Creating A Learning Environment

Brinley Franklin
Director of University Libraries

As the University of Connecticut strives to become one of the top twenty public research universities in the United States, one of our challenges is to create campuses that focus on and support a modern academic program. UConn’s libraries, strategically located on each university campus, are positioned to play a key role in establishing a more intellectual environment for the community.

The library has always endeavored to provide students and faculty with an intellectually stimulating environment. In addition to its extensive research collections and other information resources, the libraries showcase changing exhibitions and permanent works of art. The Dodd Research Center hosts regular public programs on academic disciplines and permanent works of art. The Dodd Research Center will present an illustrated presentation about her career and her new work.

The library also seeks to enhance the academic environment on campus through generous service hours. Last year, Babbidge added additional hours to its weekend and final exam service.

Will Your Favorite Journals Still Be Here Next Year?

Carolyn Mills, Reference Librarian/Liaison to the Life Sciences & Jonathan Nade, Reference Librarian/Liaison to CANR

The University of Connecticut Libraries has canceled more than 1,000 journal subscriptions over the last ten years. If your research hasn’t yet been affected, it will be. You can take action to save access to research that is important to you by attending “The Crisis in Scholarly Communications,” a forum sponsored by the Chancellor’s Library Advisory Committee on March 12 from 4-5:30 pm in Konover Auditorium, Dodd Research Center.

Jean-Claude Guedon, Professor of Comparative Literature at the University of Montreal and a noted authority on scholarly communications, will address the history of scholarly communication leading to the present crisis and the related issue of copyright ownership: How did we get where we are? Who owns scholarly information? How does the future hold if the current trends continue? What options are open to us with respect to both commercial and non-profit publishing?

The deepening crisis in scholarly communication is defined by the loss of access to research literature as rising costs for journals far outstrip library budgets. Over the last 15 years, the price of research journals has risen over 200% (compare with the CPI, up 57% over the same period). Consequently, academic libraries are subscribing to fewer titles and slashing book buying as well. In many humanities and social science fields, finding a publisher for a scholarly monograph has become virtually impossible for anyone but an established scholar.

At UConn, science journals routinely inflate an average of more than 10% per year. For the last eight years, except this one, the library has received a 5% increase. Much of the increase has gone to increasing access to electronic journals and databases. Journal inflation has largely been managed through cancellations. Journal inflation is caused by a number of factors; most significantly, the control by commercial publishers of an increasing percentage of titles at the expense of scholarly societies and university presses. Typical profit margins for commercial publishers are at least 20%, with the profits coming from university libraries. Mergers and acquisitions exacerbate the trend to the point where five publishers now produce over 50% of the science journals received at UConn.

At the University of Connecticut, in the sciences alone, there are at least 450 journals that cost $1,000 or more per year, 20 that cost more than $5,000 per year, 16 that cost more than $10,000 per year, five that cost more than $15,000 per year, and one that costs more than $20,000 per year. With an annual inflation rate of only 10% (below the average for science journals), a $5,000 journal subscription increases $500 per year just to maintain the subscription.

To inform yourself about this crisis and to give you ideas about ways to respond, visit the library’s Scholarly Communications Crisis web page at http://www.lib.uconn.edu/ris/scholarlycommunication.html where you will find:

• Background information on the causes of the crisis
• The financial impact at UConn, including the price list for science journals
• Alternative publishing ventures worldwide
• “What Can Faculty Do?” Suggested ways for you to help secure affordable access to scholarly information as an author, reviewer, editor, member of a professional society, or faculty member.

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A university library may measure success in many ways: by the relevance of collections to the educational and research mission of the institution; by the physical condition and long-term stability of collection materials; by the comprehensiveness and accuracy of the catalog; by the comfort and utility of its facilities.

Of increasing interest for those who look for accountability and utility at every turn are measures that record the breadth and depth of collections and services: how many people enter the library each day? When is the library busiest? Which databases are used most? What titles are consistently borrowed from other libraries?

Most recently, libraries have begun to measure students’ success in finding books, articles, scores, maps, records, and data relevant to the subject they are investigating. This last measure is of growing importance in an age where information options are dizzying in their variety and daunting in their sheer mass. Research libraries are wonderful repositories of knowledge and information and will always have value in their own right. But, if students remain (however blissfully) unaware of the purpose, scope, and value of their library’s collections, or do not understand how to tap into and make use of the information in them, we will have failed in our fundamental mission.

