DON’T FORGET TO VOTE
Ballot must be received by Home Office by April 18, or you may submit at conference. Your name must be on outside of envelope.

SAVE THE DATES

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SHARING THE WORLD’S KNOWLEDGE:
The Virtual Clearinghouse on ATOD

By Bette Reimer, Coordinator
Virtual Clearinghouse on Alcohol, Tobacco, & Other Drugs, Ottawa, Canada

Check out the Virtual Clearinghouse on Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drugs (VCATOD) http://www.atod.org/ the next time you are looking for information such as:
§ Drug or alcohol strategies in Europe, Austral-Asia, Africa, or the Americas
§ Cannabis policy in countries such as Canada, Australia and the Netherlands
§ Prevention or treatment best practices
§ Compilations of national, regional or worldwide statistics

The VCATOD is a global ‘virtual library’ of information not easily found elsewhere and is being built by a partnership of organizations in Europe, the Americas, Austral-Asia and Africa. The Web site is trilingual with parallel pages in English, French, and Spanish and the target group is professionals.

The main goals of the VCATOD are to:
• Provide access to policy and program practice information
• Encourage cooperation to avoid duplication of effort
• Promote information sharing and dialogue among professionals.

History of Project
The VCATOD began in 1995 at a meeting held during the SALIS conference in Boston. A number people attending the conference got together at the end of a busy day to discuss how the web could be used to improve access to international information. By the end of the meeting, a pilot project had been initiated. Organizations in Canada, United States, Netherlands, Portugal, Australia, and South Africa agreed to be part of the pilot.

(Continued on page 4)
JTO Search Gets a Big Upgrade

The Join Together Online website (http://www.jointogether.org) hosts what is probably the web's largest and oldest archive of alcohol/drug/tobacco daily news summaries, in-depth feature articles, funding news, action alerts, and press releases. It also offers extensive publication and web link databases that drive the "related" resource information in the sidebars of JTO news stories. All told, you can access about 35,000 documents dating back 10 years -- and it’s growing by over 50 new pages every week!

Until now, public access to this trove of information has been somewhat limited by a functional but very basic search facility. We have, however, just launched a substantially more powerful, integrated and user-friendly JTO search engine that will be of particular interest to SALIS members.

Our default search is considerably improved, but the “Advanced Search” features are perhaps even more interesting, and SALIS members are exactly the kind of end users we had in mind when developing them.

What You Can Find:

Anything you’ve seen in a JTO Direct email is available in JTO Search, but that’s not all. Because the archive reaches way back to when JTO wasn’t even on the Internet (anyone remember HandsNet?), it also provides a rich history of the field. You can find news of significant public events, major trends in prevention and treatment, research findings, important legislation, legal and policy developments, funding and more -- from 1993 to the current day.

In addition to the news archive, JTO Search indexes the content-rich pages in the Issues, Take Action and Help sections of our website, as well as our databases of current resources (print and online publications), external web links, and "factoids."

Where to Find It:

Type a search in any search box located at the top right of every JTO web page, or go to our main search page at http://www.jointogether.org/search/

CASA Library On The Web

The National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse (CASA) at Columbia University has recently launched a web site at the following address: http://www.casalibrary.org.

This web site was created in house using Microsoft FrontPage and is also hosted in house geared more towards the needs of CASA’s research staff than those of the public. As a result, a large proportion of the web site is password protected as the material residing beyond the login is vendor provided, royalty based, and paid for by CASA. Although this area is unavailable to the public, its content and function will be described here as it demonstrates how one small ATOD research library has taken advantage of what the web can offer in the way of information dissemination and integration.

