Exploring Careers in Archives and Special Collections

Thursday August 16, 2018
12-1PM Central Time
Panelists

Curtis Small
Special Collections Department
University of Delaware Library

Jose C. Guerrero
Penn State University Libraries

Nathaniel Moore
The Freedom Archives

Maria Victoria Fernandez
John Carter Brown Library
Brown University
Why this webinar?

The lack of diversity in Special Collections/Archives:

- Hiring and retention issues
- Need for greater awareness regarding diversity of collections; discoverability
- Need for greater cultural awareness in presenting materials
# Racial demographics: Rare Books & Manuscripts Section (RBMS)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1997</th>
<th>2015</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afr. Amer./Hispanic</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Native Amer./Alaskan Native</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>3%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Asian/Pacific Islander</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1%</td>
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| Source: RBMS Member surveys
Curtis Small
Coordinator, Public Services
Special Collections
University of Delaware Library
Newark, Delaware
Coordinator of Public Services - Responsibilities

Public-facing Services

• Support for researchers – reading room, virtual

• Exhibitions - curation, coordination

• Teaching and learning - books, manuscripts, etc.

• Outreach activities

Images: www.library.udel.edu
Photographer: Sean Diffendall
Instructional Collaboration: *Issues and Debates in African American Literature*

- Collaboration with faculty member
- Based on gallery exhibition
- Student research extends exhibition scope
- Student presentations part of exhibition programming
Instructional Collaboration: Langston Hughes ephemera

- Grant funded collections-based course
- Students create digital collection
- Student-curated library exhibition

Langston Hughes ephemera collection

Biographical and Historical Notes

Langston Hughes, a prominent African American author, was born in Joplin, Mississippi, in 1902. He began his career during the Harlem Renaissance. In his 1926 essay “The Negro Artist and the Racial Mountain,” Hughes criticized African American literary conventions. In contrast, much of Hughes’s poetry is written in the language of the African American vernacular.

Top Image: detail of finding aid for Langston Hughes ephemera collection (Univ. of Del.)
Left image: materials from Langston Hughes ephemera collection
Photographer: Curtis Small
Right image: portrait of Langston Hughes by Carl Van Vechten [public domain] via Wikimedia Commons
Curatorial Work in Academic Libraries’ Special Collections

Jose C. Guerrero
Resident Librarian
Pennsylvania State University
jcg38@psu.edu
Collections and Community

• A false dichotomy

• Publics gather around “matters of concern.”

• Purveyors
  • Donors
  • Dealers
Background: Where I Am and How I Go There
Background: Where I Am and How I Go There

Where I am:

• University Park campus, Central Pennsylvania

• 40,000 students

• Special Collections contain rare books, labor archives, and the University Archives

• Instruction, exhibitions, collection development, technical services, public services
Background: Where I Am and How I Go There

*Where I am:*

- University Park campus, Central Pennsylvania
- 40,000 students
- Special Collections contain rare books, labor archives, and the University Archives
- Instruction, exhibitions, collection development, technical services, public services

*How I got here:*

- MLIS from Wayne State University
- IMLS-RBS Fellowship
- Colorado Antiquarian Book Seminar
Projects: The Sanchez Library

Historia de la conquista de México [microform] : población y progresos de la América Septentrional, conocida por el nombre de Nuevo España / escrita por Antonio de Solís.

Solís, Antonio de, 1610-1686.

