Winter Term in South Africa: Developing Youth Literacy

A group of 13 Oberlin students traveled to the KwaZulu-Natal area of South Africa for an exciting Winter Term project during the month of January. The students worked in libraries that were established by the World Library Partnership (WLP), which is headed by Oberlin alumna Laura Wendell ’90; they engaged in a series of projects designed to increase literacy and leadership skills among the youth of that rural area.

Upon arriving in South Africa the students were brought together with a group of teenaged South African learners for three days of intensive training. Each Oberlin student was paired with a South African learner and the teams were formed into groups to carry out projects with young children, high school students, and adults. The South African learners were all members of library clubs previously established by WLP volunteers.

Finding and Using Images: Digital and Print

On January 27 the Library presented a workshop on finding images and incorporating them into a classroom context. The workshop was designed to familiarize faculty and staff with a selection of tools, indexes, websites, and databases useful for locating a wide variety of images and also to explore issues related to the use of images in teaching.

About 30 faculty and staff attended the workshop, which included an overview of issues related to accessing and using images (covering such topics as image formats, copyright, the “invisible web,” and intellectual access through metadata); demonstrations of selected image resources; information about digitizing personal image collections; and a focus on faculty perspectives on the use of images in the classroom.

The workshop was presented by librarians Alan Boyd, Cynthia Comer, Haipeng Li, and Barbara Prior, and Professor of History Steve Volk.

The resources discussed at the workshop are linked from the workshop website: www.oberlin.edu/library/programs/images/
Friends Highlights

The Friends of the Library Council held its annual meeting on Saturday, November 1, 2003. The Council heard reports from standing committees and took action on a variety of items.

The Council approved a recommendation from the Research Awards Committee to make three awards (rather than the usual two) because of unusually strong applications. The Graduate Library School Scholarship Committee reported that two scholarships, in the amount of $1,250 each, were awarded to Clara Stemwedel '99 and Dolsy Smith '00 (see Perspectives Fall 2003).

The Council approved the Acquisitions Committee's recommendation for approximately $25,000 in acquisition expenditures. The Council also held an extensive discussion of Friends support for the Library's special collections. It appointed a committee to investigate and make recommendations for allocating funds on a regular basis to encourage the integration of special collections into the curriculum.

The Friends Program Committee reported on programs held the previous year as well as those planned for the fall of 2003. The first reception for Oberlin faculty and staff authors, held in December 2002, was particularly successful.

A special allocation of $3,000 was approved to support a Winter Term project for a group of Oberlin students to travel to South Africa to do literacy work in rural libraries established by the World Library Partnership (see related article, page 1).

The Council also approved a life membership for Lucy Marks ’76, and elected new officers and members of the Council for 2003-04.

Full minutes of the Friends council meeting are available at: http://www.oberlin.edu/library/friends/minutes/2003-11-01.html

Library Hosts continued from page 1

Ms. Yang is interested in exploring the similarities and differences in issues and practices between American and Chinese academic libraries, and what impact American libraries can have on Chinese libraries.

Friends of the Oberlin College Library

Spring 2004 Programs

Thursday, March 4, 4:30 p.m., Moffett Auditorium, Mudd Center
Faculty Book Talk by A. G. Miller, Associate Professor of Religion, author of Elevating the Race: Theophilus G. Steward, Black Theology, and the Making of an African American Civil Religion, 1865-1924

Sunday, March 14, 4:30 p.m., Classroom I, Allen Art Building
Lecture by Professor Dennis Doordan, University of Notre Dame
“The Curious Case of Frank Lloyd Wright and the Cold War”

Monday, March 15, 4:30 – 5:30 p.m., Art Library
Clarence Ward Birthday Party and Exhibition
Infinite Curiosity: Oberlin, Children, and Art
Exhibition Dates: March 15 through May 30

Friday, April 16, 4:30 p.m.
Walking Tour of Oberlin Monuments
Tour led by Erik Inglis ’89, Assistant Professor of Art History. Tour begins at the Harper’s Ferry Monument in Martin Luther King Jr. Park, corner of Vine and Pleasant Streets

Saturday, May 29, 3:00 p.m., King 106
Friends Commencement Weekend Program
Speaker: David Young, Emeritus Professor of English
Title: “Road Maps for Babel”

Recent Friends of the Library Acquisitions

At its November meeting the Friends of the Library Council authorized the use of Friends' funds to acquire a variety of print and electronic resources for the Library’s collections. The approximate cost of the purchases, described below, is $24,885.

New Curricular Area

The Friends will provide support for monographs, back-runs of journals, and audiovisual materials for the new interdisciplinary program Comparative American Studies.

