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## Newsletter Fall 2008

Colgate University Libraries

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# Colgate Libraries Newsletter

## From the University Librarian

Joanne Schneider



### Are Rumors of the Death of the Reference Desk Greatly Exaggerated?

A hallmark of the late twentieth century undergraduate library was the personalized research assistance provided to students by a librarian at the reference desk. Also, as online databases with various search protocols proliferated, student discussions with librarians at the reference desk increased and became more protracted.

This has changed in the 21<sup>st</sup> century—even at Colgate and even in the new Case Library and Geyer Center for Information Technology. Last year, while in-person directional and printer questions were significantly higher than in the old Case Library (understandable due to a much larger facility with more computers and printers), research-related queries had declined. They totaled 3,657 for the reference and the learning commons desks, down from a high of 4,925 over the last four years in the former Case Library from 2002-2005. The same was true at Cooley Science Library with 1,044 research questions in 2007-08, lower than the high of 1,555 from 2002 to 2005. While email and synchronous email chat has boosted queries, they don't affect the overall conclusions that reference consultations are decreasing. [Note that all statistics were down for the two years, 2006-2007, that Case Library was distributed over several locations during construction.]

This decline has not been matched by other statistical benchmarks at Case-Geyer which are increasing dramatically. In 2007-08, attendance in Case-Geyer was 424,824, 162% higher than the 262,781 figure for the old Case Library in 2003-2004, the year before construction began. Likewise, collection circulation has skyrocketed from 52,308 in 2003-04 to 115,401 in 2007-08, an increase of 221%.

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## From Case-Geyer to the World: Peace, Conflict, and Podcasting

by Charlotte Droll

This fall students in PEAC 111 (Introduction to Peace and Conflict Studies) are researching lesser known conflicts around the world, recording an audio essay or podcast, and then broadcasting their findings to the world via iTunes. All this arose from a collaboration among a professor, a librarian, and an information technologist, and the resources and services of the Case Library and Geyer Center for Information Technology. The professor is Tyrell Haberkorn, postdoctoral fellow, who wants her students to explore a conflict and to convey their thoughts to a broader audience. The librarian is Clarence Maybee, Information Literacy Librarian, who, together with Haberkorn, is guiding the students as they evaluate the information available and assemble that information into an effective audio communication. The information technologist is Ray Nardelli, Manager of Digital Media, who taught professor and students how to record and edit their audio essays. Below are excerpts from interviews with the three collaborators wherein they reflect on the experience thus far and offer their tips for those considering such a project.



### What motivated you to launch this project?

**Haberkorn:** Thinking about how we get engaged with the world—that led to podcasting as a possibility.

**Maybee:** Last year we thought about podcasting and how to use information to communicate in this different medium. This fall, through reviewing other podcasts, the students got the sense of what

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## Learning Commons Librarian

by Chloe Lanzara, Catherine Murray & Clarence Maybee

Colgate University Libraries welcomes Debbie Kraemer, the new Learning Commons Librarian, who began at Colgate in July of 2008. Debbie came to Colgate from a position as a Digital Learning Librarian at the University of Nebraska at



Lincoln. At Colgate, Debbie oversees the Learning Commons on Level 5 of the Case Library. Specializing in Queer Studies and Transgender Studies, Debbie is the Libraries' liaison to Queer Studies, Film and Media Studies, Educational Studies, Asian Studies and East Asian Language and Literature.

**“Together with ITS, there is support within the entire library for anything faculty might wish to do!”**

Excited about working at Colgate, Debbie sees Case-Geyer's Learning Commons as essential to students and faculty! For students the Commons offers great group study spaces and large screen monitors for working on computers. There are also media computers in the media workrooms for editing video and audio. The Café and the Flexible Room (24 hour space opposite the Café on Level 5) also make the Commons a great location for students to study and work on projects. Plus, student assistants are available to help or direct students to the right source for help for just about everything – technology, research, etc!



For faculty, the Learning Commons provides resources for your own work or for your students to work on their multimedia assignments. The Commons' Digital Conversion Room can take just about anything and convert it into something digital – VHS tapes to DVDs, vinyl records to MP3s, etc. Debbie assured us that, “Together with Information Technology Services (ITS), there is support within the entire library for anything faculty might wish to do!” Debbie added, “Also, the Commons has the best view in the Library!” ●

### Send Students to the Reference Desk

Students who grew up in an electronic world may not always realize how close at hand an answer may be. Encourage your students to go to the Reference Desk on Level 3 of Case-Geyer for research help.

