The Hundred Tongues of Rumour

Propaganda from the English Civil War. Photo by Patrick Montero

BY NICHOLAS LASINSKY ’23

In a newsletter devoted to

Haverford’s libraries, it is perhaps not unreasonable to ask you, dear reader, to pause for a moment to consider the role of information in your life. We are surrounded by information, inundated by it each and every day, and we also confront those falsehoods and misdirections broadly known as “misinformation.” The ability to recognize the role that propaganda, persuasion, and rumor play in our lives is incredibly important. During the summer of 2021, through the Haverford Libraries’ Joseph O’Donnell Internship, I was privileged to curate an exhibit investigating this topic.

Given the prompt of “information and misinformation,” I was tasked with examining Haverford’s Quaker & Special Collections for items relevant to the story of fact and fiction throughout history. Eventually, I settled on the theme of crisis, with the hope that by examining different moments in the past when resources were limited, when human beings were stretched to their limit by war, disease, moral conundrums, or crises of faith, I could gain a better understanding of how we process chaos and how we are deeply susceptible to lies when we crave clarity the most.

In the course of my research, I identified four areas of focus, each highlighting a different way that the truth has been bent and broken in different times and places. My first area of interest revolved around the Yellow Fever epidemic that struck Philadelphia in 1793, unleashing a wave of rumor and chaos that shook the city, and provided a remarkable example of the way that the confusion generated by a crisis can be inculcated into accepted

From the Librarian

BY TERRY SNYDER

As the great jazz composer, pianist, and singer Fats Waller sang: “This joint is jumpin’… it’s really jumpin’!”

While we refrained from urging students to “get your jug and cut the rug,” the liveliness in the building as finals approached mirrored Waller’s creativity and rhythmic contagion. And very fortunately that’s the only contagion we’re talking about here; thanks to the administration’s well-managed COVID protocols, the Libraries continued to welcome students into our physical spaces.

Amid the busyness of semester-end research, writing papers, and preparing for finals, students enjoyed bountiful opportunities to take breaks and clear their heads by considering other interesting topics. The curatorial talks complementing this array of exhibitions proved interesting and insightful. The excitement of students presenting their findings was palpable and profound.

Lectures this semester also generated another kind of vibrancy. Paulina Ochoa Espejo, the William Penn Foundation Professor of Political Science, presented on her recently published book, *On Borders: Territories, Legitimacy, and the Rights of Place*, which takes a place-based approach to solving questions and problems surrounding use and governance of

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transnational resources. The Libraries organized additional lectures featuring Saidiya Hartman, author of Wayward Lives, Beautiful Experiments, in conversation with professors Asali Solomon and Lindsay Reckson, and another by Jessica Marie Johnson on “Slavery, Soil, and Black Life as Data.” These lectures represented a range of in-person, virtual, and hybrid formats; all drew strong attendance.

While these events brought an energy to the Libraries, the collaborative physicality of the spaces also invited engagement. We are thrilled to see students return to the Libraries as one of the central, safe gathering spaces on campus. This spring semester we gratefully celebrated the dedication of our music library which opened in the fall. [See Connections, Spring 2021, for more information.] Students, staff, and faculty alike remain delighted by the open and inviting spaces, the large stack area that brings music collections together, and the exhibition cases, that, last semester, celebrated music at Haverford over the years. If you want to hear recordings of Fats Waller or listen to any other outstanding music, join us at the Nan and Bill Harris Music Library.

Regardless of which library you visit, you’ll find that across the system, things are jumpin’.

— Terry Snyder is librarian of the College

Pamphlets studied by Richard Thompson, a conscientious objector to the Vietnam War. Photo by Patrick Montero

“Noah D. Smith ’23 is a double major in English and history.

“The Hundred Tongues of Rumour” is on display in the Rebecca and Rick White Gallery in Lutnick Library from December 15, 2021 through July 22, 2022.”
Streaming Media Study at Haverford College

BY ANNA FODDE-REGUER, ELLEN GARRISON, AND NORM MEDEIROS

Haverford is one of 24 institutions in the United States, Canada, and Germany participating in a study of streaming media use for teaching and learning. Administered by Ithaka S+R, the non-profit organization behind JSTOR, the study seeks to answer five research questions:

• How are academic libraries licensing streaming media?
• How do libraries monitor and assess the impact of the streaming media they provide?
• How are library users’ practices, perspectives, and needs relating to streaming media, and their libraries’ role in providing access to streaming media, evolving?
• What realistic pricing model should libraries seek in addressing the needs of their users and their resources?
• How can libraries effectively negotiate better terms with streaming media providers?