Conservatory Library Special Collections

Cahusac’s Pocket Companion for the German Flute or Violin : Being a Selection of Favorite Songs, Airs, Minuets, Marches, Allemands, Cotillons, Dances and Duettis Properly Adapted for Those Instruments. London : W.M Cahusac, [1798].


These eighteenth century editions will support teaching of historical performance for the flute.

Main Library Special Collections

Burmese Buddhist Palm Leaf Manuscript (Kammavaca). Kammavaca are among the most sacred of Burmese religious texts, each of which relate to a specific Buddhist ceremony associated with monks of the Theravada school of Buddhism. Dated to the second half of the nineteenth century, superb illustrations accompany the text, which is hand written on dried palm leaves.


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Lucy Marks Receives Life Membership

The third annual Friends of the Library Excellence in Research Awards were presented by Janice Zinser, Professor of French, to Shama Cash-Goldwasser, Shoshana Friedman, and Lauren Stensland at the Friends dinner and reception on November 1. While typically the award goes to two students per year, the Research Awards Committee this year found three papers to be of the very highest quality and thus requested and received approval from the Friends Council to present the three awards.

Ms. Cash-Goldwasser’s winning paper, “New Weapons in an Ancient War: Fighting Malaria with Genomics” was written for Professor of Biology Yolanda Cruz’s developmental biology course. Professor Cruz noted at the award presentation that Ms. Cash-Goldwasser “was

Excellence in Research Awards Presented

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Starting this spring, researchers will be able to see OBIS records for some of our East Asian materials in the vernacular languages using CJK (Chinese, Japanese, Korean) display technology. Users will continue to search OBIS with transliterated or romanized terms, but the search results will appear in Chinese, Japanese or Korean characters.

According to Jiann Lin, East Asian Specialist, “Oberlin College Library’s East Asian holdings are among the richest in the state of Ohio, along with Ohio State University and Ohio University.” In addition to English language materials on East Asian Studies (covering history, language & literature, political science, economics, art, philosophy, and religion), our collection consists of well over 25,000 volumes in Chinese, Japanese or Korean characters.

The CJK display will improve access to the vernacular language portion of our collection, allowing researchers to more quickly determine if they have found the right item, since the uncertainty inherent in the transliteration of names and titles will be eliminated.

Instructions for how to configure your Internet browser (e.g. Internet Explorer, Netscape) for CJK display will be available in OBIS.

Mellon Undergraduate Interns Selected

Oberlin has selected seven interns to participate in the Mellon Librarian Recruitment Program this spring (see Perspectives, Fall 2003). The interns will explore librarianship as a career by participating in a 10-week orientation to libraries and librarianship. They will also work on individual projects with members of the library staff.

Megan Kinney, coordinator of the multi-institutional program, reported tremendous interest at each of the participating colleges, with several schools, including Oberlin, receiving more than 20 applications. Oberlin will have 7 interns, Wellesley 2, Occidental 3, Mt Holyoke 2 and Swarthmore 6. According to Kinney, “the pool of applicants was so exciting we decided to accept a larger number of interns than initially planned.”

Oberlin’s interns will bring diverse backgrounds and experiences to the program. The interns are Aaliyah Bilal, a senior majoring in African American and Hispanic Studies; Teresa Collins, a junior majoring in Anthropology; Satoko Kanahara, a sophomore majoring in Biology and Comparative American Studies; Joseph Kimmel, a double degree junior majoring in Music Composition and Computer Science; Grace Hammond, a senior majoring in Creative Writing and History; Wolfgang Niederhofer, a senior majoring in History and Cinema Studies; and Fumiko Osada, a sophomore majoring in Spanish.

The interns have expressed interest in a wide variety of library issues and topics – ranging from patron privacy and the impact of the USA PATRIOT Act, to uses and applications of technology in libraries, to children’s literature and librarianship, to forms of community outreach.

Library Acquisitions continued from page 2

Art Library Special Collections


Primary Source Materials to Support Teaching and Research

Musical Times and Tonic Sol-fa Reporter (3 reels of microfilm). Ann Arbor, MI: ProQuest/UMI, 2003. These reels of microfilm complete Oberlin’s holdings of these important journals.

Surveying the First Decade: Video Art and Alternative Media in the U.S. Kate Horsfield, producer. [Chicago, Ill.]: Video Data Bank, c1995. 9 videocassettes. This premiere
On February 6 and 7 twenty prominent historians of American abolitionism donned nineteenth century garb and reenacted the debates about slavery and black rights that occurred at Lane Seminary and Oberlin College in 1834 and 1835. Theology students attending the Lane Seminary in Cincinnati, Ohio spent eighteen evenings in February 1834 debating the best way to combat the evils of slavery. Unlike other abolitionists at the time, these students rejected the notion of colonization, or repatriation of blacks to Africa, and instead advocated immediate emancipation of slaves and the integration of blacks into American society.

