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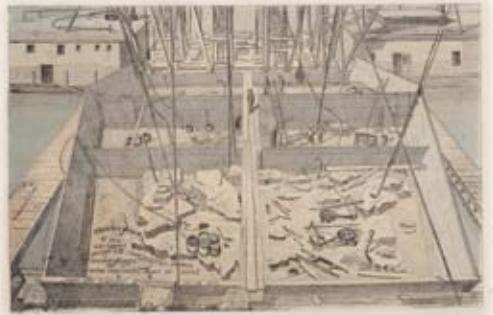
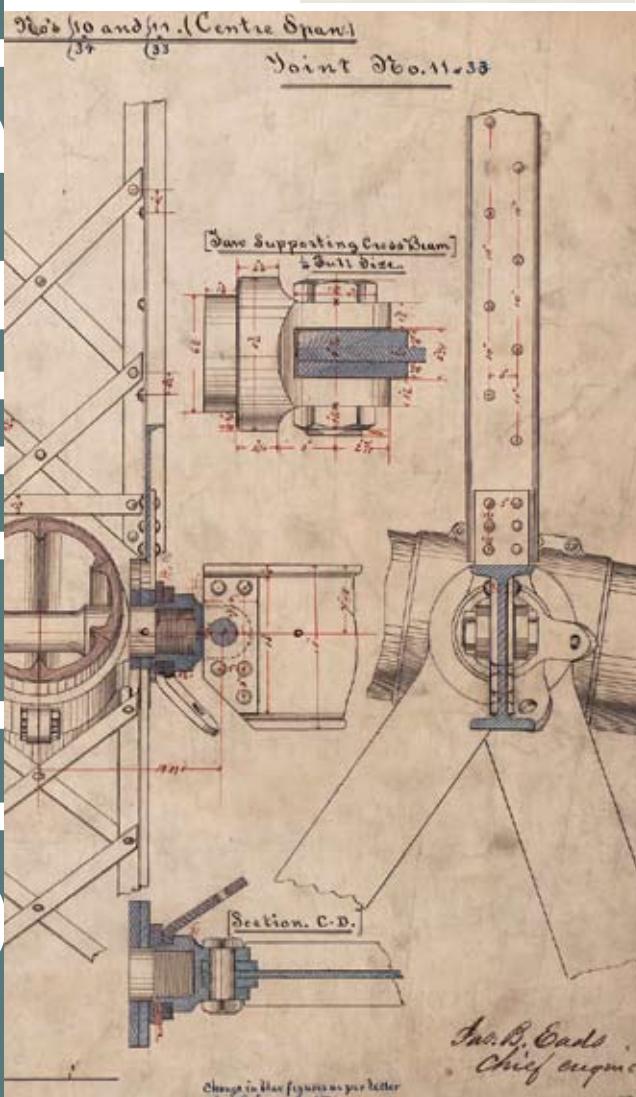
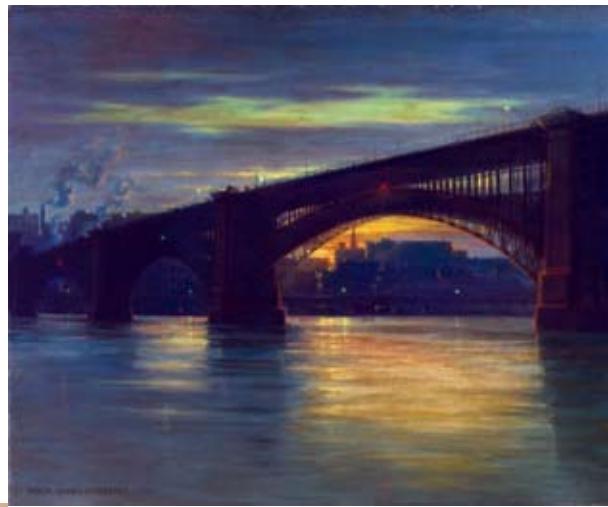
A PUBLICATION OF WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES

OFF THE SHELF



A Bridge to History

DIGITIZING AN
ARCHITECTURAL
MASTERPIECE



LETTER FROM THE DEAN



WHEN I FIRST LEARNED that some of Thomas Jefferson's books had been discovered in our collections, I was struck by how fitting it is that they were found here. St. Louis is the eastern edge of Jefferson's Louisiana Purchase. Our state capital is Jefferson City, and the Louisiana Purchase transfer documents are in the Missouri History Museum just a few blocks from Washington University. The Louisiana Purchase added more than 800,000 square miles of territory, including all of Missouri, to the Union.

I was equally struck by the Google Books/rare books connection. Google, in digitizing older materials from Harvard's libraries, included an alumni publication from 1880. While conducting a Google Books search, Jefferson scholar Ann Lucas Birle came across it, uncovering mention of a gift of the library of Joseph Coolidge, Jefferson's grandson-in-law, to Washington University. This exploration into old but hidden territory would not have been possible without the new territory that the digital age opens to us.

At Washington University Libraries, many of our efforts occur at the intersection of old and new—places involving both Google Books and rare books, digitization and preservation. Much of this issue of *Off the Shelf* examines that multifaceted work.

Our cover story describes our critical role in the physical and cultural maintenance of the Eads Bridge. This 19th-century engineering marvel continues to transport people and goods across the Mississippi. By digitizing the architectural drawings that guided its construction—housed today in our University Archives—the Libraries are making these functional works of art accessible to engineers and to anyone interested in exploring them.

As we continue such work, we're encouraged by new opportunities to take on key projects. I am ever mindful that these projects are possible through the vision and hard work of library staff and the friends, faculty, funding agencies, and other institutions that partner with us.

This latest issue of *Off the Shelf* will tell you much more. Enjoy!

SHIRLEY K. BAKER

Vice Chancellor for Scholarly Resources &
Dean of University Libraries

ON THE COVER

Frederick Oakes Sylvester's 1903 painting, *The Bridge*, owned by Saint Louis Art Museum; an 1871 architectural sketch of crossbeam support for the Eads Bridge; and details from a chromolithograph celebrating the bridge's completion in 1874. For more, see "A Bridge to History," p. 8. Images courtesy of Saint Louis Art Museum, Washington University Archives, and the Library of Congress.

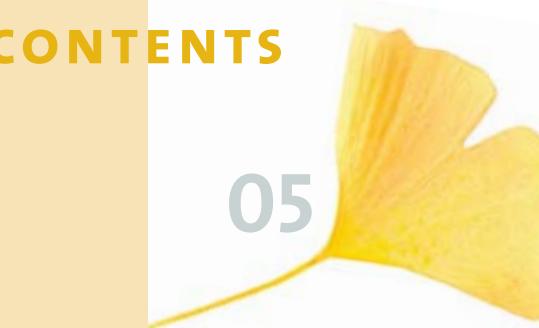
EDITOR'S NOTE: As executive editor of *Off the Shelf*, my goal is for our magazine to be of interest and value to our readers, including our peers at other libraries. So it was especially gratifying to learn that *Off the Shelf* had placed second in the most recent annual library newsletter competition sponsored by the Library Leadership and Management Association. (Kudos to the first-place winner, the Metropolitan Library System of Oklahoma County.) Our magazine was judged in a category for libraries with total operating budgets of \$20 million or more. We share credit for this recognition with the many members of our staff who contributed story ideas, information, articles, photographs, feedback, and encouragement. But I'd like to single out Aaron Welborn, our former managing editor and lead writer—who now is at Duke University Libraries—and Laura Burns Gericke, our graphic designer, for applying their awesome talents, hard work, and attention to detail to this publication. Clearly the judges liked what they saw and read. We hope you do too.

JOY GILLISPIE LOWERY

Director of Communications

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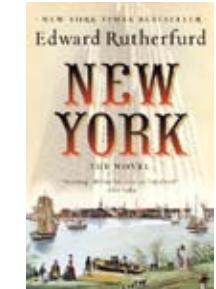
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THE MILITARY ALEROP-O-TELEGRAPH
For FIELD-SERVICE.
Simpler than the Field-Telegraph, and less liable to
Breakage.



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A Look Back:

EVENTS & EXHIBITION NOTES



^ This page (left to right):
Dana Brown showcases his Safari coffee;
Humanities Medal recipient Francine Prose signs books; author Adam Ross; Timothy Barrett shows off unique books and papers.

LIBRARIES JOIN HEC-TV FOR DANA BROWN FILM PREMIERE

"This is Safari Land, and I am Dana Brown," says a distinctive voice accompanying footage of a black rhino, taken from the vantage point of a jeep. "We just wanted pictures of a baby [rhino]. But no one explained that to the [mother] rhino. It wasn't really a fair race. She hit us before we got into second gear."

A documentary featuring clips of adventures like this one premiered in Washington University's Steinberg Hall in December. The Libraries' Film & Media Archive co-sponsored the showing of the film, *Dana Brown's Life on Safari*, which explores the life, work, and philanthropy of St. Louis entrepreneur and world traveler Dana Brown.

Produced by HEC-TV, the film draws on hours of film footage documenting Brown's travels to Africa and Asia, where he created commercials for his Safari Coffee brand in the 1960s, '70s, and '80s. Brown's commercials always included a clear call to buy his coffee. But he also introduced viewers to everything from lion cubs to tiger fish along the way, and the wildlife and people of faraway places made the commercials particularly memorable.

The premiere drew an audience that included several of Brown's friends and associates who were interviewed for the film. Attendees traded stories over refreshments—including coffee—during a reception that showcased Safari Coffee cans and other memorabilia.

Now owned by the Libraries, the Dana Brown materials are housed at the Film & Media Archive. Staff members will begin processing the collection this summer, eventually making the unique footage from Brown's adventures accessible for further use and research.

AUTHOR FRANCINE PROSE RECEIVES 2010 HUMANITIES MEDAL

Can art protect us? Does art make us better people?

During a lecture intended more to raise questions than provide answers, acclaimed novelist and nonfiction writer Francine Prose outlined "Ten Things Art Can Do" for a crowd in Graham Chapel in late November.

Prose's thought-provoking address accompanied the presentation of Washington University's International Humanities Medal, a prestigious award given biennially by the Center for the Humanities. The University Libraries are a co-sponsor. The award includes a \$25,000 cash prize, one of the largest of its kind in the United States, and is made possible through the generosity of alumni Phyllis Wilson Grossman and David Grossman. Previous recipients are journalist Michael Pollan (2008) and Turkish novelist Orhan Pamuk (2006).

Prose was chosen as the 2010 recipient because of her sustained, significant contributions to the world of arts and letters. Her many books cover a wide variety of literary forms, ranging from nonfiction works on Anne Frank and Caravaggio to novels and short stories.

