A Note from the Interim Dean

A COMMON CIVIC CULTURE

> "Self-governing communities, not individuals, are the basic
> units of a democratic society."
>
> — Christopher Lasch

Studies tell us that fewer and fewer people bother to vote in national elections. This is not an isolated problem. Instead, the declining participation is symptomatic of a more general retreat from the public square . . . a weakening of the common bonds created by shared values and the expression of those values in public debate and discussion. Now our lives are much more privatized with private health clubs, shopping malls, more than one-hundred cable TV stations, and considerable time spent surfing the Web. We have greater and greater access to information, yet increasingly we withdraw from civic engagement, and often we feel less of a shared sense of purpose with those around us. In other words, although we have more information at our fingertips, we have fewer and fewer opportunities to "use" this information in settings like ward meetings, neighborhood gatherings, or school board meetings. The late Christopher Lasch termed this problem a decline of civic virtue.[1] Lasch argued that while America has always had a rich mosaic of religious and ethnic cultures, it has had a common civic and political culture based on involvement by an informed citizenry. Now, he feels this critical ingredient is atrophying.

This observation has relevance to higher education. The Internet and electronic resources and databases have placed worldwide resources before us. As students go directly from the classroom to the computer to access these resources, libraries and librarians come into play in two important ways. First, as information specialists, we can work with students to develop a core of information literacy skills and values, so that students can evaluate the information they find. Critical thinking is an important skill for both learning and civic engagement. Secondly, the library can and should be the intellectual commons of the university. As intellectual common space, it should encourage and provide for programs, speakers, and group study as well as individual research. If universities are to enhance their appeal to residential students and to commuting students, the library as a learning center can help provide a social dimension to learning. Perhaps, then, the library can be the kind of intellectual public square that seems to be disappearing from the larger society. Education has always been about more than acquiring knowledge and preparation for a career. It is most fundamentally about values . . . and the value of a sense of civic virtue is part of the bedrock needed to sustain and nurture a democratic political and civic culture.

Mark Weber
Interim Dean, Libraries & Media Services

[1] Lasch, Christopher (1995). The Revolt of the Elites: And the Betrayal of Democracy, New York: W.W. Norton. Of related interest is Paulina Borsook's critique of the privativism associated with some parts of the growing cyberculture. See: Borsook, Paulina (2000). Cyberselfish: A Critical Romp Through the Terribly Libertarian Culture of High Tech. New York: Public Affairs.

Inside

Footnotes

News from the Kent State University Libraries & Media Services
http://www.library.kent.edu/footnotes/

Scholarly Communication: Time to Create Change

The Scholarly Publishing & Academic Resources Coalition (SPARC) and the Association of Research Libraries (ARL) announce the launch of the CREATE CHANGE Web resource (*www. createchange.org*), designed to guide librarians and faculty toward solutions to the scholarly communication crisis. CREATE CHANGE provides a framework and tools for local action in order to ensure a healthy future for research and scholarship. The Web site includes:

..in-depth statistical data and background on the scholarly communication crisis;

..a database listing of the 100 most expensive journals, with editors and editorial boards;

..tips on how scientists and other faculty members can take leadership roles on campus to change the status quo, whether they're journal authors or editors-in-chief of high-priced journals;

..templates for letters librarians and scholars can write to commercial publishers to express their dissatisfaction with pricing trends.

Faculty and University administrators are invited to contact Mark Weber, Interim Dean, to discuss steps that can be taken (330-672-2962, markw@lms.kent.edu).

Dataware, Release 5

OhioLINK staff continue to develop enhancements for the Dataware software which is used as the search interface for 39 of the OhioLINK databases. New this fall are these features:

- My Search Settings: users can choose a short, medium, or long search menu, and make other interface choices that will persist as long as the browser is open.

- Saved Searches: users can save a sequence of search statements, and then re-execute the same searches later in the same database or in another Dataware database. Searches can be saved for up to 3 hours on the OhioLINK server, or permanently on a user's computer. Searches are re-executed on demand.