The study will utilize findings from a survey distributed across academic libraries in the United States to determine particular challenges faced by libraries in the discovery, licensing, acquisition, and costs associated with streaming media. These survey results will be complemented by interviews with instructors at participating institutions regarding their use of streaming media. The authors have recently completed interviews with six Haverford faculty members whose pedagogy relies on film. Among the insights we’ve gleaned from these interviews are:

• Language faculty often use film to expose students to language and cultural explorations made possible by such media.
• The audio and visual quality of film is more pressing for visual studies faculty than it is for language faculty, for whom the accessibility of particular films is of greater importance. Acquiring streaming films that meet requested artistic requirements can prove challenging, as can acquiring specific versions of films.
• Some faculty are unclear about the Libraries’ role in acquiring streaming films. For example, faculty asked questions regarding public performance rights fees and who is responsible for paying them; license renewal terms; the temporary nature of most streaming licenses; and linking to streaming films via course pages on Moodle. Faculty also stated confusion about platforms, terms of use, and pricing due to the diffuse nature of the current market.
• Streaming technology can be problematic for faculty and students for a variety of reasons (e.g., internet connections, platform differences), particularly when faculty are trying to promote group discussion remotely.
• The COVID-19 pandemic and associated quarantines have spurred a recognition among faculty of both the advantages and drawbacks to using streaming media in place of DVDs.

After each of the 24 participating institutions completes its interviews this spring, Ithaka S+R will use the anonymized interview transcripts and survey responses to inform a public report on the state of streaming media in academia. We hope this report will galvanize academic libraries to pressure the streaming media marketplace for improved brokering, terms of use, and pricing.

— Anna Fodde-Reguer is research & instruction librarian
— Ellen Garrison is acquisitions specialist
— Norm Medeiros is associate librarian of the College & coordinator for collection management and metadata services
Recent Exhibitions in Lutnick Library

The Art of Politics: Black Lives Matter Murals in Minneapolis

CURATED BY JACK WEINSTEIN ’23

Due to popular demand, “The Art of Politics,” curated by Jack Weinstein ’23, remained open through February. The exhibition featured Jack’s photographs taken in his hometown of Minneapolis following the murder of George Floyd. The Uptown Association of the Twin Cities invited artists to paint murals, and Jack saw an opportunity to document art before it was lost to ephemerality. Classes continue to visit the exhibition as part of their own inquiry.

Narrative Beyond the Monolith: An Exhibition of Bi-Co Intersectional Lived Experiences Through Artifacts

CURATED BY KIMIKO SUZUKI

In the words of Kimiko Suzuki, “This exhibition showcases the lived experiences of different people within the Bi-Co community through artifacts [they have created] that amplify and document their stories. When we engage in conversations about diversity and inclusion, we often focus on monolithic categories of identity. In doing so, we not only lose sight of the different experiences within categories such as race, gender, and socioeconomic status, but also how these various identity markers intersect and create unique perspectives and struggles.”

These Are My Roots: A Journey Through Co-Education at Haverford

CURATED BY TALIYAH EVANS ’24

In celebration of Women’s History Month, Taliyah Evans ’24 curated an exhibit entitled, “These Are My Roots: A Journey Through Co-Education at Haverford College.” Drawing on materials from the College Archives, the exhibit, which was co-sponsored by GRASE, highlighted Haverford’s move to co-education, the creation of the Women*s Center, and the leadership of Black and Brown women on campus.

Overheard: Voices on the Underground Railroad at the Lutnick Library

CURATED BY SALLY BERGER AND THE STUDENTS of “Reframed: Enactment and Reenactment in Popular Culture, Digital Media, and Contemporary Art”

This exhibit is a collaboration with Marisa Williamson, the visiting artist-in-residence at Haverford for the visual studies course, “Reframed: Enactment and Reenactment in Popular Culture, Digital Media, and Contemporary Art,” taught by Sally Berger in fall 2020. Students in the class selected materials from Quaker & Special Collections that served as inspiration for parafictional objects created by the students. These parafictional objects are featured as part of Williamson’s visual art installation, “Seedbed” (2022), which is featured in “Performing Past-Present: Transforming Reenactment” in the Cantor Fitzgerald Gallery. The exhibit in Lutnick Library showcases the materials from Quaker & Special Collections and discusses how the students used them to create their parafictional objects.
Black History Month 
Book Drawing: The Office of Multicultural Affairs 
Book Giveaway for Black History Month 2022 
► BY DENISE ALLEN