"Prose's reviewers say that, in addition to writing muscular prose, she is able to depict the ordinary foibles and vicious vanities of life with profundity and power," Dean Shirley Baker said while introducing her at the event. "She keeps her reader off-balance, caught between laughing and crying, between admiration and disgust for her characters. She is courageous in stating her opinions forthrightly, and she is one of the master writers of our time."

In exploring what exactly it is that art can do, Prose's lecture looked to answers embodied in the work of artists such as photographer Diane Arbus, novelist Roberto Bolano, poet Emily Dickinson, and composer Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. Prose spoke of limits as well as possibilities.

"Can art make you a better person?" she asked. "Not necessarily ... It's neither the responsibility nor the purpose of art to make us better people." Prose suggested that responsibility remains with each of us, as human beings. But art can affect, shock, humanize, alert, and protect us, she said, and it "can diminish the solitude of being a human being."

"Art is the driftwood humans cling to, as we always have," she said, "when we worry that we are drowning."

Among Prose's most recent books are *Touch*, a novel for young adults, and *Anne Frank: The Book, the Life, the Afterlife*, both published in 2009. She is a contributing editor at *Harper's* and writes about art for *The Wall Street Journal*.

AUTHOR OF MR. PEANUT DISCUSSES FICTION, HUMOR

Washington University alumnus Adam Ross returned to campus in October to read from and discuss his complex debut novel, *Mr. Peanut*, which gained immediate and widespread attention upon its publication by Knopf in 2010.

The book begins, "When David Pepin first dreamed of killing his wife, he didn't kill her himself. He dreamed convenient acts of God." When his wife Alice actually does die, David claims it's suicide and says he tried to save her. The police believe it's murder, and David is the prime suspect. Ross's novel, which he wrote over a 15-year period, is circuitous, ultimately more about the many challenges of marriage than about uncovering the truth of Alice's death.

ESSAY COMPETITION DRAWS WIDE RANGE OF SUBMISSIONS

What do military history, cookbooks, Polish science fiction, and the literature of World War II have in common? They were all topics of the winning essays in the 2010 Neureuther Student Book Collection Essay Competition. The contest, now in its 24th year, rewards students for sharing stories about their passion for book collecting. Winners receive cash prizes: \$1,000 for 1st place, \$500 for 2nd.

Pictured here (left to right) are the 2010 undergraduate and graduate winners: Michal Hyrc (sophomore Chemical Engineering major), Anna Teekell Hays (PhD candidate in English), and Maggie Gorman (junior Business major). Not pictured: Amit Patel (MD candidate). You can read their essays, as well as those of previous winners, on the Libraries' website: library.wustl.edu/collections/neureuther.html.

Reviewed in *The New Yorker*, *The New York Times*, and elsewhere, the book's admirers include suspense masters Scott Turow and Stephen King, who pronounces *Mr. Peanut* "the most riveting look at the dark side of marriage since *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*"

Adam Ross earned an MFA in Creative Writing from Washington University in 1994.

The Libraries joined Washington University's Creative Writing Program in co-sponsoring the visit.

LECTURE UNCOVERS HISTORY AND SCIENCE OF PAPERMAKING

The Libraries sponsored a presentation by internationally recognized papermaker, conservator, and educator Timothy Barrett in November. Titled *14th- to 19th-century Handmade Papers: Recent Aesthetic and Scientific Investigations*, Barrett's talk focused on his and his colleagues' recent analysis of hundreds of antique paper specimens. More than 150 people attended. After the lecture, attendees were able to look at and even handle artists' books and paper specimens new and old.

Barrett, who received a MacArthur "Genius" Award for his work in 2009, is a research scientist and adjunct professor at the University of Iowa Center for the Book, which is the only academic program in the United States that focuses on producing traditional Western- and Japanese-style papers and teaching techniques.

In 2002, Barrett and co-workers fabricated archival paper that was then used to re-house the Declaration of Independence, the Bill of Rights, and the Constitution. He has authored two books, six videotapes and 25 articles on hand papermaking.

A Room with a View:

LOOKING OUT FROM THE GINKGO ROOM



[▲] Left to right: The poster accompanying the Libraries' *Little Magazines* exhibition; covers of two of the publications featured in the *Little Magazines* exhibition; Jonathan Safran Foer posing for a photo with a fan; and Foer's latest book.

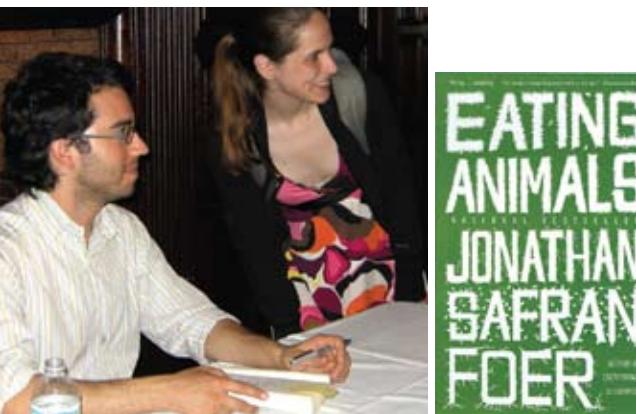
LITTLE MAGAZINES SHOWCASED AT UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES

An exhibition called *Little Magazines* was displayed in Olin Library from July 25 to September 15, 2010. "Little magazines" are literary journals typically intended to bring attention to promising but undiscovered writers, and often present avant garde content. Popular in the 20th century—especially from the 1950s to 1970s—little magazines were usually produced inexpensively and with little concern for making money. Many literary greats were first published in these publications.

The exhibition drew on Special Collections' extensive holdings. Among the featured magazines was *Perspective*, published from 1947 to 1975 by Professor Jarvis Thurston and poet Mona Van Duyn, a married couple who spent their careers at Washington University. One of the more unusual magazines in the exhibition is *Neue Revue*, published in Germany in the 1930s. Its strong anti-Nazi stance earned its editor, Gert von Gontard, a place on the Nazi's "death list" in 1933. Von Gontard eventually fled to the United States. The groundbreaking quarterly *Neurotica*, published from 1948 to 1951 in St. Louis, explored the relationship between neurosis, sex, the arts, and the creative person. Contributors included Marshall McLuhan, Anatole Broyard (the *New York Times* literary critic), and Beat writers Allan Ginsberg and Jack Kerouac.

Among the other magazines featured in the exhibition and held in Special Collections are *Big Sky*, *Black Mountain Review*, *McSweeney's*, *Evergreen Review*, *City Lights*, and many more.

John Hodge, curator of manuscripts, oversaw and expanded the Libraries' collection of little magazines, and curated this exhibition. John died December 3, 2010, after a lengthy illness. In 2001, he edited *James Merrill: Other Writings*,



a catalog published by the Libraries, to accompany an exhibition by the same name. John is survived by his wife Patricia Brooke and their young daughter Margaret "Mags" Brooke-Hodge.

JONATHAN SAFRAN FOER FILLS GRAHAM CHAPEL

Celebrated author Jonathan Safran Foer drew a near-capacity crowd when he spoke at Graham Chapel September 30, 2010. Foer was in town as part of a book tour for his latest book, *Eating Animals*, which details his journey to becoming a vegetarian. The Campus Bookstore arranged the event, with the Libraries and Mortar Board honor society co-hosting.

Foer credits his two young sons with inspiring him to make major changes in the family's diet. His research into healthy eating eventually moved him to eliminate meat from his diet, but he readily acknowledges that isn't for everyone. Instead he urges individuals to become more knowledgeable about food choices—including how our buying habits impact the environment—and to eat healthier. He sees reducing meat consumption as crucial to achieving these goals.

Foer has also written two wildly popular novels: *Everything is Illuminated* and *Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close*.

Foer's lecture was funded in part by income from an endowment established by Engineering alumnus Carl Neureuther, who sought to encourage students to read for enjoyment.



Joy Lowery

WHEN A CERTAIN GINKGO-LINED SIDEWALK showed up in Andrew Sullivan's popular "View From Your Window Contest" feature on *The Atlantic*'s website in December, readers sent in plenty of guesses about the location. Among the anonymous comments that the Daily Dish blog posted, a number were slightly off, to say the least.

Is that Bryn Mawr? Princeton? Wait, no, it must be somewhere south, given the shorts the passerby at left is wearing. Vanderbilt?

"That building screams University of Florida to me," said one reader.

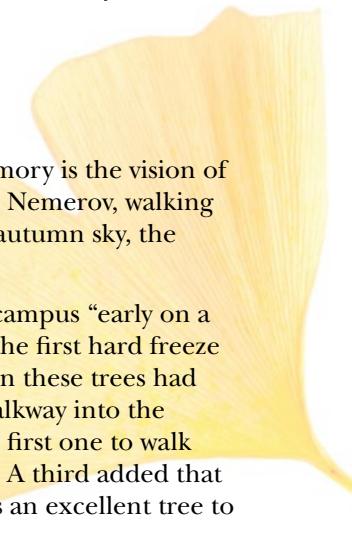
"I believe this may have been taken at the University of Tokyo, in Tokyo, Japan," said another.

But a fair bunch of Sullivan's readers knew exactly which building the picture had been taken from—the John M. Olin Library at Washington University—and wrote to tell him so. Many of them recalled fond memories of the featured walkway and of hours spent inside the library.

"I haven't seen that alley of ginkgo for 34 years," wrote one Washington University alum, "but apparently nothing has changed. It's impossible to forget the yellow transparency and tenacity of their fall foliage. The only thing about this photo that



[▲] In December, *The Atlantic*'s Daily Dish blog featured a reader's photo taken from inside Olin Library.



does not compare with my memory is the vision of my professor, the poet Howard Nemerov, walking the path under a blazing blue autumn sky, the same color as his eyes."

Another described coming to campus "early on a Saturday morning, right after the first hard freeze of the year. The yellow leaves on these trees had fallen en masse, turning the walkway into the yellowbrick road, and I was the first one to walk through them. It was sublime." A third added that "the second tree on the right is an excellent tree to climb and read a book."

The final comment posted came from a reader that the blog called "too unique" not to be named the winner: "Could I be the first [contest] submitter to stumble across the image while sitting in the exact room it was taken in? This window is in the Ginkgo Reading Room in the main library of my school, Washington University in Saint Louis, where I happen to be sitting right now . . . What inquisitive soul reads the Daily Dish alongside me?"

To view the photo (whose original owner remains a mystery) and the many reader responses, go to theatlantic.com and search for the "View From Your Window Contest: Winner #27."

