FROM THE UNIVERSITY LIBRARIAN
GOOGLE BOOKS 101

You have probably heard of Google Books, and you may have heard that there was some controversy about it. So, what is all the fuss about anyway?

THE GOOGLE BOOK PROJECT: In December 2004, Google announced that it was working with Harvard, Stanford, the University of Michigan, the University of Oxford, and the New York Public Library to digitally scan their collections and make them searchable online. In 2005 the project was named the Google Books Library Project, and over the next few years several large libraries in the United States and around the world joined the project.

Google Books provides free, online full-text searching of more than 15 million books in their database. If the book is out of copyright (in the United States, anything published before 1923), the entire book can be accessed online. If a book is protected by copyright, then Google Books often provides a link to buy it or find it in a nearby library. Google recently premiered Google eBookstore, to sell downloadable versions of some of the titles in its database.

Google describes its purpose as follows: “Our goal is to improve access to books—not to replace them. Indeed, we’re working closely with publishers to develop new tools and opportunities for selling books online. Copyright law is supposed to ensure that authors and publishers have an incentive to create new work, not stop people from finding out that the work exists. By helping people find books, we believe we can increase the incentive to publish them. After all, if a book isn’t discovered, it won’t be bought.”

THE GOOGLE BOOK CONTROVERSY: Almost as soon as the project was announced the lawsuits began, with claims that Google had committed copyright infringement by scanning in-copyright books without permission from the rights-owners. Two suits were filed in 2005, by the Author’s Guild and by the Association of American Publishers. Several other suits followed in the United States and elsewhere.

THE SETTLEMENT AND THE AMENDED SETTLEMENT: In 2008 a settlement was reached between Google and the Author’s Guild and the
THE AMENDED SETTLEMENT REJECTED: On March 22, 2011, U.S. Circuit Judge Denny Chin rejected the amended settlement, saying that it went too far in proposing a business model in which Google may use books without copyright holders’ permission. Chin wrote, "It is incongruous with the purpose of the copyright laws to place the onus on copyright owners to come forward to protect their rights when Google copied their works without first seeking their permission."

WHAT’S NEXT?: No one knows yet, as of this writing (March 24, 2011). The parties to the settlement will take some time to review the ruling and consider their options.

This is not the end of the dream of a universal library, however. In 2008 the Hathi Trust was established by the Big Ten universities, the University of Chicago, the University of California system, and the University of Virginia. Their aim is to build a comprehensive archive of published literature from around the world and develop shared strategies for managing and developing their digital and print holdings in a collaborative way. Some of the 8.5 million volumes in the Hathi Trust were digitized by the Google Book Project, Internet Archive, and Microsoft. Hathi Trust is an alternative vision of a universal library that is managed by academia rather than a corporation, and so is less vulnerable to market pressures and demands.


— PAT TULLY, UNIVERSITY LIBRARIAN —

SPOTLIGHT ON TECHNICAL SERVICES

Wesleyan Library’s Technical Services department is seldom seen; indeed, most library patrons are not even aware we exist. Nevertheless, Tech Services is an integral component of the library. The behind-the-scenes work of the Acquisitions, Serials/E-Resources, Cataloging, and Preservation/Materials Processing departments that comprise Technical Services meshes seamlessly with that of our Public Services colleagues to ensure the timely availability of high-quality resources to you, our patrons.

Technical Services staff work with selectors to build, enhance, maintain, and keep Wesleyan’s library collections current, relevant, and accessible. We locate sources for chosen titles and resources, then order, receive, and route them to the appropriate staff; we also evaluate and process gift collections. We catalog materials using national standards in conjunction with specialized local practices tailored to our patrons’ needs. We manage physical processing, repairs, binding, and preservation. We trouble-shoot online catalog problems and answer questions from staff and patrons alike. Our extensive serials collections, both paper and electronic, are managed by TS staff, who work with vendors to provide access to the most current information relevant to Wesleyan’s programs via both paper and electronic resources. We are responsible for the complex (and time-consuming) dance that allows patrons to simply click on a link to access our ever-expanding collection of electronic resources. We process titles deemed no longer relevant to our patrons’ needs and will be involved in the upcoming weeding project discussed in the last issue of Check It Out. Our contributions to the international WorldCat database facilitate the availability of our collections to the wider library world. We perform “quality control” in every imaginable way. Most of our patrons never think about how a book (or DVD, CD-ROM, online journal, or database) gets into their hands or onto their computer screen, and that is as it should be.

