

One Hundred Years of Freedom of Information at LSU Library

In 1907, forty-three land grant colleges became official partners with the federal government for the purpose of providing public access to federal government documents. This official partnership was the result of legislation that can be found in the United States Statutes at Large, specifically at 34 Stat. 1014 §3-in the text of the Nelson Amendment to the First and Second Morrill Acts. Thus, the Federal Depository Library Program, originally established by Congress in 1813, was enlarged and enhanced in order to better fulfill its mission of providing free retrieval of government information to the citizens of our country.

Now, one hundred years later, LSU, as one of those forty-three institutions, is celebrating this milestone of freedom of information. Freedom of Information along with Freedom of Expression are among the core liberties of an open society. It is in this spirit that LSU Library will be celebrating the landmark in conjunction with the Library's annual Banned Books Week observations. The actual 100-year anniversary reception/event will take place on September 28, kicking off Banned Books Week activities (September 29–October 6, 2007), and acknowledging the anticipated success of a three-way collaboration among the Outreach Committee, under the auspices of the Reference Services Department; the Education Resources Department; and , the Government Documents Department.

Anniversary-themed displays highlighting government documents will be mounted by the Documents Department in the Education Resources Department. Other displays focused on Government Documents will be visible throughout Middleton Library and in Hill Memorial Library. The

September 28 reception will showcase the Government Documents Department and provide a venue in which to celebrate this momentous occasion. Local dignitaries; LSU administration, faculty and staff; friends-both formal and informal-of the library; and representatives from the other Louisiana depository libraries will be invited to share in the festivities.



Because LSU Libraries has been designated as a Regional Depository since the early 1960's, it is mandated to provide interlibrary loan, reference service, and collection development assistance to fifteen selective depository libraries in the southern part of Louisiana. LSU's Federal Regional Depository also serves the government information needs of the broader university population, local businesses and industries, governmental agencies, and the general public. To help facilitate these responsibilities, each regional is required by law, specifically by Title 44 of the United States Code, to retain at least one copy of

every publication offered by the federal government through its Depository Library Program.

The LSU Libraries' collection of government materials does not just begin with titles from 1907; on the contrary, some materials date back to the 18th Century and are kept in a special Rare Documents

Section. Maps are also included in the documents provided by the Depository Program; the majority of this type of government material is housed in the Cartographic Information Center of the Department of Geography and Anthropology, located in the Howe-Russell Geoscience Complex. Whether new or historic-produced as books or maps or any other format-the Government Documents collection has been well-used and will continue to provide a valuable resource to our campus and the community at large, perhaps for another 100 years.





Information Commons

Upgraded Student Computing in Middleton

Where can you find twenty-nine Mac computers in an LSU lab for the first time, forty-three PCs including some with audio and video editing software, cozy furniture, large format printers and a coffee shop a few steps away all funded by the Student Tech Fee? Why, Middleton Library, of course, right at the center of the campus.

Over the past year, the Student Technology Fee (STF) Oversight Committee funded the creation of an Information Commons, a col-

laborative environment which blends library and computing resources. The

Committee has eleven members

and is majority student membership. They meet frequently to consider proposals to make the best use of the technology fees

collected from

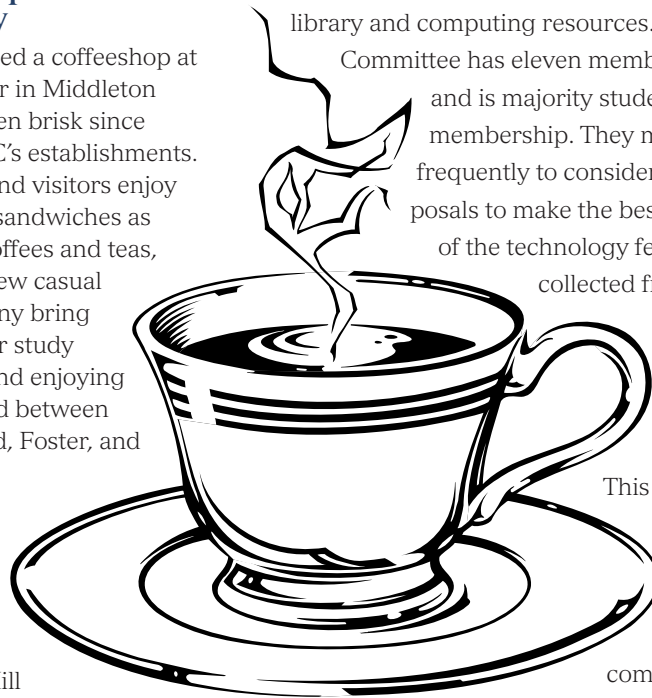
students. One type of activity they have funded for about ten years is the computing labs in a variety of locations across campus. The labs in Middleton are the busiest.

