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## Newsletter Spring 2008

Colgate University Libraries

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# Colgate Libraries Newsletter

## From the University Librarian

Joanne Schneider



### Hidden Treasures: The Importance of Primary Resources

As a graduate student in the 1970s, I recall the awe I experienced when I was handed the original travel diary of diplomat William Woodville Rockhill as I did research for compiling a bibliography of Tibetan bibliographies at the Library of Congress. In 1891-1892, the Smithsonian sent Rockhill to Tibet on what became one of several book collecting trips, resulting in the foundation for the Library of Congress to become one of the world's leading centers for Tibetan books. With each turn of the page, Rockhill's unedited, first-hand account of his travels to inaccessible monasteries—which also functioned as the country's major publishing houses of woodblock printed texts—provided the “you are there” experience that makes primary resources appealing and useful for student research. Many faculty members know this from their own research and consequently guide students toward this kind of discovery which can be transformative for learning.

Like many liberal arts undergraduate libraries, Colgate's Special Collections and Archives Department serves as a repository for original documents that tell stories from a first-person perspective. Whether a letter written by Joseph Conrad to his publisher concerning one of his novels, a George Bernard Shaw typescript with handwritten annotations or letters written in 1830 by a Colgate graduate from Calcutta, India, to the Baptist Education Society in Hamilton, student use of primary resources aids them in fully developing research skills which form the basis of effective lifelong information discovery.

While librarians curate and preserve original artifacts, we are also beginning to selectively digitize

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Try **ENCORE** - the Libraries' new keyword search tool — see page 3 for details!

## Selecting Primary Resources

by Emily Hutton-Hughes and Mike Poulin

A committee of the Library Faculty called EPEC – Electronic Products Evaluation Committee – periodically reviews requests for electronic databases, researches pricing and license restrictions, and makes recommendations for or against purchase to the entire Library Faculty. The recommendation is based on uniqueness of the resource, the degree to which it supports the curriculum, cost and availability of funds, anticipated amount of use, ease of use, and the financial stability of the vendor. For electronic journal back files we place a high degree of emphasis on the publisher's provisions for archival preservation. If a publisher is sold to another, or goes bankrupt, what happens to our access to purchased materials? Publisher membership in Portico, an electronic archiving service, is a solid way of guaranteeing Colgate's investment. Due to budgetary constraints, titles with high annual maintenance or subscription costs are much less likely to be recommended for purchase.

Many primary sources have been added to the collection in print, microform and more recently, in digital format. Examples of recently purchased digital titles include *America's Historical Newspapers series 1-5* (more than 1,000 newspapers from 1690 -1922 covering all regions of the

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## Primary Research Using the Colgate Libraries' Special Collections & Archives by Carl Peterson

Special Collections & Archives provides a surprising number of avenues available to student researchers seeking primary source materials at whatever level he or she might be in their Colgate career!



"Shanty Town." Temporary businesses located on the current village green, while the town was being rebuilt. April or May 1896.

...there are sources available that fit any level of expertise.

### Upper-level research has centered on a variety of diverse topics:

- presidential election between Cleveland and Blaine (often said to have been the dirtiest presidential campaign)
- history of Dana Arts Center
- diaries of Eliza Eaton (wife of Colgate's third president)
- history of fraternities at Colgate
- New Deal in Madison County
- coming of co-education to Colgate
- Klu Klux Klan activities in Madison County in the 1920's
- loyalty oaths at Colgate
- Colgate during World War II (we were a training center for Navy aviation)
- Joseph Conrad's silent movie manuscript of *Gaspar the Strongman*. (it was never filmed, thankfully)

Students often do not come to Special Collections until their last year at Colgate, usually in relation to a senior Honor's project. But there are sources available that fit any level of expertise. A favorite first-year topic in the past has been the history of the fire in February, 1895 that destroyed the entire village of Hamilton, save for the hotel standing on the site of the current Colgate Inn. Other topics have included the history of early sports at Colgate and the Chenango Canal, which ran through Hamilton until it was filled in the 1890's.

Please don't hesitate to consider a trip to Special Collections (Room 275, Level 2) if you are researching a project that requires primary sources. Recently, a student came in asking if we had anything on 19<sup>th</sup> century



"A lock on the old Chenango Canal." This lock was located in nearby Solsville.

travel and tourism in New York State. I asked her to come back in an hour or so, but thought to myself I don't think we can help her much. Then lo and behold, I started finding things, and managed to retrieve over a dozen 19<sup>th</sup> century books on travel in the state, including an 1831 *Tourist's Guide*. It never hurts to ask! ●

## Library Liaisons: Your Guide on the Side

by Emily Hutton-Hughes and Charlotte Droll

Did you know that there is a member of the library faculty assigned to your academic department and program? Think of this librarian as your guide on the side. Someone you can turn to when you have a question about library collections and services. Liaisons are available to meet with faculty individually or in groups for consultation regarding a wide range of topics.