So what does all this mean to a typical patron, you ask? Well, let’s see... A student has a paper due on Friday and needs a particular book. She searches Caleb, Wesleyan’s online catalog, and finds the title there. It’s been received, so she knows it’s in the library, but there’s no call number given, so what do? She clicks “Make a Request” and chooses “Request Item Ordered/Received/In Process.” Magically her request reaches Tech Services staff, who, using their considerable skills and experience (because there are any number of places it might be, depending on myriad factors), drop everything and hunt that book down. With lightning speed, we all do our various tasks that will get that book into her hands, enabling her to finish that paper way before deadline and still have time to catch up on her e-mail. Or, a faculty member requests a title of particular importance be added to our collection. Sometimes it’s as simple as a few mouse clicks to find and order the book. But maybe the book is out of print. Again, locating a copy may be a relatively straightforward matter. But what if it’s not? Have no fear! Our Technical Services staff will move heaven and earth to satisfy the request.

All Library staff have the same goal, whether at the front desk or in the back room: to provide our patrons with the materials and service they need to accomplish their goals.

— LINDA DERUSha, LIBRARY ASSISTANT / CATALOGER —

KALLIR FAMILY GIFT OF AUSTRIAN LITERATURE

The name Otto Kallir is well-known among art collectors and historians of early 20th-century European art. A champion of Austrian Expressionism, he brought artists such as Egon Schiele, Gustav Klimt, and Oskar Kokoschka to the attention of an American audience who knew nothing of them. He also was a respected publisher and book collector. Thanks to the generosity of the Kallir family, Wesleyan’s Special Collections and Archives now holds a rich selection from Otto Kallir’s personal book collection, donated in honor of Barbara Kallir, who graduated from Wesleyan in 1983.

Kallir first established himself in Vienna, where he founded the Neue Gallerie for art and the Johannes Press. In 1938, due to the Nazi takeover of Austria, Kallir immigrated to the United States, settling in New York City. There he started his career over, establishing the Gallerie St. Etienne, an art gallery which is still vibrant today under the direction of Jane Kallir and Hildegarde Bachert. With determination, enthusiasm, and persistence, Otto Kallir mounted
exhibitions of European avant-garde artists (including the first solo exhibitions of Schiele and Klimt in the United States), paving the way for the attention and reputation that Austrian Expressionism finally received. He also pursued his interest in self-taught and folk art, becoming one of the major champions of folk artists such as Grandma Moses.

Kallir’s diversity of interests spanned many other cultural and scientific avenues of the twentieth century, including aeronautics, modern literature, and graphics. He was an astute book collector and publisher, and was well-connected within Austrian literary circles. His book collection, now held by Special Collections and Archives, centers on Germanic-language literature from the late-19th and early-20th centuries, with a strong focus on Austrian and Jewish authors. The fact that more than two dozen of the books are inscribed by their authors to either Otto or his wife Fanny attests to the personal connection he had to many leading writers of the day.

The authors most heavily represented within the Kallir Collection are Hugo von Hofmannsthal, Rainer Maria Rilke, Thomas Mann, Richard Beer-Hofmann, and Joseph Roth. Valuable and rare fine-press limited editions, such as those by the Bremer-Press, are joined by small Insel-Verlag publications, and even a paperback “Feldausgabe”—an edition published specifically for soldiers to take into the field. Unique and personal materials within the collection include an autograph manuscript of Max Mell’s Ein alles deutsches Weihnachtsbuehnenstück, a publisher’s proof copy of Joseph Roth’s novel Die Geschichte von der 1002. Nacht—heavily corrected and cut by the author—and Richard Beer-Hofmann’s own album of photographs of his beloved wife Paula. These kinds of materials, as well as author’s inscriptions, rare periodicals such as Poetischer Flugblätter (highlighting contemporary Austrian and German poets), and political pamphlets written by Thomas Mann, give readers a glimpse into the German-speaking literary world of the early 20th century.

The entire collection is cataloged and searchable within the library's online catalog. To see the contents of the collection, search by keyword for (including the quotation marks): “Kallir Family Collection” in the Caleb online catalog. Any item may be requested and viewed in Special Collections and Archives during our reading room hours, Monday–Friday 1–5 p.m. during the school year and Monday–Thursday 1–5 p.m. during the summer.

— REBECCA MCCALLUM, CATALOGING LIBRARIAN —

LIBRARY COLLECTION HIGHLIGHT

The Friends of the Wesleyan Library have identified projects that we hope to fund in the future to enhance research and learning at Wesleyan through the library. Below is one highlight from our wishlist.