2nd National Award This Year for OhioLINK

OhioLINK is one of six winners of the Academic Excellence and Cost Management National Awards Program sponsored by the American Council on Education (ACE) and the USA Group Foundation   The award was established last year to recognize, reward, and give greater visibility to innovative strategies at colleges and universities that strengthen academic quality while containing costs.

Database News

- *AccessScience* (*www.accessscience.com/ server-java/Arknoid/science/AS*): OhioLINK is proud to announce the addition of AccessScience, its 100th research database. AccessScience is the online version of *McGraw Hill's Encyclopedia of Science and Technology*.

- *Biological Abstracts*: Coverage now goes back to 1980. The database exceeds *Medline* in size with over 5,000,000 records!

- *ComAbstracts* (*www.cios.org/www/abstract. htm*): The Libraries now subscribe to this database from the Communication Institute for Online Scholarship (CIOS). Coverage is to about 50 communication journals. Access is to all eight campuses.

- *INSPEC*: Database provides access to the world's scientific and technical literature in physics, electrical engineering, electronics, computers and computing, communications, control engineering, and information technology. There is also significant coverage for materials science, oceanography, nuclear engineering, geophysics, biomedical engineering and biophysics. Coverage is 1969 to present.

- *OED Online* (*dictionary.oed.com/entrance. dtl*): OhioLINK's subscription to the *Oxford English Dictionary* now connects directly to the publisher's version. It is possible to search the complete text of the twenty-volume Second Edition and the three-volume Additions Series. The site provides a history of this remarkable tool, as well as a useful online guide.

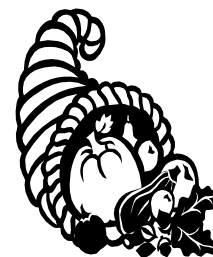# Core library services for you and your students….
we're here to help!

The Libraries are committed to the delivery of both online and in-person services. Classroom faculty can strongly influence the perceptions their students have of the library and the use they make of it. We ask faculty to encourage their students to seek assistance and advice from us when needed.

Sometimes the in-person services available in our libraries are overshadowed by what is available on the Internet. We want to emphasize that personalized help from a librarian is available in each of the libraries on the Kent and regional campuses. The following are examples of the types of direct assistance offered at the Kent Campus Main Library:

♦ <u>Walk-up assistance</u>: The Main Library Reference Center is staffed with professional librarians over 70 hours per week. Any individual with an information query can obtain personalized assistance in identifying possible sources, creating a search strategy, learning to evaluate sources, and getting the needed material in hand.

♦ <u>Assistance by appointment</u>: To obtain more in-depth assistance, a user can make an appointment with the librarian working in that subject specialty. For an appointment, call (330) 672-3045.

♦ <u>Help by phone</u>: Phone call inquiries are handled during Reference Center hours as traffic permits. The number to call is (330) 672-3150.

♦ <u>Using the Internet</u>: A user can use e-mail (*library@kent.edu*) or a Web-form (*www.library. kent.edu/reference/equest.html*) to contact. Most responses are given within two working days, many even sooner.

Media Services—A Cornucopia of Value

Media Services (Audio Visual Services and Teleproductions) provides a full range of production and presentation technology services in support of classroom teaching, research and meeting presentations, and for telling the University story. If you have any questions about these and related services, contact John Kerstetter, Director of Media Services, for more information (330-672-1841, jkerstet@kent.edu).

