



LIBRARY

*A Newsletter of the
Oberlin College Library*

PERSPECTIVES

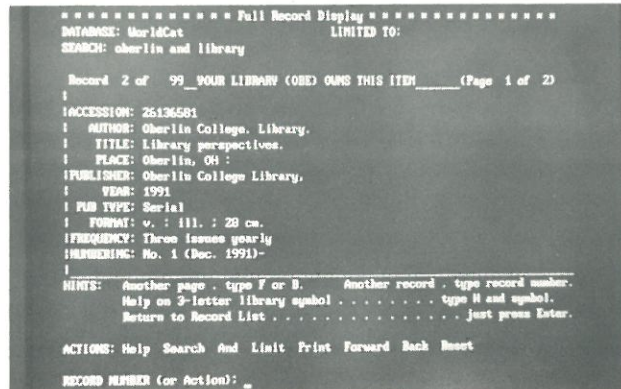
NUMBER FIVE

FEBRUARY 1993

Introducing FirstSearch: A New World of Information

Starting this month the Library begins offering a new service called FirstSearch, an electronic information system designed for direct searching by faculty, students, and staff. FirstSearch allows users to scan tables of contents from more than 11,000 journals and to search nearly thirty different subject specific bibliographic databases, such as the *MLA Bibliography*, *BIOSIS (Biological Abstracts)*, *ERIC* (a major database for topics in education), and the *Public Affairs Information Service Bulletin*. The service also provides access to the OCLC database, the world's largest computerized library catalog with more than 27

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FirstSearch displays OCLC record for Library Perspectives

The Ellen Johnson Collection

The Clarence Ward Art Library has recently received a major gift of art books from the estate of the late Ellen H. Johnson, former Professor of Art at Oberlin College and Honorary Curator of contemporary art at the Allen Memorial Art Museum. Consisting of some 4,500 titles, with a special emphasis on the visual arts since 1945, the collection is the gift of the estate's executrix, Athena Tacha, acting on Ms. Johnson's wishes. Books added to the Art Library's collections will be plated "Gift of Athena Tacha in memory of Ellen Johnson."

A significant number of books will go into the Art Library's Special Collections. Some of these titles are artists' books that add to the library's holdings in this category. The majority of the titles to

be shelved in Special Collections are inscribed to Ms. Johnson from students, artists, admirers, and friends. Some of the artists represented in this collection of inscribed titles include: Christo, Claes Oldenburg, Athena Tacha, Red Grooms, David Saunders, Robert Venturi, Bill Barrette, Mel Bochner, Billy Kluver, and Jackie Winsor. Art historians represented in the inscriptions include: Albert Elsen, Robert Rosenblum, Thalia Gouma-Peterson, Nils Sandblad, William Olander, Fritz Novotny, Barbara Tannenbaum, Roger Keyes, Larry Feinberg, William Kloss, and Joel Isaacson, the latter two of whom were students of Ellen Johnson. It is perhaps this part of her collection that most fully and touchingly captures the level and quality of Ellen Johnson's support and en-

couragement of contemporary visual artists and their work.

Titles that duplicate items already in the collections will be included in an on-campus sale next spring. Proceeds from this sale will be used to establish an Art Library book fund in honor of Ellen Johnson for purchasing books in the areas of contemporary visual art and architecture.

The Clarence Ward Art Library is extremely fortunate to have received such an important and meaningful collection, one that will contribute significantly to the library's educational and research missions. These titles, and those the library acquires from the proceeds of the sale of duplicates, will perpetuate the memory of Ellen Johnson's contributions to the life of Oberlin College.

Lecture, Workshop, and Exhibit on Bookbinding

Sue Allen, a book designer and nationally recognized expert on nineteenth-century bookbinding, will present a lecture on the topic of American bookbinding for the Friends of the Library program on Sunday evening, March 7. Ms. Allen will also conduct a workshop on decorative bookbindings ear-

lier in the day. Participants in the workshop, which will begin at 2:00 p.m., are encouraged to bring books with decorative bindings from their personal collections. The workshop will be followed at 4:00 p.m. by a reception and opening of an exhibit of books with decorative bindings from the library's collec-

tions. The exhibit, entitled "To Judge a Book by Its Cover," is curated by Dina Schoonmaker, Head of Special Collections. Ms. Allen's lecture, "Gold on Cloth: Nineteenth-Century American Book Covers," is scheduled that evening at 7:30 p.m. in the Allen Art Building.

