

# CHECK IT OUT

WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES

October 2005

- THE INFORMATION COMMONS
- TRILLIAN
- NEW DATABASES

## TRILLIAN—A BIRD, A PLANE OR A PREHISTORIC INSECT?

**TRILLIAN IS** actually none of the above, but it is a really cool software program that allows remote library users to contact a Wesleyan University reference librarian for live-chat with their questions about using the library. Trillian is compatible with your favorite chat software such as AOL Instant Messenger (AIM), Yahoo Messenger, MSN Messenger, and the soon to be released Google messenger service. A reference librarian will be available to take your questions in a chatroom during regular reference hours:

Monday–Thursday, 10 a.m.–10 p.m.; Friday, 10 a.m.–5 p.m.; and Sunday, 2 p.m.–5 p.m., 7 p.m.–10 p.m. Simply click the **Reference LIVE HELP!** icon located at the upper right hand corner of any screen in the Wesleyan Library homepage and select **Web Login** for your preferred chat service in order to connect to the librarian. If you do not have a chat service on your computer, select the program you wish to download under **Service**. Our library users now have the following ways to get help from a librarian: in person at the Reference Desk, by telephone, by e-mail, or through Trillian. Talk with you soon in one of our Reference Assistance chatrooms!

— ALAN J. NATHANSON,  
BIBLIOGRAPHER/REFERENCE LIBRARIAN

WESLEYAN  
UNIVERSITY

*From the University Librarian*

## ANOTHER WAY TO THINK ABOUT LIBRARY “COLLECTIONS”

Academic libraries are developing new ways to define and build library “collections.” The traditional model involves the purchase, cataloging, preservation, and housing of print material. This model creates heavy financial expenditures for space, acquisitions, and staffing. Our serials librarian now expends considerable time deciding which journals Wesleyan requires, and then negotiating licensing agreements with vendors who “package” or “aggregate” electronic journals. But, the times are changing. Since most libraries share their holdings in order to avoid duplication of infrequently used titles, some funds that are used to purchase books could be reallocated to Interlibrary Loan—a popular and growing service. Most libraries are also looking to off-site or compact storage for housing infrequently used materials so that more library space can be utilized as study areas. The new Olin Library Information Commons is a good example. The Information Commons is a first step in the development of greater space devoted to group study where faculty, students, librarians, and information technologists can collaborate.

What happens to library “collections” in this new environment? Lorcan Dempsey and Eric Childress of the OCLC Research and Development team have developed a “collections grid” that offers valuable insights. There are four types of “content” represented on this grid. The first type is “published content.” This category includes electronic databases, e-journals, monographs, and other published resources in physical formats. Libraries spend most of their acquisitions funds for materials in this category.

The second type is “special collections.” These include rare books and manuscripts that require intensive physical maintenance and security protection. Special collections are expensive, but they represent the uniqueness of a particular library. Our Special Collections also contains Wesleyan’s institutional history that serves the research needs of local historians, a student’s thesis about a rare book, or an attorney’s inquiry about institutional archival documents.

The third type is “open Web content.” This segment of library resources is growing rapidly, and they are available to anyone with an Internet connection. These resources are difficult to manage and to present, and they absorb considerable amounts of a librarian’s time to work with users to evaluate their quality and scholarly reliability.

The fourth area is “institutional content”—a quickly developing area that includes technical reports, learning objects, courseware, and other faculty and student Web creations. MIT was one of the first libraries to deal with how to control this material, and their solution is called “d-space.” This area, like special collections, contains content unique to the particular institution.

Because of ever-limited resources and ever-growing information to purchase, Wesleyan is exploring how better to allocate funds and staffing to address all four information content areas. It is crucial that librarians serve as stewards for what we purchase; our permanent collections are clearly a significant part of Wesleyan’s investments. We must be able to house and provide easy access to library resources both for Wesleyan as well as for our consortial users. We must insure security and physical stability for Wesleyan’s collections of uniquely owned collections. For materials published in traditional formats, we will continue to collaborate as much as possible with other institutions to avoid unnecessary duplication.