After the debates these students formed an anti-slavery society and began reaching out to the black population of Cincinnati. When the Lane Seminary trustees ordered the student activists to stop agitating on the issue of slavery, the “Lane Rebels” as they became known, left the seminary. Seeking to continue their studies, the Lane Rebels agreed to come to the struggling Oberlin Collegiate Institute on the condition that it accept students regardless of race.

Lauren Stensland’s winning paper, “The Unz Initiatives and the Dangers of Direct Democracy,” was written for Assistant Professor of Politics Debbie Schildkraut’s course “Race and Ethnicity in American Politics.” In her comments Professor Schildkraut notes that “Lauren’s paper strikes just the right balance between breadth and depth, between argument and evidence, between theory and data, and between case study and generalizability... Her work admirably demonstrates how a passion for politics can be combined with rigorous social science inquiry and result in sophisticated analysis.” Ms. Stensland is a sophomore religion major, considering an additional major in politics.
Jenifer Grady has recently been named Director of the American Library Association’s Allied Professional Association (ALA-APA). ALA-APA is a new nonprofit professional organization established by ALA “to promote the mutual professional interests of librarians and other library workers.” It focuses primarily on certification of librarians in specializations beyond the initial professional degree and on improving the salaries and status of librarians and library workers.

Ms. Grady graduated from Oberlin in 1991, received her MS in Library Science from the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill in 1993, and an MBA from Case Western Reserve University in 2003. She has previously held medical and corporate library positions.

Digital Resources continued from page 5

studies—books that are vital to both scholars and advanced students, and are frequently cited in the literature. The HEB Project plans to add 250 books annually to the collection, as well as the balance of 85 new electronic titles that have the potential to use web-based technologies to communicate the results of scholarship in new ways. ACLS is collaborating in this initiative with eight learned societies and a select group of university presses to assist scholars in the electronic publishing of high-quality works in history, to explore the intellectual possibilities of new technologies, and to help assure the continued viability of history writing in today’s changing publishing environment.

Ethnic NewsWatch: A History. Ethnic NewsWatch: A History is the archive of the Ethnic NewsWatch database, extending coverage back to 1960. Ethnic NewsWatch is an interdisciplinary and bilingual (English and Spanish) full text database

The lighting, or more accurately, the lack of lighting in Mudd Center has been a source of consternation and complaint since the mid-1980s, when individual light switches were installed throughout the building in an effort to conserve energy. While some energy efficiencies did result, the switches were hard to locate and, even when found, it was often difficult to determine what floor area a given switch controlled.

This summer and early fall the lighting system in Mudd was completely overhauled and also returned to its original master switch configuration. Now the stacks areas are lit at all times the library is open, so the days of hunting for books in the dark or searching for a switch in hopes of illuminating a desired stack range are gone.

The project, which included installation of energy-efficient light fixtures as well as new electronic ballasts, will produce substantial energy savings, even though the stacks are lighted continuously. It also resolves another persistent user complaint. The older fluorescent ballasts gave off an irritating buzzing sound as they grew old and malfunctioned, and that problem has been eliminated.

Library Acquisitions continued from page 4

video art anthology consists chiefly of short films, many from 1970s and 1980s.

Electronic Resources

Digital National Security Archive (permanent online access). The DNSA database contains more than 40,000 declassified documents (over 250,000 pages) that led to U.S. policy decisions. DNSA is currently comprised of 20 collections, each of which contains a diverse range of policy documents including presidential directives, memos, diplomatic dispatches, meeting notes, independent reports, briefing papers, White House communications, email, confidential letters and other secret material.

Evans Digital Edition (permanent online access). Based on the renowned American Bibliography by Charles Evans and Roger Bristol’s Supplement to Evans’ American Bibliography, the Early American Imprints collection provided access to primary source material through the use of microform technology. For decades, the Evans microfiche collection has been the definitive resource for information about every aspect of life in 17th- and 18th-century America, from agriculture and auctions through foreign affairs, diplomacy, literature, music, religion, the Revolutionary War, temperance, witchcraft, and just about any other topic imaginable. Now access to the collection has been dramatically enhanced through the use of 21st-century technology. Evans Digital Edition will include every item previously produced on microfiche plus more than 1,200 additional works located, cataloged and digitized since the microfiche collection was issued. Upon completion, Evans Digital Edition will consist of more than 36,000 works and 2,400,000 images.