Traditional academic libraries were relatively simple to navigate. Like the Wright brothers’ aircraft, the basic mechanics of exploration could be grasped through a relatively brief orientation. Contemporary research libraries are more like 747s. To understand how they work require familiarity with several complex and inter-related systems and the ability to process the information they provide. You do not have to be a rocket scientist to fly an airplane but you do need to know a considerable amount about flight systems to just take off.

Acquiring the skills and knowledge to navigate today’s academic library requires more than a brief orientation. It requires multiple learning sessions, sequenced throughout the student’s university career, so that content and skill training are introduced when most relevant and meaningful, with each new session building upon material the student has learned before.

One still hears, on occasion, students say to their instructor, “I just have the library session already,” as if there were but a single simple and static skill set to learn. Information literacy is not so easily attained.

SNET first entered into a partnership with the Dodd Center in 1998. Since then, project archivist Cynthia McElroy and Stephen Showers have organized the collection and created the finding aid for researchers.

The collection is an extraordinary research tool and historical record. Students, faculty, and scholars in the fields of business, telecommunications, and Connecticut history use it for research, and the general public has access to the collection both in person, and for an increasing portion of the materials, online.

Commenting on the company’s donation, President Austin said, “Over the years the University of Connecticut and SBC SNET have established a close and cooperative partnership. This donation takes that collaboration a giant step further and we are grateful that SBC SNET views us as the appropriate steward for this invaluable archival material.”

“I am extremely pleased that we have been selected as the permanent home for SNET’s archive,” Thomas Wilted remarked. “My colleagues and I continue to be amazed at the vast amount of useful historical data contained in this archive. We are proud that our efforts will help preserve these documents so that current and future scholars can gain a greater understanding of our state’s history and telecommunications industry.”

For more information, see http://www.lib.uconn.edu/DoddCenter/ASC/SNET/snetmain.htm
**The Hog What?**

_Some of you may have heard about the Hog River Journal. This new quarterly explores the lesser-known, yet fascinating, aspects of Central Connecticut's history. The first issue, which appeared in the Fall of 2002, included articles on Connecticut's Puerto Rican tobacco farm workers, the genesis of Hill-Stead in Farmington, the importance of a photograph for one Connecticut family, and a photo essay on the Park River, which used to run through downtown Hartford and now runs under it. The theme of the second issue, in bookstores now, is "Built Up Raed It," a look at some of Greater Hartford's significant historic structures and their surprising sagas. The Park River was popularly known as the Hog River; it gives our journal its name. The tenements and banners that dotted its banks, and gave the river its nickname, were torn down to make way for Bushnell Park in the second half of the 19th century. Though picturesque, the river was prone to devastating floods and thus was buried in a conduit in the 1940s. The Hog River is our symbol for the lost (buried) stories of our region._

Cynthia Cornier, education director at Hill-Stead Museum, was familiar with the common lament of local historians: so many interesting research projects and so few venues in which to publish them. She was the first to propose the idea for a new journal. Such ideas usually are greeted with "great idea" all around and little follow-through, but one person who heard Cynthia's idea had followed aplenty. Had Elizabeth Normen, former interim director of Hill-Stead Museum, known exactly how much follow-through it would take to realize the journal, it probably wouldn't have happened. But luckily, Elizabeth and the team that formed were blissfully ignorant of the persistence needed to start such an endeavor; they ploughed right in.

Cindy and Elizabeth invited regional historians, educators, museum professionals, archivists, and librarians to Hill-Stead to discuss the idea, and a core team emerged from those early meetings. Elizabeth, Cindy, photo editor Nancy Albert of Wesleyan University, Connecticut State Archivist John L. Jacobs, and Sandra Wheeler of Trinity College's Hill-Stead Studies Project, editor Clarissa Ceglio, and myself, then curator of the Hartford Public Library's Hill-Stead Collection. We wanted our journal to be lively, well written, and richly illustrated, accessible to non-scholars yet intellectually satisfying, a way to bring focus to the many great historical collections and institutions that surround us. Professional, amateur, and student historians would have a forum in which to publish their work; institutions would have a place to feature the "cool stuff" that too few people know about. We were energized as we realized how much research was being done in the region, how much of the historic record was preserved in our institutions. All we needed was a way to disseminate the stories. How hard could that be?

