A PUBLICATION OF THE WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES

BROWZINE — A NEW WAY TO BROWSE ACADEMIC JOURNALS

The library has acquired a subscription to BrowZine, an exciting new way for Wesleyan students and faculty to read articles and follow academic journals to which Wesleyan subscribes. BrowZine, developed by Third Iron (http://thirdiron.com/browzine/), is an app that has been optimized for use on iPads, Android tablets, and the Kindle Fire HD. In early 2014, BrowZine will unveil an enhancement to allow content to be read on Apple and Android smartphones as well.

Since launching in 2011, BrowZine has partnered with numerous academic journal publishers including Elsevier, Taylor & Francis, Cambridge, and Sage to bring current content of leading journals to readers in a wide variety of fields. A complete list of publishers, which continues to expand, is available from the Third Iron website. BrowZine also provides access to open-access journals such as those available from PLoS (Public Library of Science) and BioMed Central.

BrowZine combines individual articles from databases to create complete journals and arranges them in a "newspaper" type of display, delivering this content to users based on subject areas or by specific journal titles. Users can create a personal bookshelf of favorite journals, receive alerts when new articles are published, and export citations from specific journal articles to citation tools such as Zotero, Mendeley, or EndNote.

The BrowZine app is available either from the Third Iron website or by going directly to iTunes (for iPads), Google Play (for Android devices), or Amazon (for Kindle HD). If you are a current Wesleyan student or a faculty or staff member, you can access many of Wesleyan's journal subscriptions by downloading the BrowZine app and then choosing Wesleyan University Library, entering in your Wesleyan username and password to authenticate your access. You will then be able to select from the subject areas displayed or choose specific journals to which Wesleyan subscribes using a drop-down menu.

With more and more people using tablets and smartphones for a variety of online applications, BrowZine is an innovative way to untether what has been traditional computer-based content and make it available via mobile devices, allowing Wesleyan Library users access to journal content from almost anywhere in the world.

— DIANE KLARE, HEAD OF REFERENCE

— SUZY TARABA, DIRECTOR OF SPECIAL COLLECTIONS & ARCHIVES

CLASS INSTRUCTION IN SC&A SKYROCKETS

During the fall 2013 semester, a record number of classes visited Special Collections & Archives (SC&A) Director of SC&A Suzy Taraba and University Archivist Leith Johnson gave 52 class presentations, reaching more than 600 students. Normally, more than 50 sessions would be a large number for the whole academic year, let alone a single semester. Fall 2013 exceeded all of our expectations, making for a lively (and exhausting!) semester. Classes in SC&A ranged across many departments and disciplines, including art and art history; dance; English; feminist, gender, and sexuality studies; history; music; and Romance languages and literatures.

Class instruction in SC&A takes various forms. Many sessions center on a typical “dog and pony show,” in which the archivist/librarian presents materials related to the topic of the class, talking briefly about each item. Some classes involve an in-class activity. The “mystery book exercise” teaches students skills for evaluating unfamiliar materials quickly and placing them in a context of a discipline or topic. Students in Cecilia Miller’s intellectual history and political fiction classes enjoy a “treasure hunt” in the Davison Rare Book Room, identifying books that fit complex criteria and making connections among them. Often classes include assignments that require or encourage students to return to SC&A for more in-depth research.

Some classes focus on student work with special collections and archival materials. Archiving America (ENG 341), an English class taught by Assistant Professor Marguerite Nguyen, is a case in point. This course asked the question “How do we know what we know?” By investigating and critiquing how archives and special collections are built, developed, and used, students explored ways libraries and archives shape knowledge. In addition to teaching students about the holdings of SC&A, Taraba and Johnson spoke to the class about their own careers and what archivists and special collections librarians actually do. Students tried their hands at analyzing an unprocessed archival collection, gaining an insight into practical issues about access, organization, and preservation. As a final paper, each student conducted a semester-long archival project. Some used SC&A holdings, others used family materials, and others focused on literary theory as a lens through which to view archives.

Other sessions culminate in a presentation by an archivist or librarian. For example, the Davison Rare Book Room collection, identifying books that fit complex criteria and making connections among them. Often classes include assignments that require or encourage students to return to SC&A for more in-depth research.

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Students came away with a new understanding of the multifaceted meanings of archives, and we gained new ways of seeing Wesleyan’s collections.

— SUZY TARABA, DIRECTOR OF SPECIAL COLLECTIONS & ARCHIVES

Rien que le savoir — DIANE KLARE, HEAD OF REFERENCE
BIG CHANGES THIS SUMMER

This spring and summer, the librarians are undertaking major changes to make books easier to find and to enhance group and collaborative study spaces.

WHAT’S HAPPENING

WEEDING PROJECT: For the past two years, the library has undertaken a project to withdraw 60,000 volumes from the library’s almost one million-volume circulating collection, to make it possible to move the Art Library into Olin (and to create space for new books). This project is coming to an end and will be completed by May 2014, having met the 60,000-volume withdrawal target with help and suggestions from many Wesleyan faculty members. Next year the library will establish an ongoing weeding process, selecting a small number of books to withdraw annually based on condition, use, availability, and “out-of-dates” (in fields in which this is a factor).

