INTRODUCING FRANCESCA LIVERMORE

THE LIBRARY welcomes Francesca Livermore as Wesleyan's first digital projects librarian. In this newly created role, Livermore will lead projects to digitize and build online collections of library materials. She sees digitization as a tool to provide greater access to and awareness of unique and important content while permitting new ways of incorporating the materials into teaching and research (see related article “The Game’s Afoot: Evolving Access to Wesleyan’s Treasures” to learn more about how this is happening at Wesleyan and beyond). Meanwhile, proper digitization and storage procedures will enable us to preserve these rare materials for the future in digital form.

Livermore’s 13 years working in libraries and her strong background in managing digital projects, working with rare books and manuscripts, and creating metadata make her well-prepared for this role. Her most recent position as Yale University’s Arts Area Digital Librarian utilized both her undergraduate degree in art history (Hartwick College) and her master’s in library science (Drexel University).

Prior to working at Yale, Livermore spent seven years at Colgate University in both the Cataloging and Rare Books & Manuscripts departments. She is excited to return to a smaller liberal arts institution where she can work more directly with faculty, staff, and students.

She looks forward to partnering with faculty and staff to identify collections that are ideal candidates for digitization, working with faculty to incorporate those materials into their research and coursework in novel ways, and bringing students into greater contact with the rich collections available in Wesleyan’s libraries.

Livermore is happy to discuss new ideas and develop methods for supporting student and faculty research, teaching, and learning at Wesleyan. Please reach out to her at flivermow@wesleyan.edu or call 860-685-3882.

— LORI STEITHERS, SYSTEMS AND EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES LIBRARIAN —

SIGNS OF CHANGE

If you have visited Olin Library recently, you may have noticed colorful, new signage throughout the building. In summer 2014, the Art Library moved into Olin Library, which caused a major shift in the entire collection in order to accommodate all of the art books and periodicals. In addition, several offices were moved to make way for the new Art Library and Group Study Rooms. As a result, the first floor was completely redone on the second floor. With all of these changes, the existing stack guides and floor maps contained outdated information, and a committee of three librarians and two library assistants was formed and tasked with updating these signs.

In addition to replacing the existing signs, the committee wanted to incorporate a wayfinding system to help people navigate within the library. This included new directories and overhead signs in specific colors to define each floor. It was important that the sign inserts could be easily swapped out for any future changes in library signage. The Olin signage was bought up to ADA compliance for our sight-impaired patrons. The Science Library also received several new directory and overhead signs.

The committee worked closely with Anne Marcotty and Dena Matthews in Olin Communications in designing the new signs. A local sign company, Sign Pro of Plantsville, Conn., was hired to manufacture and install the signs. Brandi Hood, in Construction Services, also was instrumental in getting this project completed.

— LISA PHINETTE, LIBRARY ASSISTANT, ACCESS SERVICES —

EXPLORING THE STUDENT E-BOOK EXPERIENCE

F or the last four summers (2011–2014), prior to my appointment as interim university librarian, Kendall Hobbs, reference/instruction librarian, and I have been engaged in a usability study of students’ use of academic e-books. Like many academic libraries, Wesleyan University Libraries have been purchasing or subscribing to more and more e-books to augment our collection of print books. Kendall and I were interested in how students felt about their use of e-books and how they might incorporate them into their research work at Wesleyan.

Quantitative statistics (e.g., what and how many e-books have been used, for how long, how many pages have been printed) are relatively easy to obtain from our e-book providers, but few studies have been done on student preferences by means of interviews. In addition to results we obtained by interviewing students while recording their answers and using screen capture software, we launched a quantitative survey component in 2013 with the advantage of using the MISO survey, a standard survey given to Wesleyan students every two years, to incorporate five questions specifically addressing student use of e-books.

The results of our efforts from 2011–2014 were recently presented at the biennial Association of College and Research Libraries conference held in Portland, Oregon. The topic was of great interest to conference participants, and more than 275 attendees listened to our overview of our longitudinal study findings.