The area of the web site that is limited to CASA researchers is entered by clicking on a ‘Members Login’ tab found on the left-hand margin of each page. After logging in, the user is brought to the ‘Members Welcome’ page from which various resources can be accessed. One of these is called ‘Online journals’ which consists of an alphabetic listing of all the major substance abuse related journals which are available through CU and for each of these has created a separate (‘individual’) page on CASA’s web site with a link to the full-text at Columbia. At the same time CASA library has contracted with Institute for Scientific Information (ISI) to receive the Table of Contents (TOCs) of 25 of the major substance abuse, and SA related, journals and these TOCs are placed on the journal’s ‘individual’ page. When a new issue’s TOC arrives (via email to the library staff) it is placed on the journal’s ‘individual’ page and researchers are then sent the link to the page. This then creates a page with the latest TOC as

(Continued on page 6)
No, not Ghostbusters! When substance abuse librarians and information specialists need reference help and assistance, they ‘call’ the SALIS listserv. Despite our personal expertise in addictions and information science, it is often that we need to turn to our peers for their specific knowledge, unique experiences, and distinctive outlooks. Frequently those peers are found, not in our own organizations, but in SALIS.

Recently a Research Scientist from my organization requested a listing of all the substance abuse research centers in the United States. She left the definition open, wanting to review a comprehensive listing of all centers that would fit multiple definitions of "atod research centers". My search of federal web sites and even of a general search engine did not result in what I believed to be comprehensive results.

My thoughts quickly turned to the SALIS listserv. Memory told me that research centers had once before been a listserv topic. Also, with the variety of employment settings of SALIS members, some of them would naturally have more familiarity with national research centers than I would. So who did I call? This query for assistance went out on the SALIS listserv.

Multiple responses were promptly provided. Not only did such a collective memory provide new lists and explanatory comments, but several SALIS members mentioned what I had forgotten - that a national research center listing was already available on the ADAI home page. As a result of such assistance, I was able to share with my patron the following list of possibilities:

http://depts.washington.edu/adai/links/catindex.htm#research

Alcohol and Drug Abuse Institute, University of Washington. Categorical lists of alcohol, drugs, and tobacco web sites. Here SALIS member Nancy Sutherland has already assembled a list of 91 USA alcohol and drug abuse research centers. Each mention is linked to its home page. In addition, one also finds: 31 international alcohol and drug research centers, 24 U.S. government agencies, 70 organizations and advocates.

The National Drug & Alcohol Research Centre

By Eva Congreve, Librarian
National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre, New South Wales, Australia

The National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre, NDARC, (http://notes.med.unsw.edu.au/ndarc.nsf/) was established at the University of New South Wales in 1986. It receives its funding from the Commonwealth Government as part of the National Drug Strategy (formerly, the National Campaign Against Drug Abuse). The centre’s main aim is to increase the effectiveness of treatment for drug and alcohol problems in Australia. The centre is multidisciplinary, collaborating with psychology, medical, social science university departments and centres nationally and around the world. Staff number has grown to over 50.

I started work, May 1987 with the task of establishing a library, called “document archive”, because it was to serve staff only and should not be confused with a public access library. Staff consisted then of two researchers, one project officer, a secretary and myself, later that year two research assistants joined our small team and Professor Nick Heather became the director of the centre. I worked 2 days/week, working part-time as a research assistant, measuring blood pressure, carbon monoxide and many other bodily functions as part of an ongoing project. The document archive had to run on minimal costs, minimal space allocation and minimal staff input. I bought a compactus for shelving, purchased Inmagic as indexing software for my fledging collection of offprints, books and tests. The collected items were filed by their acquisition number, there was no time to introduce Dewey or Library of Congress classification systems. Staff learned to browse on the computer. A special staff meeting decided on the policy for selecting preferred terms for an in-house thesaurus, as the ETOH thesaurus was not available on the net at that time. Medline, Embase and PsychInfo were starting to index few, very few D&A Journals and D&A terms were not well covered. Our thesaurus has grown to more than 1000 terms and is searchable as a database.

We still file books and offprints by acquisition numbers, using Datafile as a filing system for our offprints. Datafile uses thin cardboard folders with colour coded labels and is very cost efficient in uptake of space, speed of filing and retrieval time. It was a novel filing system then. The collection has grown to more than 20,000 records,

(Continued on page 7)
In 1996, the VCATOD was endorsed by SALIS (Substance Abuse Librarians and Information Specialists) and ELISAD (European Librarians and Information Specialists on Alcohol and other Drugs) at their respective annual meetings. In early 2000, funding was obtained from Canada's Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade to support and enhance the project.

