The Stacks

The Dean's Corner
Are Internet-Accessible Databases Making Students Stupid?

This is a play on the frequently asked question "Is Google making students stupid?" Although it may not be a fair question, I want to address it from the narrow perspective of how I saw university students locate research material before they had access to Internet-accessible databases. As both a college student writing research papers during the 1960s and 1970s, and as an academic library administrator committed to making educational and research materials available to students since then, I particularly want to address the unforeseen, negative consequences related to the extensive use of full-text and other Internet accessible resources for student research papers.

Prior to the widespread availability of online resources, students writing research papers had no choice but to look for physical research material in physical libraries owned by the institution. Research projects typically began when students came to the library to search through many volumes of journal indexes for articles, and/or search through the card catalog by author, title, or subject headings. Students frequently found it necessary to search through many volumes of journal indexes un-

der one or more topics for relevant articles. For interdisciplinary topics, students often needed to search through multiple volumes of two or more subject indexes. Similarly, students located pertinent books the library owned by flipping through subject headings in the card catalog. Noting citations by hand as students found germane sources made the process all that more tedious and time-consuming. Once they found the cited references in the library stacks, examination may have revealed that the journal articles or documents were not relevant to

New Ebook Collections

Harvard University Press

The newest University Library ebook collection comes from Harvard University Press. Currently, faculty, staff and students have access to 264 titles covering a variety of subject areas from Art and Music, History, Law, Literary Studies, and Mathematics to

Medicine, Economics and Religion. More titles will be added in 2013. Harvard ebooks come in pdf format and can be downloaded chapter by chapter to your computer and read there or moved to your ereader.

Project Muse

The University Library has had access to some Project Muse ebooks, and you will find those books in our catalog, SOUTHcat. However, we recently purchased 4 new collections, the 2013 Complete collection,

Internet-Accessible Databases

their research topic — adding even more frustration. Thus, students writing research paper before the availability of Internet-accessible databases often spent many hours in the university library gathering and reading articles and books before they could even begin to write their papers.

Analyzing this labor intensive library research process further, I believe that a good percentage of students learned about authors, publishers, subject headings, and indexing companies, such as H. W. Wilson, as they went about their library research. Reference and instruction librarians, as well as the faculty, often taught students about the importance of choosing articles written by respected scholars or experts. Students often learned that there were scholarly journal titles and publishers and, as a result, could distinguish them from popular magazines and other non-scholarly sources.

The research process is dramatically different for today's university students. They no longer see or use rows of journal indexes and card catalogs when they come to the university library. If they come to the library at all to find journal articles for their research papers, university students no longer need to spend hours combing through indexes because, thankfully, publishers and data-

base aggregators license searchable databases to libraries for students and employees to use from any Internet-accessible device. As a result, students only need to access the appropriate subject database(s), type suitable keywords into search boxes to generate a list of relevant journal articles, and then press the print command when they find a relevant article. Some libraries, such as the University Library, make it even easier than this for students by providing a "one search" tool that allows students to search multiple databases and the online catalog at the same time. Never mind that university libraries license such tools and hundreds of databases at great cost.

Thus, for today's students, a few keystrokes separate them from the research results needed to begin to write their research papers. Instead of finding articles in bound volumes of the library, students can peruse articles online and reject those that are not relevant. Because information, articles, or documents needed for research papers are so readily available to most students, they are not likely to have an understanding or appreciation for the interconnectedness of relationships among authors, publishers, aggregators, libraries, and consumers of information. Few institutions of higher education recognize or assess students' knowledge in this regard because it is not

a critical or general education requirement.

The point is that Internet-accessible databases and search engines have caused what I call an "information disconnect". Students are less and less likely to come to the physical library, ask a librarian for assistance, or have a library class in which scholarly research and publication is discussed.

So let us go back to the original question: Do Internet accessible databases make students stupid? There is no evidence to support that conclusion. So, if students include inaccurate information, unverified sources, or invalid information and citations in their papers as a result of using electronic databases, it is not the fault of database providers. The blame would lie elsewhere. Therefore, my answer to the question is both yes and no. The use of full-text Internet-accessible databases does not necessarily make students stupider, but their ready availability also does not encourage them to be smart about the scholarly publishing process.

Please send your comments to rwood@southalabama.edu.