Many might assume that students, who are often referred to as digital natives, would be entirely comfortable with using e-books in the same manner that they use their laptops, smartphones, or tablets. The quantitative and qualitative results illustrate findings that counter that assumption. While students are fairly adaptable to new online tools and devices, in many ways they are slower than expected in adopting new techniques that do not fit in seamlessly with their already established successful habits for studying and writing their research papers. Moreover, many students do not draw on the analogy of online e-books being equivalent to the way online journal articles can be used (i.e., searching for concepts or manipulated, i.e., saving in a familiar file format). As a consequence, many of the more advanced options available in e-book platforms are rarely used. In addition, the non-standardization of e-book platforms can be confusing and perplexing to students, who may have limited time to obtain materials for their papers due to their busy schedules.

Although students over the four years have shown greater acceptance of e-books as time has passed, to use a book with great facility or an extended period of time, many students still prefer working with print books due to the ability to visually present internal locations or add easily visible sticky notes for annotation.

For librarians who select materials for the library’s book collection, this study has provided context on whether an e-book or print title should become part of the collection. For quick access needs or relatively limited print runs (e.g., a reference book), e-books are a benefit to students and are now often selected when given a choice. But for deep reading of literature or significant academic texts, the decision is a more nuanced one and can be dictated by the e-book platform features and the expected demand for a title. With ever changing options and a variety of e-book providers that the Wesleyan University Libraries purchases from or subscribes to, the library world has become very interesting indeed.

— DIANE KLARA, INTERIM UNIVERSITY LIBRARIAN —
friends of the wesleyan library

there is just enough room to mention two of the many wonderful events that took place in the library during the 2015 spring semester. On April 21, Diane Longley ’82 spoke about the book she co-authored with Buck Zaidel, Heroes for All Time: Connecticut’s Civil War Soldiers Tell Their Stories (Wesleyan University Press), at the Friends of the Wesleyan Library Annual Meeting. Civil War material from Special Collections & Archives was on exhibit before and after the talk. On February 23, Eiko Otake, visiting artist in dance and the College of East Asian Studies, performed A Body in a Library to a riveted audience, who followed her movement from the Olin Library lobby throughout the building. Part of a larger project to explore non-traditional venues and to respond to the innate characteristics of each specific place, [at the c.a.r.e. . . . is her alone exploring, solitude, gauge, and intimacy . . . participate] with the particularities of places and viewers. The conversation that happens in the community becomes an integral part of the experience for audiences and artist alike” (from the Center for the Arts website). The performance transformed the experience of being in Olin and emphasized that the library is not only a place for research and study, but also for inspiration, creativity, and collaboration.

we thank the people who support the library through membership in the Friends and book donations. if you would like to join the friends or sponsor events or projects, please e-mail me at libfriends@wesleyan.edu. perhaps you might help the library build its digital lab facilities or sponsor the fellowship program for students, or events, please e-mail libfriends@wesleyan.edu or visit wesleyan.edu/libr/friends.

pasting in the memories

(Reprinted from the Special Collection & Archives blog from October 10, 2014)
in fall 1910, a young man from Oneonta, New York—a small town made important by the railroad earlier in the 19th century—stepped onto Wesleyan’s campus. He was only the second in his family to go to college, but he was not the first. His older brother had recently graduated in 1907, and this young man was ready to create his own stories that he could tell to the people back home. He was one of 121—the largest entering freshman class up to that point in Wesleyan’s history. His name was Lynn Smith Miller.

Lynn Smith Miller had a Wesleyan experience that was similar to many other individuals who came both before and after his graduation in 1914. He went to the movie theater on Main Street (the Nickel Theater at that time); he attended vesper services, cheered at the football games, dealt with a roommate, and sometimes did not finish his assignments. The difference between Lynn Smith Miller and many other Wesleyan students is that he left a record, a detailed record of his own time, on campus.