Michael Roy, director of academic computing services and digital projects librarian, works directly with me to examine how the Library and ITS can work together to define the impact of the new information environment. We will form working groups of faculty, librarians, and others to study publishing trends in various subject fields. We seek grants in collaboration with other libraries to develop ways to deal with the ever increasing complexity of what we call “information.”

— BARBARA JONES, UNIVERSITY LIBRARIAN



## THE INFORMATION COMMONS: A NEW MODEL FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

**ONCE UPON A TIME**, everyone did library research by looking up their topic in the card catalog and in printed periodical indexes, and then went to the stacks to find the items they needed. They studied at a library table or a desk. Group work was discouraged because of the noise. Students most often typed papers in their dormitory rooms. Things are now very different; during the last few years alone, there has been an dramatic increase in the amount and variety of information available, especially in electronic formats. Conducting effective research has increased in complexity because of the sheer number of online sources for books, articles, recordings, and data sets as well as sound and visual materials. "Information literacy"—defined as the mastery of the skills and knowledge necessary to effectively locate and access resources for research—is a constantly changing and evolving goal for faculty and students, especially since these technologies undergo constant change and proliferation. For students and other researchers, it becomes increasingly difficult simply to learn which database or databases are most likely to contain the information they seek. They need professional guidance in both identifying those databases, and how best to search them for the materials they require. Under the impact of technological change, class assignments and research methods have changed dramatically. Students often work collaboratively on individual as well as group projects. Research papers and other assignments require the use of sophisticated software programs such as Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and End Note. The University offers a wide range of support services to assist students to manage these aspects of their work. With all these academic resources and services to help using them, the most important question for students becomes, "Where can I find exactly the information that I need, and how can I get assistance in finding it?"

The new Information Commons in the Campbell Reference Center at Olin Library is designed to offer "one-stop shopping" for academic research, technological support, and other information to assist students with other important skills such as effective writing, mathematical skills, and proficiency in identifying career opportunities. The Commons was developed through a collaborative effort by the Wesleyan University Library, Information Technology Services (ITS), and the programs of the Student Academic Resources Network (SARN). At the new Information Commons, traditional reference service will continue to be available to consult about how best to do research, finding general and specific information, and answering questions about library policies. ITS technology consultants will be available during the hours that reference service is available to resolve technical issues such as printing problems, connectivity issues, and specific questions about computer software use. To further augment the services provided by the librarians and the technical consultants, SARN (a coalition of academic support programs that includes the Class Deans, the Writing Program, the Math Workshop, the Career Resource Center, the Language Resource Center, Life Sciences Mentored Study Groups, the Dean's Tutoring Program, the Health Professions Partnership Initiative, and the Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship Program) will also have representatives at the Information Commons to work with students. Writing tutors, for example, will be available several evenings each week for drop-in consultations in Room 106 adjacent to the Commons.

The new furniture and equipment in the Commons will facilitate either individual or group study, with or without computers. There are 26 workstations with plenty of chairs. Twelve new computers—nine PCs and three Macs—supplement the 15 PCs that were already in the Campbell Reference Center. A scanner and color printer are available in addition to two additional laser printers. The Reference Desk continues to anchor the space, while an additional desk has been added for the ITS technology consultants and SARN representatives. The new Information Commons has its own Web site ([www.wesleyan.edu/infocommons/](http://www.wesleyan.edu/infocommons/)) where you will find such information as desk hours and contact information for programs participating in the Commons, as well as FAQs about the library, technology, and the Student Academic Resources Network (SARN).

