

Friends Folio

A Newsletter from the
Friends of Ganser Library
No. 59 Fall 2009

Games and Gamers in the Library

by Greg Szczyrbak



In January 2009, Millersville University Library purchased two Nintendo Wii™ game systems and the popular simulation game Rock Band™. Since then, the library has hosted Rock Band and Wii Bowling Tournaments, open play for the competitors in the Odyssey of the Mind

tournament, and a study break during finals week, featuring Wii Sports and Rock Band. This fall, planned events include Wii games at LibraryFest and participation in National Gaming Day on Saturday, November 14. A natural question might come to mind for many: “Why?”—Why video games? Why at the library?

First about video games

Video games are an extremely popular cultural, social and interactive method of play. Despite and at least partially as a result of the many negative stereotypes portrayed by the media, the video game industry earns revenue on par or higher than the movie industry. Though myths about video games abound, most video game players are socially well-adjusted individuals. Harvard Medical School professors and psychiatrists Lawrence Kutner and Cheryl Olson dispel many of these myths through their multigenerational, multidisciplinary research written about in *Grand Theft Childhood: The Surprising Truth About Violent Video Games*. To be sure, their findings did confirm some relationship to aggressive behavior in violent game players, but only in a small group who played violent games for hours and hours nearly every day. Overall they found that most violent game players were not likely to have serious problems, were more likely to play with friends, and were just as likely to be girls (though girls played the games for less time). That dispels the major stereotype that violent game players are socially maladjusted boys with serious emotional problems.



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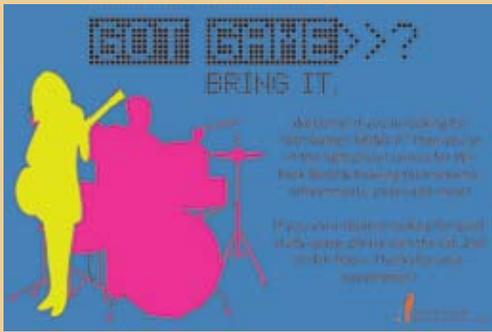
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All of the focus on the negative aspects of video game play has excluded subverted and distorted discussion of the potential positive role of video games and play in general. In his book, *Play*, Stuart Brown, a medical doctor and clinical researcher, argues that play is essential in brain development, productivity, and creativity, as well as “the single most important factor in determining our success and happiness.” In Brown’s determination, play is neurologically as essential as sleep, dreams, and nutrition.

Many might readily agree that play is important for brain development and therefore appropriate for children. One



might also argue that play is a form of rehearsal for adult life, so play should be structured around simulation activities that mimic adult activities—

namely work. After studying animals at play, Stuart Brown would argue otherwise. The snowball play activity of macaque monkeys does not train them to be better monkeys. And Brown’s observation of play between a hungry polar bear and a courageous sled dog is certainly an indication of something other than “training” for “real” life. For in “real” life, the dog should have been the hungry bear’s potential meal.

No, the benefits of play are more fundamental than mere training. Play nurtures creativity, problem solving, socialization and self-esteem. It also has physical benefits such as improving visual and spatial skills. So even though a small study indicated that doctors who played video games had better performance in laparoscopic surgery, the video games were not training for work, but rather development at a neurological level. Recent research indicates that brain development continues well beyond adolescence into adulthood. Brown says that humans and only a few other species are blessed with “divinely superfluous neurons” and the benefit of this is play. Furthermore, humans more than any other species have the characteristic of neoteny – the retention of immature qualities into adulthood. This gives us flexibility and the ability to play and to adapt.

At the library?