A Bridge to History:

DIGITIZING AN ARCHITECTURAL MASTERPIECE

On Independence Day, 1874, with some 150,000 people looking on, General William Tecumseh Sherman drove the final, ceremonial railroad spike into the Eads Bridge, officially completing one of the most spectacular feats in engineering history.

BY AARON WELBORN

One of the more than 650 original Eads Bridge drawings housed at Washington University Libraries. *University Archives*

IT WAS THE LARGEST BRIDGE the world had ever seen up to that time. It was the first bridge to span the Mississippi River at St. Louis, where the water stretched nearly a third of a mile wide. And it was the first significant span of any kind to be built using large quantities of mass-produced steel, a new and unproven material in those days.

Today the Eads Bridge is one of several arteries connecting St. Louis and the Metro East area in Illinois. Every day, as many as 60,000 people drive, bike, or walk across its upper deck or ride commuter trains across the lower deck. So it might be hard to appreciate the sense of wonder and admiration many people felt for this monumental viaduct when it was first built.

Many prominent engineers and industrialists of the age said this bridge could never be built. A bridge of that size—with enough clearance for riverboat smokestacks, enough strength to support

fully loaded railcars, and enough distance between the supporting pillars to avoid obstructing river traffic—was impossible.

The soundness and longevity of the bridge have proven just how wrong they were. Today the Eads Bridge is as hard-working as ever and, along with its 45-year-old neighbor, the Gateway Arch, is a St. Louis landmark.

Still, any 137-year-old bridge needs maintenance to keep it in working order, and the Eads Bridge has been updated many times over the years. Now, thanks to federal stimulus funds, the bridge is being updated again, and the Washington University Libraries are playing a small but important and rather unusual part.

A BLUEPRINT FOR PRESERVATION

The Bi-State Development Agency (Metro), which operates the MetroLink light rail along the bridge's lower deck, is undertaking a substantial



"I have haunted the river every night lately, where I could get a look at the bridge by moonlight. It is indeed a structure of perfection and beauty unsurpassable, and I never tire of it."

—WALT WHITMAN, OCTOBER 1879 JOURNAL ENTRY

SELECTED FACTS

Dimensions

Spans: 502, 520, 502 feet
Clearance: 50 feet above high water

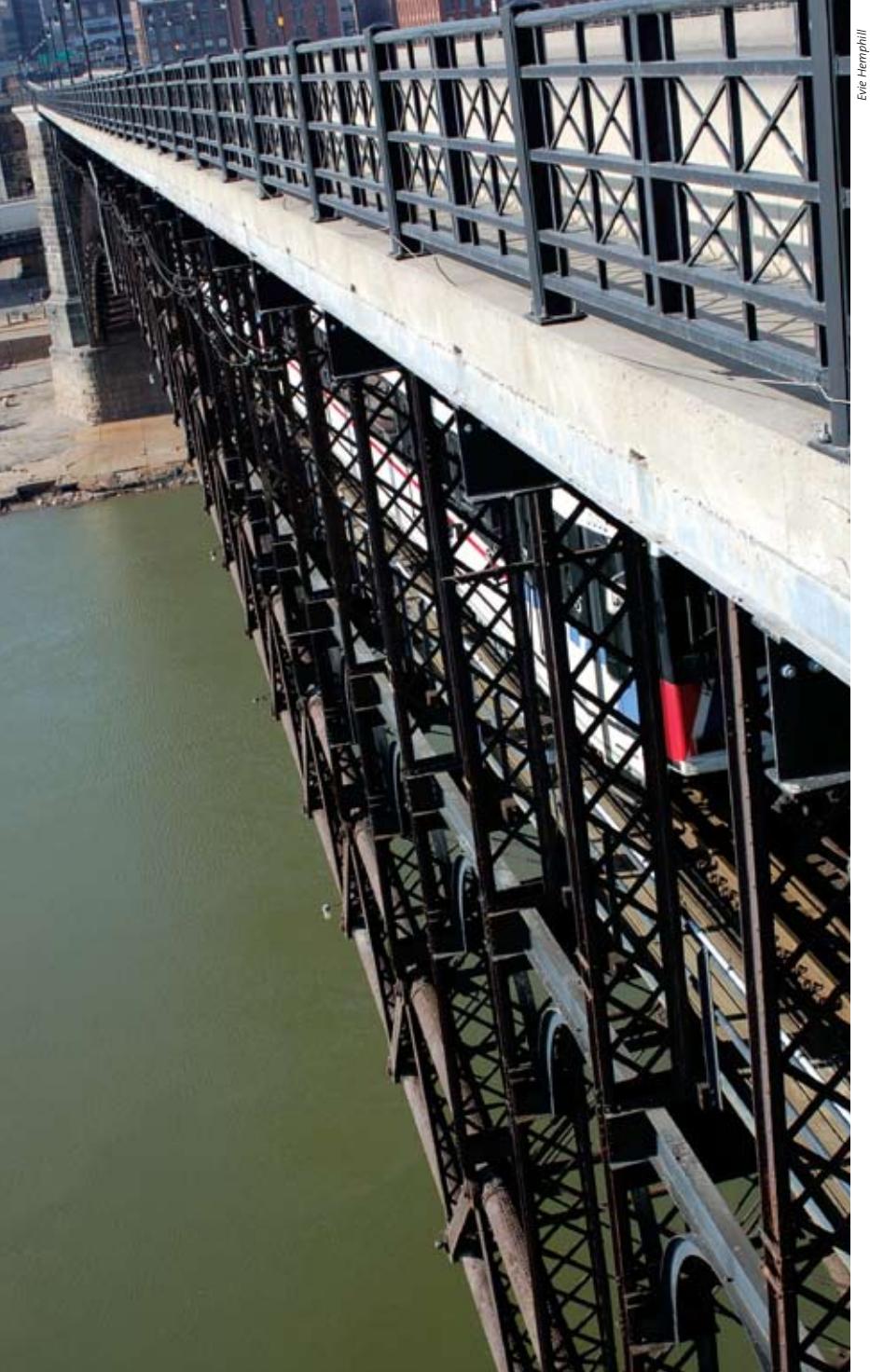
Materials

Steel: 2,390 tons
Wrought iron: 3,156 tons
Timber decking: 806 tons
Stone masonry: 97,571 cubic yards

Costs at the time of construction

Superstructure: \$2,122,781
Foundations: \$3,254,861

Total cost: \$6,536,729



Evie Hemphill

The City of St. Louis rehabbed the bridge's upper road deck in 2003, and the bridge's arch trusses remain structurally sound. But the decks supporting rail and highway traffic require periodic replacement near the typical end of service life—80 years—and the current rail deck has been in service since the 1920s.

With funds from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (the “stimulus bill”), the aging rail deck will be completely replaced. The entire superstructure will be sandblasted and repainted. The MetroLink track system will be replaced, including rails and ties. The catenary wire system, which transmits electric power to the light-rail vehicles, will be upgraded. All told, the project will cost roughly \$25 million and create an estimated 875 construction jobs.

In 2010, Metro contracted with the engineering firm TranSystems to begin initial repairs on the bridge. Anyone looking for detailed structural information about the Eads Bridge must consult the originals. That led TranSystems to get in touch with the Libraries' University Archives, which houses more than 650 original architectural and engineering drawings of the Eads Bridge, dating back to its construction. Some of the drawings are as long as six feet. The detailed plans—hand-drawn in ink on starched linen—were used by the engineers and craftsmen who worked on the bridge between 1867 and 1874. Some 570 drawings were jointly donated to the University and the National Museum of Transportation by the Terminal Railroad Association in 1974. An additional 93 drawings, owned by the American Bridge Company, are in the Archives on permanent deposit. Many of them bear the signature of chief engineer James Buchanan Eads himself.

FAMOUS FIRSTS

When it was completed in 1874, the Eads Bridge was considered an engineering marvel. It was the longest bridge in the world at that time, and the first significant structure of any kind to be built with steel.

Here's a list of other record-breaking Eads Bridge firsts:

—**Longest arches.** The bridge's three supporting arches (two of them spanning 502 feet, and the third measuring 520 feet) were 200 feet longer than any arch previously constructed.

—**Deepest pneumatic caissons.** In addition to marking the first large-scale use of pneumatic caissons in the U.S., the construction of the Eads Bridge involved the deepest excavations conducted by hand anywhere. The caissons are still among the deepest ever sunk for a large structure.

—**First American to die of “the bends”** —James Riley. Fourteen more would die, and many more would be crippled for life.

—**Tubes.** First use of tubular steel for bridge support.

—**Cantilevers.** First bridge built using cantilever support methods exclusively. The traditional method of building an arch bridge for thousands of years was to use falsework, wooden framing that held the arch in place until it was structurally sound.

—**Replaceable parts.** First use of replaceable mass-produced components in a bridge design.

—**Recognition.** James B. Eads was the first U.S. engineer to be honored with the Albert Medal of the Royal Society of Arts in London.

“This was Captain Eads, an original genius minus scientific knowledge to guide his erratic ideas of things mechanical. He was seemingly one of those who wished to have everything done upon his own original plans. That a thing had been done in one way before was sufficient to cause its rejection. ... A man may be possessed of great ability, and be a charming, interesting character, as Captain Eads undoubtedly was, and yet not be able to construct the first bridge of five hundred feet span over the Mississippi River, without availing himself of the scientific knowledge and practical experience of others.”

—ANDREW CARNEGIE, THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF ANDREW CARNEGIE, 1920

Consulting the original drawings presents a problem for such complicated jobs as the large-scale renovation work Metro has planned. On the one hand, the drawings are extremely rare and fragile. Due to their age, significance, and cumbersome size, they require special—and limited—handling. On the other hand, the engineers doing the renovations need a reliable set of working plans onsite. A surveyor could be hired to completely re-survey the bridge, but only at considerable time and cost.

The solution was for the Eads Bridge drawings to be digitized to the highest historic preservation standards, with Metro helping with the Libraries' costs of doing so. Now, Metro has a set of digital drawings to work from, and the Libraries are gradually making the drawings publicly available, allowing anyone to consult, use, or just admire them.

“We've always wanted to have the Eads Bridge plans digitized,” says University Archivist Sonya Rooney. “It's been on our wish list for a long time. But we never could devote the resources to it until now. This was the perfect opportunity to preserve the originals and make them more accessible. And it's in the name of a great cause—preserving the Eads Bridge itself.”

The newly digitized drawings are already being put to practical use. In November and December, five different firms contacted the Archives to request some of the digital files as they began the bid process for painting the bridge. And, according to Rooney, the digitized drawings will appeal to a wide range of people, not just engineers. Historians, architects, antiquarians, students of art, and even casual viewers are sure to find them interesting and full of rich detail.



