTURE
In connection with the exhibitions, on March 26, 2008, at 4:45 p.m., there will be a joint talk entitled, “Conservation of Imperiled Birds and Felines: Notes from the Field," by Trinity College’s conservation biologist and ornithologist Professor Joan Morrison and feline expert Dr. Jim Sanderson in the Joslin Family 1823 Room in Trinity College’s Raether Library and Information Technology Center.

The Watkinson Library is open Monday through Friday, 9:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m., but from the middle of May, the library will close at 1:00 p.m. on Fridays. There will be Saturday hours, 12:30 p.m.-4:30 p.m., beginning on March 29 and running through May 3. If you have any questions, please contact Dr. Kaimowitz, at (860) 297-2266 or at Jeffrey.Kaimowitz@trincoll.edu.

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NEWS from the Libraries at Trinity College

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