First we needed a name. There were many suggestions including Harriet (as in Beecher Stowe), What Happened Here, Hartford Heritage, and HARTFORD. "Hog River" was even on the table at one point, though we soon decided that the association with heroin was a tad too problematic. Hog River Journal finally won because it's a local name that has symbolic merit (the buried story), it's memorable, and, we hoped, an attention grabber. People either love the name or hate it. At least it doesn't generate indifference.

Next we pulled together articles, photographs, and features for a prototype. That was the easiest part of the endeavor. As we were all associated with heritage sites, research institutions, and regional studies programs, we had knowledge of wonderful papers and images on all sorts of under-documented subjects. Our theme for the prototype, which with minor changes became the first issue, was "A Sense of Place." We wanted the features to explore a variety of the themes that we intend to cover: social, ethnic, architectural, labor, gender, and leisure histories, all within the region of Central Connecticut.

We also discussed recurring departments, and decided on four:

- Re-Collections focuses on the contextual importance of an object from the collection of an area institution. (An Under Tom's Cabin-inspired vase from the Harriet Beecher Stowe Center, which nearly defies description, is highlighted in our first issue.)
- Shoebox Archives features a first person account of a notable past event. (In the next issue we learn why drunken Trinity College students in 1906 were dressed up as Native Americans to the delight of Hartford's finest.)
- Destinations features a locale in the area that may not get as much foot traffic as it merits.
- Soap Box is an opinion column.

Once we had the contents, graphic designer John Alves put it all together in a beautiful prototype that Elizabeth used to raise interest and, more importantly, money.

It probably would have taken years for anyone who was interested to gather enough money to fund our first year. With the second issue underway, we knew we were well into the planning of issue three. The Hog River Journal, years in the making, is finally a reality. We think of the journal as "a meeting place" and we encourage anyone to propose story ideas and writers. For those of you who are interested in the fascinating, seldom told stories of our region, this is your journal. The Hog River Journal is available through area museum shops and bookstores. To subscribe, send an email to HogRiverJrnl@aol.com.

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**Exhibits March 23-May 25, 2003**

**Classical Muse(ings)**

A society becomes more and more engrossed in popular culture, it is easy to disregard the substantial influence that earlier civilizations exerted on the art, letters, and science of the past. More often than not, that influence is only a fragment taken from the past to illuminate a contemporary idea. Sometimes it is only a name; sometimes it is a concept; sometimes a myth.

This exhibit celebrates fragments; fragments of ancient architecture appearing in 18th and 19th century art; fragments of the Greek and Roman classics emerging as motifs in the literature of past centuries; fragments of ancient science reappearing as new discoveries in the Renaissance and early modern periods of discovery. Drawn from the visual collections of the William Benton Museum of Art and the book collections in the University Libraries' Archives & Special Collections, Classical Muse(ings) provides the viewer with an opportunity to reflect on the surprising remnants of earlier cultures that artists, writers, and scientists employed to connect their works to the traditions of the past.

**Poetic Journeys™**

Poetic Journeys™ was developed by the Creative Writing Program at the University of Connecticut and was inspired by the MTA New York City Transit’s Poetry in Motion® series. This series features poems written by university students, faculty, and staff on placards designed by students in the School of Fine Arts’ Design Center.

The first poetic journey began in 2000 when graduate student Stephanie Roach’s poem “Birdilled” appeared on all of the campus buses. Poems have since appeared on placards in other transit systems, including Dallas, Iowa City, London, Los Angeles, and New York. It provides an opportunity for viewers to experience and learn more about the ways in which encounters with poetry in everyday settings enable us to think about poetry while we move through space and time. It helps demonstrate that such encounters make us more aware of the greater world of which we are an integral part.

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**Winter 2003**

Janie M. Athews, Social Sciences Librarian, Tricker Library

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**UConn Libraries**

February/March 2003
The University Libraries received two significant book donations in the Fall of 2002, one as the result of the untimely death of UConn faculty member David Shuldiner, and the other from a retired Professor of History at Trinity College, Philip Charles Farrell Bankwitz.