FOR A SAMPLE OF THE DIGITIZED COLLECTION, go to <http://library.wustl.edu/units/spec/archives/photos/eads/>.

▲ Bob Lyner and Tom Wobbe of St. Louis-based Digital Preservation prepare one of the original drawings for high-resolution scanning. Aaron Welborn

Beyond practical use, the Eads Bridge drawings have aesthetic value. The drawings are stunning examples of old-fashioned draftsmanship. They document the unique challenges of the engineering achievement and also the remarkable imagination that went into it. To look at them is to look at history in the making.

AN UNLIKELY SOLUTION

The story of the Eads Bridge has been the subject of numerous books, articles, websites, and at least one film. By the mid-19th century, the river that formerly offered St. Louis so many economic advantages had become an obstacle to further growth, moating the city off from eastern commerce. Steamboats were no longer the quickest way of transporting goods cross-country. The railroad was the new king, and Chicago had already established itself as the new transportation hub of the Midwest.

Images of the celebrated Eads Bridge appear on the covers of sheet music connected to the region. These three pieces, by Earl Hines, W.C. Handy, and C.D. Wilson, are held in Washington University's Gaylord Music Library.



In 1865, St. Louis's political and industrial leaders decided they needed a bridge that would carry the railroad across the river and put their city back in the action. There was only one problem: no one had ever built a bridge that long. Moreover, it was believed no one could. Most railroad bridges were constructed of heavy wrought iron, and one out of four collapsed. Engineers of that time did not inspire the same public confidence they do today.

A radical design solution was needed, one that could overcome the inherent technical difficulties and answer

the objections of powerful riverboat interests, who insisted that any bridge construction must not impede the passage of ships up and down the river. Astonishingly, the man who came up with the solution had never built a bridge in his life.

James Buchanan Eads had made his fortune salvaging wrecks from the bottom of the Mississippi. He designed his own ships and a special diving bell for this work. During the Civil War, Eads designed and built the first ironclads used by the Union. He was an expert on ships, rivers, and river bottoms, but he was a beginner when it came to bridges. Ironically, this very inexperience might have worked in Eads' favor.

Eads came up with the unconventional idea of using steel arches to span the river. At that time, steel was not a commonly used building material.

Although it is stronger, harder, and lighter than iron, only recently had Henry Bessemer discovered a way to manufacture steel cheaply.

Eads' plan faced many skeptics, including the steel baron Andrew Carnegie himself, who ultimately furnished the steel used in the Eads Bridge. To inspire confidence and build support for his design, Eads asked the noted mathematician and Washington University professor William Chauvenet to check his structural calculations. Chauvenet confirmed that Eads' numbers checked out.

"Here was desolation, indeed ... The towboat and the railroad had done their work, and done it well and completely. The mighty bridge, stretching along over our heads, had done its share in the slaughter and spoliation. Remains of former steamboatmen told me, with wan satisfaction, that the bridge doesn't pay. Still, it can be no sufficient compensation to a corpse, to know that the dynamite that laid him out was not of as good quality as it had been supposed to be." — MARK TWAIN, *LIFE ON THE MISSISSIPPI*, 1883

JAMES B. EADS: CAPTAIN OF THE MISSISSIPPI

A personal connection to rivers and their commerce formed early in life for James Buchanan Eads (1820-1887).

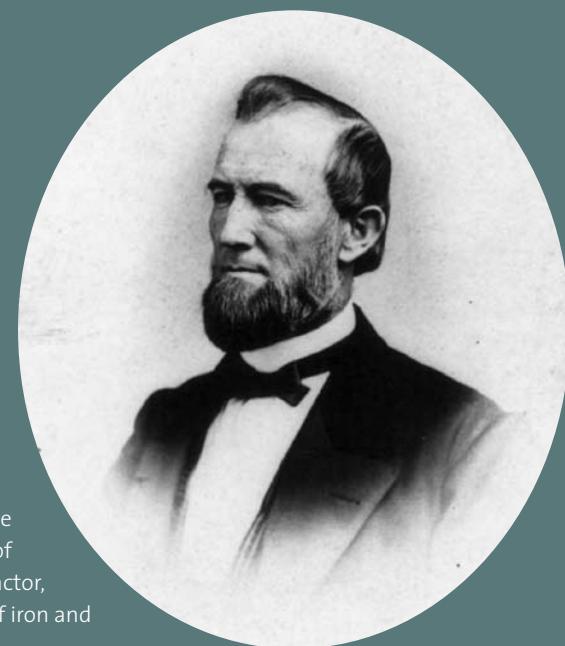
When he was a boy, Eads' family moved to St. Louis, where they planned to set up a dry goods store. But the riverboat that carried them there burned, along with their belongings and stocked goods. Eads then left school to begin working as a store clerk at age 13. He spent time in the shop owner's library above the store, reading books on physical science and engineering. At the age of 18 he started working on a Mississippi riverboat.

Scores of boats had succumbed to the great river, and at the age of 22 Eads invented a vessel specifically designed to salvage goods and remains from sunken boats along the deep riverbed. Eads soon earned his fortune by retrieving valuable cargo from the bottom of the Mississippi.

After almost 500 dives, Eads left the salvaging business to marry and to start a more traditional business venture — a glass factory. But the promising plans failed, and Eads soon returned to the river, this time inventing equipment strong enough to pump an entire sunken hull to the surface. Eads re-retired from the river in 1860, after suffering the effects of "the bends" from his many deep dives and being diagnosed with tuberculosis.

This second retirement was short-lived. As the Civil War approached, Eads recognized the key role that the Mississippi would play in the conflict, and he proposed, designed, and personally financed the first ironclad gunboats for the North. Two years after the war's end, when Eads decided to build his first — and the world's largest — bridge, his experience with the depths and currents of the Mississippi was a critical factor, in addition to his knowledge of iron and steel.

The bridge's long and challenging construction period lasted seven years, leaving Eads exhausted and in failing health. But his brilliant plans for building the bridge had worked. And the Eads Bridge, while his most well-known feat, was hardly his last invention, nor his last interaction with the Mississippi. Eads went on to successfully engineer a navigation channel for the city of New Orleans and remained a consultant for docks, canals, and other projects around the world.



Library of Congress

Another unusual aspect of Eads' design was the use of cantilevers to construct the supporting arches. For centuries, the traditional method of building an arch involved first building a wooden frame, which would support the curving structure while it was being erected. This would be difficult to do in the broad and unpredictable Mississippi River, so Eads devised a new method. He would start by building two massive stone piers in the middle of the river that would serve as the foundation for the arches. Then, using cantilevers for support, the legs of each arch would be assembled from the bottom up, curving toward each other until they met in the middle. It was an ingenious approach to a tough engineering problem, and it had the added benefit of allowing riverboats to move freely while the bridge was taking shape overhead.

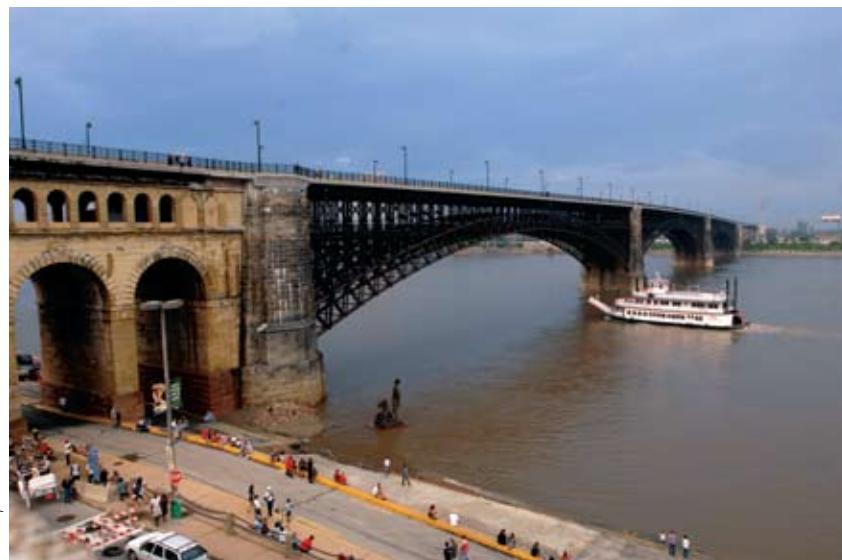
UNDER THE MIGHTY MISSISSIPPI

Not every aspect of the bridge construction process went so smoothly. The biggest challenge Eads faced was securing a strong foundation. Unless the bridge sat on solid bedrock, it risked collapse. But the bedrock beneath the Mississippi River was some 95 feet below the water's surface, deep underneath the riverbed. Digging a hole underwater through layers and layers of sand and mud would be no easy feat.

To solve the problem, Eads came up with the idea of using pneumatic caissons, essentially large pressurized chambers sunk into the riverbed. When the caissons were anchored in place, workmen descended through a series of airlocks and began digging out the sand underneath. Highly pressurized air was pumped in to counterbalance the water pressure bearing down on the caisson walls.

Meanwhile, up at the water's surface, another team of workers began building stone piers on top of the caissons. As they piled up more stone, the caissons sank deeper through the mud, which the workers down below kept shoveling out till they struck bedrock. Eads had seen this method of pier construction used in Europe, but never at such great depths.

The method worked, but it came with a high cost. Men working down in the pressurized caissons began writhing in agony upon resurfacing. Doctors dubbed the mysterious ailment "caisson disease," but no one understood the cause. Today, we know that Eads' workmen were suffering from decompression sickness, commonly called "the bends." The condition is caused by nitrogen dissolving in the bloodstream under high pressure at great depths. Inside the caissons where the men



▲ The bridge in a hand-colored Currier & Ives lithograph c. 1874 (top) and in a 2009 photograph.

worked, the air pressure sometimes reached twice as high as the inside of a car tire. When the men returned to normal atmospheric pressure, the dissolved nitrogen in their bodies expanded and formed bubbles in their blood, veins, and tissue, producing intense pain.

In the end, 15 workers died of “caisson disease” while digging the foundations for the Eads Bridge, two were paralyzed for life, and 77 others were severely afflicted. At least 20 percent of the 600 people who worked below the water’s surface became seriously ill. Eads’ own doctor, enlisted to try to determine what could be done, endured terrible pain after resurfacing from a caisson. It was a steep price to pay to provide a river crossing. But the lessons learned helped future bridge builders devise better systems for handling

pressures at such depths and minimizing the health risks to workers.