Beautiful books! To celebrate Latinx Heritage and Black History months, the Office of Multicultural Affairs organized a broad array of programming, including exhibitions of noteworthy books. For each celebration, students selected titles by Latinx and Black authors, which the Libraries installed as inviting displays in Lutnick Library. Interested students scanned a QR code on a nearby poster to enroll in a drawing held at the close of the month-long celebrations. These great books brought even greater intellectual, literary, and cultural awareness, not to mention lots of smiles. Many thanks to the Office of Multicultural Affairs!

Single Sign-On Comes to EZBorrow 

► BY ROB HALEY

White band, blue band. If you see someone on Haverford’s campus reading a book encircled with either of these book bands, that book has arrived from another library via interlibrary loan (ILL). If you have placed an interlibrary loan request and the book arrives with a white band wrapped around it, this means that your vigilant ILL specialist has searched for a lender and personally selected the institution from which to obtain the title. If the book arrives with a blue band, you are the recipient of an algorithm-filled request through the EZBorrow system, a resource-sharing system supported by Partnership for Academic Library Collaboration and Innovation (PALCI), a regional cooperative to which Haverford belongs. The EZBorrow algorithm selects a library from the PALCI network of more than 60 member libraries and places the request.

I like to think of EZBorrow as a “gateway” ILL service because of its simplicity: Patron needs book. Patron requests book. Book arrives. Since the EZBorrow network is limited to regional libraries, the book arrives within a few days. While this network of libraries doesn’t have everything our patrons need, it does include some powerhouse research institutions (like the University of Pennsylvania) as well as some small liberal arts libraries with impressive collections (Haverford, for example!).

For years, the only hitch to the simplicity of EZBorrow was the login process. A patron needed to enter their library ID number in order to log in. Of course, a patron must know their number in order to enter it. And in order to find that number, a patron must know to look on the front of their HaverCard. (We had a message to this effect in the EZBorrow request form to help users). While this login procedure had remained the same for 20 years, most other library services were increasingly available to patrons via the same credentials employed to log into their email or any other College service. This consolidation of credentials has a name: single sign-on, or SSO. Members of the Haverford community use SSO for nearly every aspect of digital life on campus. EZBorrow remained an outlier until now.

Last August, the EZBorrow system migrated to an open source platform. “Open source” often means “work in progress,” and the early days of the new EZBorrow proved this point. I think of an open source project as, for example, a robot built by a team of smart amateurs, instead of one built by a company. The latter is ready out of the box, but it’s hard (or impossible) to tweak its performance. The former robot might begin with only basic functions, but as its team works with it, they add more helpful modifications.

And so it was with EZBorrow. During the fall semester, our patrons needed the same library card number to log in that they did in previous versions. Improvements were promised, and promises were delivered.

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Anna-Alexandra Fodde-Reguer, research & instruction librarian, authored a recently-published entry on the Zhuangzi in the Database of Religious History.


New Staff:

Dee Brown, social science librarian, joined the Libraries in December 2021. Dee has a background in public librarianship, working in both adult and youth services. She graduated from Georgian Court University with a B.A. in English and from Drexel University with her M.L.I.S. When not at work, Dee enjoys immersing herself in the world of children’s picture books (for research and for fun) and hosting creative, family-oriented children’s programs for public libraries.

— Mike Persick is head of acquisitions & serials

BY SARAH HOROWITZ

The Libraries developed a statement on harmful descriptive language in 2021. The statement says that the Libraries “aim to create descriptions of our collections that are inclusive and respectful to those who are represented in and use those collections.” The Libraries recognize that there are descriptions in our catalogs and other databases that contain harmful language and biases, and we commit to reviewing and changing this offensive language whenever possible.

This spring, Quaker & Special Collections engaged in a major project to review and update descriptive language in our finding aids, which describe and index manuscript collections. The goal of this project is to reduce the prevalence of harmful language in these descriptions, and to center respect and care for the materials and the people represented in the collections. While Quaker & Special Collections staff have been reviewing and updating language on an ad-hoc basis for several years, this is our first large-scale project dedicated to this important work. We hired three interns to serve on this project: Alex Asal, Caitlin Peraria, and Nate Rehm-Daly ’16. Since February, the interns have reviewed and updated the descriptions for dozens of collections, equating to several hundred boxes of materials.

