UNP LIBRARY: AN INVALUABLE RESOURCE

Subject Librarians at UNP Library are increasingly being approached by part-time students studying at other institutions for assistance with assignments and dissertations. As the School of Business Subject Librarian, I receive numerous requests for help from students registered for MBA programmes at other institutions. A startling observation made is that these institutions have not discussed with these students the availability of relevant library facilities.

At UNP, such students have access to our Library Catalogue and may use books and journals in this Library. However, these users do not have automatic access to online databases. Only students and staff registered on the LAN can access Web-based bibliographic databases.

The level of access to the databases that we subscribe to is dictated by publisher licencing conditions. In many instances the cost of a license is based on the number of students registered at the institution (FTEs). Also, in most instances licenses permit access via specified IP address only. This is why in such cases UND staff and students cannot have access to UNP licensed databases, and vice versa. In order to minimise such restrictions, where possible we negotiate cross-campus licenses but these are costly, and depending on the publisher, not always possible. Another license feature that restricts access is the number of simultaneous users. Some of our databases are licensed for simultaneous use by one to four users. However, for reasons of cost, some databases are licensed to be accessed at one Library workstation only. For databases in high-demand there is a booking system to facilitate fair usage where possible.

Subscriptions to online databases take up a large portion of the Library budget. For example, the cost to UNP Library for the annual license for the heavily-used EBSCOhost databases for this year is R121 375. (As an indication of usage, our statistics reflect 13 786 searches on EBSCOhost databases at UNP for January to December 2002.) The license agreement has been negotiated at a national level by SASLI (South African Site Licensing Initiative) and until now the EBSCOhost license has benefited from a Government subsidy of 50%. Unfortunately this subsidy has now come to an end. The estimated cost for the UNP license for 2004, taking FTEs and previous usage into account, will be R220 000. South African Libraries will have to decide whether such costs are sustainable.

Besides registration and licensing issues mentioned, students registered at other institutions are paying high fees. It cannot be expected that their students simply utilise the costly resources of other institutions. Such resources should be provided at the institution at which the student is registered.

Nevertheless, the UNP Library has an open-door policy so members of the community can browse the collection. But in order to borrow material visiting students (and others) are required to become subscribers of the Library. The current subscription fee is R 270.00 per annum. This is good value given that the average price for a book in the Library is R 596.92.

It is difficult to envisage these students completing their dissertations without access to a full range of scholarly resources. The stresses experienced by these students once again highlight the crucial role of the library in teaching and learning and the need for such resources to be adequately budgeted for and emphasized in academic programmes.
FEATURE FILMS: ALFRED HITCHCOCK MOVIES

The Library and the Film Studies programme of the School of Language and Media Studies have pooled their feature film collections (on video or DVD) in the Library. Recent acquisitions have resulted in an excellent representative collection of the films of the British director Alfred Hitchcock (1899-1980). Hitchcock worked in both Britain and the United States. He is generally referred to as “the master of suspense” and is known for his meticulous attention to detail, planning each shot with great care.

The oldest Hitchcock film in this collection is the melodrama The Manxman (1928), a silent movie. This preceded the first British movie using synchronous sound, Blackmail (1930). Representing his work in the 1940s is the suspense drama Shadow of a Doubt (1943) that a Time Out critic describes as “a sharp dissection of middle American Life”, and Notorious (1946) starring Cary Grant and Ingrid Bergman. From the 1950s the Library has Strangers on a Train, Rear Window, Vertigo and North by Northwest, all considered to be classics. Work from the 1960s is represented by Psycho, The Birds and Marnie.

All these films may be viewed in the AV/Seminar room in Main Library, between 8.00 a.m. and 5.00 p.m. Browser boards can be found in the AV collection at AV 791.430973 HIT.

ALAN PATON CENTRE NEWS

Alan Paton Centenary Lecture and Tour

“A good buzz” and “a happy atmosphere” were some of the positive reactions of the audience of about a hundred, who enjoyed the 10th Alan Paton Lecture, held on 15 May 2003. The audience enjoyed Peter Brown’s reminiscences of the times he shared with Alan Paton in the Liberal Party; Prof. Colin Gardner’s erudite talk on the writing of Cry, the beloved country, and Jonathan Paton’s humorous and lively account of Paton family life. This was followed by a video which “brought Paton to life”, and sociable chats with old friends over drinks and snacks.

The next morning, a group set off in three vehicles to explore Paton’s Pietermaritzburg, which included his childhood home and two of his schools. They were regaled with stories by Joicelyn Leslie-Smith, former librarian of the Alan Paton Centre, Jonathan Paton and Colin Gardner, and finished their tour at the Alan Paton Centre.

A video and tape were made of the Lecture, and those with transcripts will be available at the Alan Paton Centre for those who missed the event. Contact Jewel Koopman at koopmanj@nu.ac.za or tel. (033) 260 5926 for further details.

STAFF NEWS

Congratulations to Shadia Ali and Nicky Pitout on their new appointments. Shadia has been appointed as Senior Library Assistant at the Law Library Issue Desk. Nicky, who worked at the Main Library Issue Desk, has been appointed as Senior Library Assistant at the Life Sciences Library Issue Desk.