Local system #: LIAS160597
Local system #: (OCcu)C42967280
Personal Author: Solís, Antonio de., 1610-1686.
Title: Historia de la conquista de México [microform] : población y progresos de la América Septentrional, conocida por el nombre de Nuevo España / escrita por Antonio de Solís.
Publication Info: Madrid : Imp. de los hijos de C. Piñuela, 1829-
Physical Description: volumes ; 16 cm
Content type: text
Media type: microform
Format: microfilm reel
General Note: First ed., Madrid, 1685.
General Note: On spine: Conquista del Nuevo Mundo.
Local note: Archival master and print master stored at National Underground Storage, Boyers, PA. ; service copy stored at remote facility.
Subject: Mexico--History--Conquest, 1519-1540
Series: Luis Alberto Sánchez History and Political Science collection on microfilm.
Demands Made of Dr. C. L. Lewis, Vice-President for Student Affairs, by the Douglass Association on May 13, 1968

1. More black undergraduates. There are presently only about 200 black students attending the University. The Douglass Association demanded that the undergraduate enrollment include 400 black students by the fall of 1968. 1,000 by the following fall and 10 per cent of the undergraduate population thereafter.

2. That a building be named after and dedicated to the late Rev. Martin Luther King.

3. That a Martin Luther King scholarship fund be established.

4. That a course in Negro history be made a permanent part of the curriculum.

5. More black professors.

6. More black graduate students.

7. That a section of Pattee Library be devoted exclusively to black authors.

8. Reevaluation of the athletic recruiting program with regard to black students.


10. Black coaches for the athletic teams.

11. More black literature offered in the University's English courses.

12. The introduction of an African culture study program.

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BLACK STUDIES PROGRAM
WINTER TERM
1979

Anthropology 45 Cultural Anthropology MWF 1 Abed
Community Development 7 Intro to Community Systems See Sched Fitch
Community Development 201 Youth and Societies MWF 1 Perine
Comparative Literature 104 Intro to African Literature MWF 4 Male
Economics 424 Urban Economics MWF 2 Maslenko
English 470 Literature of British Commonwealth MWF 4 Mann
French 458 African Lit of French Expression MWF 6 Male
Political Science 464 Governments & Politics of Africa MWF 6 Callagh
Rural Sociology 425 Poverty Analysis: People & Programs MWF 4 Van Horn
Sociology 415 The Urban Community MWF 1 Humphrey
Sociology 419 Race Relations TTH 15 Taylor

These courses are offered by the appropriate departments. They may be used to satisfy the requirements for the African, Afro-American and Black Studies Options. For further information on these options, please contact Mr. Virginius Thornton in 117 Old Main phone, 865-0458.

9/18/78
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NEW YORK, N.Y. 10013

Pattie Library
Pennsylvania State University
University Park, PA
att: C. Korn

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- Gray. Gospel of Slavery 42.50
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- Cruswell. A Defense of the Negro Race 45.00
- Dandies-The Black Art Collection of Primitive African Art 15.00
- Deep Rivers - 60 Broshides 15.00
- The Crucible 3 vol. 10.00
- Cunningham. U.S. 20.00
- Thurman. Negro Life in New York's Harlem 5.00
- Hillier. American Negro and his Problems 5.00
- Anderson. From doctrines to playwrite 20.00
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- Loflin. Barefoot Beatitudes 4.00
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- Parker. Opinion of... The Scottsboro Case 5.00
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- Newsom. A Gallup Code in Texas 10.00
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Farm Worker Press, Inc.
Box 1060
Delano, Calif.

Send Form 349 to:
Farm State Labor Education
209 Engineering Bldg.
University Park, Cal.

10¢
Resources

• Know your colleagues (acquisitions, technical services, and subject specialists—but dealers too)!
• Visit book fairs – www.bookfairs.com
• Visit bookshops – www.abaa.org
• Read dealer catalogs – www.abaa.org; EXLIBRIS-L
• Institutional history
The Freedom Archives

522 Valencia Street
San Francisco, CA 94110
www.freedomarchives.org
search.freedomarchives.org
The Work We Do

Preserve the Past – Illuminate the Present – Shape the Future

The Freedom Archives is a non-profit educational archive located in San Francisco.

• Preserve historical audio, video and print materials documenting progressive movements and culture from the 1960s to the 1990s.

• Create educational materials using archival materials to connect historical struggles with contemporary issues and movements.