JSTOR Arts and Sciences Collection, Part III (permanent online access). This segment of JSTOR, the Scholarly Journal Archive will add approximately 60 more journal titles in the areas of language and literature, music, art history, cultural studies, film, folklore, performing arts, and religion.

Major Reference Works

Encyclopedia of sculpture. Antonia Bostrom, editor. New York : Fitzroy Dearborn, 2004. 3 volumes. This work provides comprehensive international and historical coverage
of color. In February 1835 the Institute's trustees, after intense debate, agreed to this condition, and Oberlin became the first college in the nation that was both coed and interracial.

The reenactments, which were held at First Church in Oberlin, emphasized audience participation. Among the most active participants were students from area high schools who read about the historical events in advance and prepared questions and arguments. In addition to prepared speeches/statements, the historian actors responded to questions extemporaneously in historical context and from the point of view of their characters. Because the actual debates were never transcribed, the participating scholars had to spend months reading the literature of the period, preparing to argue the points.

Among the historian participants were Oberlin's President Nancy S. Dye and Gary Kornblith and Carol Lasser, Professors of History.

The Oberlin reenactment was the second in a series of such events; the first reenactment took place in Connecticut in May 2003, and others are planned in Cincinnati and at the University of California at Berkeley. The debates were sponsored locally by the Oberlin College Library, the Friends of Oberlin College Library, Oberlin African American Historical and Genealogical Group, First Church in Oberlin, Oberlin Heritage Center/OHIO, Oberlin College Archives, Oberlin College Department of African American Studies, Oberlin College Department of History, the Office of the President, and the Office of the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences.

The projects included drama, debate, writing and book making, reading to children, and a community mapping exercise where local resources are surveyed and "mapped" for use. At the end of the program the project groups held two separate reading fairs to demonstrate their work to the local communities, promote reading, and build participation in the library clubs.

A primary goal of the project was to increase leadership skills among the South African youth to enable them to continue literacy efforts after the program's completion. The Oberlin students were impressed by the success of that aspect of their work, as they observed the South African participants take on more and more responsibility for projects as they progressed.

According to Wendell, "the Oberlin students were so caring, open and dedicated that the South African learners began to trust and respect them very quickly. This trust gave the learners the confidence to try new things and take risks they would not have attempted otherwise. The Oberlin students and the South African learners inspired each other in ways that I think will have a lasting impact."

Upon returning to Oberlin the students described their trip in the most positive terms, some considering it a "transforming experience," "the highlight of my time at Oberlin,' and the "the most fulfilling experience of my college career." The students will share their experiences with the campus community at a public event on Wednesday, March 17 at 7:30 p.m. in Craig Lecture Hall.

The participating students planned and carried out a variety of activities on campus and in their home communities to raise money for their trip beforehand. Their project also received support from a number of college offices and organizations. In addition to the Library and the Friends of the Library, the project was supported by the Oberlin College President's Office, the Office of the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, the Center for Service and Learning, the Winter Term Committee, the Gerald M. Kline Family Foundation, and anonymous donors.

The winter term project was directed by Laura Wendell and sponsored by Ray English, Director of Libraries.

Library Acquisitions continued from page 6

of sculpture. It includes over 800 entries by 500 contributors, with 500 illustrations of a wide variety of sculptural works.

*Encyclopedia of statistical sciences.* Samuel Kotz, editor. New York : Wiley, 2003. 13 volumes. This work of more than 4,000 entries provides access to history, theories, methods, and applications of the statistical sciences.

Digital Developments continued from page 6

of newspapers, magazines and journals of the ethnic, minority, and native press. Designed to provide the "other side of the story," this database offers additional viewpoints from those proffered by the mainstream press.

*American Periodical Series Online.* This collection contains digitized images of the pages of American magazines and journals that originated between 1741, when Andrew Bradford's *American Magazine* and Benjamin Franklin's *General Magazine* were launched, and 1900. Deriving from the American Periodicals Series microform collection, APS Online features over 1,100 periodicals spanning nearly 200 years—from colonial times to the advent of American involvement in World War II. Titles range from America's first scientific journal, *Medical Repository*, to popular magazines like *Vanity Fair* and *Ladies' Home Journal*.

*SourceOECD.* The publications portal of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), *Source OECD* includes twenty collections of books and reports organized by theme, 24 periodicals, and the OECD statistical database. The themes include agriculture and food, energy, environment and sustainable development, national accounts, and social issues, health, and migration.

*ATLA Religion Database with ATLAS Serials.* This is an expanded version of the ATLA (American Theological Library Association) Religion Database, the premier index to journal articles, book reviews, and collections of essays in all fields of religion. ATLA Serials increases online full text access to articles in religious periodicals by 61 titles.
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