**Ask a  
librarian**

### New Libraries' Web Page for Faculty - Make It Your Homepage

Need to set up electronic reserves for your course? Looking for the librarian who is the liaison to the faculty in your department? Want to know more about the Libraries' Information Literacy Program? Find all the tools and services you need conveniently located in one place:

[http://exlibris.colgate.edu/services/information\\_for/faculty.html](http://exlibris.colgate.edu/services/information_for/faculty.html)

## New Resources by Mike Poulin

**Early English Books Online (EEBO)** contains digital facsimile page images of virtually every work printed in England, Ireland, Scotland, Wales and British North America and works in English printed elsewhere from 1473-1700 - from the first book printed in English by William Caxton, through the age of Spenser and Shakespeare and the tumult of the English Civil War. The collection now contains over 100,000 titles and will continue to grow to 125,000.



**Periodicals Archive Online** is a collection of over 500 titles from the 1770's through to 1995. Scholarly journals from anthropology, economics, education, film and theatre studies, fine arts, geography, history, regional studies, humanities (general), linguistics, literature, music, philosophy, political science, psychology, religious studies, social sciences (general), sociology, and women's studies are all represented. The collection contains the full text of the journals usually from their inception until 1995 or even later.

**Digital National Security Archive** is a collection of full-text primary source documents on United States foreign policy in the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The 30 individual collections include declassified documents on the Vietnam War, Latin American studies, Middle Eastern Studies, the Cuban Missile Crisis and many other topics. ●

## Oberlin Group Library Directors' Meeting Held at Case-Geyer

Colgate Libraries hosted members of Oberlin Group comprised of 55 library directors from liberal arts institutions for their annual meeting this year, October 16th - 18th.

## From Case-Geyer to the World continued from page 1

they could do and could think about what they wanted their own podcast to do. Students are excited now at the prospect of communicating with a broader audience.

**Nardelli:** Having students use the facilities down in Case-Geyer. For quality of product it's so important to have the audio and video studios.

**What do you anticipate students will gain from this assignment that they would not have gained had they been writing a conventional research paper?**

**Haberkorn:** Students have been even more careful with the topics they pick. They say, "I've been thinking about this topic or that topic, but I feel they're not important enough for the podcast." Students never had that question with a regular research paper. They are engaging passionately with something, and it's an amazing thing to convey that passion to someone else.

**Nardelli:** So much is digital communication today. It's great for students to see behind the scenes. To be a critical consumer of this content, it's great to know how it's done.

**If other professors are considering such a project, what would you want them to know?**

**Haberkorn:** Have a logic for why you're doing something outside the box. You need a pedagogical reason.

**Maybee:** Professors might be reluctant, thinking about how to grade in a medium you're not comfortable in, but there are resources to pull on for that.

**Haberkorn:** The level of support has been fantastic. If professors want to do this, they don't have to worry that they'll be thrown into something they can't do.

**Maybee:** Faculty may not know about the state-of-the-art studios that students have access to and the level of support.

**Nardelli:** They don't have to know how to do it. We can brainstorm and teach the students. We can collaborate, and the students benefit. ●

## Colgate Archives Fully Operational by Carl Peterson

The Colgate University Archives is now available on Level 2 of Case-Geyer (Room 245). Contact Carl Peterson, Special Collections Librarian, at 228-7305 or by e-mail for information concerning the Archives or to arrange access to materials:

- College and Hamilton history
- University publications
- Research collections (Rhineland Papers, Dunlap Collection of Radio & Television, etc.)
- Baptist Education Society Papers
- 19th century letters
- Photographs
- Colgate during WWII
- Biographical information on former students and faculty
- Co-education files
- The Vietnam Era at Colgate ●

### Colgate University Libraries

#### Regular Library Hours Academic Year 2008-2009

#### 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

## From the University Librarian continued from page 1

And statistics for virtual library use -- library web page hits, digital database searches, and online full-text retrievals -- continue to multiply over the half-million mark.

So, if more students are coming to Case-Geyer and checking out more materials than before, why aren't they taking advantage of asking questions of the librarians at the reference desk? After all, isn't attendance at a small, elite liberal arts residential college all about personalized service? Or, could it be simply the age of Google and the rise of Web 2.0 technologies where, as one study cites, "89% of college students use search engines to begin an information search and two percent begin a search on a library web site?"

Academic libraries have reacted in various ways -- from launching major promotions of personalized reference desk and office consultation services to doing away with the reference desk altogether. At other institutions, some faculty have required students to confer with a librarian at the reference desk who would then initial the course syllabus as proof. Much depends on the local culture and the stated expectations of faculty that their students seek guidance from librarians. This makes sense at Colgate since less than half the faculty surveyed in preparation for Middle States reaccreditation agreed that their students were competent information seekers. Since some academic libraries are experiencing upturns at the reference desk, the University Libraries have decided to dedicate this year to promoting student use of the reference desk, to assessing its use, and to exploring other service models.

My request to the faculty is, if you think your students need to improve their research skills, please send them to the reference desk. Also, you may wish to suggest that they make an appointment for an office consultation with one of the reference librarians. They can reach us by email, telephone, chat or in person--all the details are available by clicking on the Ask a Librarian icon on the Libraries' webpage. ●