Rather than just having paperwork on Miller or seeing his name in the alumni records, we can see the cigarettes he smoked (some of them instructor), the invitations he received (some from then-President Shanklin), the ticket stubs he purchased (from both live productions and movies), his schedules (lots of language classes), and his admittance into his fraternity (the Wesleyan Chapter of Delta Upsilon). We have his booklets from all of the dances he attended with the names of his partners carefully penciled in next to each song. We have his diary and tuition bill for 1913. We know of Miller’s pride in his class’s triumph in the “cannon” scan of the Douglas Cannon in 1910 because of the numerous newspaper articles he saved. We know all of this because of the immense scrapbook that Lynn Smith Miller created that was recently donated to Wesleyan’s Special Collections & Archives by his niece, John W. Miller, Wesleyan Class of 1953.

The scrapbook is about 160 pages with multiple items on each page and more stored in envelopes inside the scrapbook. These items either relate to Miller’s personal experience at Wesleyan or to the more general experience of a student enrolled in the University at the beginning of the 20th century. By flipping through the pages of the scrapbook, one can get insight into what student life was like—what were the popular events on campus, what were the groups that formed and which stood around, what were the prevalent courses, and what did students find were particularly important experiences to have during their time on campus. Beyond the scrapbook, the collection contains two diaries (one covers Miller’s freshman year in 1910–1911 and the other covers the second semester of his junior year [January–June 1913]), medals given to Miller at Wesleyan’s 100th anniversary in 1931, and a supplemental binder put together by Miller’s son containing secondary information. The diaries give a day-by-day accounting of what Miller was going through. Information ranges from the seemingly unimportant—perhaps the weather for that day—to the anticipated moments—getting to walk downtown.

Miller would go on to graduate Wesleyan with a BA, although his family is not sure in what subject his degree was given (they think it was in history). He served in World War I as a private of the infantry and then worked in newspapers with his older brother in both North Indianapolis, Ind. and Royal Oak, Mich. (a suburb of Detroit). Lynn Smith Miller passed away on January 26, 1962 in Michigan. He and his family, including his son John (see above), continue to be a part of the Wesleyan community; the donation of this scrapbook lets us unite with a classmate from a century ago.

— emma rothberg ’15, student assistant, special collections & archives —

the game’s afoot: evolving access to wesleyan’s treasures

wesleyan University has rich special collections that we can make so much more visible through digitization. While nothing can replace the experience of handling original objects, there is great potential in putting digital surrogates in the hands of scholars. Capturing these digital surrogates and publishing them online produces a dramatic shift in access and use that is abstracted from time or place. For example, in the middle of the night, a student studying abroad in France can read material by Henry Bacon about the construction of the Lincoln Memorial. Similarly, a reporter crafting a video that needs god as she and her husband receive heart -

francesca livermore, digital projects librarian —

night flying—a new book by library staff joy christine miłozanowski

night flying weaves a journey of a lifetime and changing choices with a narrative of love, understanding, and hope. in her diary, mae questions god as she and her husband, bracing for breaking news about her pregnancy and agonize over the decisions they face. needing time away to think, she visits her childhood home and reconnects with will, a deaf friend who taught her to sign when they were young. the two pen will continue an intimate written exchange in which she confides her despair, while will shares his own struggle to honor his dying father’s wishes and reconcile his mother’s reluctance to let go.

joy miłozanowski is a writer, artist, and a trans personal hypnotherapist with an interest in expressive arts, as well as a staff member at Olin Library. She has an MFA in creative writing.

the book may be purchased via Amazon.com. The Friends were pleased to host a reading by Joy on April 29 in Olin Library, as compelling a speaker as she is a writer, recounts the unexpected audience part of her journey to becoming a writer.

frida karina tello-ortiz, director of the Friends of the Wesleyan Library, served as coordinator and jennifer hadley, Friends of the Wesleyan Library, as coordinator of the Friends’ Check It Out program. funding for Check It Out is provided by the Friends of the Wesleyan Library. Check It Out is a part of the Friends’ Check It Out—sunrise—book donation program. the Friends are grateful to library staff and the Wesleyan community for their support.

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