This year's project involved a complete overhaul and enhancement of the student computing on the first floor of Middleton Library. A new Information Technology (IT) Help Desk and a Print Help Desk were added to the existing Reference Desk. All the computers in the room were replaced. Some have scan-

ners attached. For the first time in a public lab at LSU, 29 Mac computers are available. Most of the computers require an LSU logon, but there are ten

for the general public. Ordinary printers are in the middle of the room. Behind the Print Help Desk are two large format printers, one of which can print as large as 4' x 5'. Students and faculty can print large format items such as architectural drawings or large-scale maps, for less than it costs at off-campus establishments. All the computing desks and chairs were replaced, and casual, lounge-style furniture was added. The latter includes comfortable sofas and easy chairs with small shelves attached to hold a book or laptop.

The coffeeshop area has some high café tables, and a zigzag desk where students love to bring their laptops and enjoy the view outside while drinking their beverage from the CC's coffeeshop. Adaptive technology including special software and hardware is available at several computers near the IT Help Desk. Large plasma TVs are on the wall of the coffeeshop and over the IT Help Desk, usually displaying news or current events in LSU IT or the Libraries. Beginning in Fall 2007 these will also display the Tiger Gallery, digital art or photos of art by students.



CC's Coffeeshop Open in Middleton Library

In September, CC's opened a coffeeshop at the back of the main floor in Middleton Library. Business has been brisk since then, outpacing other CC's establishments. Faculty, staff, students, and visitors enjoy the breakfast and lunch sandwiches as well as the varieties of coffees and teas, and stay awhile on the new casual furniture in the area. Many bring their laptops and work or study while eating, drinking, and enjoying the view toward the quad between Middleton, Thomas Boyd, Foster, and Peabody.

Come visit the LSU Libraries, see the new Information Commons and CC's coffeeshop in Middleton Library and view the exhibitions in Hill Memorial Library.

The Civil War Book Review (CWBR) (<http://www.cwbr.com>) is published quarterly by the U.S. Civil War Center, a department of LSU Libraries' Special Collections. Issues feature reviews of the most recent books in Civil War studies, as well as columns and feature interviews by noted Civil War scholars. William W. Freehling, author of the two-part *The Road to Disunion*, is interviewed in the latest issue on his much-anticipated *The Road to Disunion Vol. 2: Secessionists Triumphant, 1854-1861*. CWBR is the journal of record for new and newly reprinted books about the antebellum, Civil War, and Reconstruction eras. Bookmark us on the web at www.cwbr.com.



Former LSU Librarian **Elisabeth Pankl** recently led an effort in receiving a grant for the LSU Libraries to allow the Libraries to participate in the Let's Talk About It program, a scholar-led book discussion program centering on Jewish Literature. The LSU Libraries is one of only two hundred fifty libraries nationwide receiving grants this year to host this series, which is organized by Nextbook and the American Library Association (ALA).

Dr. Sharon Weltman will lead the discussions for the program, which will focus on graphic novels* by Jewish authors including Will Eisner, Art Spiegelman, and Ben Katchor. Dr. Weltman is a professor in the LSU English Department and a member of the Jewish Studies faculty. She also serves on the LSU Jewish Studies Executive Advisory Committee. Author of two books and numerous articles, she is currently writing an essay entitled "Jane Heir to the Glittering World: Ozick's Judeo-Victorian Vision," tracing the debt to Victorian literature in Cynthia Ozick's latest novel. An award-winning teacher, one of Weltman's most popular courses is "Jewish Women Writers."

Since Pankl left the LSU Libraries in May 2007, Stephanie Braunstein has joined Sigrid Kelsey in promoting and advertising the program. Kelsey is the LSU Libraries liaison to the Religious Studies teaching faculty, and Braunstein is the Government Information / Microforms Librarian. Both Kelsey and Braunstein have backgrounds in Literary Studies; before completing her Masters in Library and Information Science (MLIS), Braunstein earned an MA in English from California State University Sacramento, where she taught as an adjunct professor in the English Department for over six years.

The book discussions will take place on selected Tuesday evenings at Hill Memorial Library, beginning September 18 through November 6 2007. For more information, contact Stephanie Braunstein (sbraunst@lsu.edu) or Sigrid Kelsey (skelsey@lsu.edu).

* Graphic novels are defined as a type of comic book, usually with a lengthy and complex storyline similar to those of novels, and often aimed at mature audiences (Wikipedia).

The Geographer Finds His Way in the Library

In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, one book published before the storm stood out as a premier source of information about the saga of New Orleans versus nature: Craig E. Colten's *Unnatural Metropolis*. Heralded as "an evocative hybrid of environmental history, urban ecology, social struggle" the book garnered national praise. It was named the winner of the John Brinckerhoff Jackson Prize which was established to encourage and reward American geographers who write books about the United States which convey the insights of professional geography in language that is interesting and attractive to a lay audience by the Association of American Geographers. The Association also honored Colten with the Media Achievement Award in 2006 for his work with the media, particularly following Hurricane Katrina. The latter is conferred in recognition of exceptional and outstanding accomplishments in publicizing geographical insights in media of general or mass communication....