**Web Site Features**

**Documents Database**

One of the main features on the VCATOD is the Documents Database. The purpose of the Documents Database is to provide a single point of access to policy and practice documents published on sites across the Web.

The full-text documents indexed in the Documents Database include policy documents, government reports, literature reviews, program best practice, national drug strategies, and statistical compilations. These documents, known to librarians and information specialists as the grey or fugitive literature, are not typically indexed in scientific databases such as ETOH and Medline, but in many cases are the only sources available for certain types of policy, program and statistical questions. These fugitive documents or gray literature are often needed by researchers to provide a ‘complete picture’ of an issue and complement information found in scientific journal articles.

Before the Web, accessing the fugitive literature usually involved contacting individual organizations and colleagues. Now with the growth of the Web, a number of organizations such as government agencies are publishing documents on Web sites, and while this has improved things to some extent, it is still necessary to know which sites to search and how to search them. The Documents Database is being built to bring these documents together in one place thus saving the searcher time and providing more comprehensive search results.

Partner organizations in the Virtual Clearinghouse contribute to the VCATOD the URL links to documents published on their web sites. The Documents Database indexes and points to the document on the partner site. The document records in the database include author, title, publisher, date, URL link and Spanish, French and English subject descriptors.

**Online Discussions**

A second feature of the web site is an online discussion tool. This feature provides a means for information sharing and dialogue among professionals. To date, discussions have been by invitation and are password protected. The online discussions focus on a topic of interest to professionals, are moderated, and take place over a set time period of several weeks.

The discussions use a “threaded” discussion format. The threaded discussion format allows the moderator to begin the discussion by posting a topic or topics (threads). Participants can respond to comments within existing threads, or create a new thread (topic for discussion). Following a “thread” of a discussion, participants more readily understand the history and flow of a discussion topic, and then may contribute their own information or thoughts. Summaries of the discussions are posted on the Web site for the benefit of everyone.

Recently, a discussion took place on “Developing Projects in the Area of Drug Prevention”. The idea behind this discussion was to bring together experiences of experts who are currently working in the area of prevention in Latin America and other countries and begin to exchange ideas and opinions on how to mobilize and share resources and efforts.

The discussion took place in Spanish and had 35 participants. Participants were from both governmental and non-governmental organizations from countries such as Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Canada, Paraguay, Peru, Nicaragua, Honduras, El Salvador, Cuba, and Spain.

**Calendar, Partner Links and Topics**

Other features of the site include a calendar of events, a list of partner links, and a topics section. The Topics section provides customized searches of the Documents Database, and is intended to save the user time by providing quick access to full-text documents on policy and practice topics. Current topics include Alcohol Controls, Cannabis, Economic Aspects and Costs, Government Strategies and Policies, Injection Drug Use, International Agreements, Statistics, Prevention and Treatment Programs and literature reviews.

**Machine Translator**

The site includes a customized machine translator that can be used to translate the full-text documents indexed in the Documents Database as well as sections of text such as comments contributed to the online discussions.

**Partners**

The partnership has now grown to over 45 organizations in 24 countries. Partners in the Virtual Clearinghouse (Continued on page 5)
include multilateral organizations, national government agencies, and non-governmental organizations. Multilateral partners include the United Nations International Drug Control Programme, the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction, the Inter-American Observatory on Drugs of CICAD, the World Health Organization, the International Labour Organization, and of course, ELISAD and SALIS.

Countries represented by national government agencies and non-governmental organizations include Australia, New Zealand, Argentina, Barbados, Bermuda, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Honduras, Jamaica, Peru, Finland, France, Germany, Portugal, Scotland, Spain, Sweden, Netherlands, United Kingdom, and South Africa.

Criteria for Partnership

An organization wishing to become a partner in the Virtual Clearinghouse must meet a set of criteria. This set of criteria specifies that partners must be:

§ An organization or agency, not just an individual,
§ Disseminating information on the Internet, and not merely advertising a product or service,
§ Producing alcohol, tobacco or other drugs information based on the literature, research, or the organization's established policy or program experience, and
§ Working at national, regional, or international level

Organizations that do not qualify for, or are not interested in partnership, but wish to contribute to the information base, may do so through arrangements with partner organizations.