As the philosopher once said “Why Not?” The Millersville University Library is full of content in many forms. Besides books, the library has periodicals, vinyl records, audiocassette tapes, videocassette tapes, digital video discs, compact discs, and curriculum kits (including microscopes, rocks, sand, puzzles, and toys!). In electronic format, the library has additional content: e-books, articles, digital music, and datasets. Are video games really any different from movies or music? Many video games

contain complex storylines, high quality soundtracks, and cinematic features. Wouldn’t any distinction be an arbitrary one? Eli Neiburger thinks so. In *Gamers...in the Library?!*, he argues the only difference between story time at the library and a gaming tournament is the format. He then points to the many historical changes in format and process in libraries including clay tablets, closed stacks, the addition of romance novels and other fiction, children’s libraries and collections, recorded music, and so on. The library is more than a collection of books. Libraries offer more in one location than bookstores, music stores, computer labs, and even arcades.



The Millersville University Library mission statement indicates that the library promotes the “...discovery, access, use and evaluation of information.” It also includes ideas about community and “establishing connections among people and between people and ideas...” Video game tournaments, like

Friends Folio

The Friends Folio is published twice a year (fall and spring) and distributed to the Millersville University community and Friends of Ganser Library.

For more information or questions, contact us at (717) 872-3624, Special.Collections@millersville.edu or visit Archives & Special Collections on the 4th floor of Ganser Library.

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Current and past issues of the Friends Folio are available on the Special Collections website:
www.library.millersville.edu/sc.cfm?Parent=3336

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book discussions or exhibit displays, add value to library content and provide opportunity for the community to establish connections between people and ideas.

How does playing video games lead to ideas? The benefits of play have already been enumerated, but let's consider another aspect, one with a direct link to the liberal arts. In the legendary story of Archimedes' discovery of the principle of water displacement, he solves the problem commissioned to him by King Hiero. Hiero suspected that a jeweler surreptitiously mixed silver with gold when creating his crown, keeping the extra gold for himself. He can not prove it because the crown weighs the same as the bar of gold he provided to the jeweler. Archimedes pondered and struggled with the challenge for a long time. Archimedes only discovers the solution when he decides to take a break from the problem and go to the baths. Upon submerging himself in the bath he notices the displacement of the water and realizes this is the key to the problem of the gold crown.

Ideas, creativity and problem solving require leisure time. This break for our brain allows the opportunity for information to be processed. This is more than a mental break. Physical actions are taking place in our brain. Neurons are growing and connecting; synapses are firing. Physical change is taking place during leisure time. It is just invisible to the casual observer. This type of leisure activity and subsequent creativity and innovation only became possible for humanity once survival was more or less guaranteed. It is no coincidence that the rise in the average life span of humans correlates with the rate of innovation and discovery.

The next time you observe children (or even adults) playing video games, don't think of it as a distraction or waste of time. That "ripping" guitar solo in Rock Band™, or "hole in one" in Wii Sports Golf may just be the seed of future innovation and discovery. What better place for that innovation to begin than at your library, which has the necessary people and content to support the growth of that idea?

Sources

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Neiburger, E. (2007). *Gamers ...In The Library?!*. Chicago: American Library Association

Prensky, M. (2006). *Don't Bother Me Mom – I'm Learning*. St. Paul: Paragon House.

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GOT GAME???
BRING IT!

Saturday, November 14

1 – 4 p.m.

**Millersville University
Library, Third Floor**

Wii™ RockBand

tournament,

Wii™ Bowling,

or join in the free play

with Wii™ Sports

Registration required for
tournaments, free play is
open to anyone.

*Prizes awarded for
top performers in
tournaments.*

Special Events

First Robert Sayre Awards



Award Winners: Robert Youse, Rebecca Douglass and Patrick Owens. David Misal was not able to attend.

The Friends of Ganser Library presented the first Robert Sayre Awards at the Spring Banquet on April 7, 2009. The award is in honor of the late Robert Sayre, who served as a member of the history faculty and as a campus pastor. Winners included Robert Youse, Rebecca Douglass, Patrick Owens, and David Misal. These students made exceptional use of primary source materials in their History 105 projects.

Friends of Ganser Library Book Sale

The annual book sale will be held Monday, March 15, through Wednesday, March 17, with a preview sale on Sunday, March 14. The three-day sale offers a great selection of high-quality used books. We are always interested in receiving new volumes for the sale, particularly juvenile, art, music, and collectible books. Contact Marilyn Parrish (872-3633) if you would like to donate books for the sale, or to arrange for books to be picked up.