During this review, the interns evaluate both specific terms and the general tone of the finding aids. Sometimes this work involves adding more information to what is present. For instance, in a number of collections related to Indigenous Nations in the post-Civil War period, finding aids have been revised to include and prioritize the names these Nations use for themselves, while also connecting them to the names used by the 19th-century writers in the collections. Research conducted by the interns has made it possible to include the full names of women who had previously been referred to only as someone’s wife or “Mrs. Josiah White, for example” rather than by their full names. We are also revising overly laudatory descriptions of people and organizations.

All this work must be done thoughtfully and manually, rather than by using an automatic “find and replace” search, because there are cases in which language should not be changed, or where we need to completely rewrite certain aspects of a finding aid. One example is material in several collections related to the “New York Colored Mission,” an organization that offered cooking, sewing, carpentry,
The Lutnick Library building project, followed closely by the global COVID-19 pandemic, created a larger than normal backlog of Quaker collection books needing cataloging attention in fall 2021. The backlog includes new acquisitions: the final set of 100 or so books from the James Frorer Collection that was donated by Wilmington Friends School in 2015, as well as the miscellaneous books already in the Quaker collection that need to be re-cataloged or moved from the Quaker circulating collection to the Quaker rare books collection.

Most of the miscellaneous books in need of cataloging attention surfaced during the Libraries' major RFID tagging project in summer 2018, which occurred while the Quaker circulating collection was temporarily relocated offsite. During the tagging work, library staff and students set aside books for Curator of Quaker Collections Mary Crauderueff to review. Books were usually set aside because of their age or physical condition; because of missing or unlinked barcodes; or because they were housed in a single, protective bindery enclosure with other loose items (a legacy practice). Some books were set aside due to their visible provenance, as was the case when Acquisitions Specialist Ellen Garrison came across books that were inscribed by U.S. President Herbert Hoover to Haverford College President Felix Morley.

While the cataloging of recently published acquisitions is generally a straightforward process, the cataloging of older books is often more complex. Older books tend to have briefer catalog records in both Tripod and WorldCat, the collective catalog of over 10,000 international libraries, so it can take longer to find a record that matches the book in hand. When it comes to older books that are already in the Quaker collection, these brief catalog records can make it more difficult to assess exactly what is on the shelves. This means that the seemingly simple tasks of changing a book's physical location or adding a second copy can turn into mini-detective mysteries. By solving these mysteries, we're able to improve both access to and discovery of the Quaker collection.

These projects offer a preview of the kind of work that will be involved in upcoming library strategic plan initiatives. One initiative is to holistically assess which books in the Quaker circulating collection should be relocated to the Quaker rare books collection. The second and related initiative is to move the Quaker circulating collection into the general collection stacks of Lutnick Library. Currently, the Quaker circulating collection is located in a separate, card-accessed, alarmed room complete with its own HVAC system. The room will be repurposed as additional closed stacks space for Quaker & Special Collections materials. Increased familiarity with the cataloging complexities of the Quaker collection will put us in a better position when it comes time to develop workflows for these larger strategic projects.

— Emily Thaisrivongs is metadata librarian
Updating Harmful Language in Collection Descriptions

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and Bible instruction to African Americans. It is important to preserve the name so that researchers looking specifically for this organization can find it, while changing other instances of outdated and offensive language in the collection descriptions so that they reflect contemporary, respectful terminology.

While changing terminology and differences within groups mean that no description will ever be perfect, we hope that at the end of this project our descriptions will be better than they were. This work is informed by similar projects happening at other institutions, as well as by the “Anti-Racist Description Resources” by Archives for Black Lives Philadelphia. Revising description is not a one-time project, however, and such reviews will need to take place repeatedly over time as we continue to improve and refine the descriptions of materials Haverford is privileged to steward.

—Sarah Horowitz is curator of rare books and manuscripts & head of Quaker and Special Collections

Single Sign-On Comes to EZBorrow

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In January, EZBorrow entered the SSO age. Now, a patron need only know (or have their computer remember) their institutional login credentials. Haverford users can navigate to the “Borrow Beyond Trico” tab in Tripod, click EZBorrow, and begin a search. When a book is selected, the user is asked to log in with their SSO credentials. As a bonus, if the user is already logged into their library account, they don’t even have to authenticate!

The shelves of many libraries await your requests.

—Rob Haley is interlibrary loan specialist