David Shuldiner taught in the UConn School of Family Studies for many years, principally as an adjunct professor. Trained as an oral historian, he had wide-ranging interests in all aspects of historic and contemporary folk culture. His publications include work on folk ideology and the Jewish labor movement, aging political activists, folklore and aging, and humanities programming for older adults. He was deeply engaged in research on the cultural role of elderly women in their communities, with a particular emphasis on Native Americans. His library included substantial sections devoted to anthropology, blues and folk music, African American, Native American, and women’s studies, folk art, folklore, gerontology, history, and social theory.

Dr. Bankwitz’s gift, an extensive collection of books, pamphlets, and copies of archival records, reflects his career as a well-known historian of twentieth century France. Random checking indicated that much of the French language material that constitutes the majority of the collection was not available in the UConn Libraries. Professor of History Joel Blatt, UConn/Stanford, who also pursues research on France in the interwar years, reviewed the collection inventory and was enthusiastic about the potential value of the collection.

This collection now resides in Archives & Special Collections. Processing this gift will require close coordination between subject review and library preservation operations. Few very French books are issued in bound format, and the paper quality of much of this collection may rule out binding as an option. If regular use is anticipated, we will probably photocopy the text onto acid-free paper and bind the resulting book. Other titles, particularly where national holdings seem sparse, will be reviewed for possible reservation microfilming and/or digitization.

Online Guide to UConn Libraries & Info Centers

The tenth edition of A Guide to the University of Connecticut Libraries and Information Centers is now available at http://webapps.lib.uchc.edu/InfoCenters/. It includes all sites that provide information, either remotely or on site, to the university community. The alphabetic arrangement takes one from A—Air Force Library to Women’s Center Library. The guide is the key to libraries and information sources spread across the university and includes phone numbers, email addresses, and web site URLs. A keyword search engine makes it easy to search for a particular library or subject.

Creating A Learning Environment

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In the coming year, we plan to be open on Labor Day and hope to move the library or subject library facilities like Babbidge Library, the Dodd Research Center, the Music and Dramatic Arts Library or subject. The university's new general education requirements stipulate that all students must achieve a functional level of information literacy before graduation. The ability to access a world of information beyond the library's walls has challenged the staff to provide appropriate search engines, gateways, and portals to deliver information to users wherever they may be. Library staff are working diligently to create the best online tool for learning in this new electronic environment.

In addition, UConn librarians have developed a carefully structured model program for teaching information literacy skills, beginning with freshmen and extending through graduate students. That program is described in Scott Kennedy’s article on pages 2 and 6.

Libraries have a critical role to play in transforming the University of Connecticut. Modern library facilities like Babbidge Library, the Dodd Research Center, the Music and Dramatic Arts Library, the Jerry W. Richardson Library in Stamford, and the new Waterbury Library are important milestones. As learning takes new forms we will seek to stay in the forefront, helping to enhance the campus learning environment.
The University of Fort Hare in South Africa is the oldest historically black university in South Africa and has educated political leaders such as Nelson Mandela, Robert Mugabe, and Oliver Tambo. From 1948, when apartheid became official policy, until 1991, when it officially ended, the University of Fort Hare attempted to provide a first-rate education to its students by relying on housing archives and facilities. This experience has led researchers to develop new academic programs that serve South Africa's contemporary needs.

In 1999, the University of Connecticut signed an historic agreement with the African National Congress (ANC). Initial efforts, funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, focused on preserving the ANC's archive in the apartheid era and included extensive discussions on developing historical archives for the ANC members and leaders. Because the ANC records are too sensitive to be housed at the University of Fort Hare, the UConn/ANC partnership was expanded to include Fort Hare. A second grant, from the United Negro College Fund, supported an initial exchange of faculty and professional staff between the University of Fort Hare and UConn and provided for future exchange opportunities among students, faculty, and staff.

During December 2002, three library staff from the University of Fort Hare (UFH) left balmoral South Africa to visit the UConn Libraries. Undaunted by the snow that greeted their arrival, Yolisa Soul, University Librarian; Robin Treheaven, Deputy University Librarian; and Suzette Oosthuizen, Senior Librarian for Information Services, spent two weeks in Storrs. They were eager to continue the conversations begun in the Spring of 2001 when Yolisa Soul first visited the University Libraries.

