

3-1-2012

Connections, Spring, 2012; Issue Seventeen

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Recommended Citation

Fobert, John, "Connections, Spring, 2012; Issue Seventeen" (2012). *Connections*. Paper 19.
<http://docs.rwu.edu/libnews/19>

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CONNECTIONS

From the Dean's desk...

TWENTY YEARS OF INNOVATION



In 1991 the University Library with its distinctive clock tower was dedicated and opened to the public. Its first two decades have fostered dramatic changes in operations, services, and use.

For students, both undergraduate and graduate, the "clock tower building" has always meant much more than traditional library operations. It provides a central means to access academic support through the Center for Academic Development, located on the second floor; this agency in partnership with library reference has provided in recent years daytime writing assistance on the first floor.

The multimedia technology support of all classroom and other academic spaces emanates from the building's ground floor Media Services department. And the newest addition to the building, the Instructional

Design department, directly impacts the character of both teaching and learning across the curriculum.

In all, the four enterprises located in the University Library comprise what has come to be known as the Learning Commons – including the Library, itself, Instructional Design, Media Services, and the Center for Academic Development. The partnering enterprises are currently refining and promoting the Learning Commons "brand" and extending its many related services to users both on and off the campus.

The four enterprises in the University Library comprise... the Learning Commons.

Perhaps the most striking quality of our Learning Commons is that, while its components reside in a single building, its services reach well beyond it (via its Architecture Library and the virtual support provided via the associated websites of the four partners).

Some milestones in the last decade (since 2000) have helped to define and guide us as the institution's central academic support. The University Library established the institution's first electronic teaching and learning facility and, with the help of the

Office of Information Technology, the first public wireless use environment. It inaugurated the first virtual reference service (ASKHELIN), in collaboration with other consortium libraries. Through a generous alumni donor the annual John Howard Birss library collection development and exhibit endowment began in 2001. The Mary Tefft White Cultural Center, created through the support and vision of its namesake in 2004, is the active site for scores of cultural programs each year.

The many chapters of our Learning Commons are just now being drafted for the years ahead, and we invite our many users to help us with their creation.

Peter Deekle
Dean of University Library Services



CONNECTIONS Co-EDITORS:
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Veronica Maher, *Media Resources Librarian*
John Fobert, *Serials / Government Documents Librarian*

HAPPY BIRTHDAY CHARLES DICKENS

by John Fobert, *Serials / Government Documents Librarian*



On February 7th, the library celebrated the 200th anniversary of Charles Dickens' birth. Born in 1812, Dickens spent his childhood in Kent.

Due to financial difficulties, the family moved to London

in 1822 where his father eventually was sentenced to debtor's prison. His first story

was published in London's "Monthly Magazine" and was titled "A Dinner at Polar Walk". Dickens went on to write such classics as "the Adventures of Oliver Twist", "A Christmas Carol", "David Copperfield", and "Great Expectations". He also worked with his close friend Wilkie Collins who is credited with writing the first true detective novel. Dickens' last novel is the unfinished

"Mystery of Edwin Drood". Dickens died in June 1870 and is buried in Westminster Abbey. His funeral card featured a quote by himself which read, "From these garish lights I vanish now evermore".

"From these garish lights I vanish now evermore".

Dickens Trivia

- Was epileptic which explains his detailed description of the symptoms suffered by his epileptic characters.
- Believed the position of his bed aided his writing due to magnetic fields. For this reason he insisted his bed be aligned north to south.
- Character of Little Nell is based on his sister in law who died at the age of 17.
- During an extended stay at his home by Hans Christian Andersen, Dickens posted a note on Hans' bedroom mirror which read, "Hans Andersen slept in this room for 5 weeks which seemed to the family like ages".

