Animating the Archives

**Who Killed Sarah Stout: A Participatory Exhibit**

*BY JEN RAJCHEL*

“Well then gentlemen, go together, and consider your evidence.” This was the task of the jury in 1699 during its deliberation of the trial of Spencer Cowper. Accused of murdering Sarah Stout, a young Quaker woman of unusual independence and wealth, Spencer Cowper and his alleged accomplices stood trial and were acquitted. Despite the verdict, many questions were left unanswered. A series of scandalous speculations surrounded the trial: a forbidden love affair between Spencer and Sarah, political backstabbing, forged love letters, medical curiosities and lovesick suicide.

Using the rich holdings of Haverford’s Quaker and Special Collections, which include an original transcript of the trial and many pamphlets from the case, we set out to bring the evidence of this 17th-century murder mystery to life with the key question: Who killed Sarah Stout?

I worked with a core creative team of three undergraduates (Rose Abernathy ’13, Vanessa Hernandez ’13 and Mary Clare O’Donnell ’14) who took on the charge of animating the archives. Each student brought a different disciplinary expertise and an extraordinary amount of creativity to the construction of the exhibit, connecting their classroom experiences with a project-based team in the Libraries.

Through the exhibit, visitors are asked to consider the various social, political and religious factors that shaped opinions about the case of Sarah Stout. Using location-based design (think Clue), visitors can investigate four locations: the coffeehouse, the Glove and Dolphin tavern, the Hertford Meeting House and the Stout barn. Each location showcases items from Special Collections, includes physical objects (such as a Quaker bench in the Meeting House), and allows visitors to interface with a character from the trial using a mobile device.

Much of the evidence from the trial consisted of oral testimonies. As a way of foregrounding this evidence, Rose Abernathy ’13, a computer science major, developed and designed the digital component, Sarah Stout’s Interrogations (a game featured in the image below). Through her coursework, participation in the Libraries’ Digital Scholarship team, and interest in gaming, Rose was able to build the entire game, which allows visitors to use a mobile device to interact with characters and thereby gain insight into clues featured in the physical exhibit. For example, in the meeting house you may question Sarah Walker, the maid of Sarah Stout, about physical evidence in the exhibit or hear her account of the night of her mistress’ death. Rose’s design also allows visitors to take notes on their findings, review the case and record their own verdicts.

Rose collaborated with Vanessa Hernandez ’13, an art and Spanish double major, to bring the characters from the trial to life.

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**From the Librarian**

*BY TERRY SNYDER*

**Exciting things continue to happen at the Libraries.** Now six months into our three-year strategic plan, I can report colleagues continue to improve programs in service to our community. Here I’ll point to two: our current exhibition and our new website.

Our *Who Killed Sarah Stout? A Participatory exhibit*, is exciting on many levels. The exhibit engages visitors with rare texts from 1695 to 1867, as well as with a computer game, to consider the historical facts and possibly solve the case. More exciting is the fact that students created many of the ideas, labels, artwork and the computer game.

After more than a year of planning and coding we launched our new website in January. Focus groups and user testing told us that we had something good. But we’re not alone. The Association of College and Research Libraries awarded it the “Library Website of the Month,” almost immediately after its launch. In their words: it is “sleek, elegant and user-friendly.”

In order to capture that same spirit, I’ll conclude this column with an invitation to read on. I offer my gratitude for your continued support of the Libraries —ours and those within your local communities.

-Terry Snyder is librarian of the College (Continued on p. 2)
life. Through researching and observing portraits in the archives, Vanessa designed a series of etchings that illuminate the personality of each character for the game.

Visitors can learn more about the case through introductory and explanatory labels co-written by assistant curator Mary Clare O’Donnell ‘14. Through her work as a research assistant in the Libraries and her interest in 17th-century culture developed through her history courses, Mary Clare helped to frame the historical context of the spaces and the trial. By drawing on the political and religious climate of the time period, she highlighted the societal tensions underlying the trial.

The exhibit appears in the Sharpless Gallery of Magill Library and runs through September 20, 2013. We hope you will use your deft detective skills to help us solve the mystery. But remember the advice of the prosecutor for Sarah Stout when considering the evidence: “The thing was done in the dark, and therefore evidence is not so plain as otherwise it might be.”