Partner Roles

Partner organizations are asked to:

§ Link to the Virtual Clearinghouse from their own sites,
§ Encourage the use of, and promote, the site among their colleagues,
§ Appoint a contact person to liaise with the Virtual Clearinghouse Secretariat,
§ Identify documents to add to the Documents Database, and
§ Participate in online discussions and governance as desired.

Operational Model and Governance

The VCATOD is developing under a cooperative, distributed model, and is designed to be as self-sustaining as possible. Resources and efforts have been directed to build in-kind support, strengthen the partnership base, and develop the governance structure. These efforts and the critical mass of the partner organizations are intended to ensure the long-term sustainability of the VCATOD.

Currently, the Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse serves as the Secretariat. The Secretariat hosts the Web site, provides the administrative and technical infrastructure, and coordinates the development of the governance committees.

In 2001, the increase in the number of partner organizations led to the need for the development of a more formalized governance and partner input structure. The partners were consulted and two governance committees were formed. The Steering Committee provides strategic direction to the Virtual Clearinghouse, and is composed of senior-level executives representing multilateral and national organizations working in the Americas, Europe, Africa, and Austral-Asia. The Partner and Content Committee is composed of members with information and library expertise representing a range of geographic areas. The committee advises on information management and reviews applications for partnership.

Benefits and Next Steps

In summary, the VCATOD:

• Connects users to documents that might otherwise have been missed, thus providing more comprehensive search results in less time, and giving partner organizations wider dissemination of their documents
• Facilitates access to documents not found in peer reviewed journals thus complementing other databases such as ETOH; and {NEED OTHER NAMES}
• Leverages contributions from partner organizations and build on rather than duplicate existing web sites.

The next steps include continuing to build the partnership base and the Web site. For further information, or if your organization would like to become a partner in the VCATOD, please contact Bette Reimer, Coordinator, VCATOD Secretariat, breimer@ccsa.ca (604) 408-9727.
To access the more powerful new features, click the "Advanced Search" link to the right of the search input box on the main search page.

New Basic and Advanced Features:

· **Flexible query functionality:** you can use Boolean, natural language queries, exact phrase match, regular expressions, + or - operands, and more. You can use this feature in the search box on any JTO webpage.

· **Sort results** by date, relevance or category of page.

· Search by **date range** (Advanced Search)

· Search by **topic area:** Alcohol, Tobacco, Other Drugs, Gun Violence (Advanced)

· Search by **type of document:** News summary, funding item, press releases, web links, etc. (Advanced)

· **Word options:** Search for "any words" in your query (best matches will list first) or "all words" for a narrower search (Advanced).

· **Automatic spelling correction.** It works well, but we have to manually configure a table for this function. We've already entered most common misspellings found in our search logs (e.g. “alcahol”) but I would be delighted for SALIS members to drop me a line suggesting new ones when you make a typo that the system doesn't correct.

Tips on understanding and using the various search features and options are documented in the online help file, which is hyperlinked on all Search pages.

Questions and suggestions on the new JTO Search are very welcome! Just email me at eric@jointogether.org. We hope that the new search will make it much easier to take advantage of the vast collection of content amassed on our site.

* Note: Please contact me if you have Web Sites you want reviewed or would like to review for this column. Samantha Helfert, Web Sites Editor (SHELFERT@northropgrumman.com)

well as a link to the full text of the journal online which brings closer to reality the bibliographic nirvana that we all crave: the seamless flow from citation to full-text. Many journals now provide the TOC of their latest issue for free, however these often lack abstracts and come burdened with links to the publisher’s page where the only method of retrieving an article is to pay. ISI’s service, although it costs, does not come so encumbered and has the added value of abstracts.

A similar subject based service, also provided by ISI, searches across multiple bibliographic databases using standard terms within the ATOD research field. The results in the form of citations with abstracts to articles, are posted daily on the library’s web site under a section called ‘Today’s Alerts’. CASA researchers are then notified via email on each day with a link to the alerts page. After a month the daily alerts are ‘archived’ by month and a new series is begun. Thus with these two services CASA library keeps its researchers as much abreast of current research as possible. There is inevitably some duplication between the two services.