DISPLAYS FOR JUNE

• 9-20 June
  Study Skills

• 17-27 June
  Youth Day

16TH JUNE OPENING HOURS

Main and Life Sciences
09h00 – 16h00

Law Library
08h00 – 22h00

VACATION OPENING HOURS

Main Library
Mon to Fri
08h00 – 18h00

Saturdays
09h00 – 16h00
(Short Loan closed)

Law and Life Sciences
Mon to Fri
08h00 – 16h30

Saturdays
Closed
ARCHIVES NEWS

‘Archive fever’ outbreak

March and April brought an outbreak of ‘archive fever’! Many groups and individuals visited the University Archives for various forms of orientation. A group of Information Studies students visited with their Lecturer, Mrs Fiona Bell, for a brief introduction to the Archives on the 6th March. It was a pleasure to renew acquaintances with Ms Sara Mitha, our ‘new’ Librarian colleague at Life Sciences, who came for a short introduction to the Archives on Monday 10th March. On the 8th April, Dr Augustine Msiska, who was in Pietermaritzburg for his graduation (Doctorate in Information Studies), was grateful for a brief tour of the Archives. Dr Msiska is College Librarian at the University of Malawi and is keen to see the establishment of a University Archives at his institution. Students registered for the course in Records Management spent an hour-and-a-half learning about the University Archives on the 9th April. A diligent masters student from this group, Mr Francis Garaba, returned later that morning to ‘interrogate’ and ‘cross-examine’ the Archivist to get the full picture of Archives’ activities. Mr Garaba has worked in the archival field for several years and will of course be focussing on an aspect of archival work for his masters research. The enthusiasm and interest shown by these visitors is encouraging.

Did you use your University Archives during 2002?

A total of 323 information requests were received by the University Archives during 2002. Of these, 133 were received as telephone enquiries, 96 through correspondence (e-mail, letter and fax), and 94 came in the form of visitors in person.

Most requests were received from staff (176), followed by members of the public (90), and then by students (57). The largest number of correspondence requests, as well as telephone enquiries were received from staff, whilst students were the predominant visitors.

The Archives is located on the Golf Road part of the UNP campus, behind the School of Psychology and the Hexagon Theatre. Hours of service are 8:15am to 1pm, Monday to Friday. Archives’ telephone number is (033) 260-5622.

BJ
In this informative and enlightening book, is a discovery of an alternative to a controversial drug called Ritalin. The authors claim that the drug does nothing to treat the cause of Attention Deficit Disorder, commonly known as ADD. The alternative they proclaim is called Biofeedback. The book is about the experience of the authors’ (psychiatrist Eduardo Castro and psychologist Robert Hill) in the field of ADD. It was due to their frustrations, that they researched an alternate method of dealing with ADD.

ADD is a common disorder that affects approximately four million children of school-going age in the United States. The authors use the definition of DSM-IV as being “a persistent pattern of inattention and/or hyperactivity/impulsivity”. The criteria used to diagnose ADD are the following: A child who, fails to give close attention to detail, cannot keep attention, is easily distracted, does not follow through tasks, has organizational problems, loses things, is forgetful and avoids tasks that require attention.

Hyperactivity includes the following characteristics: often runs or climbs excessively, has difficulty playing, often leaves his/her seat, talks excessively and often fidgets. Impulsivity would include the following: blurs out answers, has difficulty waiting his/her turn and often interrupts others.

The authors discuss ADD, its causes, and provide a checklist for assessing ADD in children and adults, from Chapter 2-4, in great detail. They attribute the possible causes to family discord, poor parenting, environmental influences, genetics, brain injury and stress or injury sustained during delivery. The symptoms of ADD are manifestations of the slowing of brain waves and this slowing is due to an injury. However, the exact cause of ADD is still unknown but research has focused on neurophysiological defects.

A common method of treating ADD is by the use of a medication called Ritalin (methylphenidate). The authors make it clear that it is not the proper use of Ritalin, its generic or other medications used to treat ADD that they dispute, but the “unbridled” (as they put it), use of Ritalin. They also provide the pros and cons of Ritalin, as well as the side effects and long-term side effects. Their intention is to give parents an alternative so that they can make an informed decision to choose a safe and more natural treatment like neurofeedback. It is a type of biofeedback in which patients are taught to alter their brainwaves. The authors report that a course of treatment could be anything from 20 to over 100 sessions and also report excellent results. They discuss neurofeedback and a typical neurofeedback session in the chapters that follow with case histories to illustrate the effectiveness of their method of treatment.

In the second half of the book, the authors cover aspects of nutrition, food additives, television, violence and their effects on children. They conclude with a chapter on parenting and also list practitioners who provide neurofeedback treatment.

However, according to some medical opinion, more in-depth studies in neurofeedback need to be carried out and researched. It is an intriguing method but still requires extensive evaluation and research.

This book is valuable and a must for parents whose children are on Ritalin as well as those who are looking for an alternative to the drug.

Related Readings


Sara Mitha