• Maintain an internship program, conduct educational outreach and work collaboratively with community to build a more just future.
The Founders
The Internship Program

- Since 2003, the Freedom Archives has maintained an active youth development program that encourages engagement with historical materials, the development of reading/writing/critical thinking skills and provides media production training as well as fostering a love for progressive history.

- All internships are shaped around the specific student, their interests and their goals for the internship experience. This aspect of the program is a key element of sustaining the initial spirit that generated the materials; a genuine desire to empower young people to explore, question, challenge and create their own narrative.

- Our goal is to further liberate archive and library spaces and empower young people to engage, learn, imagine, re-define, challenge, understand, and create history.
In the Archives
Accomplishments

• The Vinyl Project (2003) – 12” vinyl record was the culmination of extensive audio editing and contains very short, dramatic, and historic sound bites for use by spoken word and performance artists, and DJs.

• A video and supplemental one-page leaflet containing step-by-step directions on how to locate and properly address a letter to a friend or loved one in a California prison.

• Classroom curricula, countless archival collections, online book supplements, timelines, etc.
Experiences at the Archives...

“There is a profound power in hearing, reading, and seeing these marginalized histories and narratives directly. It wasn’t hard to get lost down the rabbit hole that is the Archives, that’s for sure. I felt privileged and humbled to actually hear the voices of resistance fighters, read through meeting notes on the work of artists to combat imperialism, or view art and posters of resistance and justice. It makes me imagine a parallel universe: what if a core part of our public education system was to just let all students loose in archives like these? What would happen? How would students become more curious, more critical? How would minds be liberated? What movements would form, what fights, how would the future of our country and world be transformed? These typically erased histories, legacies, knowledge—they are vital. I hope that, like me, more people will find their way here to the Archives, making that parallel universe a little bit more of a reality.” (January 2018)
Lessons to Share

• Demystify who makes history, libraries, archives, intellectual spaces and challenge accepted notions of power and knowledge production.

• All skill sets are transferrable – even if we don’t end up working in archives or special collections how can we center empowerment, community engagement and challenge systems of oppression in all the work we do?
  • Content and Practice

• Building community is vital to building power.
The Intersection of Special Collections & Digital Scholarship

María Victoria Fernández

Assistant Curator for Digital Outreach
John Carter Brown Library
maria_victoria_fernandez@brown.edu
Digital Engagement and Curation
Opportunities at the Intersection of Special Collections & Digital Scholarship

• Digital engagement and curation

• Digital asset management and preservation

• Metadata records and linked open data: searching across institutions and collections

• Expand computational use of digitized cultural heritage collections
Collections as Data

Always Already Computational

Social Networks and Archival Context
Rare Books and Manuscripts Section

Association of College and Research Libraries
A Division of the American Library Association

- Professional standards and practices
- Annual Conference
- Scholarly Journal (RBM)
- Conference Attendance Scholarships
- Mentoring Program
- Professional Development Resource Guide
- RBMS Diversity Stories

Images from www.rbms.info.org
RBMS Diversity Stories

Learning Opportunity: Rare Book School, University of Virginia

- Courses in book history, bibliography, etc.
- Global History of the Book courses and fellowship opportunities
- RBS-RBMS Diversity Fellowship: two per year
- Several other scholarships and fellowships

Images from www.rarebookschool.org
Learning & Professional Development Opportunities

- ARL/SAA Mosaic Program Scholarship
- ARL Initiative to Recruit a Diverse Workforce
- ALA Spectrum Scholarship
- SAA Scholarships
- SAA Mentoring Program
- AERI Emerging Archival Scholars Program
- ALA ALCTS Preservation & Reformatting Section (PARS)
- Minnesota Institute for Early Career Librarians
Thank you and feel free to reach out to us!

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Jose Guerrero  jcg38@psu.edu

Nathaniel Moore  nathaniel@freedomarchives.org

Maria Victoria Fernandez  maria_victoria_fernandez@brown.edu
Q&A Session

What is your interest in Special Collections and Archives?

What questions or comments do you have about the profession?