A page labeled ‘Library Catalogs’ listing all relevant catalogs is also located on the left margin navigation buttons. This leads to a page of catalogs, the most relevant being CASA’s own, known as CASACAT, and which was created using Inmagic’s DB Textworks. One field in the catalog record which is increasingly useful is of course the link to the full text. Other catalogs listed include Columbia’s CLIO, NLM’s Locator, NYPL’s CATNYP, etc.

Another advantage arising out of CASA’s relationship with Columbia occurs under the label ‘Bibliographic Databases’. As with the online journals, these databases subdivide, some of them, such as NIAAA’s ETOH or N.I.M.’s Pub Med do not require login and password and can be accessed directly. However, those that are royalty based and located on Columbia’s web site are password protected. The latter databases are distinguished from the former by using the Columbia crown (as shown below). The list of databases on the CASA library’s web site is a distillation of those at Columbia, as well as a variety of other sources relevant to the substance abuse field. This list does not reside within the ‘Members Only’ area as CASA library depends on Columbia to provide whatever security is needed.

One very important area of the web site, and one which is also available to the public, is labeled ‘Resource Center’. This utilizes Join Together’s ‘Plugin’ program and con (Continued on page 7)
siderably enhances the vale of the site. Much of what webs do is repeated from site to site and the phrase ‘reinventing the wheel’ probably resonates with anyone who has sat down to provide such resources as ‘News’ or ‘Links’. The ‘JT Plugin’ program obviates the need for this as the work of linking and updating is done for one by Join Together. Some categories are stronger than others and the taxonomy of terms used to identify various aspects of the field can be questioned, but the service overall is remarkable. Anyone considering JT’s plugins on their web site is encouraged to do so and should know that the process of setting them up is quick and easy.

Other areas of the site include ‘Government’ and ‘Organization Publications’, which in most cases is an alphabetic listing of publication titles with links to the full text. Likewise a page of ‘Latest Acquisitions’ lists the most recent books added to the collection.

The National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre (NDARC) produces, apart from original research papers for peer-reviewed journals, two categories of in-house publications, technical reports and monographs. The monographs are conference proceedings of meetings, literature reviews or treatment manuals. The technical reports are research reports, describing research protocols and/or stages of research projects or the completed projects. We are planning to publish our reports and monographs full-text on the net after all peer-reviewed articles have been generated during this year. At the moment you will find a list of publications with abstracts attached on our website. The publications are for sale. For more information, please go our website.

A visit to this website will give you an overview as to what kind of research is being done. Here are few key projects of general interest:

The Illicit Drug Reporting System (IDRS) is Australia’s national illicit drug monitoring system: http://notes.med.unsw.edu.au/ndarc.nsf/website/IDRS

Australian Treatment Outcome Study – NSW (ATOS) describes the characteristics of people entering treatment for heroin dependence, the treatment they receive and is examining more closely the treatment outcomes: http://notes.med.unsw.edu.au/ndarc.nsf/website/Research.current.cp26

The development of an Adolescent Cannabis Check-up and Intervention Trial: evaluates the feasibility and effectiveness of a brief “Cannabis Check-up” intervention for adolescents involving families of drug users to change the drug use behaviour of their children: http://notes.med.unsw.edu.au/ndarc.nsf/website/Research.current.cp14

Evaluation of the Medically-Supervised Injecting Centre (MSIC): evaluates the political controversial 18-month trial of a medically supervised centre where drug addicts can inject safely: http://notes.med.unsw.edu.au/ndarc.nsf/website/Research.current.cp16

Development of a brief multi-dimensional instrument designed to measure outcomes for clients receiving alcohol and other drug treatment: The Brief Treatment Outcome Measure (BTOM)

Consisting of journal offprints, chapters of books, books and tests. The collection reflects in its subject matter current and past research. The offprints stay the property of the researchers and the whole collection is restricted to staff use only.