Soul’s first visit focused on learning about the Libraries’ Academic Liaison Program and work related to the preservation of the ANC documents. The 2002 visit provided for more extensive discussions regarding liaison roles and responsibilities, and an opportunity to share ideas about information technology and access issues, information literacy programs, digital collections, online reference services, and archival facilities and technical practices.

ANC Archives: Storage and Access

Once the ANC archives have been fully processed, they will be shipped to UFH for storage and use. Additional space will be needed to house the collection. Thomas Wilsted, Director of the Dodd Research Center (DRC), and Yolisa Soul discussed how existing UFH archival facilities might be renovated and expanded to provide the needed storage space. They reviewed building blueprints and made trips to the Museum of the National Historical Museum and the Mystic Seaport Museum, which provided first-hand review of recently erected archival facilities. This experience will help inform decisions regarding equipment needs and storage areas for housing ANC materials until new facilities can be built.

Our discussions revealed that these questions are not unique to UConn. Despite our differences, both UConn and UFH staff are working towards the same goals and expectations. In this context, we were able to explore and contrast our challenges. What emerged were mutual suggestions for expanding faculty participation in the liaison program, training sessions that demonstrate leadership and techniques for improving instruction; and tips for developing collegial relationships between faculty and librarians. The partnership will develop skill sets in these areas and provide a forum for sharing information about research techniques, assessment efforts, and innovative instructional technology.

Development of Information Literacy Skills

Information literacy has become an increasingly important issue on university campuses, and the acquisition of information literacy skills is now a requirement for UConn undergraduates. (For a detailed description of the UConn program, please see the article by Scott Kennedy on pages 2 & 6.) One of the UFH’s key goals was to learn more about the UConn Libraries information literacy program. Conversations centered on how such skills are taught and how this instruction helps students use information more effectively. The structure of the library’s information literacy course and the concepts it introduces represent a working model for the UFH library staff. According to Suzette Oosthuizen, this kind of instruction is needed to “improve UFH students’ ability to become critical thinkers.” We hope that continued discussion, reciprocal learning, and collaboration in this area will enhance our ability to develop effective information literacy programs, both at UConn and at UFH.

Future Communication and Collaboration

There is still much progress to be made in liaison work, information literacy instruction, and archival management, and it is important for librarians from both universities to continue to share knowledge and expertise. When our South African colleagues departed, implicit in our farewell was a promise for ongoing support and communication regarding liaison activities, information literacy, instruction and learning outcomes, library and programmatic assessment, and library marketing strategies. Despite the thousands of miles that separate us, we are motivated by the same purposes: to support the educational missions of our respective institutions and to contribute to students’ academic and professional success.

Francesce DeFranco and Tom Wilsted coordinated the University Libraries’ visit to UFH. They gratefully acknowledge the following UConn Libraries staff who participated in discussions and presentations.

Administrative Services: Brinley Franklin, Deb Sunday; Access Services: Nancy Orth, Lois Fitchett, Lisa Hendricks; Collection Services: Peter Allison, Eva Boloko, Carole Dyal, Sandy Gallup, Janie Rechlo, Deb Sanford; Dodd Research Center: Hedi Abbey, Kristin Eshelman, Terri Galdich, Jean Nelson, Betty Pitan, Rutherford Withers; Information Technology Services: Peter M.urry, David Brethauer; Research and Information Services: Scott Kennedy, Steve Batt, Richard Bleier, Barbara Cervara, Sharon Gwene, Kathy Ladbrook, Jill Livington, David M. Cheevers, Carolyn M.ills, M eredith Petersons, Tracey Rudnick.
What is Information Literacy?

Information literacy implies a general understanding of or a respect for the integrity of information sources, documentation styles, permission notices, and how to identify the differences between primary and secondary sources: authoritative vs. non-authoritative sources. Information literacy training into each major’s curriculum and therefore the specific elements vary according to the purview of the Undergraduate Services Librarian and are essentially the same for all undergraduates. A developed competence is fall under the purview of subject-focused liaison librarians, and therefore the specific elements vary according to the needs and aims and literature of the program being served.