♦ Audiovisual equipment for classrooms

♦ Printing of course packets

♦ Production of video and PowerPoint programs

♦ Securing copyright clearance

♦ Creation of name tags, poster displays, banners, charts, posters, and signs

♦ Production of audio cassette programs for foreign language and music study

♦ Production of color photocopies and color transparencies

♦ Student lab for creating a variety of multimedia programs, including their own Web sites

♦ Design of video/computer projection systems

♦ Help in the selection of video and audiovisual equipment

♦ Set-up of sound systems for special events

♦ Over 10,000 video and film titles for use in classroom teaching or for class reserve use

OhioLINK
Electronic Journal Center

Journal Full-text Update

- OhioLINK has added 28 titles from the American Chemical Society (ACS) to the Electronic Journal Center (EJC). At the EJC entry for an article, click on "Get article." This will take you to the ACS site, where it is possible to see the abstract as well as the HTML or PDF versions of the article.

- The EJC (*journals.ohiolink.edu/*) now includes 11 publishers and more than 3,000 journal titles.

- The Libraries continue to record the availability of online journals in the EJC through KentLINK. Updates to KentLINK for online journals include those from these publishers: MCB University Press (140 titles), Institute of Physics (34 titles), Royal Society of Chemistry (18 titles), and Wiley (315 titles).

New on the Reference Shelf

Juvik, Sonia P. and James O. (1998*) Atlas of Hawai'i*. 3rd ed. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press. Ref q G 1534.2 .U5 1998

When winter arrives in Northeastern Ohio later this year, why not escape to a lush tropical paradise by curling up in the Library with an atlas?   An *atlas*?

A delightful examination of the fiftieth state by the Department of Geology of the University of Hawai'i, this work unites solid factual information with gorgeous color photography and beautiful full-page maps. It examines the physical environment through geology, climate, natural forces and hazards (such as volcanoes and the ocean).

Flora and fauna are explored through the various ecosystems of the islands and the ecologic threats to the environment and its denizens. A variety of cultural and social information is presented to provide the reader with a more inclusive picture of the islands. Included are such topics as archaeology, history, religion, language, population distributions, museums, libraries, crime, land use, government, education, military, and transportation. Hawai'ian place names are explained. Appendices present statistical tables,
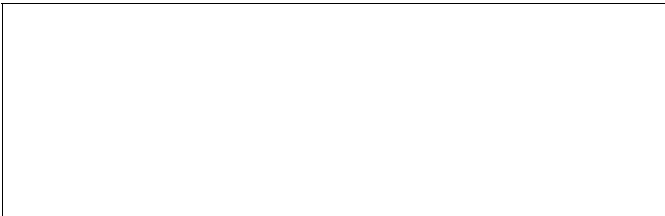

New in Government Documents

Health and Healthcare in the United States: County and Metro Area Data: Docs Ref HA214.H43 1999; CD-ROM circulates.

This annual publication includes a CD-ROM with the same data and coverage as the print edition. Population Characteristics, Vital Statistics, and Healthcare Resources are provided down to the county and metropolitan area level. Reference maps are included, and all statistical terms are well defined. The CD-ROM is user-friendly as well and easily installed in a Windows environment. The print volume is kept on the tenth floor of the main library in the Government Documents Reference Collection (HA 214 .H43 1999) and the CD-ROM is available to check out. Government Documents staff is available Monday through Friday from 10 am to 5 pm to assist researchers.

National Trade Data Bank Migrating to Stat-USA

Effective October 1, 2000, the *National Trade Data Bank* will be available online via *Stat-USA* and will no longer be distributed to Depository Libraries in the CD-ROM format. As a member of OhioLINK, the Libraries have access to *Stat-USA*, although authentication is required for off-site access.

In other news, the Department of Commerce is ceasing the distribution of *USA Trade* in the CD-ROM format and making the information available in two CD-ROM titles: *U.S. Imports of Merchandise* (C 3.278/2:) and *U.S. Exports of Merchandise* (C 3.278/3:). Both titles circulate and are available on the tenth floor, Main Library, in the Government Documents office from 10 am to 5 pm, Monday through Friday.

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★ **ASK a Documents Librarian**: questions relat- ★
★ ing to information from the State of Ohio, Fed- ★
★ eral Government, or United Nations can now ★
★ be sent by e-mail to ***govtdocs@lms.kent.edu*** ★
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