We subscribe to very few journals and rely heavily on the Main University Library for the access to journals and bibliographic databases such as Medline, Embase, PsychInfo, Current Contents, Web of Science and others. Another important supplier of D&A material is the Resource Centre of the Alcohol and other Drugs Council in Canberra. Without these connections the gathering of D&A literature would be more difficult.

My position as library manager has become more complex over time. The job purpose states now: ‘to provide the National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre at the University of New South Wales with library and information resources and services which effectively support the research goals of the Centre. This position is responsible for all aspects of library management, the provision of research support services and the development of a very specialised collection within the fields of research of the centre’.

I now work a 4 day-week, have a library assistant one day a week, and clerical assistance from the front office. I am in the process of updating my Inmagic software to DBText 6 and Webpublisher Pro and staff will be able to search the bibliographic databases via an intranet.
groups, 55 information resources, 9 international govern-
ment agencies, 53 professional societies, 18 treatment
resources, 12 recovery organizations and resources, and
the online presence of 78 journals and newsletters. This
long listing has been evaluated for accuracy within the
past year.

http://www.addictionresourceguide.com/
profresources1.html#Research
Addiction Resource Guide - Resources for Professionals.
This site links to 10 addiction research centers.

NIAAA National Research Centers.
The Alcohol Research Centers have been established
through the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Al-
coholism (NIAAA). The 15 Alcohol Research Centers
provide long-term support for interdisciplinary research
that focuses on alcohol abuse, alcoholism, and other al-
cohol-related problems; encourage involvement of out-
standing scientists; and become significant regional or
national resources.

http://www.niaaa.nih.gov/intramural/web_dicbr_hp/
PrinInvest-text.htm
NIAAA Intramural Research - Principal Investigators.
The name, title, laboratory, unit/section, email, and
phone of 21 NIAAA intramural researchers are provided.

NIDA National Drug Addiction Treatment Clinical Tri-
als Network. In an effort to dramatically improve treat-
ment throughout the country, the National Institute on
Drug Abuse (NIDA) has established a clinical trials net-
work to more rapidly move promising science-based
drug addiction treatments into community settings.
While there are five sites listed here, feedback from a
SALIS member mentioned that there are now 17 clinical
trials sites.

http://www.samhsa.gov/counters/csat2002/funding.html
SAMHSA Grant Funding Awards.
This site offers an alternative method for finding organiza-
tions involved in atod research. Throughout the many
levels and windows, one can locate centers by first ex-
ploring the various funding sources of SAMHSA
(Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Admini-
stration).

After reviewing the options, my patron was pleased with
the precise list she was able to assemble, and both she
and I are thankful to the invaluable assistance from
SALIS members.

This article highlights the importance of—and benefits of-
-SALIS membership: back-up reference assistance, ac-
tive listserv, prompt communication, peer interaction,
knowledge sharing, professional cooperation, and cus-
tomer satisfaction!

Spring Notes
from the Editor

If I had written this any earlier, it would have contained
some notes relating to my garden. But given this “eve of
destruction” my mood is somber, as I wonder about those
whose gardens will no longer be....

This issue of the News is unusual in that we have five
contributors, who don’t usually write for the newsletter.
And one of these has done two pieces!

Bette Reimer’s ATOD “Virtual Clearinghouse” is fea-
tured to draw attention to the need for gaining US part-
tners in this endeavor. Remember that SALIS has been
supporting this project since its inception and as librari-
ans and information specialists we need to be vocal in
promoting this innovation and seeking partners who will
join. Please do take some time to read and then look at
the site.

Both Eric Helmuth and David Man have written about
their respective websites, Eric under the Websites col-
umn, normally Samantha Helfert’s domain, and David’s,
a separate piece. He has also written the book review for
this issue, about the “literary side” of addictions.

Barb Weiner’s “Who you gonna call?” article succinctly
sums up the importance of SALIS’s Listserv and how it
constantly supports and facilitates our daily work.

Eve Congreve reminds us of the similarities and differ-
ences we all share in our respective libraries and informa-
tion centers, and gives us key sites relating to the re-
search and projects taking place in Australia.