Basic Competencies

- **First Year Experience (two modules):** An overview of research library facilities and services and library resources accessible from student residencies. FYE classes may choose between an active-learning overview of the modern research library and an overview of the most heavily used full-text resources. Contact: Kathy L. Labrador, Undergraduate Services Librarian, 486-1253, kathy.l.labrador@uconn.edu
- **Freshman Writing (English 110/111):** Library research basics. This class session is the first formal engagement students have with the scholarly research process. After a brief overview of their library’s resources and organization, students learn how to construct and implement an effective information search; how to locate, retrieve, and evaluate targeted materials; how to cite resources in a paper or presentation; and where to go for further assistance. Contact: Richard Bieler, Humanities Reference Librarian, 486-1246, richard.bieler@uconn.edu or Kathy L. Labrador, Undergraduate Services Librarian, 486-1253, kathy.l.labrador@uconn.edu

Advanced Competencies

- **Research Competency within the Major:** Writing and research within the major are fundamental to university education and a cornerstone of the university’s new general education program. Liaison librarians, information specialists assigned to each academic department, offer multiple subject-based research training classes each semester and provide assistance in building effective information literacy training into each major’s curriculums. Contact: Your departmental Liaison Librarian http://www.lib.uconn.edu/ liaison/
- **Library Research Competency within the Major:** Writing and research within the major are fundamental to university education and a cornerstone of the university’s new general education program. Liaison librarians, information specialists assigned to each academic department, offer multiple subject-based research training classes each semester and provide assistance in building effective information literacy training into each major’s curriculums. Contact: Your departmental Liaison Librarian http://www.lib.uconn.edu/liaison/
- **Course Specific Research Assignments:** To prepare students for a research library assignment, the Undergraduate Services Librarian provides assistance in building effective information literacy training into each graduate research program. Contact: Your departmental Liaison Librarian http://www.lib.uconn.edu/liaison/
- **Individual Research Consultations:** Liaison librarians provide a focused overview on the research topic at hand and assist in making the research assignment a successful and engaging learning experience for graduate level study. Contact: Your departmental Liaison Librarian http://www.lib.uconn.edu/liaison/ or the appropriate Special Collections Curator http://www.lib.uconn.edu/DoddCenter/ASC/pages/ staff.htm
- **Online Tutorials:** Online tutorials provide information to students of any age with an opportunity to learn about the library’s collections, primary information access tools, and the research process. Online tutorials are linked from relevant areas of the Libraries’ Web site, from the university’s WebCT template, and are also listed at http://weapps.lib.uconn.edu/infolit/tutorials/cm/Requests for new online tutorials should be made to the Undergraduate Services Librarian. Contact: Kathy L. Labrador, Undergraduate Services Librarian, 486-1253, kathy.l.labrador@uconn.edu
- **Workshops:** The University Libraries offers a series of workshops each semester and once during the summer. Each series generally includes sessions on using HOMER, the library catalog; searching the Internet; Continued on page 2
Teaching Students to Engage The Modern Research Library

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finding full text resources online; finding images on the Web; citation searching; geographic information systems; and using reference citation management software.

Contact: Sharon Giovenale, Pharmacy Librarian, 486-2513, scott.kennedy@uconn.edu

Reference Assistance The most effective learning takes place when students are highly motivated. This is generally the case when students approach the reference desk for research assistance. It is an opportunity for the information specialist to make significant inroads with an individual learner. Today's reference desk is equipped as a research training area, with instruction workstations, training tools, and research guides available immediately on hand. Contact: Reference Desk, 486-2513, scott.kennedy@uconn.edu

Will Your Favorite Journals Still Be Here Next Year?

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- A list of the highest-priced journals—primary targets for individual action such as refusing to purchase
- Author manuscript language to use in order to control local costs of access
- Sample letters to publishers to register dissatisfaction with journal pricing

The crisis in scholarly communication has already affected the holdings of the University of Connecticut Libraries negatively, and thus the quality of support provided to faculty and researchers. Innovative solutions to this problem are underway at many institutions worldwide, both large and small. This problem involves you and all academic researchers. The solution must too. We invite you to get involved today.
Botanical Metamorphics by Ann Parker

Trained as a painter, graphic artist, and photographer, Ann Parker holds a BFA degree from Yale University. For the past decade she has been experimenting with a new imagery that is artistically and technically a dramatic change from her former photographic career. She calls this new body of work Botanical Metamorphics.

