

RESEARCH BRIEFS

New Journey for *The Western Scholar* by Connie Foster

What can reach thousands and travel worldwide without crimping a budget? *The Western Scholar* has achieved a new level of prominence. Cover-to-cover, *The Western Scholar* will be included in Academic Search Complete, a new full-text academic database by EBSCO Publishing, one of the world's largest database producers. Currently *The Western Scholar* can be read online,¹ retrieved through TOPCAT (WKU Libraries' online catalog), as an electronic journal through TDNet (the Libraries' e-journal finder) and, yes, through a Google Search.

With database access, just imagine the possibilities for discovering *The Western Scholar* as a publication that highlights outstanding university scholarship. Academic Search Complete will contain 5,500 full-text journals, including 4,500 that are peer-reviewed. Selected articles from *The Western Scholar* will also appear in other subject-appropriate EBSCO databases. For example, Bob Skipper's article in the Fall 2005 issue about research conducted by Phil Womble, "A Wireless War on Terrorism"² will appear in EBSCO's International Security & Counter Terrorism Reference Center.

What are the criteria for selecting journals for a database? According to Scott Bernier, Director of Communications for EBSCO Publishing, *The Western Scholar* is ideal because it is multi-disciplinary and contains high quality articles. Selection criteria usually include: ranking studies, citation statistics, impact factor, usage reports from subject indexes (such as PsycINFO,

MEDLINE, ERIC, EconLit, Inspec, CINAHL, SPORTDiscus), subscription data from EBSCO Subscription Services, feedback from all-librarian advisory boards, and research conducted by a product management team which includes librarians employed by EBSCO and subject experts.



As of this writing, EBSCO plans to release Academic Search Complete when significant content enhancement from key publishers is attained and offers libraries a substantial upgrade over Academic Search Premier. EBSCO typically announces new library products in conjunction with a major American Library Association conference. Bernier targets the new database release for ALA Midwinter, January 2007.

In the fall 2000, *The Western Scholar* emerged as a quality, multi-disciplinary magazine under the editorial leadership of Phillip Myers and Gay Perkins. In a 2005 article for *Serials Review*, Myers explained the launch of *The Western Scholar* and its place among other university research magazines.³ A free and simple part of the publication process involves applying for an International Standard Serial Number (ISSN) and, if offered in electronic form also, an e-ISSN. Consistent placement of the ISSN,

title, volume number, issue and year, as well as adherence to a regular publishing schedule, achieves a level of dependability in the publishing world that benefits everyone from the consumer to the postal services to the alumni in Alaska or an undergraduate in Kuala Lumpur. Adherence to standards means consistent citation access, rapid check-in for libraries, successful database retrieval, and more.⁴

The Western Scholar's dramatic increase in exposure through database access boosts WKU's quest for international prominence. Currently Academic Search Premier is available in more than 29,000 academic libraries worldwide; EBSCO expects more than half of those libraries to eventually upgrade to the Complete version.

The world of scholarly communication and research is exciting, complex and comprehensive. Getting published results and reports around the world accelerates with major database access and e-journal retrieval. WKU's accomplishments can roam the globe and extend to a user with a wireless computer at the beach or someone holding a glossy magazine in an overstuffed chair. The choice is yours; the possibilities are unlimited!

¹ www.wku.edu/Dept/Support/AcadAffairs/Magazine

² www.wku.edu/Dept/Support/AcadAffairs/Magazine/Fall%2005/WS.FA.05%2019-21%20wireless.pdf

³ "University Research Magazines and The Western Scholar," *Serials Review* 31, iss. 2 (June 2005): 116-118.

⁴ To apply for an ISSN or to learn more about this standard, visit www.loc.gov/issn/



Dr. Louis Strolger



Distant Supernova 1 - Before Outburst



Distant Supernova 1 - After Outburst



Distant Supernova 2 - Before Outburst



Distant Supernova 2 - After Outburst



Distant Supernova 3 - Before Outburst



Distant Supernova 3 - After Outburst

Understanding Supernovae

In 1998, the observations of very distant thermonuclear supernovae astonishingly revealed that the universe is accelerating, speeding up in its expansion, and seemingly being pulled apart by a mysterious force. Scientists are now attempting to better understand this so called “dark energy” by fixing the most powerful telescopes, including the Hubble Space Telescope (HST), on the most distant supernova events yet. These supernovae will offer the best probe of dark energy’s evolutionary nature, and provide answers to profound questions such as the age of the universe, and what its eventual fate will be.

Despite the truly awesome discoveries these supernovae provide, it is remarkable how little is truly understood about how thermonuclear supernovae themselves are formed. Although many believe

they result from white dwarf stars, the detailed mechanisms of how they develop are still not well understood. Much can be ascertained about the possible progenitor mechanisms of supernovae by probing the timescales necessary for these events to unfold. Here at Western, Dr. Louis Strolger and his students are doing just that. By co-adding archived images from HST, they are searching for the most distant supernovae to date. Although the analysis is still underway, evidence suggests that the universe runs out of supernovae farther out in space, or more precisely, further back in time. This implies that progenitors require substantial time, roughly 3.5 billion years, to evolve to the point where they can explode as supernovae. This is quite surprising, as it is an order of magnitude longer than has been previously considered on theoretical bases.

Obesity in the Workplace

Dr. Cecilia Watkins was awarded a Junior Faculty Scholarship to research obesity in the workplace. Her study is prompted by the Center for Disease Control finding that in 1991



Dr. Cecilia Watkins

sixty-one percent of American adults were overweight or obese. The workplace is a significant contributor to this statistic. Americans spend more hours there than workers in any other industrialized country. They work longer hours, sit for long periods of time, eat on the run, and are tied up with stressful issues that have led to the obesity epidemic. Moreover, technological improvements at home and in the workplace have reduced physical activity, which is a major contributor to obesity. Along with technology Americans live in an environ-

ment where increased calories are the rule. "We eat fewer meals per day and we gulp food to satiate our appetites when we find the time to eat," said Watkins. Professor Watkins will gather data from area industries by holding focus groups with ten to twenty percent of the employees. She will help the groups brainstorm about workplace issues that may contribute to high obesity rates. The data will be analyzed to isolate outstanding themes. The themes will lead to an instrument that can be used by industrial wellness programs. Primary outcomes will be increased knowledge of employees' perceived barriers in the workplace to eating healthfully and to exercising enough. Dr. Watkins will also discover employees' ideas about how the workplace can be enhanced to encourage healthful eating and exercise to benefit health.



Marital Satisfaction

Dr. Jill D. Onedera's Junior Faculty Scholarship is enabling her to research "Marital Satisfaction and Coping Strategies of Couples Married More Than Forty Years." She states, "We know about what



Dr. Jill Onedera

causes divorce, but we know little about what causes marriages to last. Moreover, much of the research about marital satisfaction has been with young couples." As a result Onedera is studying thirty couples that have been married for forty or more years. She will use interviews and a survey that covers affective communication, role orientation, problem-solving communication, aggression, family history of distress, time together, dissatisfaction with children, disagreement about finances, conflict over child rearing, sexual dissatisfaction, and general distress. Dr. Onedera's work will guide future research and development of effective marital intervention and clinical treatment. It will help define the practice of the Family Counseling Clinic at WKU and the Marriage Therapy Course.