Noted Writer Melissa Fay Greene To Return

Melissa Fay Greene, class of 1978, will return to Oberlin on Monday, April 19 to participate in programs sponsored by the Creative Writing Department and the Friends of the Library. Ms. Greene is a poet and author of *Praying for Sheetrock*, a recent, nonfiction work about life among blacks in a small

Georgia town south of Savannah. Enthusiastically acclaimed by reviewers, *Praying for Sheetrock* was a finalist for the National Book Award. The *New York Times Book Review* describes it as "an exciting book about the failures of idealism in America in the last decade and a half." The *Christian Science*

Monitor reviewer said: "I cannot say enough good things about this book." Ms. Greene will participate in an informal question and answer session at 4:30 p.m. and will read from her work at 8:00 p.m. Her reading will be followed by a reception and book signing.

Friends of the Library Spring Program Schedule

Sunday, March 7

- 2:00 p.m. Workshop on decorative bindings with Sue Allen
Mudd Center
- 4:00 p.m. Reception and opening of exhibition:
To Judge a Book By Its Cover
- 7:30 p.m. Lecture by Sue Allen, *Gold on Cloth: Nineteenth-Century American Book Covers*
Allen Art Building, Classroom A

Monday, April 19

- 4:30 p.m. Informal question and answer session with Melissa Fay Greene
Goodrich Room, Mudd Center
- 8:00 p.m. Reading by Melissa Fay Greene, Wilder 101, followed by reception and book signing

Saturday, May 29

- 4:30 -5:30 p.m. Friends Commencement Weekend Reception
Goodrich Room, Mudd Center

Aaron Copland Bequest to Conservatory Library

Any list of the most important American composers of this century would surely include Aaron Copland (1900-1990). *Appalachian Spring* and *Fanfare for the Common Man*, to name but two of his works, have become well-established staples of the orchestral repertory. Under the provisions of Copland's will, the Conservatory of Music Library was one of forty-five college and university libraries that received a complete set of his published scores. The Conservatory Library is grateful for this gift and for the opportunity to preserve and make available to performers the works of one of America's most esteemed composers.

Friends Council and Membership Meetings Highlights

At a very productive meeting on Friday afternoon, November 6, the Interim Council of the Friends of the Library heard and discussed reports from several of its committees, established a policy for spending funds raised by the organization, and selected officers for the 1992-93 year.

The Friends general membership meeting on Saturday morn-

ing, November 7, opened with welcoming remarks from President Scott Bennett, which were followed by a report on the Library from Ray English, Director of Libraries. The organization also heard reports from the Acquisitions, Membership, and Program Committees. The Nominating Committee reported on the election by the Interim Council of officers for 1992-

93, and it presented names for election to the 1992-93 Council. Council members were elected unanimously.

Minutes of both the Interim Council and Membership meetings are available to Friends members. They may be requested from: Friends of the Oberlin College Library, Mudd Center, Oberlin, OH 44074.

Where Will the Money Go?

At its Nov. 6, 1992 meeting the Friends of the Library Interim Council adopted a policy for spending funds raised by the Friends to support the Library. As a ground rule the Council voted in favor of supporting current library needs, rather than creating endowment funds. The policy specifies that up

to 25% of funds raised each year may be spent for programming, including efforts to increase public awareness of the need for collection preservation, and to support a library visiting fellows program. At least 75% of funds raised annually for the Friends will be spent on library acquisitions. Purchases

will not include subscriptions or other continuing financial commitments. Computer hardware and other equipment will be purchased only under exceptional circumstances, usually when linked to specific acquisitions for the library's collections.

Friends Making a Difference

The Acquisitions Committee of the Friends of the Library has authorized purchase from Friends funds of the titles and categories of materials listed below. Many of these items have already been received and made available for use by Oberlin faculty and students.

Anti-slavery collection (\$2,000). Pamphlets are being selected by Curator of Special Collections Dina Schoonmaker to strengthen the library's outstanding anti-slavery collection.

Biblia Latina cum Glossa Ordinaria, (\$1,000). A reproduction of the first printed edition (c. 1480) of the Latin Bible with the standard gloss used by Christians for several centuries.

Decennial Census Reports of the United States 1790 to 1870, 23 vols. reprinted 1991 (\$3,495). These volumes will replace the

library's existing, heavily-used decennial census volumes, which are in deteriorating condition and incomplete in some instances.