With the completion of the project, there is now enough shelf space to move the Art Library into Olin.

ART IN OLIN SPACE: The Art Library in the Center for the Arts is a much-loved, popular place for students to study. But it is small—since 1989 it has been out of shelf space and less-used art books have been regularly transferred to Olin Library. As a result, the art book collection is now pretty evenly split between the Art Library and Olin Library—less than ideal for students and researchers. The space also lacks air-conditioning, so at times in the summer the temperature and humidity rise to a level that is not good for books and is very uncomfortable for students and staff working there.

This summer a new art area will be created on the second floor of Olin Library. In the stacks, the art books will be re-organized—the books from the Art Library inter-shelved with the art books now in Olin. Art Librarian Susanne Jaworski will have an office on the second floor just off the main stairwell. Next to her office will be an area with a color photocopier and selected art materials, and next to that will be a large collaborative study/seminar room. Tables and workstations near the second floor stacks will facilitate the study of large-format materials and group work.

All these spaces have been designed with the needs of art and art history students and researchers in mind, but they will be available to the entire Wesleyan community. Their updated functionality and style will be a welcome addition to the library’s more traditional study spaces and will also enhance Olin’s symbolic role embodying Wesleyan’s academic mission in the 21st century.

GENDER-NEUTRAL BATHROOM IN OLIN: This past year, members of Wesleyan’s trans* community expressed concerns about the lack of gender-neutral bathrooms in Olin and in other buildings on campus. Trans* people working in Olin were forced either to choose a gendered bathroom within the library that they did not feel comfortable using, or to go another building with a gender-neutral bathroom. In response to this situation, a gender-neutral bathroom will be installed on the ground floor of Olin Library this summer.

Wesleyan University Library services and resources are constantly evolving in response to the needs of Wesleyan students and faculty. We are very pleased to be able to make these changes in our facilities in order to adapt to 21st-century scholarship and create an environment that is equally welcoming and functional for everyone.

— Pat Tully, University Librarian —

WINTER 2014

FRIENDS OF THE WESLEYAN LIBRARY UPDATE WINTER 2014

With a dynamic new look for the Friends newsletter, the Friends are energized to spread the word about many worthwhile library projects.

The first priority for this spring is to enable Preservation Librarian Michaele Biddle to conserve more books that have important ties to Wesleyan’s curriculum and/or its history. Although Wesleyan does its best to maintain books in fine condition, years of use by students and faculty inevitably cause wear and tear. Conservation treatment can counteract and remedy these effects, but the painstaking work is expensive—hence there is a constant need to seek conservation funding so that the books that support teaching and research today can still be read in the future. The Adopt a Book program, in which patrons choose from a selection of books needing treatment, is one way donations can be made for this vital work.

The F.W. Beers County Aitken of Middlesex, Connecticut (1874), for example, is highly used by students researching 19th-century local history. As you can see from the accompanying photographs, a copy has been beautifully conserved, including mending the binding, thanks to Friends’ support. However, there is a second copy with lost pages, which needs to be adopted as well, since both are often in demand for teaching classes and individual research. Two pamphlets by poet Siegfried Sassoon have received treatment including the removal of a stain in the photo opposite, with drawings by Stephen Tennant. Part of the work done on Frances E. Chickering’s Cloud Crystals: A Snow-flake Album [an anthology including: 65 poems, stories, and scientific articles about snow] was the repaired binding pictured here. Readers who would like to find out more about the Adopt a Book program can visit wesleyan.edu/libr/friends/adoptabook.html or e-mail libfriends@wesleyan.edu.

The second priority this spring is to support the continuation of an oral history of retired Wesleyan faculty project that was begun three years ago in spring 2011 as a collaboration among Karl Scheibe, director of the Wash Center for Retired Faculty, history professor Sean McCann, and English professor Anne Greene. In its first iteration, students interviewed five retired faculty members and transcriptions were done by a University of Connecticut-based service. To continue to gather this important perspective on Wesleyan’s history, the Wash Centre has asked Nancy Smith, former Wesleyan magazine editor, to conduct six interviews and prepare edited transcripts, which will be made available online and deposited in the university archives. The Friends are happy to join with other departments in the preservation of voices that have helped shaped Wesleyan’s community. If you would like to support this project through your membership in the Friends, please e-mail libfriends@wesleyan.edu or visit wesleyan.edu/libr/friends.

The Friends spring events calendar is in the works and will be sent out in February. We are looking forward to a lively annual meeting program, exhibits and open houses in the library, and a spring book sale, and hope to see you at some of these events. In the meantime, stop by our ongoing book sale on the shelves outside Smith Reading Room, 1st floor Olin Library. If you have questions about membership, would like to become involved as a volunteer, sponsor programs, or donate books to the book sale, please contact me at libfriends@wesleyan.edu.

— Jennifer Hadley, Library Assistant and Coordinator of the Friends —