-Jen Rajchel is curator of digital scholarship at the Harverford Libraries and assistant director of Tri-Co Digital Humanities

Current Art Exhibitions:
A Research Guide

BY JAMES GULICK
One of the advantages that Haverford has over many elite liberal arts colleges is its location. Close to Philadelphia and within a few hours of New York, Washington, D.C. and Baltimore, Haverfordians have ready access to world class art museums and galleries. This is not to mention the many fine regional museums in this area. To facilitate knowledge and use of these great resources, we have created the research guide Current Art Exhibitions. It can be accessed at hav.to/artlistings and via the Libraries’ website.

The guide is intended for a broad audience ranging from the student visiting Washington, D.C. and interested in catching an exhibition while there, to the fine arts professor who needs to be kept aware of every photography show currently on view. The structure of Current Art Exhibitions follows that of the Libraries’ research guides prepared for individual classes. We selected this format as many of the potential users of this resource are students and faculty who are familiar with the general structure of these guides.

Current Art Exhibitions has the following sections:

The Tri-Co section allows the patron to become aware of not only the fine arts events at Haverford, but also of nearby Bryn Mawr and Swarthmore Colleges. Selected Exhibitions lists some of the major current exhibitions, as well as a few interesting, but less high-profile shows. Exhibitions that will be of interest to current courses are also featured.

Sites Listing Exhibitions provides links to aggregators of exhibition listings. This section is useful to the person who wants to know about the full range of shows currently being held in New York, Philadelphia and Washington, D.C. Some of these sites allow for highly flexible searches. For instance after accessing NY Art Beat you can search to find exhibitions that feature a particular art medium (e.g. photography) that are being held in a particular section (e.g. Chelsea) of the city.

Auctions has a list of upcoming fine arts auctions at the major New York houses, as well as links to the houses themselves on which the online versions of the sales catalogs may be found. Many people do not know that before an auction the artworks are on display for three-to-five days prior to the sale and there is no charge for viewing. Often for photography auctions there are up to 500 prints on view.

The Daily Alerts/Blogs section of the guide serves the person who takes an active interest in the current fine arts scene, and provides ready access to the blogs and art news sources that provide constantly updated information.

Regardless of your level of interest, Current Art Exhibitions will keep you informed of the many fine arts opportunities available to you.

-James Gulick is research & instruction librarian
The Comic Book Collection Expands

BY MICHAEL DAHLE

The generous donation of over 1,600 comic books and 20 graphic novels by Brian Poon ’93 has significantly expanded the Libraries’ comic book collection. Classic DC and Marvel titles such as X-Men, Batman, and Superman have been updated with recent additions thanks to Poon’s gift. New series have also been added. Ex Machina, by Brian Vaughan and Tony Harris, follows the life of Mitchell Hundred, the world’s first and only superhero, who also serves as mayor of New York. DMZ, a 2005 title by Brian Wood, is set in a Manhattan torn apart by a second American civil war. Comics following the New Avengers, which continues the Avengers series with a new team of superheroes, as well as Canada’s equivalent to the Avengers, Alpha Flight, have both been added to the collection. Several seminal graphic novels, including Watchmen, Lone Wolf and Cub, Akira, The Dark Knight Returns and Walking Dead, have also been incorporated into the collection. Whether interested in crises (Infinite Crisis, Final Crisis, Countdown to Final Crisis), justice (Justice Machine, Justice Society of America, JLA, Justice), or quirky short series (Jack of Fables, Amazing Screw-On Head, Dead Boy Detectives, No Hero), the comic book collection has something for everyone.

-Michael Dahle ’13, a student assistant in Magill Library, processed the donation.
Lightning Talks: Round II

“Going Medieval on Your Art,” "Animal Bodies Are Not Digital," “The User Paradox,” “From Powerpoint to Historical Documentary.” Each of these titles could be an hour-long lecture on its own. Yet they lasted a combined six minutes during the second round of “Lightning Talks,” a fast-paced, fun and dynamic celebration of the variety of digital scholarship work occurring at Haverford. An audience of more than 50 crowded into Magill Library’s Philips Wing on January 31 to take part in this event, which featured presentations of about two minutes each from seven faculty members, seven students, and six staff members. The “Lightning Talks” are the signature event among a variety of workshops and conversations entitled SAVE AS: Digital Haverford, a year-long series that seeks to inspire the Haverford community to reimagine changing technologies and their implications for how we think, learn, and live. SAVE AS sponsors include the Libraries’ Digital Scholarship team, IITS’ Instructional Technology and Training group, the John B. Hurford ’60 Center for the Arts and Humanities and the Tri-Co Digital Humanities Initiative. Videos of most of the talks can be found at http://hav.to/saveas.

