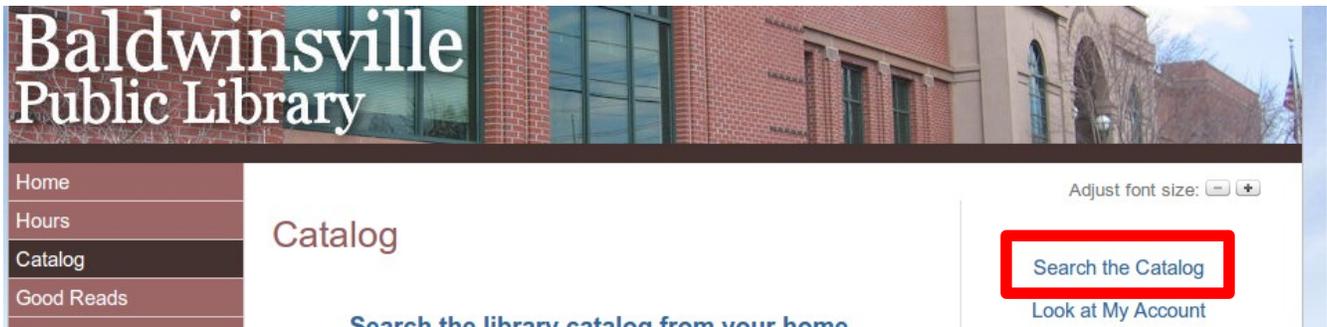# Using the Library's Print Collection

Robert F. Loftus, MSLIS

In libraries the phrase "Print Collection" refers to a collection of physical items such as books, maps, leaflets, etc. These are the items that people traditionally associate with libraries. To search the print collection at the Baldwinsville Public Library you use the *OPAC* (On-line Public Access Catalog) You can start at one of the OPAC terminals in the library, or by using the Catalog link on the library website. To begin your search using the website, click on the *Search the Catalog* link at the top right of the library homepage.

This brings you to the Onondaga County Public Library's Online Catalog. Two key elements to be mindful of when using the OCPL Online Catalog are the *Search by* and *Limit by* fields.

The *Search by* field allows you to select which category of information you're searching for. The default setting is *Any Field*, which can lead to a lot of unfocused results. For example, if you were searching for a book written by an author with the last name of "Carpenter", just putting that name into the search-box would return unwanted results about wood-working. To specify that you want items by

authors with the name *Carpenter,* click the down arrow-head, and in the drop-down box that appears select *Author*. If you are looking for a book with a particular title, you can select *Title* from the drop-down box and enter words from the title of the book. It isn't always necessary to enter the exact title of the book, a few keywords will often suffice. Another option to speed your search is to use quotation marks. When you do a search using quotation marks the system will give preference to titles that are an exact match for both the words, and the word order that you have in quotes. For example, if you search for the phrase "Hunger Games" with the quotation marks you'll only get titles that have the exact phrase "hunger games" in the title. For additional help using the Baldwinsville Public Library and Onondaga County Public Library OPAC you can either click the *Click here for tips and instructions* button on the OPAC search page, or refer to the OCPL Catalog Frequently Asked Questions page, which includes a series of tutorials to help hone your search skills.