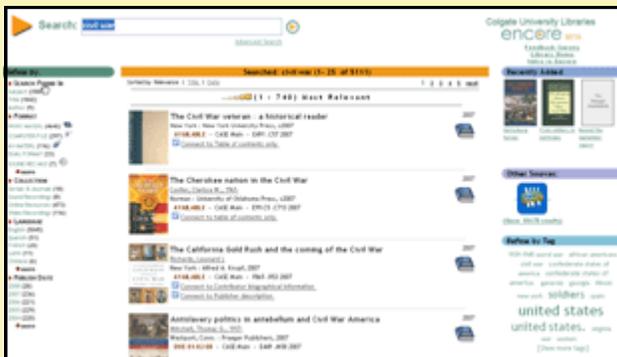
Contact your liaison to:

- Get a general orientation to either Case or Cooley Library.
- Recommend books or films to support a course you are teaching.
- Learn how to borrow materials from other libraries.
- Seek information about library services & policies.
- Learn about databases for searching literature in your field.
- Learn about table of contents alerting services.
- Request instruction in information literacy for your classes.

For more information or to identify your liaison see:

<http://exlibris.colgate.edu/services/departments/libraryfaciiaisons.html> ●

## ENCORE - New Ways to Search



With just one “Google-like” click, Encore, the Colgate Libraries’ new keyword searching tool, displays results in an easy-to-use faceted format with additional suggestions for finding similar relevant items, tag clouds, recently added materials on your topic, and books available through ConnectNY. It is so new it’s still in development! For now, some features of the classic Library Catalog are not available with Encore but will be coming soon, e.g., the LASR request button and access to your patron record. Check out Encore from the Libraries’ homepage ●

## Selecting Primary Resources continued from page 1

country), *Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS) Daily Reports 1974 – 1996* (translated transcripts of foreign radio and television broadcasts, news agency transmissions, newspapers, periodicals, and government statements), and *Parliament Rolls of Medieval England* (official records of the meetings of the English parliament from Edward I until Henry VII). Relevant websites featuring primary source information are often added to the catalog, e.g., the *Complete Works of Charles Darwin online* (full text of all of his books, field notebooks, and reproduction of thousands of pieces of correspondence).

The committee also tries to acquire resources to support a variety of disciplines. The goal is to select key resources in a number of disciplines rather than comprehensive coverage of a single discipline. Faculty are encouraged to suggest titles for consideration. To suggest the purchase of a new digital primary resource, please contact Mike Poulin, Digital Resources Librarian. ●

## Repatriation of Special Collections & Archives

by Carl Peterson

As of February, all of the Libraries' Rare Books & Manuscripts are home in Room 275 of Case Library. Most, but not all of the books have been reintegrated. Because of space constraints a number of books, particularly 19<sup>th</sup> century serials, had to be transferred to restricted bins in LASR. These books can be requested via communication with Carl Peterson, either in person, by email, or by phone. Requested materials will then be kept in Special Collections as long as the patron needs.

As for the University Archive, flooring problems in its future home (Room 245) mean that the archive will not be fully integrated before the opening of the fall semester. Nevertheless, portions of the archive are accessible now—college newspapers, yearbooks, course catalogs, etc. In-depth searches, however, will not be possible, except in cases of extreme need. Of course, we will do our very best to accommodate all Library patrons. ●

## From the University Librarian

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resources which support the curriculum and make them available from the Libraries web site. Typically used by a number of classes, recent digitization of the Andrew J. Russell Civil War photographs has provided any place, any time networked access to these images while also enhancing their preservation by curtailing their physical handling.

Commercial vendors are increasingly using digitization to enhance researchers' access to similar "hidden treasures" tucked out of sight in the world's archives by offering perpetual access rights for a one-time purchase price. Utilizing the Libraries' collection development policy that primarily focuses on curricular support, the Collection Development Department processes faculty requests for new databases by purchasing cost-effective titles costing up to several thousand dollars. High-cost titles—often in excess of fifty thousand dollars—like *Early English Books Online* or *State Papers (Domestic and Colonial) Online* are added to a desiderata list for consideration if funding becomes available. Increasingly, donors are willing to commit funds for digital purchases like these. I am currently working with the Library Advisory Committee on identifying appropriate databases in case resources become available for the Libraries to make a major purchase with impact on as many courses, students, and faculty as possible.

While access to these digital surrogates may not impart the same experience as handling the original artifacts, for most undergraduate and some faculty research the content is most important. However, there is some evidence that suggests that the availability of digital surrogates increases demand for the original artifact, thereby providing an enhanced role for librarians both to curate the physical item as well as to provide access to the digital equivalent. ●

### Colgate University Libraries

#### Regular Library Hours Academic Year 2007–2008

#### Case Library and Geyer Center for Information Technology

Monday–Thursday: 8 a.m.–2 a.m.  
Friday: 8 a.m.–10 p.m.  
Saturday: 10 a.m.–10 p.m.  
Sunday: 10 a.m.–2 a.m.

#### Cooley Science Library

Monday–Thursday: 8 a.m.–midnight  
Friday: 8 a.m.–10 p.m.  
Saturday: 10 a.m.–10 p.m.  
Sunday: 10 a.m.–midnight

For exceptions to the regular hours see:  
<http://exlibris.colgate.edu/about/hours.html>

#### Phone Numbers

Case Reference: 315-228-7303  
Case Circulation: 315-228-7300  
Cooley Library: 315-228-7312  
ITS/Source: 315-228-7111