Fall Lecture well attended

More than 60 people attended the Fall Lecture on September 8, 2009, to hear Dr. John Wallace (Biology) discuss his research about Buruli Ulcers. Dr. Wallace's research and service interests combine to offer excellent opportunities for Millersville students to engage in service learning and to contribute to solving the many problems brought on by this disease.

LibraryFest

More than 500 students, faculty, staff, and community members participated in LibraryFest, September 16, at Ganser Library. LibraryFest is designed to welcome students and other members of the University community to the library. A new feature this year was Wii sports, offered on the same floor as the Library Olympics, which included book truck races and the tape cassette hockey shoot. Three hundred thirty-four people completed passports and 60 people participated in the Library Olympics.

Spring Banquet & Lecture

The Spring Banquet & Lecture will be held on Tuesday, March 2, 2010, at 6 p.m. in the Lehr Room of the Bolger Conference Center. Plan to attend the banquet and presentation on newspapers and the role of journalists in the 21st century by Gil Smart, associate editor for the Lancaster Sunday News. For more information, call 872-3624. The lecture begins at 7:30 and is open to the public.



Gil Smart



Marian Anderson photograph from the Carl Van Vechten collection.

Special Collections Treasures

By Janet Dotterer

The Archives & Special Collections has many wonderful manuscript collections. One of these is the Carl Van Vechten Memorial Collection, donated by Professor Emeritus Bruce Kellner. Over the years, Bruce has donated materials that now comprise four series within this collection: the Carl Van Vechten African-American Collection of Arts & Letters; the Carl Van Vechten Photograph Collection; the Bruce Kellner Dance & Theatre Collection; and the Bruce Kellner Sheet Music Collection.

Among the items of interest, are photographs of such notable people as Pearl Bailey, Diahann Carroll, Ruby Dee, Ossie Davis, Langston Hughes, William Faulkner, Lillian Gish and Christopher Plummer. Also included are playbills of Broadway productions, ballet programs, journals, souvenir books and books by and about people highlighted in the collection.

This collection is used by a wide variety of students, faculty, and researchers because of its diversity of items. Dr. Tracey Weis' History 105 class examined sheet music cover art and lyrics, along with photographs from the African American collection during fall semester 2009.

LibraryNews

Learning Technologies Librarian since 2004



Greg Szczyrbak

You may be aware that the library has a robust information literacy instruction program. Librarians and other faculty collaborate to provide experiential learning opportunities for students. These opportunities are often held in the library classroom and feature customized instruction in the use of library resources and services. In addition to being the coordinator of library instruction, as Learning Technologies Librarian, I develop digital learning materials that support the instructional mission of the library. Online tutorials and instructional guides offer students an opportunity to learn about library resources and services outside of the classroom.

I serve on the MU Online Advisory Group, which advises the University community about policies, procedures, and

programming related to distance education and online learning. In that capacity I have had the opportunity to assist in the development of an online and distance learning evaluation instrument. Additionally, I have participated in the development of an online course development workshop for faculty. Most recently I have been selected to serve as the only librarian on the PASSHE LMS-LCMS Evaluation Committee (Learning Management System-Learning Content Management System).

Of course, I also provide one-on-one instruction opportunities via consultations by appointment and at the reference desk. These interactions with students are my favorite, because they have the potential for the biggest impact. A few minutes with a librarian can often provide a student with much greater confidence and as a result lead to better success with research.

Readers can reach Librarian Greg Szczyrbak at 717-871-2479 or Greg.Szczyrbak@millersville.edu.

Digitization Project Updates

◆ The Special Collections areas at Millersville University and Dickinson College received a second Library Services Technology Act grant through the Pennsylvania Office of Commonwealth Libraries to digitize additional 19th century printed works relating to slavery and abolition in the United States. This grant will extend the collection already available at deila.dickinson.edu/slaveryandabolition/. Project Coordinator Greg Aldin brings considerable expertise to the project as a result of his work with Fordham University and the Hudson River project. Four students will assist with the digitization



project—two at Millersville and two at Dickinson, paid through grant funds. Millersville communication major Chris Byrne and English major Michele Marouchoc have begun work on editing the OCR'd text for additional titles to be added to the collection.