Richard Wood
Dean of University Libraries

New Ebook Collections

the 2012 Complete Supplement, the 2011 Complete Supplement and the Archive Complete Supplement, giving us access to over 20,000 ebooks. These titles are being added to SOUTHcat. Project Muse ebooks come in pdf format and can be downloaded chapter by chapter to your computer or to your ereader.

EBSCO Academic Collection

The EBSCO Academic Collection contains over 112,000 ebook titles and represents

a different model of ebook for the University Library, both in purchasing and in format. These ebooks are not owned by the library; they are subscriptions; if we cancel, we lose access. This new subscription model, unlike our purchased EBSCO titles, allows unlimited access; i.e., books can be checked out by more than one person at the same time. These books can be read on your computer or ereader, except the Kindle; Adobe Digital Editions does not support the Kindle.

For information about other ebook collections, see the University Library's *Electronic Books* page. For information on how to use the different collections with your ereader, see *Using University Library Ebooks with Ereaders*. The *Ebook Collection Tips* tab contains usage tips for each collection we own, including whether a particular collection is compatible with a specific ereader.

Kathy Wheeler
Electronic Services/Reference

Inside the Doy Leale McCall Rare Book and Manuscript Library

On May 6, 2011, the family of Doy Leale McCall donated a collection of historical documents dating from the late eighteenth through the mid-twentieth century to The McCall Library. The collection documents the lives of approximately ten families living in Alabama and Georgia. Printed materials make up one of the larger portions of the collection, which includes advertisements, annual statements, books, broadsides, brochures, bulletins, circulars, flyers, government documents, leaflets, magazines, periodicals, reports, and sheet music. In all, there are more than 13,000 printed items dating from 1757 to the 1980s. Some of these printed items were valued at well over $1,000 each. Here is just a short list:

Message of the Governor of the State of Alabama to Both Houses of the General Assembly Delivered November 19, 1823 (Cahawba, 1823). This report by Israel Pickens, Alabama's third governor is unique and, until now, unrecorded. It was valued at $10,000.

Ten rare publications dating from 1819 to 1823 and dealing with the formation of the state's constitution and government, and its admission into the Union that were appraised at $17,750.

Proceedings of the Bible Society of Alabama, Containing Its Constitution and an Address to the Friends of the Bible throughout Alabama (Cahawba, 1823). Price tag: $8,000.

An extremely rare volume entitled *Proceedings of the Grand Lodge of the Free and Accepted Masons of Alabama* (Cahawba, 1823). It was valued at $3,500.

A large format catalog dated 1851 announcing the formation of the Montgomery Manufacturing Company's iron works. The works belonged to the Winter family (one of the families that make up the collection). This important and rare document was appraised at $6,500.

A calling card in its original envelope belonging to the Montgomery True Blues militia. Value: $2,500.

McCall Library staff has a complete index to the 13,000+ printed items in this magnificent collection. In addition, they have finished organization of the Pickens portion of the collection. Israel Pickens and his brothers and siblings were deeply involved in the political and economic history of Alabama. Their part of the collection includes more than 6,300 letters ranging in date from 1806 to 1944, as well as numerous family account books, educational materials, and documents related to land sales and slavery.

We have now moved on to the organization of the next portion of the collection, which appears to be even larger than that of the Pickens family. An initial inventory of the collection can be found by going to http://mccalllibrary.southalabama.edu/html/manuscript/mccall_finding_aid.pdf. In addition to the work on the McCall Collection, The McCall Library has also received eight linear feet of deeds, maps, and photographs relating to the Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce's subdivision of and sale of lots on Dauphin Island from the 1950s to the 1980s. That collection is closed for processing.

Carol Ellis
Director
McCall Rare Book and Manuscript Library

Common Read/Common World

The University has chosen *Half the Sky: Turning Oppression into Opportunity for Women Worldwide* by Nicholas D. Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn as the book for its Common Read/Common World program to take place during the 2013-2014 academic year. *Half the Sky* addresses the problems caused by the inequality and oppression of women in the developing world.
The University Library, in support of this program, has purchased ten copies of the book and placed them on 7 Day Library Reserve, meaning they can be checked out for a week. These books can be found at the library's Circulation desk and have the following call number: HQ 1236.5 .D44 K74 2010.