Our 25th Anniversary is only a month away, and I am
gathering “Memories” for a history of SALIS presenta-
tion. I’ve also asked that people bring photos of past
conferences to put in our Anniversary Album. See List
messages from me dated 3/5/03 and 3/20 /03.

Sheila and team have put together a conference program
to stimulate the mind and remind us that these venues are
for fun too. I hope most of you will be there to celebrate
with us. But in any case do send me your memories and
pictures!!!!! Following the conference, they will go up
on the Website.
UNDER THE INFLUENCE: The Literature of Addiction

SALIS librarians most often handle the addiction literature from the perspective of outcomes, trends, pathways, demographics, etc. all of which are aimed at trying to answer such basic questions as: what causes addiction and how can it be best treated or prevented?

However, it is refreshing and useful sometimes to step back from the objective framework of the observing social sciences and to instead view addiction from the perspective of the addict. Over the past two hundred years or so a literary tradition has emerged which has drawn on the experience of those who have themselves gone through the seduction, the oblivion, the torment and the horrors that constitute much of an addict’s life, or so we are told. This new anthology “Under the Influence: The Literature of Addiction” has culled some of the best examples from this tradition and presents a powerful vision of what addiction is about.

Reading through the works represented in this anthology, it is instructive to observe ‘the unending chase’ to recapture that ‘fleeting ecstatic moment’ when the future addict, like a fly in a spider’s web, first enters a place which will not easily give him up, and even possibly destroy him. That world can barely be understood from the social-science literature, but it can be more so through the writings of those who have been there and who were or are fortunate enough to have survived it and to report their experiences of it. Some do better than others, some even flourish momentarily, but all share in the ultimate struggle to escape.

As Peter Hamill notes in his introduction: “Each tale of human addiction is as different as one individual is from another...They begin with the tentative entry into Paradise, usually through the discovery of a magic potion. Or pill. Or powder...Then, sometimes swiftly, usually more gradually, the addict begins the Descent...The next stop is Hell...”. Powerful stuff indeed, however, one perspective not presented here is a non-western view where drug taking has been successfully integrated into ritual and functions to heighten spiritual experiences in a manner that does not threaten the annihilation of the individual. Instead, this anthology is firmly rooted in the western tradition where the steady drum beat of the consequences of addiction includes: crime, depression, despair, suicidal thoughts, etc. It is also useful to be reminded, as some of the selections in the anthology do, of how our attitudes towards drugs have changed. For example, Freud’s enthusiastic endorsement of cocaine, presaging those of psychotherapists in the 1960’s for LSD and those of the 1980’s for MDMA.

Although anthologies of this type have appeared at regular intervals, this latest addition is best characterized for its careful choice of writers, which together put on a dazzling display of literature that captures with consistent success the allure, escape, and pain of addiction. It also contains many works that were in fact created while “under the influence” and so in a sense is well balanced. Contributors include: Frederick and Steven Barthelme, Kate Braverman, William S. Burroughs, Emily Carter, John Cheever, Sigmund Freud, O. Henry, Aldous Huxley, Jack London, Dorothy Parker, Edgar Allan Poe, Thomas de Quincey, Donna Steiner, Sue William Silverman, Leo Tolstoy, Abraham Verghese, and Linda Yablonsky.

New From NIAAA


From NIAAA’s web site: “Brings together information on the etiology and consequences of alcohol abuse and alcoholism among American Indians. Also discusses the following topics in relation to American Indians and Alaska Natives: genetic susceptibility to alcoholism, community alcohol control programs, treatment and prevention programs, alcohol and HIV/AIDS, fetal alcohol syndrome, alcohol in the lives of women, alcohol-related motor vehicle fatalities, and alcohol-related violence.”

Editor’s Note: All SALIS members who requested NIAAA publications on their membership application will receive this monograph.

DON’T FORGET TO VOTE

Ballots must be submitted to SALIS Home by April 18, 2003 or at the conference. If you are mailing the ballot to SALIS Home, please put your name on the outside of the envelope NOT on the ballot.
**New Books**

*By Andrea L. Mitchell, Librarian*

Alcohol Research Group
Berkeley, CA


(Continued on page 11)


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