Without using either film or camera, she passes light directly through fruits, flowers, and vegetables. When projected onto color sensitive paper, the resulting photographs reveal the inner essence of plant life with extraordinary clarity.

Mr. Parker believes that we are increasingly out of touch with nature. Although the marketplace provides us, both in and out of season, with an unprecedented variety of produce, it comes to us dyed, bleached, waxed, gassed, saturated with chemicals, dehydrated, reconstituted, and frequently tightly cocooned in plastic.

Her exquisitely provocative botanical interpretations counter this trend to amaze, delight, and reinvolve the viewer with the absolute beauty of botanical forms. About her Botanical Metamorphics, Parker says, “I am reaching into the very center of familiar plant life and presenting my discoveries in a compelling and contemporary graphic manner. I want viewers to imagine they are bees, intimately exploring deep inside the fruits, flowers, and vegetables that I have chosen to depict. I strongly believe that what I am doing is valid botanical recording presented with a new and different technique.”

Ann Parker’s work can be found in public, private, and corporate collections, including the Boston Museum of Fine Arts; the Boston Public Library; the Center for Creative Photography; Hood Museum, Dartmouth College; the Metropolitan Museum of Art; the Museum of Modern Art; the San Antonio Museum of Art; and the Whitney Museum of American Art.

In the past decade, she has had major exhibitions at the Sonoma Valley Museum of Art; the Lyman Allyn Art Museum; Tower Hill Botanical Garden; the Sony Gallery, American University, Cairo; the University of Massachusetts Medical Center; and the Worcester Art Museum.

Ann Parker lives in North Brookfield, Massachusetts with her husband Avon Neal. She is represented by galleries in the United States, Europe, and Australia. (27) Babbidge Library, Stevens Gallery

The Naturalist’s Eye: Four Centuries of Botanical Illustration

Complementing Ann Parker’s extraordinary photograms, The Naturalist’s Eye: Four Centuries of Botanical Illustration presents a selection of herbaria, travel accounts, and scientific botany books from the University Libraries’ Archives & Special Collections in the Thomas J. Dodd Research Center. The botanical illustrations found in these volumes are intended to provide precise details of a plant so that it can be recognized and distinguished from other species. Although some botanical illustrations approach the level of fine art, their primary purpose is scientific rather than aesthetic. Modern technology has moved us beyond the limited edition woodcuts and engravings of earlier centuries to beautifully illustrated volumes available to most nature enthusiasts.

Babbidge Library, Gallery on the Plaza

Witness to War 1941-45: The Soviet Jewish Experience

In this exhibit, a project of the Jewish Historical Society of Greater Hartford, forty Connecticut residents describe their experiences as Jews in the Soviet Union during World War II. Through oral history, photographs, and historical documents, they speak compellingly about courage, patriotism, compassion, and endurance in the face of catastrophe. They also convey the powerful identification with their native country felt by many Jews during this era—and their dilemma when fellow citizens treated them as outsiders.

After a brief overview of the changing situation of Jews in the Soviet Union prior to World War II, the exhibition focuses on five main topics: Defending the Motherland, Rescuing the Wounded, Feeding the Nails, Surviving in Hiding—Ghettoes and Camps, and Fighting in the Forests. Most of the survivors portrayed came to Connecticut as refugees from the Soviet Union in the 1990’s, and the exhibit includes a brief update on each of them.

Also on display is a video of some of the interviews, and a copy of the Memorial Book compiled by one of the survivors, the original of which is housed at Yad Vashem, a Holocaust museum, archive, and memorial in Jerusalem. (27) Babbidge Library, Plaza Level, West Alcove

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UConn Libraries is published by the University of Connecticut Libraries four times each year to provide current information about collections, services, and activities to faculty, staff, friends, and others who are interested in the welfare of the Libraries. If you do not wish to receive the newsletter, please contact Ann Galonska at ann.galonska@uconn.edu or 860-486-6882 or Dodd Research Center, 405 Babbidge Road, U-1205, Storrs, CT 06269-1205.