When it was finally completed, the Illinois and St. Louis Bridge (as it was initially known) was hailed as an architectural tour de force. To prove the strength of his design, Eads had 14 fully loaded locomotives drive back and forth across it, stopping in the middle of each span to the applause of admiring crowds. The most dramatic display of stability happened when a circus elephant was directed across the bridge. A popular superstition held that elephants possess a sixth sense about unsteady structures and will not set foot on them. When the elephant walked all the way from St. Louis to Illinois and back, the public was ready to follow suit.

More importantly, the Eads Bridge helped usher in a new era of prosperity for St. Louis. It opened the city to eastern rail lines and facilitated the flow of people back and forth across the water. Although the bridge cost investors more than they ever made from it, the city reaped immeasurable rewards from its brand new connection to the world. James Buchanan Eads became a household name, and news of his bridge traveled around the world, inspiring engineers, politicians, poets, painters, and countless others to applaud this latest proof of man’s mastery over nature.

ACCESSING HISTORY IN THE MAKING

Fast-forward to 2010. Across town, at Washington University’s West Campus Library, Bob Lyner and Tom Wobbe engaged in their own version of bridge building. Only instead of a river, they were engineering a way across time.

Together, Lyner and Wobbe make up Digital Preservation, a local company specializing in digitizing historic documents. The Libraries brought them in to scan the nearly 700 original Eads Bridge drawings that reside in University Archives.

On a typical workday, Lyner carefully spreads one of the oversized, yellowing linen rectangles on the floor beneath an array of high-powered lights. It shows a cross-section of a single bridge component, hand-drawn and lettered in black and red ink. Suspended from above, a large-format digital camera snaps a photo of the drawing and sends it to a computer across the room, where Wobbe checks the image for sharpness and color accuracy.

These high-resolution scans are stored on the Libraries’ computer servers, while the original drawings are archived safely away in a climate-controlled vault. Even if the physical drawings eventually turn to dust, the digital files will still be there, as clear and usable as ever.

“About this time two great engineering works were under way. One, the triple arch bridge to cross the Mississippi at St. Louis, Capt. Eades [sic], chief engineer; the other, the great cantilever bridge which was to cross the Chasm of the Kentucky River, C. Shaler Smith, chief engineer ... Here was Romance, here again was man, the great adventurer, daring to think, daring to have faith, daring to do. Here again was to be set forth to view man in his power to create beneficently. Here were two ideas widely differing in kind. Each was emerging from a brain, each was to find realization. One bridge was to cross a great river, to form the portal of a great city, to be sensational and architectonic. The other was to take form in the wilderness, and abide there; a work of science without concession.”

—LOUIS H. SULLIVAN, *THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF AN IDEA*, 1924

“It’s a privilege to work with gorgeous works of art like these,” says Lyner. “What makes it fun is that you get to see material only the archivist usually sees. You can try to describe something like this to people, but until they actually see it for themselves, they can’t appreciate it.”

The drawings reveal an incredible amount of detail, right down to the size of each coupling and bolt. Wobbe says it reminds him of another project they recently worked on, digitizing architectural drawings of the Gateway Arch at the Jefferson National Expansion Memorial in downtown St. Louis. “Now we know enough to build our own Arch and our own bridge,” he jokes.

Indeed, now that the drawings are digitized, anyone will be able to study them. A web interface will be rolled out later on, and the entire collection of drawings will be available online for every engineer and amateur pontist (yes, there’s a word for bridge lovers) who wants to see them. According to University Archivist Sonya Rooney, the Eads Bridge project is “a model of what can be accomplished through collaboration.” Metro’s Chris Poehler, senior vice president for engineering and new systems development, emphasizes the project’s functional role.

“Washington University has been a reliable partner in preserving these valuable documents not only for the public interest, but for the City of

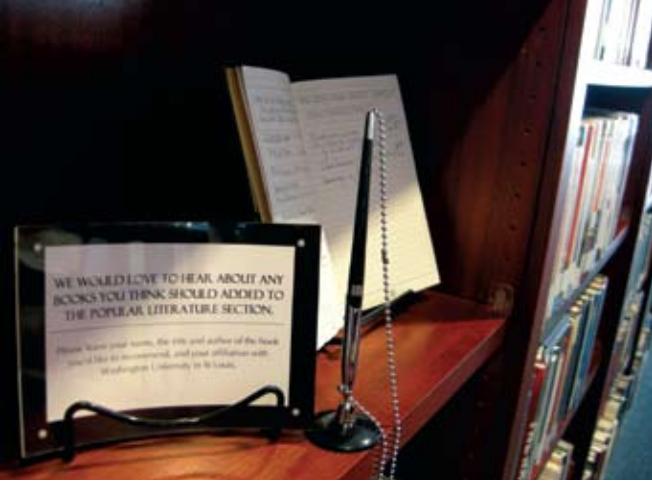


▲ A chromolithograph (Compton & Co., c. 1874) based on photographs of the bridge’s construction. Library of Congress

St. Louis and Metro, the agencies responsible for maintaining and preserving the Eads Bridge,” he says.

Best of all, the actual Eads Bridge will be made nearly as good as new. When the renovation is complete, James Buchanan Eads’ legacy will be secure for that much longer, continuing to inspire confidence in commuters and elephants alike.

This article was written by Aaron Welborn, former writer and editor for the Washington University Libraries, with contributions by Evie Hemphill and Joy Lowery. Aaron is now director of communications for Duke University Libraries, Durham, North Carolina.



«On the first floor of Olin Library, the New Books and Recommended Reading displays invite users to explore the Libraries' newest additions and even make their own recommendations. *Evie Hemphill*

▼ The homepage of the Libraries' newly launched mobile site (www.library.wustl.edu/m) is specifically designed for viewing on a smartphone.



▼ Stephanie Biermann (left), Sarah Laaker, and Marty Cavanaugh (right) at Olin Library's central Help Desk. *Evie Hemphill*

Lights! Club Chair! Action!

IMPROVING THE USER EXPERIENCE

BOOKS ARE FLYING OFF THE SHELVES of Olin Library's New Books and Recommended Reading displays. On many a Friday morning, staff member Stephanie Biermann has refilled the colorful shelves near the front desk, only to find that a good half of those books are gone before the weekend begins.

"It's the book equivalent of the impulse buy," says Biermann, who has brought fresh eyes to the Libraries in her first year as supervisor of stacks management and retrieval. In addition to enhancing the new books area with track lighting and a comfy chair with footstool, she has created the recommended reading section nearby—complete with excerpted reviews of each book and a journal for visitors to add recommendations of their own. Between September 2010 and January 2011, more than 70 books were recommended, and 50 of those volumes went on display. When it's a book that the Libraries don't yet have, a request is sent to acquisitions to purchase it.

Biermann's initiatives are just one example of the ways she and her fellows are working to enhance the Libraries' user experience. From the new books display to the Help Desk on the first floor of Olin, and from the Arc technology center to the Libraries' homepage, efforts are continually underway to deliver the Libraries' resources in the most user-friendly fashion possible.

STREAMLINING FACE-TO-FACE SERVICE

A natural center of such initiatives is the first floor of Olin, where the Help Desk operates as the primary point of service for visitors to the facility. Whether you're a first-year Writing 1 student looking for general guidance on credible sources or a PhD candidate in need of a rare item, the front

desk area is likely to be one of your first stops. It's a good place to begin. But it could be even better, says Circulation Librarian Sarah Laaker.

One challenge is that while circulation and reference staff are typically equipped with distinct skill sets, library users naturally approach the combined Help Desk in need of assistance in either department. With this in mind, Laaker, Reference Desk Manager Marty Cavanaugh, and Circulation Desk Manager Chris Brady have begun cross-training staff and student assistants so that circulation staff can answer reference-related questions with more confidence and reference staff have a fuller understanding of circulation.

"We want to achieve more seamless service for our users," Laaker says. "We want the first person who helps them to be able to guide them in the right direction."

This shift toward more integrated service is also evident in changes to the physical orientation of the Help Desk area itself. Until recently, the work station behind the middle of the Help Desk—informally referred to as "the island"—sat perpendicular to the main service counter. But staff found that it kept them from seeing all users and created an unintentional wall of separation between the reference and circulation areas. Turned 90 degrees, the island now sits parallel to the front of the Help Desk, allowing for better interaction with both users and peers.

MEETING USERS WHERE THEY ARE

The Libraries' website is another central point of service that impacts the Libraries' ability to provide excellent resources and assistance. It's the primary portal into the Libraries' catalog, finding guides, databases, and much more. And as of January

2011, it's accessible from a smartphone through a newly launched mobile version of the University Libraries' website.

The mobile site (www.library.wustl.edu/m) allows users to check library hours, search the catalog, get reference assistance, check for computer availability, and search some of the most popular databases right from their phones.

"We're working to meet our users wherever they are," says Dean of Libraries Shirley Baker. "The mobile site adds a new level of convenience, and

we expect it to become an essential tool for our on-the-go users."

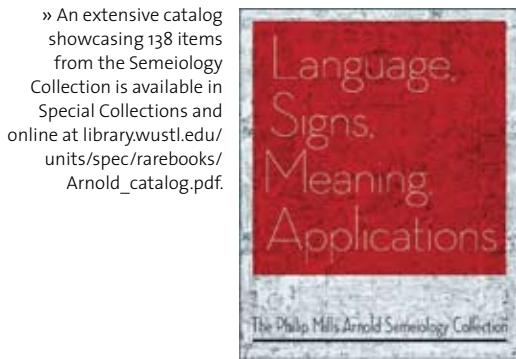
Washington University students, faculty, and staff can also employ their cell phones to immediately communicate with a reference librarian via text messaging (to 314-884-8010). Since the service started this winter, texters have inquired about everything from hours and policies to specific books and call number locations—and have received prompt, confidential responses whenever the reference Help Desk is open.



Inside a Well-Worn Suitcase:

PHILIP M. ARNOLD'S EXEMPLARY COLLECTION

Among Library of Congress subject headings, one category description that's not to be found is "means of communication other than ordinary language." Related headings certainly make the list—communication, signs and symbols, and semantics, to name just a few—but none that puts it quite like that.



» An extensive catalog showcasing 138 items from the Semeiology Collection is available in Special Collections and online at librarywustl.edu/units/spec/rarebooks/Arnold_catalog.pdf.

Special Collections in 1969, was looking for written works on a subject that to this day remains difficult to put into words.

"He was trying to do something that even he found hard to describe," says Erin Davis, the Libraries' curator of rare books. "'Means of communication other than ordinary language' would seem by nature to defy neat categorization, highlighting the inherent limitations of the mind, as it were, observing itself."

Yet Arnold pressed on in his lifelong quest to develop the most useful, cohesive semeiology (often called semiotics) collection that he could. Thanks to those efforts in collaboration with the Libraries' Department of Special Collections, the Philip Mills Arnold Semeiology Collection now numbers more than 2,300 items and has proved useful to countless scholars over the years.