◆ Art Librarian Sheila Kasperek, working with the Library Digital Assets Committee, has created a comprehensive workflow and metadata assignment process to prepare for loading digital oral histories into CONTENTdm. Sheila gave a presentation about the project at the Eastern CONTENTdm Users Group meeting held at Yale University in August 2009: "More Metadata Than You Can Shake a Stick at: How 52 Metadata Fields Makes Our Oral History Project More Usable." The Library Digital Assets Committee includes Scott Anderson, Sheila Kasperek, Teresa Weisser, and Janet Dotterer.

◆ Lancaster County Digitization Project celebrated its 5th anniversary with a reception at LancasterHistory.org

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Planned Giving Opportunities

Consider including Millersville University in your estate planning. For more information on planned giving opportunities, including Ganser Library, Friends of the Library, or student scholarships, contact the Millersville University Development Office at (717) 872-3820.



Recent Additions

Each issue of the Folio highlights recent additions to the collection made possible through funding from the Friends of Ganser Library or through donations. Thanks to retired math education professor Joseph Rousseau, our Special Collections area is now home to a new collection of rare math and science books. The collection is currently being processed, and when complete, will provide an unusually rich array of resources for students and scholars interested in the history of science and math from the 16th through the early 20th centuries. Sample titles from the collection are included here.

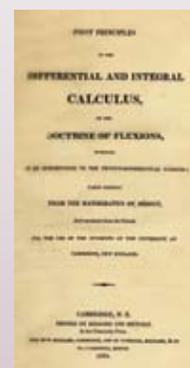
Rousseau Collection

Early mathematician Robert Record published one of the first math texts, **The Ground of Arts: Teaching the Perfect Work and Practice of Arithmetic**, in 1554. Record was the first mathematician to use the equals sign. The Rousseau Collection contains a copy of Record's work published in London in 1561, as well as a later edition published in 1654 by Robert Hartwell (building on the work of mathematicians John Mellis and John Dee).

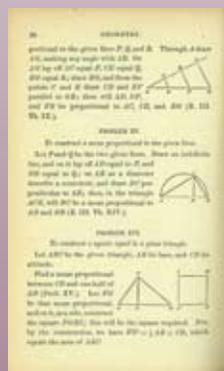


A Child's Second Number Book by Julie E. and Saul Badanes was published by Macmillan in 1930. This slender volume contains illustrations and simple problems to help introduce children in early grades to mathematics concepts.

John Farrar translated and published Etienne Bezout's **First Principles of the Differential and Integral Calculus** in 1824. John Farrar was a professor of mathematics and natural philosophy at Harvard University from 1807 to 1836. He collected meteorological observations and made significant contributions to the mathematics curriculum. This work was translated from the French specifically for the students at Harvard. Printed in Cambridge, New England by Hilliard and Metcalf at the University Press.



Eber Wheaton published the first edition of **Analytical Arithmetic: Being a Natural and Easy Introduction to the Elementary Rules of the Science, Adapted to the System of Mutual Instruction** in 1828. This copy was owned by early American educator Lyman Cobb, and bears his signature. Our Wickersham collection contains many of Cobb's spellers, readers and math texts.



A prolific author of text books, Edward Brooks was a professor and then principal at the Millersville Normal School from 1866-1883. The Rousseau donation adds many volumes by Brooks including **The Normal Elementary Geometry: Embracing a Brief Treatise on Mensuration and Trigonometry; Designed for Academies, Seminaries, High Schools, Normal Schools, and Advanced Classes in Common Schools**. This text was published in Philadelphia by Sower Potts & Company in 1865.