The services and facilities offered by the Information Commons will evolve and change over time to better meet the research, writing and technological requirements of Wesleyan faculty, students and staff. To help us determine what future changes to consider for the Commons we encourage you to forward your ideas and suggestions to us. Either send an e-mail to [infocommons@wesleyan.edu](mailto:infocommons@wesleyan.edu), or complete a feedback form available online from the library homepage or the Information Commons homepage. There are also paper feedback forms at Olin reference desk. In addition, we are conducting an ongoing survey of the Information Commons. To participate, please send us your e-mail address, and we will reply with a link to the survey form. All responses will be strictly confidential.

There are plans to construct a variety of new group study and instructional spaces both within and outside of Olin Library, fully equipped and furnished to support traditional instruction and informal collaborative work. As librarians, technology consultants, and SARN representatives work together, they will develop innovative services and programs that will further coordinate the strengths of each unit. In short, the Information Commons will continue to evolve in response to the changing needs of 21st-century teaching, learning, and scholarship at Wesleyan.

— PAT TULLY, ASSOCIATE UNIVERSITY LIBRARIAN

## LIBRARIANS' ACTIVITIES, SUMMER, 2005

Michaëlle Biddle, head of preservation services, volunteered on an archaeological dig as a way to gain a better understanding of the history of a specific area in the past. She spent six weeks this past summer in Petra in the Kingdom of Jordan. Petra is designated as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Michaëlle volunteered as one of five diggers for the 21st season of the American Expedition to Petra, led by Dr. Philip C. Hammond, emeritus professor of anthropology at the University of Utah and an authority on the Nabateans. The Nabateans were an industrious pre-Arab people who built the monumental city of Petra about 2,200 years ago. The expedition uncovered the northern perimeter of a plaza that had been buried since an earthquake in 363 AD that destroyed roughly 60 percent of the city. The plaza is behind the Temple of the Winged Lions, the most important Nabatean temple in the city. The Temple was built in 27 AD and destroyed in same the earthquake. In six weeks, the five diggers cleared 50 cubic feet of dirt, earthquake fall, and hard packed mud slides. The workers this summer discovered beads, coins, oil lamps, many, many pieces of pottery, and a beautifully carved life sized bas-relief bust of a male. The group worked five days a week on the site, drawing pottery and the pavement, and documenting their finds. The other two days were spent exploring Petra. With more than 1,000 historical monuments and many miles of trails in the Petra region, it literally took every free minute to see everything of interest in this fascinating and historical area. Michaëlle has also worked on archaeological expeditions in Paqueme, Mexico, and Hueco Tanks, Texas. She plans to work at an Inca site in Cuzco, Peru next summer.

Alan Nathanson, bibliographer/reference librarian, worked for five weeks last summer on the cURL (Curricular Resource Library) project in European Intellectual History. This project is an ongoing collaboration with Cecilia Miller of the History Department, and Mike Roy and Mary Glynn of ITS. The purpose of the European Intellectual History component of cURL is to offer students and scholars access to a wide range of thoroughly annotated and cataloged Web sites in this very broad field from ancient Greece to the Enlightenment through Postmodernism. Alan has served as a contributor to, as well as cataloger of, this project since its inception in 1998. The ITS staff developed and continue to improve the software, and they have also secured grant funding for project support. Cecilia Miller is general editor and she actively uses the resources in cURL for class assignments in her history and CSS courses at Wesleyan. cURL-EIH also employs outside academic contributors as well as advanced undergraduate students to locate valuable Web sites for inclusion in the database. Anyone interested in locating subjects ranging from Aristotle to Voltaire,

or from Machiavelli through late 20th-century political and philosophical thinkers should visit the database at [www.wesleyan.edu/curl/](http://www.wesleyan.edu/curl/). You will find links to full-texts of primary texts of the thinkers, secondary critical material about them, images, timelines, and occasionally some sound files. If you have any questions about content please contact Alan at [anathanson@wesleyan.edu](mailto:anathanson@wesleyan.edu) or [cmiller@wesleyan.edu](mailto:cmiller@wesleyan.edu).