Arnold began collecting books while he was a chemical engineering student at Washington University in the 1930s. He then worked for nearly 40 years at Phillips Petroleum Company, retiring in 1976 as vice president for research and

development. In the meantime, he was pursuing his love of books and learning—and sending fascinating volumes the Libraries' way, as Head of Special Collections Anne Posega recalls.

"A sturdy but rather battered-looking black suitcase would arrive in Special Collections every few months. Inside we would discover the latest batch of books, carefully selected and purchased by him, documenting the complex history of signs, symbols, and communication," Posega says. "These new additions to the collection were unpacked, and the suitcase shipped back to Bartlesville, Oklahoma, to await his next acquisitions. This went on for many years, and the many, many files full of letters show the continuing partnership between an exemplary collector, Mr. Arnold, and our rare book librarians."

A celebration of that partnership is underway in Olin Library's Grand Staircase Lobby and Ginkgo Reading Room, with 62 items from the Semeiology Collection forming an exhibition titled *Language, Signs, Meaning, Applications: The Philip Mills Arnold Semeiology Collection*. On display and open to the



^ Washington University faculty members Annamaria Pileggi and Matthew Wilkens answer questions from the audience after their presentations in the Ginkgo Reading Room on February 23. *Evie Hemphill*



public through May 27, the exhibition showcases a wide-ranging selection of items, including the first printed book on cryptography, charts of early communication systems for the deaf, schemes for a universal language of symbols, an ambitious 17th-century history of language that includes a famous depiction of the Tower of Babel, and much more.

In February, Special Collections hosted "A Meeting of the Arts and Sciences in the Philip Mills Arnold Semeiology Collection," featuring lectures by two Washington University faculty members whose research hinges on topics connected to the collection. Annamaria Pileggi, senior lecturer in Performing Arts, discussed human-robot interaction and showed a performance piece between a robot and a human. Matthew Wilkens, postdoctoral fellow in American Culture Studies, introduced the audience to some of the ways data-driven techniques are transforming scholarship in the humanities.

Wilkens, whose essay "The Origins of Literary Text Mining" is included in the extensive exhibition catalog, sees Arnold's collection as worthy of

renewed consideration in a digital age, especially among scholars working in the humanities.

"As these digital methods play an ever larger role in the field," Wilkens writes, "literary critics will need to understand both their historical development in other academic areas and their links to the work we already do. In both cases, materials such as those held in the Arnold Semeiology Collection will make up a crucial part of this backstory . . . This historical narrative matters more than we might think; it's responsible not just for the way we understand our past, but also how we imagine our future possibilities."

Indeed, both Arnold himself and the works he collected from many decades and centuries ago appear to anticipate intellectual riddles just now emerging in today's world. Erin Davis, who explored 30 years of correspondence between Arnold and previous rare book librarians, points out that, "from the perspective of our information-rich age, it seems that Mr. Arnold—who was, after all, an engineer—intuited the kinds of applications and challenges that would emerge with the development of computer-assisted encoding and analysis of deep semantic structures."

Arnold's instincts were forward-looking in another respect too. In addition to his valuable collection of books, Arnold left the Libraries a generous endowment that continues to have an impact.



« *De Laudibus sancte Crucis opus* (1503), the first printed edition of a poem from the 9th century titled "In Praise of the Holy Cross."

"FEW AMERICANS WILL EVER LEAVE A COMPARABLE LEGACY OF THE PROFOUND WISDOM, KINDNESS, GENEROSITY, COMPASSION, AND VISIONARY LEADERSHIP THAT SHE CONTRIBUTED TO ST. LOUIS, AMERICA, THE NAACP, AND THE ENTIRE WORLD."

—John Baugh, PhD, the Margaret Bush Wilson Professor in Arts & Sciences

The Papers of Margaret Bush Wilson



▲ Margaret Bush Wilson

THE LIBRARIES RECENTLY ACQUIRED the personal archives of native St. Louisan and Washington University trustee Margaret Bush Wilson (1919–2009), whose groundbreaking career in law and active commitment to civil rights make her records of interest to scholars in a wide range of fields.

Graduating law school in 1943, Wilson became the second black woman to practice law in Missouri. Eventually arguing before the Supreme Court of the United States in the 1948 landmark case of *Shelley v. Kraemer*, she was instrumental in the ruling that held racial housing covenants unenforceable. Her role as the first female African American chair of the national NAACP board of directors (1975–1983) placed her in the national spotlight. She was also the first African American woman to run for Congress in Missouri and held several public service positions in the region.

After her death, Wilson's son, Robert E. Wilson III, placed materials from her law office and home

with the University Archives, a unit of the Libraries' Department of Special Collections. The collection contains professional and personal papers, research materials, correspondence, books, awards, and much more, requiring 856 linear feet of storage space. Next comes the complex process of unpacking, organizing, and creating an inventory for the material. When this is complete, the Margaret Bush Wilson Papers will be a rich resource for students, faculty, scholars, and others interested in the civil rights movement locally or nationally, St. Louis or Missouri history, women's history, law, and leadership.

John Baugh, PhD, the Margaret Bush Wilson Professor in Arts & Sciences, remembers Margaret Bush Wilson as "one of the most exceptional people I have ever met. Few Americans will ever leave a comparable legacy of the profound wisdom, kindness, generosity, compassion, and visionary leadership that she contributed to St. Louis, America, the NAACP, and the entire world."

A FAITHFUL RENDERING



Aaron Weisborn

« Washington University architecture student David Hamm sketches the southeast corner of the Whispers Café in Olin Library, where the window curves and looks out on campus. The drawing was a semester-long project for one of his architecture classes.



The Art of an Archive

A WRITER'S EARLY DRAFTS. Candidate pins from a presidential debate. Mid-20th-century magazine illustrations. Books made by early printing presses. Reels of interviews filmed but never screened. These are just a few of the wide-ranging materials archived by the Libraries' Special Collections department.

But what about contemporary items—like posters of Bella and Edward from the wildly popular *Twilight* series? Candy wrappers imprinted with New Moon ads? What happens to all the materials that accompany pop-culture products or events?

Emily Moorhead, a 2010 MFA graduate of the Sam Fox School of Design & Visual Arts, explored by-products of the vampire-romance novels and movies—and the task of an archivist—by creating an exhibit that was displayed at the Kemper Museum last summer. As part of Moorhead's thesis project, her exhibit consisted of an archivist's desk surrounded by *Twilight* literature, images, and associated products.

When Moorhead was an undergrad at Miami University in Ohio, she helped process papers and personal effects donated by a writer to the university's special collections. That work got her wondering: "What makes you decide what's worth archiving and what's not? Someone took the time to think about whether anyone would be interested in this object later on. I like the research aspect of that."

During the year she spent working on the project, Moorhead consulted the University Archives' Sonya Rooney and Miranda Rectenwald, who helped her find proper storage material for the *Twilight* artifacts. Moorhead borrowed acid-free folders and boxes from the Archives and, as Rooney notes, "wanted to store the materials in the way a real archive would."

"It was exciting to see Emily's passion for her project, both for her topic and the storage and display of the material," Rooney says. "When I went to the exhibit, it was intriguing to see an archives displayed as an art exhibit. I found myself wanting to sit down and start looking through the collection."

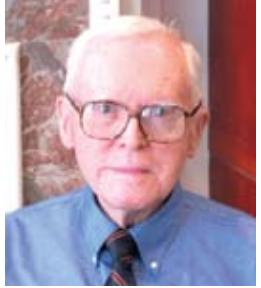
Moorhead says that she likes exhibitions at libraries more than those at museums, because with libraries it's all about the information. In museums, the focus is much more on the object. But the challenge a librarian faces is how to express all the related importance of something that may not be obvious from the object itself.



« Washington University MFA graduate Emily Moorhead created an archive-oriented exhibit titled "Meyer-Hardwicke Special Collections: The Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil" (Mixed media installation) in Kemper Art Museum last summer.

A Life in Libraries: ONE PROFESSOR'S STORY

BY KEVIN HERBERT, PROFESSOR EMERITUS OF CLASSICS



≈ Kevin Herbert

ONE DAY IN 1925, as a three-year-old, I was taken into the great hall of the main Chicago Public Library on Michigan Avenue. The room was filled with battle flags, standards, and militaria of the Grand Army of the Republic, the veterans' organization of the Union Army, and it was a sight I shall never forget. Moreover, at that time, there were hundreds of thousands of living veterans of the Civil War, on both sides.

Years later as a high school student, I changed buses in front of that very same library on my way to classes, and so I often stopped there to check out books. My memory is that many of them were on British and European history, topics of interest to me at the time. I was so fascinated by the Russian Revolution that I was constantly talking about it, with the result that my friends began calling me "Kevin the Red."

Then, in 1940, I enrolled at Loyola University Chicago as a major in Classics, and I quickly found the quiet of the Cudahy Library reading room much to my liking, for it was a refuge for study away from the crowded and often distracting campus. But soon enough, after just five semesters, the war intruded and changed everyone's life. I joined the Army Air Forces.

After various duties, in 1945 I was a tail-gunner on a heavy bomber, flying combat missions over Japan. But most remarkably, our squadron, based on Saipan, had its own library, and I especially remember reading its paperbacks. This was my first encounter with that form of publication and one for which the military has not been given due credit. There were also hardcovers, and one was unforgettable—Louis Untermeyer's *A Treasury of Great Poems: English and American* (1942). That volume was a source of great comfort in a time of great stress.

The war ended abruptly after the events of August 1945, and just eight months later I was transported to a completely different scene. In the summer of



1946, I became a graduate student at Harvard, reading Aristophanes in the Greek and Plautus in the Latin, in my own carrel and in the classrooms of the Widener Library, the largest academic library in the world. I felt honored to be able to enter it and use its resources every day.

There then followed 14 years of teaching and writing at a variety of institutions: a large Jesuit university, a large state university, an Episcopal boarding school, and a Little Ivy college in New England. Finally, I came to Washington University in 1962 and from that date until 1992, I taught Latin and Greek at all levels—graduate, undergraduate, and University College. From 1992 to 2008, I continued to teach in University College, thus completing 60 years in the classroom.

In that long period, for the most part, I used the resources of Washington University's Olin and Steinberg libraries to publish seven books (and contribute to an eighth), three exhibition catalogues, and many articles and reviews.

The Libraries' great collections continue to be of fundamental value, and I hope that this brief review of a lifelong interaction with libraries in the search for knowledge and understanding of our world shows just how important libraries are—for ourselves and for generations to come.