Lexikon des Mittelalters, 5 vols., 1977- (\$1,740). A general, scholarly encyclopedia of the Middle Ages, useful for faculty and students in several departments.

Oxford English Dictionary on CD-ROM (\$895). Computerized version of the second edition of the most important historical dictionary of the English language.

New Curricular Areas. Collections are being strengthened in the amounts listed to support these new areas of the curriculum:

Geology (Earth System Sciences)	\$1,000
History of India	\$1,500
Jazz Studies	\$2,500
Neuroscience	\$1,000
Third World Literature	\$2,000.

Another Successful Membership Campaign

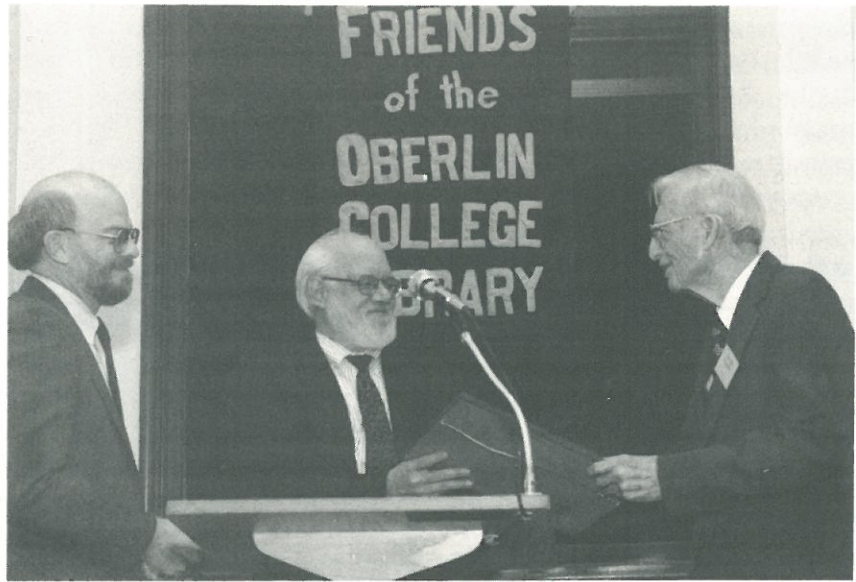
The 1992-93 membership drive for the Friends of the Library is proving to be very successful. Spurred in large part by a membership challenge offered by Wallace A. Sprague '38 and William G. Roe '64, 349 people (including 135 new members) contributed to the Friends prior to the November 1992 annual meeting. As of January 20, 1993, current membership in the organization was 483 and a total of \$32,528 had been given or pledged to the Friends during the year.

Friends Life Members Honored

Life memberships in the Friends of the Oberlin College Library were awarded to the following individuals at the organization's annual dinner on November 6:

Fenner Douglass, class of 1942 and Professor of Organ at Oberlin from 1946–1976. Following his retirement from Duke University, Professor Douglass donated to the Conservatory Library his personal collection of books on the history and literature of the organ. This collection, which includes a number of rare and valuable items, complements and significantly strengthens the library's existing holdings in organ history.

Susi Lanyi, wife of the late Professor of Government George Lanyi. Mrs. Lanyi donated to the library approximately 900 volumes from her husband's personal collection, markedly improving the library's holdings in Eastern European history and politics. Mrs. Lanyi has also been the single largest donor to the endowed book fund established by the Politics Department in her husband's memory.



Provost Sam Carrier presents Friends life membership to George Simpson

Paulina Marks, class of 1945, and her husband Robert Marks. Mr. and Mrs. Marks recently established an endowed book fund in memory of Mrs. Marks's mother, Anna Konoff. This general endowment fund supports library purchases in all subject fields.

George Simpson, Emeritus Professor of Sociology and Anthropology. For over two decades Pro-

fessor Simpson has personally supported the library's subscription to the Human Relations Area Files, a remarkably rich collection of information on the cultures of the world. Professor Simpson, a regular donor of books and periodicals to the library during the entire time that he taught at Oberlin, also donated approximately 650 volumes from his personal library, including many rare and valuable items on religion in the Caribbean region.