-Laurie Allen is coordinator for digital scholarship and services
Libraries Unveil New Website

By Adam Crandell

With the flip of a switch, turn of a knob and a few celebratory sparks, the Libraries new website was born—on January 16 at 2:46 a.m., to be precise.

Okay, obviously the moment wasn’t quite so gothic or galvanic as involving switches, knobs and puffs of burnt ozone. It was, however, the culmination of a year-and-a-half labor of love, led by the Libraries’ Web Redesign Team: librarians Adam Crandell, Julie Coy, Dawn Heckert, John Anderies, Mike Zarafonitis, and student Alex Villalta ’14. The old site had existed four years without significant changes, and as websites go, four years is a long time. As a result, rejuvenating the website was a critical component of the Libraries’ Strategic Plan.

Rather than just cosmetically improving the existing site, we decided to start from scratch, breaking apart everything and examining the rubble before us. While rebuilding it, we consistently asked ourselves—How does this help the Haverford community? In other words, will faculty, students, staff, alumni and guests benefit by the decisions being made? Though this seems self-evident, the omission or dismissal of that question is a fatal flaw in any design process—the assumed easy becomes the neglected.

Everything, then, was about how we could present the various resources, services and spaces embodied by the Libraries in a way that not only made sense, but that was intuitive to a rather eclectic range of users. Given that most people are only on a website for a few moments, “streamlined” and “intuitive” were the watchwords, with plenty of user testing to make sure that our definitions of these watchwords were aligned with our audience.

Some decisions that resulted from this streamlined, intuitive and user-obsessed design include having the Libraries’ open hours and a Tripod search box in the top part of each page (the “header”), so that it is easily accessible at all times. User testing showed that finding the open hours and searching Tripod were top activities for almost everyone and thus warranted prime real estate. Another design decision is manifest in the “Looking for…” section on the home page, a “Quick Launch” of sorts. Here you can find buttons which center on particular users and interests, such as faculty, senior thesis writers, alumni and those looking for diversionary materials (i.e., fun stuff). Clicking on the appropriate button leads to a page with specifically collected and curated information. A final design element worth noting is the use of section headers that, when clicked on, expand to reveal their contents (called “accordions” in the web design world). Accordions allow for a great amount of information to be available, but only if needed; otherwise, it remains neatly tucked away.

Another large step forward in the website’s redesign lies in its very framework—the bones, you might say. An emerging and exciting web design standard is “responsive” design: A webpage that will display in a useful and easily navigable way, regardless of the browser size, platform or device. In other words, a responsively designed website would look good and be usable on a large desktop screen as well as on a smartphone (and every conceivable device in between).

They say a picture is worth a thousand words, and by extension, so too is a website. We invite you, then, to take a look and let it speak for itself: library.haverford.edu.

-Aadam Crandell is music librarian & web coordinator
Margaret Schaus, lead research & instruction librarian, and Terry Snyder, librarian of the College, presented a poster session entitled “Have You Thought About Your Thesis Lately? Cognitive Bottlenecks at the Intersection of Research & Writing” at the 2013 Association of College & Research Libraries (ACRL) Annual Conference in Indianapolis.

On March 12, Mike Zarafonetis, Digital Scholarship Librarian, was a member of an impromptu panel at the NERCOMP Annual Conference, entitled “Preparing Our Campuses for Digital Course Materials Adoption.” Mike talked via Skype about his experience managing the creation of Bit By Bit, an online resource for the History of Mechanized Thought course taught by Steven Lindell, professor of computer science. The resource was built by Haverford students under the supervision of digital scholarship staff in Magill Library during the summer of 2012. The fall 2012 issue of Connections features the making of the Bit by Bit resource. See it here: http://library.haverford.edu/connections

Norm Medeiros, Associate Librarian, and Richard Ball, Associate Professor of Economics, were awarded a grant from the Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research to fund continued work on their protocol for documenting data management and analysis. The year-long grant will support workshops for faculty at colleges across the country to learn about and contribute to the growth and dissemination of the protocol.

Mike Persick is head of acquisitions & serials

BY MARGARET SCHAUS
Thanks to generous funding from a Teaching with Technology grant award by the Office of the Provost, the Libraries have acquired 30 iPads and a rolling cart for their charging and safe keeping. These iPads enable students to search databases and access online articles and books during librarian-led research instruction sessions.

