



ACCESS

NEWS FROM THE UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES AT NOTRE DAME

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Fast into the Past: Computers and the Classical and Medieval Worlds

by Marina Smyth

In the last few decades, scholars whose research interests reach back beyond A.D.1500 have received a great helping hand from computer technology with the creation of specialized databases, some of which are available in CD-ROM format. A number of these research tools are now housed in the Medieval Institute on the seventh floor of the Hesburgh Library at the University of Notre Dame. Thus, classicists, philologists, philosophers, theologians and medievalists studying the thought or the language of their predecessors in Antiquity and during the Middle Ages, have added the computer to their standard working tools, not simply for word processing, e-mail and searches of computerized library catalogs at Notre Dame and throughout the world, but also as a means of accessing the primary sources, those early written texts which are the *sine qua non* of their research.

Let me now illustrate a simple use of such a system. Suppose we wish to know whether the phrase *sine qua non* was really used in classical times, or whether it is a later construct. Searching it on a CD-ROM containing the full text of a wide array of works written in classical Latin will quickly point in the right direction, since no examples of such usage will be brought up by the system. On the other hand, a similar search for *et cetera* shows within seconds that already in Roman times this was a common way of avoiding the tedium of a lengthy list. The search also provides full references to the works in which the expression is used and allows the possibility of pulling up onto the screen as large a section of the context as is necessary for establishing the meaning in each case. These selections of text can then be either printed or downloaded for further examination.

This capability of creating one's own concordance for a word or concept is the most exciting aspect of these new databases. It allows the scholar to quickly find out where an author -- or several authors -- discusses a particular topic, to follow the evolution in the meaning of a word over the centuries and, in particular, what a word meant at the time it was used in a given text. To be sure, dictionaries are helpful in answering such questions, but dictionaries nowadays are made by analyzing the contents of such databases, thus bypassing the need for innumerable filing cards recording each occurrence of the entries. Even so, the making of a dictionary is a very slow process, and, while several large-scale projects are in progress at centers around the world for the "national" variations of

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Library "UnCovers" 12,000 Journals

by Marsha Stevenson

Providing rapid access to journal literature is a key goal of the University Libraries. To expand such access we have subscribed to an online service which provides a free table-of-contents listing for thousands of titles. Some of these journals are held by Notre Dame, while others are not.

Known as *UnCover*, this service is a product of the Colorado Alliance of Research Libraries (CARL). The tables of contents of some 12,000 journals, ranging in scope from popular to scholarly, can be searched free of charge from any computer or terminal able to access the Internet. Scholars can easily browse through the contents pages of these 12,000 publications, searching by journal titles, authors' names or keywords from articles' titles. Established four years ago, *UnCover* includes 3 million articles, with 3,000-4,000 new citations added every day. The system is menu-driven and simple to use.

The Libraries' subscription to *UnCover* permits unlimited browsing. Any computer which accesses the Internet from the Notre Dame domain will be able to view this file. Individuals will be able to search from computers in their offices as well as from the public UNLOC terminals in campus libraries.

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Latin during the Middle Ages, their databases are not readily available, and in any case there often is no appropriate specialized dictionary to answer a particular question.

Purchased in 1988, the *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae CD-ROM*, intended to become a complete database of the best available editions of Greek texts written before A.D. 1453, was the first such acquisition by the Notre Dame Libraries. The Jesse H. Jones Faculty Research Equipment Fund Program at the University of Notre Dame financed the initial outlay for the custom-made IBYCUS hardware designed by David Packard, which was at that time the only viable means of using this CD-ROM. (Search programs have since been developed for more conventional equipment, but the IBYCUS system is still ranked highest by users of this CD-ROM and the associated Packard Humanities Institute products mentioned below.) In my experience, the usual users are philologists, classicists, theologians studying the New Testament or the Greek Church Fathers and, more generally, philosophers and theologians interested in the history of their field. Systems such as this are designed for the expert, and one of my responsibilities is to explain the implications of this to users, who are often taken aback when they realize that they cannot simply ask for the desired word (or combination of words) in English and let the machine take over from there: the beginner must therefore be reminded of the characteristics of Greek grammar which might render a search useless if ignored.

The *Packard Humanities Institute CD-ROM #5.3 (Latin)* offers a broad selection of classical Latin texts, as well as various versions of the complete Bible and of the New Testament in Hebrew, Greek, Coptic, Latin and English and, oddly enough, the works of Milton. (An earlier version of this CD-ROM was the demonstration disk for the IBYCUS system, which probably accounts for the unusual mix of contents.) In addition to uses akin to those described above, this CD-ROM is particularly useful to medievalists, helping them, for example, to track down that elusive citation or borrowing from a classical poet or a biblical text.

The *Packard Humanities Institute CD-ROM #6 (Greek Papyrology and Epigraphy)* is very much for the specialist. At Notre Dame it is the least used of the CD-ROMs searchable with the IBYCUS system.