Sally Grucan, catalog librarian, is completing the cataloging and reorganization of the Grace W. Bacon Library of the First Church of Christ congregation in Middletown, an endeavor she began 10 years ago as a volunteer. Open to the public and used by members of the Wesleyan community, the library has about 2,000 books and audiovisuals relating to the Bible, Christian and non-Christian theology, church history, ethical issues, and religious and spiritual aspects of art, literature, science, and the social sciences. There is also a collection of biography and fiction. The library is named in honor of the previous church librarian who had also been a librarian at Wesleyan from 1946 to 1971.

— ALAN J. NATHANSON,  
BIBLIOGRAPHER/REFERENCE LIBRARIAN

## METALIB COMES TO WESLEYAN

The library will be launching a new library online search tool, MetaLib, during the fall semester to assist users in their research efforts. MetaLib is software that allows library users to search across many information resources at the same time, including library databases, online catalogs, and digital collections. This ability, which has become increasingly popular in academic libraries, is often referred to as “federated searching.” For students who are just beginning to learn how to do scholarly research in an academic library or are unsure of where to begin looking for resources on a specific topic of interest, federated searching can serve as a good starting point.

MetaLib offers users the opportunity to construct searches across various library resources and then save the results for later viewing or use. Furthermore, for purposes of ongoing research, users can save their specific search criteria across selected research databases and MetaLib will re-run the searches on a weekly basis to determine if new citations have been added. When new journal citations that fit the saved search criteria become available in those databases, the library user will receive notification via e-mail about the new sources. MetaLib also offers other customization options, such as the opportunity for users to specify the format of the sources to be searched, e.g., newspapers or journals.

When the same citation appears in more than one database, MetaLib is designed to remove duplicate items to eliminate redundancy in search results, as well as rank the listed results based on the relevancy

## NEW INDEXES AND DATABASES

**THE BEGINNING** of the academic year is an excellent time to introduce Wesleyan faculty, students, and staff to some of the new indexes and databases to which the library has subscribed during the preceding year. The listing below is a partial one from which I have selected one or two from the sciences, the social sciences, and the humanities. When you scan the list of indexes and databases on the library homepage all of the newer ones available at Wesleyan are designated with the NEW icon.

- Architectural Index serves as an index to journal articles in 18 architectural publications beginning in 1982. Printed indexing with coverage retrospective to 1957 is available in the Art Library. Subject content includes general architecture, landscape architecture, and historic preservation, as well as urban planning, design, and construction. Users should be aware that this is not a full-text database as it provides bibliographic citations only.
- Criminal Justice Abstracts contains full bibliographic data (no full-text) to journal articles, books, reports, and dissertations as well as unpublished papers in criminology back to 1968. This database is an excellent resource for locating research materials on topics such as crime trends and prevention, juvenile delinquency and justice, the police, courts, sentencing and punishment, social work and substance abuse.
- Johns Hopkins Guide to Literary Theory & Criticism is a full-text encyclopedic database that offers detailed articles about literary theorists and critics, theoretical schools and movements, and critical and theoretical innovations of specific countries and historical periods ranging from antiquity to the present time. Although the scope is international, the emphasis is on Western critical theory. The database is searchable by name, topic, or keyword.
- Westlaw Campus serves the needs of students in political science, government, and law. It contains full-texts of state and federal law including statutes, regulations, and case law. Coverage includes cases from “the courts of all 50 states and the Federal courts, states of all 50 states and federal statutes, federal regulations published in the Federal Register and the Code of Federal Regulations.” Federal cases are available since 1789, state cases since the early 1800s, and the Federal Register since 1980. In addition, there is access to American Law Reports and American Jurisprudence, 2d as well as access to the full-text of law journal articles. Changes to statutes and new cases are updated daily.
- Zentralblatt MATH contains a wide range of subjects in pure and applied mathematics, including probability theory; statistics; mathematical physics; classical, solid, and fluid mechanics; mathematical programming; and systems theory. Source coverage includes journal articles, series, books, and conference proceedings retrospective to 1886. Full bibliographic information is provided with brief abstracts. There are some links directly to full-texts since 1985.