Wallace Sprague, class of 1938. Mr. Sprague joined William G. Roe '64 in providing a challenge for the 1992-93 Friends membership drive in which they matched the total of all contributions received from new members as well as the total of all increased contributions from continuing members made prior to the annual Friends meeting. Their challenge helped to attract a substantial number of new members to the Friends and resulted in a significant increase in the average contribution from continuing members.

1992-93 Friends Council Chosen

The following people have been chosen to be officers and members of the 1992-93 Friends of the Library Council:

Officers:

Erwin N. Griswold '25, Honorary President; Scott B. Bennett '60, President; Marian H. Baum, Vice President; Nathan A. Haverstock, Secretary

Members:

Paul B. Arnold '40, Marybeth Bridegam '57, Benjamin A. Custer '31, Gail Drakes '95, Ruth I.

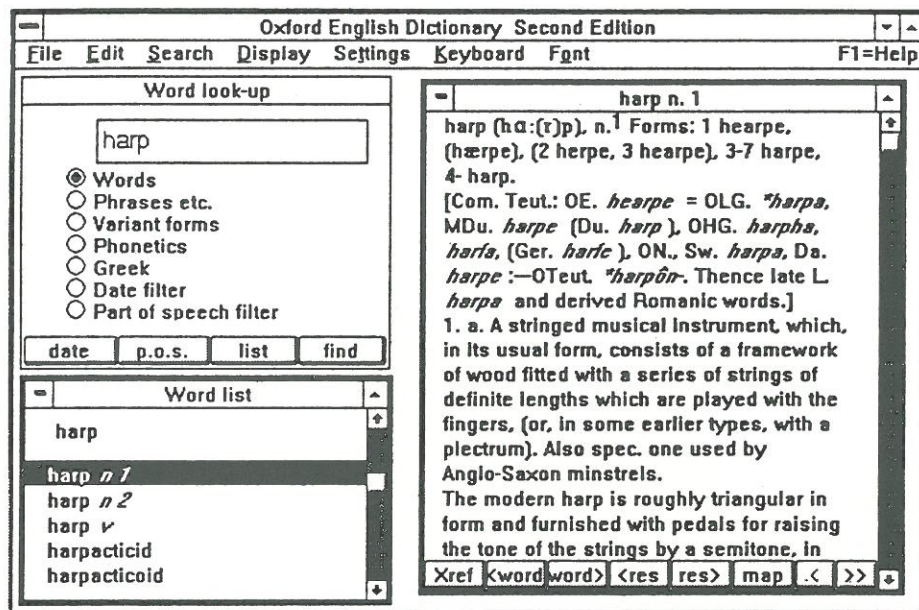
Hughes '85, Robert H. Jackson, Shirley Lincicum '93, Marlene D. Merrill, Lois G. Peterson '37, Mary Rosenbloom '80, Milton Yinger, Janice Zinser.

Ex-Officio and Appointed Members

Terry Carlton, Chair, General Faculty Library Committee; Ray English, Director of Libraries; Jessica Grim, Reference Librarian; Ron Huiatt, Director of Development; Dina Schoonmaker, Head of Special Collections.

New Electronic Resources Available

The Library has recently acquired several new electronic reference sources. These include two new CD-ROM (Compact Disk - Read Only Memory) products for use in the Main Library Reference Department. The *Oxford English Dictionary* on CD-ROM, a gift of the Friends of the Library, is an electronic version of the 2nd edition of the *OED*. It will allow wider access to and greatly enhance searching of this important research tool. *America: History & Life* on CD-ROM, is the long-awaited electronic version of the most important, and most heavily used, scholarly index in American history. Additionally, the Science Library has purchased *Science Citation Index* and



Screen display from the *Oxford English Dictionary* on CD-ROM

Compact Cambridge Life Sciences on CD-ROM, and *Current Contents on Diskette* for life sciences. These new products complement the nu-

merous CD-ROM resources already available in the main and branch libraries.

Introducing FirstSearch... continued

million bibliographic records representing the holdings of 16,000 libraries worldwide.