Text a Librarian and LibAnswers

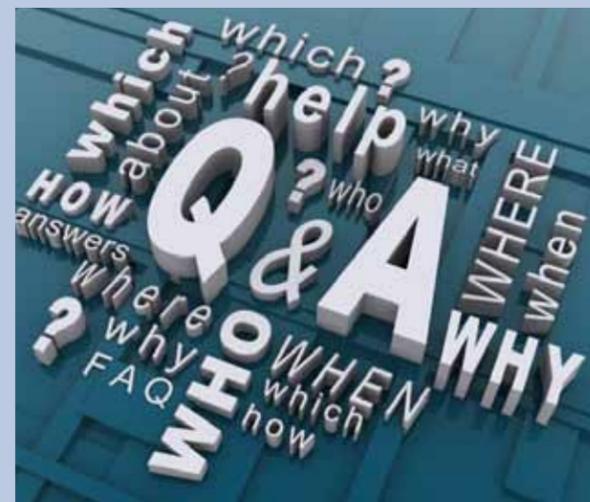
by Gaelen Adam, *Learning Commons Librarian*



Research using electronic resources is not easy. Often the results are not quite on what you were looking for, overwhelming to sort through, or of dubious pedigree.

The RWU Library subject LibGuides are a great place to start, but if you are having trouble or just need help getting started down the right path, send us a text at 401-680-9032. RWU reference librarians monitor the texts and respond quickly. Also a great option if you are looking for answers to questions about the Library's Learning Commons resources.

In addition, we have also gathered over 95 of the most commonly asked questions on our Ask Us page (<http://rwu.libanswers.com/>). Not only will you find it an almost comprehensive source of information about the Library/Learning Commons and our resources and procedures, you will also find plenty of information to get you started with your own research.



Ask Us questions range from: "How do I activate my library card?" to "How do I get Videos on Demand?" and "How do I find peer-reviewed journal articles?" Questions can also be viewed by topic or searched using the search bar at the top. And if you don't find your answer already there, drop us a text. If you're wondering, someone else probably is, too.

RWU JOURNAL PUBLISHING OPPORTUNITIES

by Mary Wu, *Catalog/Database Management Librarian*



Library-based journal publishing has gained momentum in recent years as academic libraries strive to advance scholarly communication and production. To take advantage of digital technology, the University Library is now providing online journal publishing services to the RWU community through the journal publishing platform supported by DOCS@RWU. The Library launched DOCS@RWU in 2006 as an online repository to collect, preserve and disseminate the scholarly output of RWU faculty and students. Designed to foster knowledge creation and dissemination, DOCS@RWU is now equipped with full-fledged journal publishing capabilities, and can serve as a base for online journal publishing programs. The topic, scope and frequency

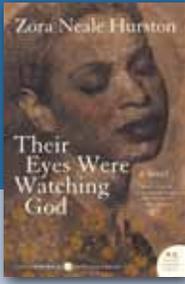
of these journals will be determined by their editorial boards, generally consisting of RWU faculty, students and staff. Creative and literary works, student research projects, or conference proceedings are some examples of possible journal content. In addition, established RWU journals and journals affiliated with RWU, but not currently based at RWU, can also choose DOCS@RWU as their online publishing platform. The Library will provide assistance in the configuration of these online journals according to their needs, such as cover design, submission requirements, review process, etc. We believe that a library-based publishing service will expand the scholarly communication channel by providing alternatives to traditional publishing services. Importantly, our students will gain first hand experience in the full range of the scholarly production cycle, from conducting research to publishing its result.

If you would like to see samples, please go to <http://digitalcommons.bepress.com/online-journals/> for journals published with Digital Commons. Please let me know if you or your colleagues would like to learn more about this online publishing opportunity. I can be reached at mwu@rwu.edu, or ext. 3053. I'm looking forward to hearing from you!



PARTNERSHIPS

The University Library and Law School library are reaffirming their collaborative initiatives. Most recently the University library, as a selective federal depository library, has allowed the shelving of federal depository documents heavily used by the law school students in the law school library. When negotiating for online resources, the possibility of both schools being included in the license is explored. This has resulted in the sharing of certain materials such as electronic law journals subscribed to by the law school library with the University library. Soon, the University library will be providing access to the Chronicle of Higher education online to all members of the University and Law School community. While it is hoped that initiatives such as these may save money for the libraries, the bigger goal is the increased access to resources for the entire University community.