Users of these and all other databases offered by Wesleyan University Library should contact a reference librarian either at Olin or the Science Library for assistance and advice in formulating efficient search strategies.

— ALAN J. NATHANSON, BIBLIOGRAPHER/REFERENCE LIBRARIAN

of the citations to the search terms used. Like the other electronic resources available through the Wesleyan library, MetaLib search results will also include the SFX full-text citation linker currently offered through individual databases and will also be available from off campus through the proxy service the library offers.

Despite its growing popularity as an academic search tool, users should be aware that the best way to search library resources will still be to refine and use the native interfaces offered by individual databases after a preliminary search has been run using federated software. Using MetaLib as a first step will help source out citations of possible interest and assist users in determining which databases might prove to be rich in appropriate resources. Since databases can differ considerably from each other regarding their structure, however, one might find that a specific search term in one database is not a valid search term in a different database even if the subject content of both databases is similar.

In addition, keyword relevancy ranking within a specific database can differ from a MetaLib search. Finally, searching within specific databases can also provide the opportunity to conduct more complex searches than searching across several databases simultaneously.

Given these considerations, the addition of MetaLib to Wesleyan’s library resources will offer library users a new alternative to searching that should enable them to get a good start on uncovering relevant resources. Combining that preliminary search with more specific searches in applicable databases, as revealed by the MetaLib federated search tool, as well as consulting and meeting with the reference librarians available at Olin Library, the Science Library, and the Art Library, will result in a thorough and well-rounded approach to scholarly research. Students will be able to take advantage of this strategy when determining appropriate paper and electronic resources for their academic needs.

— DIANE KLARE, SCIENCE REFERENCE LIBRARIAN

## LIBRARY PARAPROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES & DEVELOPMENT

**WESLEYAN LIBRARIES'** paraprofessional staff, those staff members who do not have advanced library degrees, work hard to stay abreast of new library and technological trends in order to maintain a creative perspective in their increasingly complex jobs. During the past academic year the paraprofessionals hosted several in-house workshops, attended classes, and participated in regional and national conferences. Tours of library departments organized by the paraprofessional group have been useful in increasing our understanding of the work of other library departments.

Many paraprofessional staff members have taken advantage of ITS and GLSP classes as well as training offered by the Connecticut State Libraries, the Connecticut Library Consortium, and NELINET. Jody Cormack Viswanathan (Scores and Recordings) and others studied grant writing through the GLSP. Kathleen Logsdon (Binding) and others learned valuable tips at a CSL workshop on "Wet Books." Lisa Pinette, Kathy Stefanowicz, and Kate Wolfe (ILL Dept.), attended First Search training through NELINET. Dot Samson, Elizabeth Wiese (Reserves) and others learned strategies to manage multiple tasks with less stress in "Getting Things Done," a seminar sponsored jointly by the library and ITS. Other CSL and CLC workshops taken included "Cataloging Non-Book Materials" and "Effective PR for your Events and Programs."

Conferences provided another venue for paraprofessional development. Shari Swanson and Linda DeRusha (Cataloging) learned about new trends in "Catalogers on the Fast Track: Gearing up for the Future." Margery May (Acquisitions), Jody Schenker (Cataloging), and others participated in the New England Voyager Users Group conferences; Voyager is Wesleyan's online library public catalog. Jessie Steele (Library Office/Serials) and other staff members participated in the annual Connecticut Library Association Support Staff conference, and other paraprofessional staff attended the CLA conference in New Haven. Cheryl Hagner (Special Collections) researched strategies for the development of Library Friends groups at the American Library Association's midwinter conference in Boston. Jennifer Hadley (Scores and Recordings) gathered information from the first ever support staff conference-within-a-conference at ALA's annual conference in Chicago in June. The examples cited above demonstrate the commitment of the paraprofessional staff in further developing their skills to contribute to the library's mission at Wesleyan.