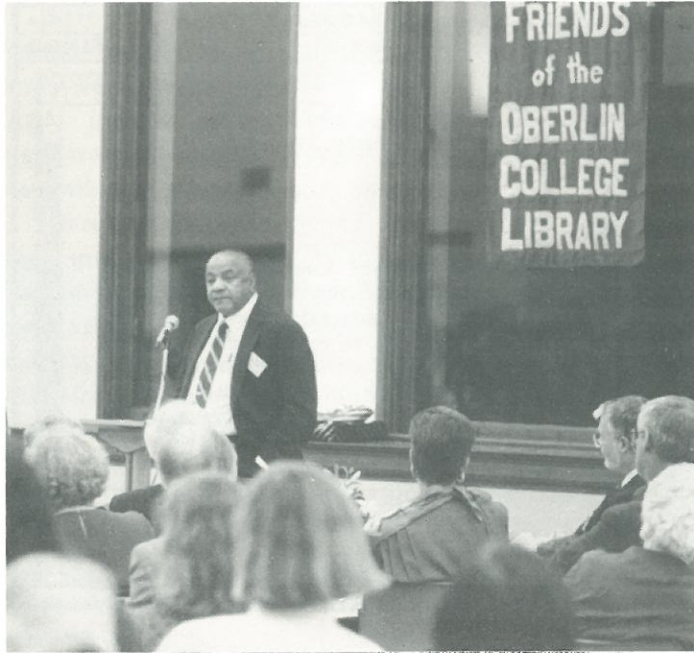
One of the exciting aspects of this new service is that, in addition to using FirstSearch from termi-

nals within the main and branch libraries, users can access it directly from their offices and homes by connecting through the campus network. The implementation of FirstSearch is just one example of the library's ongoing commitment to providing its users with easier and faster access to the information they seek. Other recent developments include an additional workstation for using the Lexis/Nexis family of databases as well as easy access through the Internet electronic network to hundreds of library catalogs and other databases worldwide.



Reference Librarian Jessica Grim using FirstSearch

Carl Rowan Addresses Friends of the Library



When Carl T. Rowan '47 addressed the Friends of the Oberlin College Library on November 6, 1992, he did so in the same honest, straightforward, and sometimes pointed style that characterizes his journalism. Rowan combined his observations on America's social, political, and economic problems with his thoughts on the value of education, skillfully weaving together various anecdotes from his life and work.

At the outset, Rowan stated that "we have had a variety of crises in America. We've gone through an educational crisis, an economic crisis, a crisis of morality, a crisis of leadership...." Referring to the period from 1980–92 as "the morass, the malaise that, for me personally, has been 12 long years of darkness," Rowan observed that "in some respects we took a lot of steps back toward the American mind-set that existed when I first stepped onto this campus forty-eight years ago." But Rowan found that the inequities fostered by a mind-set that toler-

ated and even promoted racial injustice could be addressed in part by education—in Rowan's words: "learning is a great liberator." He went on to stress the value of his own education, linking it to larger considerations of social and economic justice.

Relating a story from his years at Oberlin, Rowan referred to one

sented her with a sample of his writing: "a very angry piece of prose called 'The Conqueror's Plea' about all the blood that had been shed [during World War II] by Black people who came back and found that they weren't going to get that freedom they thought they were fighting for." Admitting that Miss Foster could simply have chosen to ignore his work, Rowan reported: "She read it, and she made little grammatical changes and suggested new words, and she was waiting when I came to class the next day. And her first words to me were 'I understand you want to be a writer—I think you'll make it!' And you talk about putting the wind under somebody's wings; that is the kind of thing you don't get too easily. And that is why I'm so proud and pleased to come back to this campus and to say to you that I cannot forget teachers like that."



Students enjoy meeting Carl Rowan at Friends reception

of his English teachers, Miss Foster. Though her class was large, at least one hundred students, Rowan resolved "I've got to let this woman know who I am." One day he pre-

Rowan tied together his thoughts on education and social conditions in this country by relating a story from his student days in

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Carl Rowan... *continued* The Carl Rowan Papers

the Spring of 1943 at Tennessee State College. On the day that he was preparing to leave the college because he did not have the \$20 needed for the next quarter's tuition, he noticed something out of the ordinary amid all the discarded green transfer tickets littering the ground at the student bus stop. There in the weeds he found a twenty-dollar bill; he prayed that whoever had lost it didn't need it as badly as he did, and promptly paid his tuition for the next quarter. "So don't ever tell Carl Rowan you don't solve problems by throwing money at them!" Rowan concluded by saying: "I just want to remind you that in the months ahead, as we try to set America's new priorities, you have got to remember that some of these social programs that people have tried to eliminate represent a twenty-dollar bill to millions of youngsters growing up the way Carl Rowan did. And it is in this spirit and the tradition of Oberlin that you not let them take away those twenty-dollar bills."