In addition, the library has purchased eight copies of the dvd, *Half the Sky*. These are currently In Process but will be placed in the Instructional Media Center on the First Floor North.

For more information about the University's Common Read/Common World program, see

http://www.southalabama.edu/publicrelations/pressreleases/2013pr/040213.html
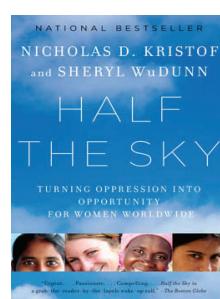
Muslim Journeys Bookshelf

The University Library is one of 840 libraries and state humanities councils across the country selected to receive the Bridging Cultures Bookshelf: Muslim Journeys from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) and the American Library Association (ALA). The program aims to familiarize public audiences in the United States with the people, places, history, faith and cultures of Muslims in the United States and around the world.

The books and films comprising the Bookshelf were selected with the advice of librarians and cultural programming experts, as well as distinguished scholars in the fields of anthropology, world history, religious studies, interfaith dialogue, the history of art and architecture, world literature, Middle East studies, Southeast

Asian studies, African studies, and Islamic studies.

Access for a year to _Oxford Islamic Studies Online_ is part of the grant. Visit the Library's homepage and choose E-Reference.

For information about these new materials, please visit http://libguides.southalabama.edu/muslim or contact Elizabeth Rugan, 460-7025, or erugan@southalabama.edu.

This collection is located in the University Library's IMC on the First Floor North.

Beth Rugan
Reference & Instruction Librarian
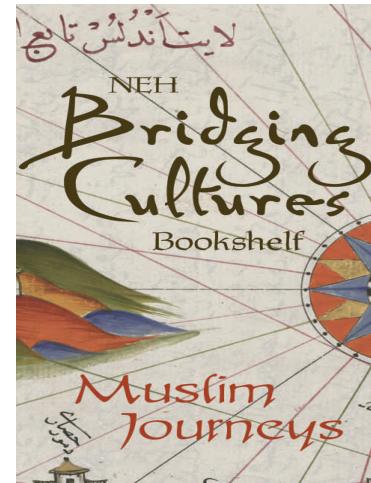
Wiley Online Library Ebooks

The University Library recently purchased books from the _Wiley Online Library_ in these specific modules: Computer Science and Engineering (154 titles), Environmental Chemistry (94 titles), Environmental Engineering (16 titles), Nanotechnology (71 titles), Neuroscience (25 titles) and Public Administration and Management (24 titles), for a total of 384 titles.

There is currently no way on the Wiley homepage to limit to only those books

for which we have access, but the ones we bought will have an open lock icon

after the title. _Wiley Online Library_ ebook titles have also been cataloged and added to SOUTHcat, so you can also search for them there by limiting to University Library Electronic Books.

Kathy Wheeler
Electronic Services/Reference
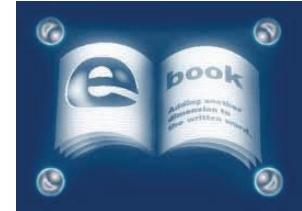
Blind Date With a Book

One of the libraries many goals is to come up with innovative ideas that keep the students engaging with the library. The faculty and staff are constantly searching for new ways for students to both utilize and enjoy the library. Recently the USA University Library created a display for the month of February, referred to as, "Go on a Blind Date with a Library Book." The display received positive feedback and the books were well circulated.

The display was done in conjunction with Valentine's Day, as the idea stems from a blind date concept. Staff and Faculty members were asked to pick their favorite book in the library. The books were then wrapped in craft paper, with only the barcode left in view. Three to four words were written on the outside of each book, explaining ambiguously the content of the book. A sign was put with the display, inviting students to treat themselves to a new adventure with a new book.

The display consisted of 19 different books and only one was not checked out. Several students commented on how much they enjoyed the display. The display was also featured in the Vanguard under the JagLife section. The library plans to continue this initiative next year.

Abigail Sherman
Library Technical Assistant

Blind Date with A Book Display

Bon Voyage, Mary Engebretson!

Things are different around the University Library these days. There is change in the air–a legend has retired. Mary Engebretson, Head of Reference and Coordinator of Access Services for the University Library, has retired after 28 years of service to the University of South Alabama community.

