

# Features

## LIBRARY INFORMATION 101

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My work in the library has consisted of little public service, as we call it. Mostly I've been working in technical services, where we order, receive and prepare materials for the shelves. But lately I've been sitting in the stacks for an hour a day (2-3 p.m.) helping people find the periodicals they need. I didn't realize until very recently that for some—especially new—users we need to be clearer about the difference between searching for a title and an article.

In an age when you can find most anything on one computer, it may be difficult to imagine that there are very different approaches to title and article searching. [Thanks to Malone Stinson, one-time reference librarian and currently cataloger, for this insight.]

When I came through Guilford nearly 30 years ago, there were distinct visual cues: there was a large wooden cabinet (called a card catalog) divided into sections for author, title and subject cards. These were used

to find books in our library. The shelves nearby were full of rows and rows of indexes, which were used to locate specific articles in periodicals housed in a different part of the library. The indexes were published at regular intervals, just like the journals they covered, because each journal was like a never-ending book with lots of often rather unconnected chapters.

We don't have those cues anymore. Especially now that the online catalog has a web-based version, searching for both book and journal titles and journal articles can take place in the Information Village, on the very same computer. And NC-LIVE, for instance, is a source of both indexing databases and full-text databases. But more about full-text later.

Let's look at the basics of the difference. I know this will seem incredibly obvious to most readers, but for those who need just a bit more explanation, read on.

A book is a fixed entity and usually has an index at the back covering the subject matter in that book. And you usually get a

clue to the subject matter in the title. The NC-PALS online catalog (remember to click on Guilford!) will help you locate the book you want, by author, title or subject, even keyword searching. Journal titles and holdings for those titles can also be found, but one cannot get to a specific article from there.

Journals often contain many different articles on many subjects in each issue, and can have a very general title (i.e., *Journal of American History*), so title clues are less helpful. An index at the back of each one would not suffice unless you wanted to spend your time reading separate indexes in multiple issues to find what was needed. That's where subject indexes (or indexes online that search by subject or keyword) come in very handy. They cover a broad subject area for a specific time period, and articles in that subject field are listed with citations for a number of different journals. You can check to see which of those we have in our collection and go look them up! [Here's another difference while you're looking things up: Books are "cataloged" and

shelved by call number and journals are shelved alphabetically by title.] Those not physically here can usually be ordered using interlibrary loan in our Information/Reference Department or clicking on the request feature in the online catalog.

One more word about articles, to shed a little light, and add more than a little complexity. There is another category of them, relatively new on the information scene, called full-text or sometimes full-image, depending on whether graphics are present. This category has, I think, caused some of the confusion. One can sometimes use an indexing tool such as NC-LIVE to search for and find articles in their entirety rather than simply a citation. It's a little bit like finding a book in the online catalog because you've found the whole thing. . . which makes it harder to see the difference between titles and articles. Are you thoroughly confused now? If so, stop by at the Information/Reference Desk on the first floor or the Periodicals Department on the lower level any weekday and get some help. It's an information jungle out there!



The observance of a "Carnival" (aka Mardi Gras) before the Lenten period (a Christian symbolic penitence from Ash Wednesday to Easter) is not new. It originated in the middle of the second century in Rome when

the Fast of the 40 days of Lent was preceded by a feast of several days during which time participants delivered themselves up to voluntary madness, put on masks, clothed themselves like spectres,

gave themselves up to Bacchus and Venus and considered all pleasure allowable.

New Orleanians caught the enthusiasm of the youths and from 1827 to 1833. Mardi Gras each year saw more and more revelries,

culminating in an annual Mardi Gras ball. In 1833 Bernard Xavier de Marigny de Mandeville, a rich plantation owner, solicited a large amount of money to help finance an organized Mardi Gras celebration. It was not until 1837 however, that the first Mardi Gras parade was staged. The first description of a Mardi Gras parade is of a single float in 1839 which was a crude thing, but a great success. It is reported that the float moved through the streets while the crowd roared hilariously. Since then Mardi Gras in New Orleans has been a definite success. It continued to grow, with additional organizations participating each year until the Carnival as we know it today was the result.

There is no celebration in the world which is as much misconstrued as the New Orleans Mardi Gras. Laboring under a misconception, the vast majority of people outside of New Orleans believe that the New Orleans Mardi Gras is a celebration spreading over a period of a few days just before Ash Wednesday. In reality the New Orleans carnival is similar to the Fasching of Germany which begins on the twelfth night after Christmas and continues until Shrove Tuesday. The expression Mardi Gras is from the French, meaning Fat Tuesday."



Did you earn your beads?

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