The donation of Carl Rowan's personal papers to the Oberlin College Archives was officially announced by College Archivist Roland Baumann at the Friends of

of State for Public Affairs, Ambassador to Finland, Director of the U. S. Information Agency, and his years as an influential nationally syndicated columnist. The collec-



Carl Rowan holds inscribed tray presented by George Bent

the Library annual dinner on November 6. Rowan's papers, consisting of over 150 linear feet and approximately 450,000 items, document every phase of his award-winning career, including his highly acclaimed reports for the *Minneapolis Tribune* in the 1950s, his government service as United States Deputy Assistant Secretary

tion reflects Rowan's correspondence and contacts with many of the leading political figures of the post-war period. According to Baumann, the Rowan papers represent "one of the most significant bodies

of non-institutional documentation to be added to the College Archives."

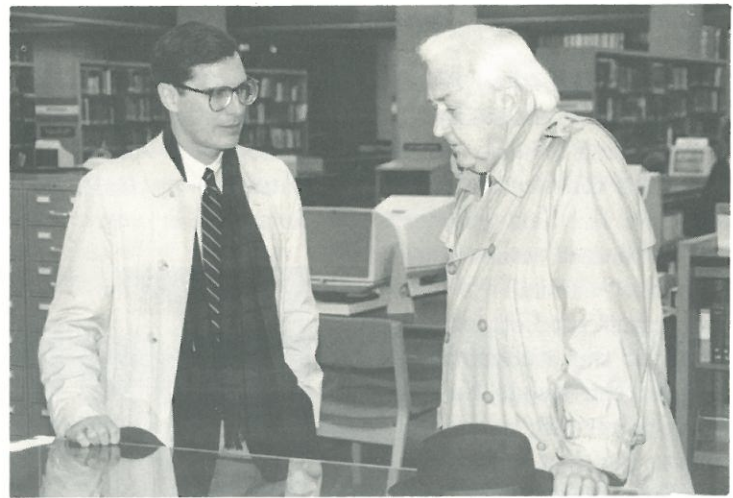
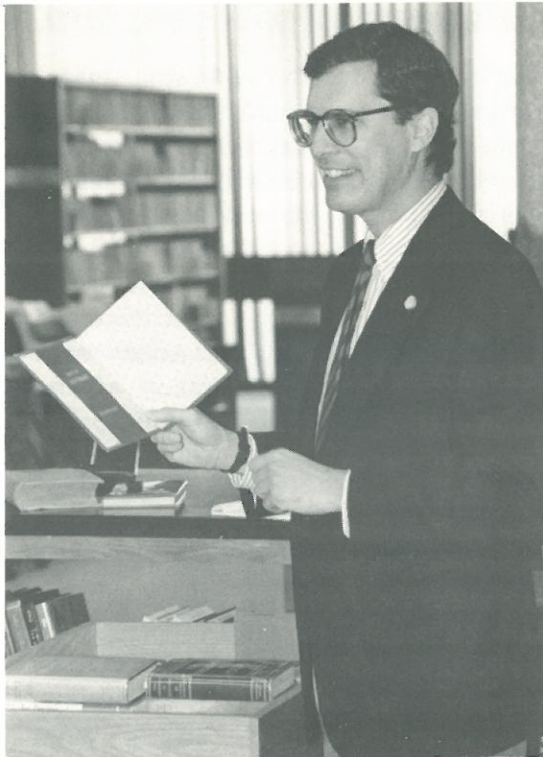
Following the announcement of this gift, George Bent, Chairman of the Board of Trustees, presented Rowan with an inscribed silver tray as an expression of appreciation and gratitude from Oberlin for the gift of his papers.



Friends members join Carl Rowan in viewing display from the Rowan papers as assembled by Assistant Archivist Brian Williams.

Rowan Videotape Available

A videotape of Carl Rowan's lecture at the Friends of the Library dinner on Friday, November 6 is available on request. The cost of the tape, including shipping and handling, is \$6 for Friends of the Library members. Copies of the tape may be requested from: Friends of the Library, Mudd Center, Oberlin College, Oberlin, OH 44074. Please do not send payment with your request. You will be billed when the videotape is shipped. Allow four weeks for delivery.



Charles Tharp talks about his exhibition of presidential campaign biographies at the Friends Annual Meeting (left) and shows the exhibit to former Presidential candidate Eugene McCarthy who spoke at Oberlin in November (above).

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