"A library is not a luxury but one of the necessities of life." —HENRY WARD BEECHER

Professor Emeritus Kevin Herbert examines what was once President Thomas Jefferson's copy of Plutarch's *Lives* in Special Collections with subject librarian Colin McCaffrey. For more on the recent discovery of books from Jefferson's library, see p. 6. *Evie Hemphill*

STAFF PICKS: NEW BOOKS & ACQUISITIONS

SEARCHING FOR TAMSEN DONNER

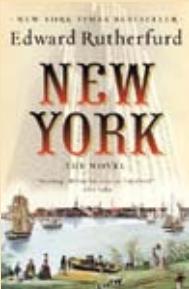
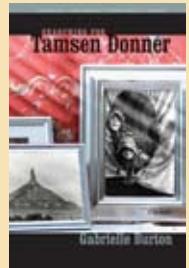
By Gabrielle Burton
(University of Nebraska Press, 2009)

During the stormy winter of 1846-47, a group of 87 westward-bound emigrants later known as the Donner Party became trapped in the Sierra Nevada Mountains. By the end of the ordeal, nearly half the party had lost their lives, and some had resorted to cannibalism. In subsequent, often sensational accounts, pioneer wife and mother Tamsen Donner emerged as a heroine who selflessly sent forth her five daughters with a rescue party but stayed behind in the mountain camp to tend to her dying husband, and ultimately share his fate.

One hundred and thirty years later, author Gabrielle Burton found herself obsessed with Tamsen Donner and the questions her story posed within the context of the feminist movement. Piling her own husband and five daughters into a red Impala station wagon, Burton set out to retrace Tamsen's path across the country. What begins as a research venture quickly turns into the road trip of a lifetime, with a variety of quirky characters met along the way and new perspectives on Donner's life revealed, layer by layer.

The book, which chronicles those dual journeys, combines historical and personal narrative with surprising grace. Somehow, the author turns an unwieldy hodgepodge of historical fact and speculation into a highly readable, funny, and engrossing tale of parallel lives. Ultimately, the story is not so much about Tamsen Donner as it is about families—their unique dynamics and demands, the precarious balance between the self and the larger whole.

Reviewed by Masha Sapp
Catalog and Russian Language & Literature Librarian



FREEDOM

By Jonathan Franzen
(Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2010)

Freedom tells the story of a liberal-minded Midwestern couple and their struggles with children, friends, neighbors, and each other. Demonstrating the same ambitious scope of Franzen's 2001 novel, *The Corrections*, the dreams, infidelities, and migrations of Walter and Patty Berglund reflect the political, cultural, and moral landscape of America in the first decade of the 21st century.

Franzen's gifts for observation and social context are on full display—from the moral universe revealed by a bumper sticker to the environmental impact of household cats. He has the metaphysician's eye for the big and small choices his characters make and the consequences they face as a result. Altogether, they form a tapestry that is wildly funny, absurd, heartbreaking, and redemptive.

Reviewed by Jim Hone
Film and Media Digital Archivist



POINT OMEGA

By Don DeLillo
(Scribner, 2010)

Though a slim volume in comparison to many of his novels, DeLillo's latest is not a swift read. Like the main character, Jim Finley, the reader must struggle "to see what is happening in front of you" as time collapses. In scenes both surreal and philosophically dense, an unnamed man watches snippets of a 24-hour-long, slowed-down version of *Psycho* in an art gallery, and retired defense intellectual Richard Elster—about whom Finley hopes to make a documentary—waits in an American desert for word of a missing daughter. *Point Omega* focuses its attention on the limits of human consciousness, identity, and meaning—and suggests that society is reaching those limits. It's a quiet book, filled with more thinking than doing, but it stays with the reader long after the last page has been turned.

Reviewed by Evie Hemphill
Writer/Editor



LIBRARY NEWS & STAFF NOTES

NEW FACES



Casey Ellis

WEEKEND/EVENING MANAGER; CIRCULATION ASSISTANT

Casey Ellis took over duties as a weekend and evening manager and a circulation assistant at Olin Library in August 2010. She provides circulation and reference services to library users at the Help Desk, supervises student workers, and assists with interlibrary loan and reserves processing. Casey graduated from Washington University in May 2010, with a BA in Anthropology and a minor in Women, Gender & Sexuality Studies. She brings solid experience to the job, having worked in Olin Library as a student assistant during her junior and senior years.

▲ Casey Ellis



Deborah Ehrstein

INTERLIBRARY LOAN & RESERVES LIBRARIAN

Deborah Ehrstein joined the Libraries in July 2010, stepping into a new professional position here as interlibrary loan (ILL) and reserves librarian, supervising operations in those areas to support research and teaching across campus. ILL uses our library's collection as well as international systems to obtain materials and meet the informational needs of faculty, students, and staff. In her former job as associate director of member services for the Missouri Library Network Corporation, Deb provided support for services and staff development at libraries across the state. She has worked as a reference librarian at community college and public libraries in Rochester, New York. Deb earned a BA in Communications and Journalism from St. John Fisher College, Rochester, New York, and an MLS from the State University of New York at Buffalo.

▲ Deborah Ehrstein



▲ Evie Hemphill



▲ Kristin Flachsbart



▲ Sarah Laaker

Evie Hemphill

WRITER & EDITOR

Evie Hemphill took over the role of writer and editor for the University Libraries in late November 2010. She serves as managing editor and lead writer for the Libraries' biannual magazine *Off the Shelf*. She works on numerous communications projects and helps organize library events. Evie has an MFA in creative writing from the University of Wyoming and a BA in English literature from Geneva College (Beaver Falls, PA), where she graduated summa cum laude. She has worked as a journalist in the Denver area and as publications manager at Geneva. Evie also has experience as a photographer and writing instructor.

Kristin Flachsbart

ADAPTIVE CATALOGER

Kristin Flachsbart joined the Libraries in early January as an adaptive cataloger. She helps with the copy cataloging of new resources for Olin and the departmental libraries, in addition to withdrawing and reinstating books and media. Kristin previously worked at Hickey College, performing adaptive cataloging and conducting bibliographic instruction sessions. While working towards her master's in Library and Information Science from University of Missouri-Columbia, Kristin did a practicum at Fontbonne University. In addition to her MLIS, she holds an MA in Media Communications from Webster University and a B.A. in Theatre from College of Wooster.

Sarah Laaker

CIRCULATION MANAGER, OLIN LIBRARY

Sarah Laaker joined the Libraries in June 2010. Sarah manages circulation services at the Olin Library Help Desk, where staff members from circulation and reference units work side by side. Sarah is cross-training staff in both areas to reduce the need for referrals and allow staff to more quickly address user needs. Sarah comes here from John Wood Community College in Quincy, Illinois, where she had served most recently as assistant director of Library Services and the Academic Support Center. Sarah has an MLIS from Dominican University and a BA in English and Studio Art from Coe College, Cedar Rapids, Iowa.

▲ Sarah Laaker

Irene Taylor

CATALOGING & PRESERVATION ARCHIVIST

FILM & MEDIA ARCHIVES

Irene Taylor joined the Libraries' Film & Media Archives as its cataloging and preservation archivist, processing existing and newly acquired collections; overseeing preservation activities of film and other endangered materials; and managing the Archive's cataloging system (MAVIS). Irene served a graduate internship at the Archive several years ago, and later was selected by her New York University graduate program to serve a one-year fellowship at the Film & Media Archive. Irene previously was a project archivist at the Public Broadcasting System. She has a master's degree in Moving Image Archiving and Preservation from New York University, a master's in Film Studies from Emory University, and a BA from Boise State University in Interdisciplinary Studies.

▲ Irene Taylor

Jerica Vogel

EVENING REFERENCE ASSISTANT, OLIN LIBRARY

Jerica Vogel took over duties as evening reference assistant in Olin Library, in November 2010. Jerica spends the majority of her time—about 30 hours per week—staffing the reference Help Desk. Additionally, she is learning many circulation system functions to support combined reference and circulation services at Olin Library's Help Desk. Jerica has a BA in English from the University of California, San Diego, where she worked for more than two years as a student assistant in the Geisel (as in Dr. Seuss) Arts Library.



▲ Jerica Vogel

STAFF ACCOMPLISHMENTS



▲ Nadia Ghasedi

Ghasedi Named Film & Media Archivist

In July 2010, **NADIA GHASEDI** was promoted to the top job at the Film & Media Archive. In addition to managing staff, Nadia is responsible for overseeing all archive activities, including collection development, access, preservation, fundraising, and outreach. Nadia joined the Film Archive in 2007, as its cataloging and preservation archivist. She is a member of the Association of Moving Image Archivists, serving on two committees: Cataloging & Metadata, and Preservation. Nadia is working toward a master's degree in Information Science and Learning Technologies from the University of Missouri-Columbia. She earned a Certificate in Film Preservation from the L. Jeffrey School of Film Preservation at the George Eastman House, Rochester, New York. Her BA is in Communication Arts, with an emphasis in film, radio, and TV production from the University of Wisconsin, Madison.



▲ Cheryl Holland

Holland Elected to Wellesley Alumni Role

CHERYL HOLLAND, education librarian at the University Libraries, has been elected to a three-year term as vice president for programs for Wellesley College Alumnae of African Descent, an affinity group of Wellesley's Alumni Association. In this capacity, she will help develop and coordinate national and international program activities in such areas as admissions, reunions, fundraising, networking, and career planning.



Kastin Heads New Unit

In mid-2010, the Libraries merged two existing units—Original & Adaptive Cataloging and Database Management—into a single service area called Cataloging. **SHELLI KASTIN** was promoted to a newly created position—head of cataloging—and will lead this combined unit. In this role, Shellie develops and coordinates policies and procedures that support access and retrieval of library materials. Shellie joined the staff of the Libraries in 1980 and has held several positions here, including supervisor of the original and adaptive cataloging unit and supervisor of the database management unit. Shellie earned her MLS in 1980 from the State University of New York at Buffalo and her BA in Hebrew from the State University of New York at Binghamton in 1978.

▲ Shelli Kastin



Toliver Makes History as Chair of Eden Seminary Board

VIRGINIA DOWSING TOLIVER, the Libraries' associate dean for administration, has long been a leader off-campus as well as on. In 2010, she was elected chair of the Board of Trustees for Eden Theological Seminary, Webster Groves, Missouri. She is the first female and the first African American to serve in this capacity in the Seminary's 160-year history. Eden Seminary President Dr. David M. Greenlaw says, "We are very pleased with the leadership Virginia Toliver is giving to Eden. She brings the wisdom and experience of her years in higher education, together with her care for and commitment to the church. She is a passionate and trusted leader."