— JENNIFER T. HADLEY, SCORES AND RECORDINGS/  
WORLD MUSIC ARCHIVES

## FRIENDS OF THE WESLEYAN LIBRARY

I would like to extend a formal welcome to new members who joined the Friends of the Wesleyan Library during the membership drive last spring and to thank everyone who made contributions of annual dues. In keeping with our mission to sponsor one event per semester and to continue to raise funds for the preservation of materials, the cataloging of hidden collections not otherwise funded in the library budget, and for the publication of this newsletter, the Friends have an exciting and challenging year ahead.

On September 22, 2005, Professor David Sider of the Classics Department at NYU, visited Wesleyan to present a lecture entitled A Vast Storehouse of Knowledge: Books and Libraries in Ancient Times. This fascinating talk was cosponsored by the Department of Classical Studies at Wesleyan and the Friends of the Wesleyan Library. Many thanks to Andy Szegedy-Maszak, professor of classical studies and Friends board member for arranging this successful collaboration.

Beginning in the summer of 2005, librarians and library staff worked together on a large-scale de-accessioning project of book titles for which the library owns three or more copies. These de-accessioned books, along with gift books that we have kept in storage, will be available for purchase at the Friends book sale scheduled for spring 2006. A book sale of this size is an enormous venture and will require many volunteers to make it a success. I invite all those interested in helping with the book sale to contact me at [chagner@wesleyan.edu](mailto:chagner@wesleyan.edu) or (860) 685-3805.

The Friends organization makes a crucial difference to the well-being of the libraries at Wesleyan. I hope you will join us in membership and as a volunteer.

**CHERYL-ANN HAGNER, COORDINATOR,  
FRIENDS OF THE WESLEYAN LIBRARY,  
AND SPECIAL COLLECTIONS AND ARCHIVES ASSISTANT**



### LIBRARY DEPARTMENTAL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

<b>OLIN LIBRARY, FRONT DESK</b>	, , , , ,	<b>685-2660</b>
<b>REFERENCE AND RESEARCH</b>	, , , , ,	<b>685-3873</b>
<b>CIRCULATION DEPARTMENT</b>	, , , , ,	<b>685-3877</b>
<b>RESERVE OFFICE</b>	, , , , ,	<b>685-3852</b>
<b>INTERLIBRARY LOAN</b>	, , , , ,	<b>685-3876</b>
<b>ACQUISITIONS DEPARTMENT</b>	, , , , ,	<b>685-3834</b>
<b>CATALOGING DEPARTMENT</b>	, , , , ,	<b>685-3476</b>
<b>SERIALS DEPARTMENT</b>	, , , , ,	<b>685-3888</b>
<b>ART LIBRARY</b>	, , , , ,	<b>685-3327</b>
<b>PSYCHOLOGY LIBRARY</b>	, , , , ,	<b>685-2770</b>
<b>PRESERVATION DEPARTMENT</b>	, , , , ,	<b>685-3875</b>
<b>SCIENCE LIBRARY</b>	, , , , ,	<b>685-2860</b>
<b>SCORES AND RECORDINGS</b>	, , , , ,	<b>685-3898</b>
<b>SPECIAL COLLECTIONS/ARCHIVES</b>	, , , , ,	<b>685-3864</b>
<b>WORLD MUSIC ARCHIVES</b>	, , , , ,	<b>685-3826</b>



*Check It Out* is a publication of the Wesleyan University Libraries that has been published three to four times annually since 1998. Its purpose is to offer timely information to students, faculty, and staff of recent developments in library technologies and resources available at Wesleyan that will assist them in using the libraries in the most effective ways possible. Articles are contributed by library staff members, and the publication is edited by Alan J. Nathanson, bibliographer/reference librarian. [anathanson@wesleyan.edu](mailto:anathanson@wesleyan.edu), (860) 685-3869

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