As head of reference, Mary has seen a great deal of changes in librarianship; indeed Mary has overseen many of these changes during her tenure at the university. While it would be impossible to list everything that Mary has done to better serve the students and faculty of the university, a few particular things stand out in her distinguished career.

 Mary has grown the library's book collection with NAAL funds; overseen the acquisition of and transition of print journal subscriptions to electronic; provided access to library services via a library homepage; added computer workstations for students and faculty; and overseen the renovation of the library. Of course, if you asked Mary, she would say that she didn't do any of these things–she would say that we all did them.

Thank you, Mary for your wonderful years of service to the library and university. You will be missed. Best Wishes for a wonderful retirement!

Beth Rugan
Reference & Instruction Librarian

Goodbye, Ajibola

After several years with the University Library, our Management Systems Specialist, Ajibola Ajomale, is departing for a new job at SSI.

Goodbye and good luck, Ajibola! We wish you the best in your new position.

Movers and Shakers
Professional Activities of the Librarians of the University Library

Carol Ellis, director of The McCall Rare Book and Manuscript Library, took part in an event marking the 50th anniversary of the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s Letter from Birmingham Jail. The letter, written by King on April 16, 1963, during the civil rights demonstrations in Birmingham, Alabama, praises Spring Hill College for the desegregation of its college campus. On April 17, the History Museum of Mobile presented a roundtable discussion marking the anniversary of Spring Hill's successful integration effort. One of the people credited with Spring Hill's peaceful attempt to admit African Americans to its campus was Father Albert Sidney Foley, a Jesuit priest and professor of sociology at Spring Hill College. Ellis's 2002 master's thesis concentrated on the civil rights work of Father Foley. The Learning Lunch event at the museum took place at noon with the public invited to bring their lunch.

In conjunction with the 150th anniversary of the American Civil War, on May 14 at 2:00 p.m. in the Atlantis Room at Children's and Women's Hospital, **Carol Ellis** presented an exhibit of some of the rare items related to the Civil War within the Doy Leale McCall Collection, which was given to USA on May 6, 2011, and valued at $3.1 million. Ellis also gave a brief presentation of other Civil War items from the collection. The event was sponsored by the Medical Museum of Mobile.

Carol Ellis participated in a session at the annual Southern Historical Association conference held in November in Mobile and was on the nominating committee for officers for the Society of Alabama Archivists.

Muriel Nero and **Beth Rugan's** article, "Library Scavenger Hunts: The Good , the Bad, and the Ugly" has been accepted for publication by *The Southeastern Librarian* and will appear in the Fall 2013 issue.

Muriel Nero and **Kathy Wheeler** spoke on editing ebook records at the Technical Services & Systems Round Table (TSSRT) Technoforum, "Managing Your Library's Resources," at the Alabama Library Association convention in Montgomery on Thursday, April 25. Their talk was entitled "From Here to There: Editing Ebook Records with MarcEdit."

Amy Prendergast is the co-chair of the Association of College and Research Libraries, Science and Technology Section Publications Committee and is also the co-editor of the newsletter, *STS Signal*.

Paula Webb attended USA's *Applying the QM Rubric* workshop on March 4 and had the following book reviews and encyclopedia entries published:
Webb, Paula. (2012), Apples & Ashes.Tennessee Libraries. [Online]. 62.3. Available:
http://www.tnla.org/displaycommon.cfm?an=1&subarticlenbr=501#Hutchison__C.
Webb, Paula. (2012),Horrible Shipwreck! *Journal of Military & Strategic Studies*. [Online] 14. 3 & 4. Available:
http://www.jmss.org/jmss/index.php/jmss/article/view/475/472
Webb, Paula. (2013), "Bailey, Margaret E (1915-)" in *Encyclopedia of Women at War: From the Home Front to the Battlefield*, edited by Lisa Tendrich Frank, Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO. http://www.abc-clio.com/product.aspx?isbn=9781598844436.

Ellen Wilson planned programs for the Alabama Library Instruction Round Table and the Alabama Association of College and Research Libraries for the Alabama Library Association Convention in Montgomery in April. As the Vice-President/President-Elect of AACRL, she also was responsible for planning the AACRL dinner meeting. She moved from Vice-President/President-Elect to President of AACRL in April.