▲ Erika Cohn



▲ Shannon Showers



▲ Tim Lepczyk



▲ Mark Scharff



▲ Cheryl Morton

Leach Tapped for ALA Emerging Leaders Program

ERIN LEACH, catalog librarian, has been accepted into the 2011 class of the American Library Association (ALA) Emerging Leaders Program. Erin is one of just 83 individuals nationwide selected in a competitive process for a place in this program. Participants include newer librarians and library staff from across the country. Those selected for the program take part in project planning workgroups; for instance, Erin serves on a five-person workgroup that is expanding Libraries Build Communities, ALA's popular annual volunteer service day, which provides libraries with librarian-volunteers whenever and wherever needed. In addition, participants network with peers; gain an inside look into ALA structure; acquire leadership experience early in their careers; and report on their activities at the 2011 national ALA conference, to be held June 2011 in New Orleans.



▲ Erin Leach



▲ Andrew Rouner

Rouner Chosen for WU Leadership Training Group

Earlier this year, Washington University's provost announced the names of University staff chosen to participate in the inaugural Professional Leadership Academy and Network (PLAN) class, a year-long program to cultivate individuals who have shown interest in and potential for further developing their leadership skills. Among them is **ANDREW ROUNER**, head of Digital Library Services. Andrew is one of 27 chosen by the provost's selection committee from an applicant pool of about 100 University staff members across campus. PLAN is designed to enhance the growth and productivity of staff and to provide the University with a cadre of leaders who will contribute to University-wide initiatives and projects. Gail Oltmanns, the Libraries' associate dean for organizational development, is co-chair of PLAN's steering committee.



▲ Rina Vecchiola

Vecchiola Joins Art Libraries Society Board

RINA VECCHIOLA, art and architecture librarian, has been named to the executive board of the Art Libraries Society of North America (ARLIS/NA) as the development and membership liaison. Rina will serve a two-year term for the organization, which fosters excellence in art and design librarianship and provides a forum for ideas, projects, and programs.

Conferences, Presentations & Publications

Digital Access Librarian **ERIKA COHN** and Digital Projects Librarian **SHANNON SHOWERS** presented a poster at the Chicago Colloquium on Digital Humanities and Computer Science in November 2010. The colloquium, which included speakers and participants from all over the world, focused on the theme "Working with Digital Data: Collaborate, Curate, Analyze, Annotate." The poster presentation showcased Digital Library Services' grant-funded project to remediate and expand the content and functionality of the St. Louis Circuit Court Records Projects, as well as develop a standard of encoding for digital legal documents.



WU Libraries had a strong presence at the National Conference of the Black Caucus of the American Library Association (BCALA) held in Birmingham in August 2010. Library professionals

RUDOLPH CLAY,
MAKIBA FOSTER,
CHERYL HOLLAND,
KIM LIPSEY, and

CLARA MCLEOD presented four posters at the conference, which focused on the theme "Bridging the Divide with Information Access, Activism and Advocacy." Rudolph received the BCALA Library Advocacy Award for his efforts as the Libraries' head of outreach. Associate Dean for Administration Virginia Toliver, who also attended, notes that WU librarians "did a remarkable job and really represented Washington University well."

TIM LEPCZYK's stories "Leveling Out" and "Like an Artesian Well" were published in the summer 2010 issue of the *Dunes Review*, a literary journal located in northern Michigan. Through a coincidence in scheduling, Tim was able to read his work for the journal's reading series while on vacation in Michigan. In his day job, Tim works as the metadata librarian in Digital Library Services.

MARK SCHARFF, music cataloger, was a co-presenter for a session on using and cataloging electronic theses and dissertations (ETDs) at the annual meeting of the Music OCLC Users Group (MOUG) in Philadelphia in early February. The presentation touched on how the cataloging process compares to that for analog counterparts and what to do with ETDs that include non-textual content, such as sound or video files. OCLC is an international collective of libraries that builds and maintains the WorldCat database.

The Libraries also congratulate **CHERYL MORTON**, GIS librarian at the Earth and Planetary Sciences Library, for winning *The New Yorker's* lighthearted Covers Contest in August 2010. With just a small portion of four different book covers for reference, Cheryl was the first person to correctly identify all four fish-themed books—*Cod*; *One Fish Two Fish Red Fish Blue Fish*; *Little Children*; and *The Old Man and the Sea*. While Cheryl insists the contest is just for fun, one might wonder whether her work with visual and geospatial information gives her a certain edge. It's possible, Cheryl says, but "really I just spend a lot of time looking at books that I may or may not ever read, and they somehow seep into my consciousness. I think book lust is common among librarians, and this is one small instance where it came in handy."

Survey Results: WHAT USERS TOLD US

BY CAROL MOLLMAN,
ASSESSMENT COORDINATOR



≈ Carol Mollman

FOR MORE INFORMATION

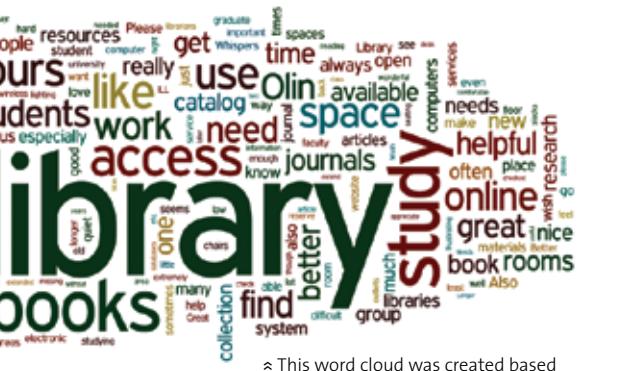
about the Service Quality Survey, contact Assessment Coordinator Carol Mollman at mollman@wustl.edu or 314-935-6465.

More than 3,000 faculty, students, and staff responded to the Washington University Libraries' Service Quality Survey in November 2010.

Conducted every three years and tailored to library users on the Danforth Campus, the purpose of the survey was to provide a clear snapshot of user needs, highlighting areas for deeper investigation. While the Libraries continue to analyze the data, there are already some preliminary findings to share.

Overall, satisfaction levels were high, with room for improvement. Over 82 percent of users indicated they were satisfied or very satisfied with library services. Undergraduates came in highest at 84 percent, while graduate students ranked next in line with 81 percent. Faculty generally registered less satisfaction than the students, with a score of 78 percent.

An important area of feedback on the survey relates to how users think the library should spend its budget, after covering its primary responsibility for collections. The priorities chosen by faculty and graduate students reflected their heavy commitment to academic research. As the accompanying graph shows, their top priorities are support for digital scholarship, improvements to the Libraries'



≈ This word cloud was created based on all the comments from the Library Service Quality Survey. The more frequently the term appeared in the survey comments, the larger the type.

catalog, and support for interlibrary loan and document delivery. Undergraduate students want more space for study and for collaboration as well as longer hours.

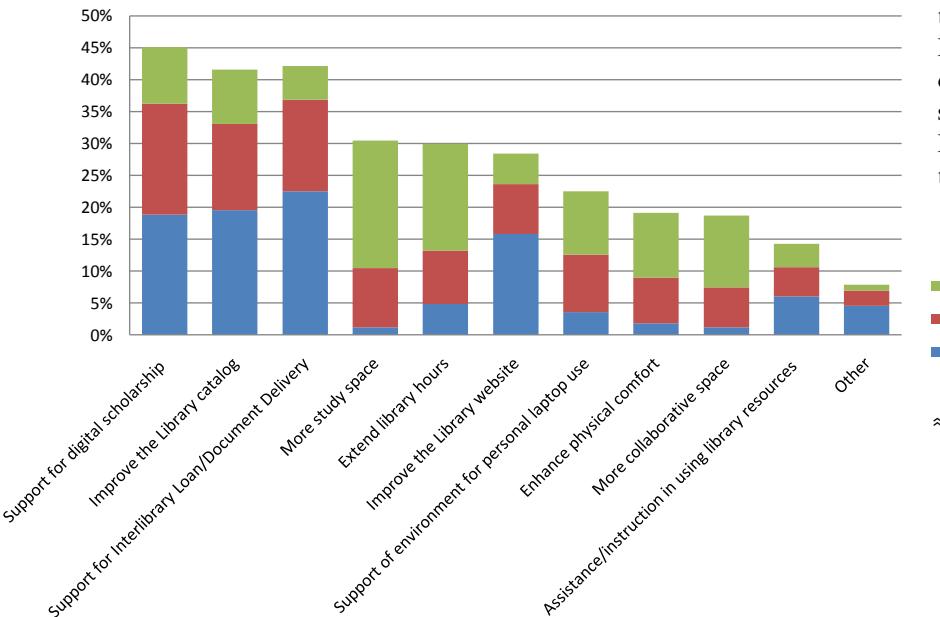
Support for digital scholarship was defined in the survey as a broad range of activities, including help with digitizing, support for course sites, websites, online publications and repositories, and textual analysis and encoding. Expect to hear more about digital scholarship in the Libraries over the next year, as we explore the issues in more depth. A data curation survey of faculty is already underway.

The most illuminating survey feedback often comes in the form of comments. This fall's survey yielded more than 1,600 comments about new services, individual libraries, and much more. Over the next few months, library staff will be working on a variety of issues that users raised, including temperature control, wireless coverage, and specific collection needs.

Perhaps the greatest payoff is how the survey leads the Libraries to areas of further investigation. Responses to questions about our school or departmental libraries around campus will provide insights and focus our efforts on finding solutions.

Even more exciting is the fact that more than 300 of those who took the survey offered to work with the Libraries in smaller groups to help explore changes to the collections, services, and physical spaces. The Libraries will use this valuable feedback to transform library services.

Service Quality Survey User Priorities



≈ This chart shows how user priorities vary among the undergraduates, graduate students, and faculty that responded to the Libraries' survey.



≈ Joy Lowery



≈ Evie Hemphill

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*Published only once in 2010

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UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES: BY THE NUMBERS



≈ East Asian Library Reading Room

WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES

include 12 libraries on three campuses, 10 on the Danforth Campus and one each at the Medical School Campus and West Campus.

FUN FACTS

Oldest item in the University Archives:

– A map of the Netherlands from 1608 that Dietrich Gerhard, WU history professor from 1936-1966, used in his teaching



Oldest student publication archived:

– Issues of "The Irving Union," forerunner of *Student Life*, published between 1869 and 1877

People following the Libraries on Twitter, as of March 2011: 303

People who "like" the Libraries on Facebook, as of March 2011: 588



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FROM THE ARCHIVES



» Scenes from Olin Library,
1968-2011.



“THE REAL PROBLEM IS NOT WHETHER MACHINES THINK BUT WHETHER MEN DO.”

-B. F. SKINNER