Birss Memorial Library Exhibition to Celebrate the 75th Anniversary of *Their Eyes Were Watching God* by Zora Neale Hurston



By: Christine S. Fagan, Collection Development/Acquisitions Librarian

The twelfth annual Professor John Howard Birss, Jr. Memorial Library Exhibition celebrated the 75th anniversary of the publication of *Their Eyes Were Watching God* by Zora Neale Hurston. This exhibition was on display in the library foyer from February 1 through March 8, 2012.

The exhibition featured items provided courtesy of:

- Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library
- University of Florida, Smathers Libraries, Special and Area Studies Collections
- Boston Public Library, Special Collections in the Central Library
- Redwood Library
- Professor Jack G. Montgomery, Western Kentucky University

Featured items included:

- **First editions of:**
 - *Jonah's Gourd Vine* (1934)
 - *Mules and Men* (1935)
 - *Their Eyes Were Watching God* (1937)
 - *Tell My Horse* (1938)
 - *Moses, Man of the Mountain* ((1939)
 - *Dust Tracks on a Road* (1942)
- Facsimile of holograph manuscript of *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, chapter one and beginning of chapter two
- Facsimile of holograph manuscript of *Dust Tracks on a Road*, chapter entitled "Love"
- Facsimiles of photographs of Zora Neale Hurston taken by Carl Van Vechten and Prentiss Taylor
- Illustrations by Jerry Pinkney from *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, University of Illinois Press, 1991
- Correspondence regarding the Mule Bone controversy, including facsimiles of letters written by Zora Neale Hurston, Langston Hughes and others
- Facsimiles of selected letters to Zora Neale Hurston regarding her books
- Facsimiles of photographs of Eatonville, Florida in the early twentieth century, home of Zora Neale Hurston and first incorporated African American town in America.
- Collection of hoodoo artifacts

The exhibition was produced in conjunction with the Professor John Howard Birss, Jr. Memorial Keynote Lecture which was delivered on February 29, 2012. The speaker was Dr. Deborah Plant, Professor of African Studies at the University of South Florida. Dr. Plant's research has been focused on African, African American and Afro-Caribbean writers. She is the author of two books about Zora Neale Hurston, *Every Tub Must Sit on Its Own Bottom: The Philosophy and Politics of Zora Neale Hurston* and *Zora Neale Hurston: A Spiritual Biography*, as well as an edited volume, *The Inside Light: New Critical Essays on Zora Neale Hurston*.

Other related events included a book discussion lead by Professor James Tackach sponsored jointly by the Honors Program and the RWU Library; and the Birss Competition sponsored by the Feinstein College of Arts and Sciences. Professor Tackach offered a one-credit course on Zora Neale Hurston and *Their Eyes Were Watching God* during both the fall and spring semesters.

Previous Birss Memorial celebrated books include:



Moby Dick by Herman Melville (2001)

Uncle Tom's Cabin by Harriet Beecher Stowe (2002)

Fahrenheit 451 by Ray Bradbury (2003)

Walden by Henry David Thoreau (2004)

Leaves of Grass by Walt Whitman (2005)

The Good Earth by Pearl S. Buck (2006)

On the Road by Jack Kerouac (2007)

Night by Elie Wiesel (2008)

Adventures of Huckleberry Finn by Mark Twain (2009)

To Kill a Mockingbird by Harper Lee

Catch-22 by Joseph Heller

The Professor John Howard Birss, Jr. Memorial Lecture and Professor John Howard Birss, Jr. Memorial Library Funds were established by University alumnus, Robert Blais '70, to honor Professor John Howard Birss, Jr., nationally recognized for his knowledge of first editions.