The *CETEDOC Library of Christian Latin Texts* is the latest addition to the set of Medieval Institute electronic resources. Once more, the initial outlay for equipment was made possible by the Jesse H. Jones Fund. Provided with a search program similar in scope but far more user-friendly than that of IBYCUS, this system will eventually allow for full-text searching of the best available editions of the Latin writings of Christian authors well into the Middle Ages. As is usual with full-text searching of foreign language texts, knowledge of the language (in this case Latin) and of its grammar is essential. A librarian with such expertise can, however, make the system useful even for the scholar who

can only work with English translations. The first version of the CD-ROM contains most of the editions already published by Brepols in the series *Corpus Christianorum* (these texts were appropriately encoded for this project as they were being published in book form), as well as the complete works of Jerome, Augustine and Gregory the Great, and several other standard editions of influential works, such as the Lindsay edition of the *Etymologiae* of Isidore of Seville. As is usual with such CD-ROM products, periodic updates are planned, which allow both for eventual corrections and for an ever increasing range of materials.

There are other electronic products for the medievalist on the market and many more are planned. Within the limits of budgetary constraints, the Medieval Institute and the scholars concerned have selected these described above after considering their anticipated usefulness, quality and cost, as well as the possibility of periodic updates. However, to be used to best advantage, these specialized and costly products and equipment require specialized guidance, for both the novice and the expert.

Library "Uncovers" *continued from page 1*

As the database is searched, menu choices can lead to a screen displaying a citation for a specific article. At that point, an individual can choose to view ordering information and see the exact cost (base price plus copyright fee) for the document to be delivered via fax. CARL charges \$6.50 per item plus a copyright fee which is set by the journal's publisher. Those can vary widely, but an average price is \$3.00, for a total delivery cost of about \$9.50. CARL sends copies of articles within 24 hours of the order, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday; turnaround time varies from a few hours to a few days. All documents are faxed; neither standard mail nor electronic file transfer is available.

Once a document of interest has been identified, it can be obtained in one of two ways:

a) The individual can purchase the article for her or himself if s/he is willing to accept the charges and can offer CARL a credit card number and a fax number;

b) The individual can request the item from the Hesburgh Library Interlibrary Loan Office or any branch library. Due to limited funds, the Libraries will continue to rely on traditional interlibrary loan suppliers to acquire most articles. A special fund has been established, however, to obtain articles from those serial titles cancelled in the last two years.

For more information about *UnCover*, including specific directions about how to access the database, contact the Hesburgh Library Reference Desk (631-6258), Interlibrary Loan Department (631-6260) or any of the branch libraries.

Biological Abstracts on Compact Disc

by Dorothy Coil

Biological Abstracts defines biology as "the study of all organisms, emphasizing their identification, internal processes, environmental interactions and applications." For over 67 years this reference tool has made the vast amount of biological and biomedical literature manageable for the scientist and the librarian. At present 9,000 journals from over 100 countries are indexed. Current research in fields such as botany, zoology, genetics, entomology, ecology, molecular biology, clinical and experimental medicine, biochemistry and biophysics is covered comprehensively.

Searching the printed *Biological Abstracts* for pertinent journal articles can be a tedious and time consuming task. Often researchers and students do not want to invest the time in this two-step process. An index, with small print, must be searched and an abstract number retrieved. A book of abstracts is then consulted for the complete bibliographic citation.

In the '70s online databases brought to biological literature a more powerful method of searching by allowing the use of several concepts simultaneously. *BIOSIS Previews* permits a search to be modified, narrowing or broadening it while online. The disadvantage to using this commercial product is the cost. At \$1.60 per searching minute plus \$.90 for each citation retrieved, even a simple search can be expensive. It has become necessary to do searching on a fee recovery basis, virtually eliminating the student as a consumer. The second drawback is that an intermediary, the librarian, must be available to conduct the search.

In 1992 the life sciences library acquired its first piece of electronic media which should eliminate the tedious task of searching *Biological Abstracts* and the prohibitive cost of using *BIOSIS Previews*. *Biological Abstracts on Compact Disc* is the CD-ROM equivalent of the printed *Biological Abstracts*. This disc offers the options of lateral searching or searching in free text directly from an index. Lateral searching allows the user to underline words in the abstract and seek articles containing these words. In addition, searching by author, concept codes, corporate source and biosystematic codes is possible. Retrieved articles can be limited by publication year, language and CODEN, a six-character code identifying a specific journal.

Numerous, explicit help screens aid the uninitiated. Results of the search, citations plus abstracts, can be printed or downloaded. Even if the journal is not available on campus, the abstract is often substantial enough that the original document does not have to be consulted. One of the biggest advantages to this format is that the user can search any time the library is open, and is not limited by cost or the need for an intermediary. The primary

disadvantage is that discs are received quarterly. Data on the literature of the first three months of 1993 will not be available until sometime in April. Therefore, compared to online searching some of the immediacy important to the scientist is lost.

Although discs covering biological literature back to 1989 are obtainable, the life sciences library currently has only the year 1992. However, we will continue to build on this database. While we may never be able to completely retire the magnifying glass some users need with the print index, with time this database on CD-ROM will continue to grow and become more useful to faculty, students and librarians working in the life sciences.