The small collection of illuminated manuscripts in Special Collections and Archives includes a handsome, small-format 13th-century Bible, written (as is typical of the period) in a tiny, precise hand. The language of the Bible is Latin, and it was probably copied in France. Our 13th-century Bible was a gift: of George W. Davison, Class of 1892, for whom the Davison Rare Book Room is named. Many of the 537 leaves of the Bible include historiated, illuminated initials and/or decorative strapwork, as well as more modest decorative initials in red and blue. Historiated initials are letters that include a scene; the initials in this Bible include scenes of manuscript production, singing, knights, and saints. While there are a substantial number of images from digitized medieval manuscripts available on the Internet, most of these projects include only the highly decorated leaves, not the whole manuscript, and few are from the 13th-century. Due to the delicate nature of the manuscript and the number of leaves, the digitization process will be complex and costly. However, it will result in high quality images presented by the library in an effective online interface so that this valuable manuscript can be studied by scholars around the world. If you would be interested in contributing to the support of this project, please contact the Friends of the Wesleyan Library at libfriends@wesleyan.edu or 860-685-3805.

— JENNIFER HADLEY, FRIENDS OF THE WESLEYAN LIBRARY —
FRIENDS UPDATE

Library Friends help the library in so many ways. Last December, Friends attended an open house at Olin Library's Book Conservation Lab (ground floor of Olin Library) hosted by Michalle Biddle, collections conservator and head of Preservation Services, to learn about book conservation and the Friends new Adopt A Book program. The Adopt a Book program is a wonderful opportunity for people to give a gift for a special occasion or honor loved ones through a donation to support the care of noteworthy books in the Wesleyan collection. Several books have been fully adopted already and are now in the process of being conserved so that they can be used by researchers for years to come.

On April 20, 2011, the Friends hosted the first of what we hope will be many annual Friends gatherings highlighted by a lecture by Matthew Warshauer, professor of history at Central Connecticut State University. He spoke about his book Connecticut in the American Civil War, which was recently published by Wesleyan University Press. As part of the event, Library Friends and the Wesleyan and local community were able to visit Special Collections and Archives for a special viewing hosted by Suzy Taraba (head of Special Collections and university archivist) of the Samuel Proal Hartfield Civil War Album, a collection of photographs of the 4th Connecticut Infantry, Company G, which was largely made up of Middletown residents. The Friends hope to raise funds to digitize this album and create an online exhibit (or similar platform) so that researchers around the world can have increased access to this important resource. In the meantime, the Friends were delighted to sponsor this lecture for the Wesleyan and local community.

In May, the Friends also will sponsor a WESeminar at Reunion/Homecoming by Suzy Taraba entitled Pinnacles of Poetry: Highlights from Wesleyan's Collections. Wesleyan's rich and varied poetry collections reflect the passions, generosity, and intellectual curiosity of alumni donors, faculty, and librarians over the decades. From John Gower's Confessio Amantis (Westminster: Caxton, 1483) to the first edition of Walt Whitman's Leaves of Grass (Brooklyn, 1855) to Beat poet Gregory Corso's shaped poem Bomb (San Francisco: City Lights, 1958) to a fine press edition of Wesleyan faculty member Elizabeth Willis's The Oldest Garden in the World (Northampton, MA: Propolis Press, 2006), there's truly something for everyone. Taraba will speak about the collection and display some of the pinacles of Wesleyan's poetry holdings. The WESeminar is in conjunction with the exhibition "Poetry at Wesleyan" on view in Olin Library.

Friends members make all these events and this library newsletter possible. In addition, many Friends (both official and unofficial) donated hundreds of books to the library book sale this winter. If you are not yet a member of the Friends, we invite you to become involved with the group. We are always looking for new ideas. To learn more about the Friends, become a member or renew your membership, donate books for the sale, or sponsor an event or project, please contact Jennifer Hadley, libfriends@wesleyan.edu or 860-685-3897 or visit the Friends web site at www.wesleyan.edu/libt/friends/. We also invite you to stop by our ongoing book sale, on the first floor of Olin Memorial Library, outside the Smith Reading Room.

— JENNIFER HADLEY, FRIENDS OF THE WESLEYAN LIBRARY —

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 on recent developments in library technologies and resources available at Wesleyan to students, faculty, staff, alumni, and other Friends of the Wesleyan Library.

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