Colten holds the Carl O. Sauer endowed professorship of Geography at LSU, where he has taught since 2000.

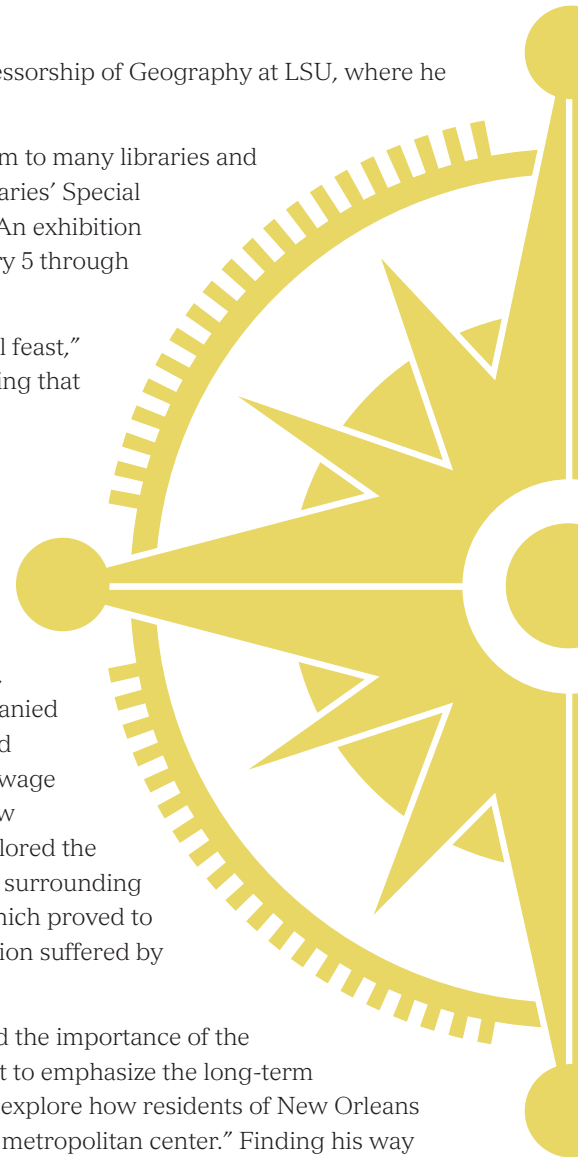
His research for *Unnatural Metropolis* took him to many libraries and archives in the region, including the LSU Libraries' Special Collections division in Hill Memorial Library. An exhibition based partly on his research ran from February 5 through June 2, 2007.

Visitors gave it rave reviews, calling it "a visual feast," "intriguing," "incredibly stimulating," and noting that it was "extremely timely and educational" and "should be shown all over the nation."

The book and the exhibition demonstrate that the catastrophic flooding that accompanied Hurricanes Katrina and Rita is only the latest episode in the 300-year-old struggle between the Crescent City and Mother Nature. Using government documents, books, maps, photographs, and manuscripts accompanied by interpretive text, the exhibition documented yellow fever epidemics, flooding, drainage, sewage and sanitation issues that have challenged New Orleanians since 1718. The exhibition also explored the 20th-century push to "reclaim" lands from the surrounding swamp for commercial and residential use, which proved to be a major factor in the magnitude of destruction suffered by New Orleans in 2005.

"For many years urban geographers neglected the importance of the environment of the city," said Colten. "I sought to emphasize the long-term relationship between people and place and to explore how residents of New Orleans struggled to transform a wetland into a major metropolitan center." Finding his way through the mass of historical materials available for use in Hill Memorial Library, Professor Colten has made clear the continuing relevance of historical, primary source documents that are preserved in the LSU Libraries' Special Collections.

Special Collections is open 9 to 5, Monday through Friday, and 9 to 1 on Saturdays. When classes are in session the library is open Tuesday evenings till 8 p.m. Visit the Special Collections website at <http://www.lib.lsu.edu/special/> for more information.



Upcoming Events In Hill

Super Stories: A Brief History of Comics

Selections from the William Morton Bowlus Collection of Comic Books

June 25-October 20, 2007

Speaker: TBA



T. Harry Williams Center for Oral History

Selected Collections

November 12, 2007 - March 8, 2008

Speaker: TBA

Andrew Lytle, 19th Century Photographer

Selected Images

March 31 - June 28, 2008



Paddle Steamer: Fred A. Blanks from A Lifetime's Devotion: Baton Rouge Through the Eyes of Photographer Andrew D. Lytle, 1857-1917.

For more information, see: <http://www.lib.lsu.edu/special/exhibits/index.html>

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