The Belfast News-letter Collection, 1738-1800

by Charlotte Ames

The University Libraries of Notre Dame is pleased to announce two new arrivals: the Donald R. Keough Endowment in Irish Studies, and the *Belfast News-letter Collection, 1738-1800*. The Keough Endowment, initiated in 1992, has made possible the purchase of a major microfilm set which will greatly enhance the Libraries' holdings in 18th century Irish studies.

The Belfast News-letter and General Advertiser, founded in 1737 by Francis Joy, was the first news-letter ever published in provincial Ireland. In the small port of Belfast, the *News-letter* provided its citizens with a wealth of information regarding political and social events, as well as economic and trade practices. Detailed coverage of political tensions between Unionists, who supported British control of Ireland, and Nationalists, who demanded Irish independence, was given from the perspective of the common man. The *News-letter* offered announcements of births, marriages and deaths; it contained passenger lists and shipping announcements which served as sources of immigration and emigration information. The *News-letter* offered data on commerce and trade practices, including products, prices and government regulations.

Coverage ranges from 1738 to 1800, with numerous reports of several major political upheavals which rocked the Irish on the verge of rebellion. Vivid accounts of incidents pertaining to the American and French revolutions and graphic descriptions of the Irish uprising in December 1797 are among the countless chronicles of events preserved in this collection.

The Belfast News-letter Collection provides excellent primary source material for the study of 18th century Irish politics, trade and social life. In format the collection consists of 45 reels of microfilm. Access to the set is provided by the *Belfast News-letter Index* which accompanies the collection on 52 microfiche. Divided into four parts, the index is arranged by personal name, place name, ship name and subject. The collection was originally filmed by the Linen Hall Library of Belfast, and is available in the United States from University Microfilms International. Researchers may use this collection in the Microtext Reading Room in the Hesburgh Library. We are deeply grateful that the Keough Endowment in Irish Studies has made this major acquisition possible.

New Engineering/Architecture Librarian Arrives

by Melodie G. Eiteljorge

Sheila Curl joined the library faculty as the new engineering/architecture librarian on November 15. An energetic member of her profession, Curl is active in the American Library Association, the American Society for Engineering Education, the Patent Documentation Society and the Patent and Trademark Depository Library Association. In her previous position as engineering subject specialist at Arizona State University, Curl was responsible for collection development, engineering

reference, online and CD-ROM searching and training and bibliographic instruction. Prior to that, she held positions at Kansas State University and Columbia University. In addition to her line responsibilities, Curl has participated extensively in continuing education programs, published several papers, given a number of presentations and coordinated a variety of exhibits. At Arizona State she served as patent representative. She observes: "Patents are a chronically underused source of information which can be of great research benefit to students and faculty."

Curl anticipates that within the next few years branch libraries will move more and more to the use of technology in providing access to information and delivery of resources. She foresees patrons using the campus information network, dial access to CD towers, local area networks and gateway systems. She feels that technology is particularly valuable to branch libraries in reducing the problems of limited hours, staff and collections, because sources available on a campus information network are available at all hours and from all locations.

Recently Curl viewed a video in which Father Malloy discussed the mission of the University. She believes the library is essential to that mission. She states: "Informed, ethical graduates in all fields reflect well on Notre Dame and on their professions. The library is an integral part of the process of producing such graduates."

Curl strives to be someone who surprises patrons by answering questions before they are asked. She would like to be regarded as a librarian who can anticipate and meet the informational needs of patrons. She invites you to stop by the engineering library to meet her or to give her a call at 631-6665.

Sheila Curl with Library Advisory Council chairman Jack Nash (right) and vice chairman Charles Dobson (left)



P. Karpinski



Two Million
and 30

Reasons to



Theodore M.
Hesburgh
Library

C E L E B R A T E !

1963

1993



Two Million and 30 Reasons

A year of celebration, beginning and ending with two milestone events, is about to begin at the University Libraries. Our "Two Million and 30 Reasons to Celebrate" events will commence with a Friends of the Library at Notre Dame dinner on April 23. At that time we shall celebrate the acquisition of our two-millionth and two-millionth and first volumes, acknowledge the donors of each, and lead the way to various events throughout the upcoming year. The festivities will culminate in the spring of 1994 with the celebration of the Theodore M. Hesburgh Library's 30th anniversary.

The celebration will include lectures, exhibits, a community open house and a book on the history of the libraries at Notre Dame. Also pending are plans for a community book fair and a conference on the development of Catholic research libraries.

We look forward to your participation in the above events, which collectively will celebrate the growth and progress of the University Libraries and the many individuals and groups without whom this celebration would not have been possible.

Favorite Books

Bob Havlik, exhibits coordinator, invites members of the Notre Dame community to send him copies of their favorite books. He would like to display personal copies of well-loved and well-known books, along with notes explaining what makes the books special to their contributors. Books will be returned promptly once the exhibit is over. Because the purpose of the exhibit is to encourage reading, and because the list of entries may be long, preference will be given to books for which copies are available in the University Libraries' collections. If you have an entry, please contact Robert J. Havlik, Exhibits Coordinator, University Libraries of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, IN 46556.

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