Other Recent Additions to our Collections

The first edition of Lucretia Mott's *Slavery and "The Woman Question"* was published in 1840, following her trip to Great Britain to attend the World's Anti-Slavery Convention of 1840. Our copy is a reprint, edited by Frederick Tolles in 1952, as a supplement to the Journal of the Friends Historical Society. It was the exclusion of women from this conference that inspired Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott to organize the Women's Rights Convention in Seneca Falls, New York, in 1848.



Slavery Defended from Scripture: Against the Attacks of the Abolitionists: in a speech delivered before the General Conference of the Methodist Protestant Church in Baltimore in 1842 was printed in Baltimore by W. Woody. The work reprints the speech by Alexander McCaine, summarizing his arguments on behalf of the institution of slavery.

William Still's *The Underground Railroad: A record of Facts, authentic narratives, letters, &c. narrating the hardships, hair-breadth escapes, and death struggles of the slaves in their efforts for freedom, as related by themselves and others or witnessed by the author: together with sketches of some of the largest stockholders and most liberal aiders and advisers of the road* was published in Philadelphia in 1872. This classic work detailed the experiences of conductors and escaping slaves as they traveled the Underground Railroad from slavery to freedom.



Temperance pictorial songster, by Asa Fitz published in Philadelphia by Nathan Moore in 1843. This small volume contains songs with music, text, and illustrations. It is inscribed: "Maria L. Demuth. Lancaster. From Cousin Ann." And "Maria Louisa Demuth's book. February 3rd 1847. Memorable for a great storm of Winds which demolished our Windows."

The Philip Dinkelberg business ledgers (1831-1887) detail daily transactions including contracts, estimates, wages, and suppliers. Dinkelberg was a carpenter and builder on Locust Street in Lancaster. He built the Sun Fire Company Building, the first public crematorium in Lancaster and the Sunday school building for Trinity Lutheran Church.



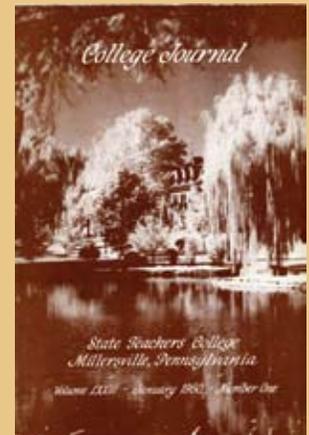
Digitization *continued from pg. 5*

(the Lancaster County Historical Society) in May 2009. Representatives from the Pa. Office of Commonwealth Libraries, Millersville University, Franklin & Marshall College, Elizabethtown College, Lancaster Theological Seminary, Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society, Lancaster Public Library, and LancasterHistory.org joined together to celebrate the accomplishments of collaborative digitization projects. For more information about the digitization projects completed by LCDP members, go to: lcdp.wetpaint.com/

◆ The first two volumes of titles for the Normal Publications digitization project were taken to Bethlehem to Backstage Library Works (formerly OCLC Preservation Services) in early September. The Normal Publications digitization project contains a variety of titles from the earliest publications of the Millersville Normal School through the Millersville State Teacher's College, including: college

catalogs, 1855-1960 and alumni publications that eventually led to the Millersville Review: The Normal Monthly, 1873-1876, The Normal Journal, 1888-1907, Millersvillian, 1908-1913, Normal Journal, 1914-1929, College Journal, 1929-1959.

Digitizing these materials will provide increased access to valuable information about Millersville's contributions to the history of education in Pennsylvania. This collection will join the digital Snapper as part of the Keystone Library Network Digital Collections: kldigital.passhe.edu



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Have you signed up to receive the Friends Folio electronically? This environmentally friendly way to read each issue of the Folio also provides the benefits of earlier delivery and helps us reduce costs for mailing and printing. If you'd like to receive the Folio electronically, email Special.Collections@millersville.edu to let us know.

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People become Friends of Ganser Library when they make a donation to Millersville University and request mailings from the Friends. Encourage your friends to become Friends of Ganser Library through their support of Millersville University. For more information, contact the Millersville University Development Office at (717) 872-3820.