Active learning, such as that enabled by the iPads, is not a new idea. Aristotle observed, “What we have to learn to do, we learn by doing.” But student agency has taken on a new meaning in the digital environment. When students learn about research strategies and sources of scholarly literature, they need to try out their own ideas and explore results. The librarian introduces the concepts of search vocabulary, structuring a query with Boolean operators, applying limits and evaluating the resulting articles and books. Students then explore a topic that interests them in a relevant database, with their professor and librarian ready to offer advice. Using the iPads, students find scholarship they want to read, interpretations that spark new ideas and a confidence in researching the scholarly literature.

In the fall issue of Connections, we’ll describe in detail how these iPads have fostered interaction with digital resources to improve the student research experience.

Margaret Schaus is lead research & instruction librarian

Transforming Research Instruction

The Libraries’ teaching cart, ready for action
Implementing LibGuides  

**BY JEREMIAH MERCURO**  
One of the many ways librarians support in-class and independent research at Haverford is through creation of research guides. Often designed to support research projects within particular classes, these course guides organize helpful resources—links to books, journals, web sites, subscription databases, and so on—and provide instructions on how best to use these sources or find further information. In addition to making course guides, librarians also create general subject guides, which assemble and provide access to the best resources for a given discipline. A smaller subset of guides helps patrons with the use of other library tools and resources, including citation managers, e-books and geospatial data.

For many years, these guides resided on a home-grown platform known as the Subject Portal. While this system had many advantages over the Libraries’ other options—namely that it was designed for close integration with our catalog, Tripod—it had in recent years required an increasing amount of technical support. Moreover, it had become subject to hacking. The Tri-College Libraries, therefore, began last spring to identify alternative platforms and gather feedback on these alternatives from students, staff and faculty members. Among the leading contenders to replace the Subject Portal were a popular product from SpringShare called LibGuides (used, according to their website, by 3,600 libraries in 37 countries) and SubjectsPlus, a free, open source system used by approximately 50 college and university libraries.

After much discussion, the Libraries decided to migrate from the Subject Portal to the LibGuides platform, planning to go live with new guides by the fall of 2012 and to migrate fully by the spring 2013 semester. Among other things, this task required our designing the layout for the new system, creating a set of best practices for librarians, and—most challenging—making the single platform work for each of the three campuses. Unlike other consortia that use the LibGuides platform, the Tri-Colleges intended to employ a single instance of LibGuides for all three colleges; that is, we had to devise a way to incorporate three separate authentication points for each subscription resource in the new system. After some experimenting and testing, we eventually found a solution. Patrons can now link directly to a resource using their normal institutional log-in information from on or off campus.

Having dealt with the challenging design issues, the Libraries still faced the difficult task of migrating pertinent older guides from the Subject Portal to LibGuides. Not all of the more than 1,000 guides in the Subject Portal were still relevant, but many were. Over the course of the summer, librarians and student assistants manually moved about 300 guides, including subject guides, guides for the upcoming fall classes and important guides from previous semesters. This migration allowed for a smooth transition for users, who could find most, if not all, of the guides they might need in the new system. As of March 2013, the Tri-College’s Research Guides (the name by which we call our LibGuides instance) contains more than 400 guides that have been viewed approximately 67,500 times.

Since Research Guides’ unofficial release in August 2012 and its official launch in January 2013, the Libraries have worked to make the system even more useful. Not only have librarians created a host of new guides and made adjustments to the system based on user feedback, they have also integrated search results from Research Guides into the Tripod homepage. Users can now use “Quick Search” in Tripod to find relevant research guides, along with the usual books, articles and related content. Furthermore, the Libraries have developed a mobile version of Research Guides, giving users access to the same useful content on their smart phones and tablets. Moving forward, we hope to make continual improvements to Research Guides and to leverage them to “flip” in-class library instruction, allowing librarians to spend less time reviewing basic search skills and giving students more time for hands-on interaction.

Jeremiah Mercurio is research & instruction librarian
The Daily Grind: A Self-Service Beverage Bar

BY DAWN HECKERT

As the end of the fall 2012 term loomed and student energy lagged, the Libraries opened a self-service beverage bar in the basement of Magill Library. Our facilities colleagues leveraged the water supply from an antiquated drinking fountain to provision a Keurig Brewer. They also built a countertop and attractive set of cabinets to hold K Cups in a variety of flavors, sugar and creamer. In addition to coffee, tea and hot chocolate that sell for the special introductory rate of 50 cents per cup, students can fill water bottles or make hot beverages with the filtered water system, which is provided free of charge.

Reaction to the new service has been very positive, with students noting the convenience of not having to leave Magill to obtain a pick-me-up. The Libraries are pleased to offer this much-coveted service.

-Dawn Heckert is circulation services & building projects manager