



Community College

Library Notes

Library Media Resources Center

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Spring
2016

A Visit to Cuban Libraries



By **Liz Jardine**, *Metadata Librarian*

In January 2016, I was privileged to travel to Cuba with nine CUNY library colleagues for a weeklong visit to Havana. We went to make professional connections with librarians and archivists there to lay the groundwork for future collaboration. Leading the trip were Sarah Aponte, CUNY Dominican Studies Institute at City College; Kenneth Schlesinger, Lehman College; and Tess Tobin, City Tech. The rest of my fellow travelers were William Blick, Queensborough Community College; Silvia Cho, Graduate

Center; Maureen Garvey, College of Staten Island; Pedro Juan Hernandez, Center for Puerto Rican Studies at Hunter College; Manuel Sanudo, Queens College; and Judith Schwartz, Medgar Evers College.

Conditions surrounding travel to Cuba from the United States are evolving rapidly. At the time of our trip, one of the limited ways Americans could visit was on an educational tour with approved itinerary. Less than four months later, the first cruise ship sailed to Havana from Miami. Cuba is also a country in transition. You can still see horse-drawn carts driving down

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News from the Institutional Archives

By **Thomas Cleary**, *Institutional Archivist*

The Institutional Archives is happy to announce that we have recently received an in depth record collection from the College's Humanities Department! The John W. Williams Record Collection contains over a thousand vinyl records and music education filmstrips specializing in American Folk music, jazz and early electronic music. The collection was built up over John Williams' (1951-2006) roughly 30 year career as a professor and eventual Head of Performing Arts Area in the Humanities Department. It was primarily used as educational materials for

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Welcome to New Library Faculty

Ian McDermott
Instruction Librarian



Ian McDermott started in March as the new Instruction Librarian at LaGuardia Community College and begins at the Instructor rank. Previously, he was the Collection Development Manager at Artstor, where he led the process of acquiring image collections for the Artstor Digital Library from museums, libraries, and archives around the world. He also served as the Kress Fellow in Art Librarianship at the Yale Arts Library and later was the Assistant Librarian at the Yale Center for British Art. In addition to his instruction duties, Ian is serving as a liaison to the fine arts and photography programs, contributing to collection development in these areas while working to address their

unique research needs. His research interests include visual literacy, crowdsourcing software, and contemporary art. Ian holds a BFA in photography from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, an MLIS from the University of Pittsburgh, and as of this spring, an MA in art history from Purchase College, SUNY. Ian loves dance parties with his wife and baby daughter, listening to music you can't dance to on his own, watching and playing soccer, and agonizing over his beloved New York Mets. ■

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Editors

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Additional Faculty & Staff News

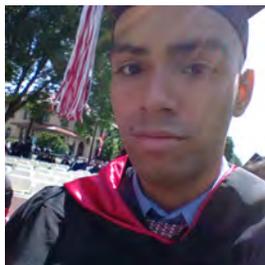
Some of you might know that **Chief Librarian Scott White** is on medical leave. His doctors discovered a brain tumor in early February and Scott suffered a stroke during the surgery to remove it. Luckily, the prognosis is good. Scott is working hard on rehabilitation and getting stronger every day. He's back home, under the watchful care of his wife Yola and his sons Owen and Luke. Scott's spirits are strong and he's ready to come back to work as quickly as possible.

Scott is always happy to entertain visitors. If you're interested, make sure you connect with his wife Yola (Nasrin Rahman, our department secretary, can help you with this). Scott has a lot of medical appointments, so his schedule can be complicated. If you want to bring food, it's always appreciated. Scott can't, however, eat leafy greens and broccoli. He's also always happy to sample sugar-free desserts.

Scott is checking email, taking phone calls, and sending texts, so there are plenty of ways to let him know you're thinking about him.

It's an understatement to say it's been a tough 2016 for Scott and his family. However, given his singular focus on healing and the amazing support of his family and friends, we're all confident Scott will be back at work in no time!

Circulation Assistant **Phillip Torres** graduated from LaGuardia this term. He earned an Associate in Arts degree in Writing and Literature. With this degree, coupled with his growing interest in literary media, he intends on pursuing a Bachelor's degree in Journalism at Baruch College. It is his goal to combine these two aspects of the literary world to aid him in his life-long goal of becoming an English Teacher. ■



LEFT: Phillip Torres at Commencement
RIGHT: Sharon Wilson Chambers (former student Circulation employee) and daughter Rachel Chambers (Commencement Representative for Graduation Class of 2016 and featured speaker for "Heads Up America")



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the College's music classes and contains a wide variety of artists and genres. We will be cataloging and processing the collection, aiming to have the collection open within the next few months.

The John W. Williams collection will also be one of the first collections to fall under the new collection scope of the Archives which will include a broader range of faculty, staff and student materials. With this new scope, we hope to capture the everyday life of LaGuardia, giving better insights into the culture of the College. If you have any questions on the collection or the Archive's new direction please contact Thomas Cleary (tcleary@lagcc.cuny.edu) or Elizabeth Jardine (ejardine@lagcc.cuny.edu). ■



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the side of highways, not to mention the vintage 1950s automobiles, for which the country is famous, alongside new SUVs. Travel could be unpredictable at times. We found hot water scarce in our hotels and elevators temperamental. We ran into venues that were closed and tried to alter our schedule to get back to them, but within the structure of a busy tour itinerary, we were not always successful. Flexibility was the traveler's friend on this trip.



To learn more about the city, we spent our first day touring Old Havana, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. I am interested in architecture and this was a feast for the eyes. The 18th-century Spanish colonial baroque style was evident in palaces and churches. More recent buildings were colorful with intricate ironwork and stained glass windows. While not all of the buildings were in the best shape, Havana is hard at work to restore more of the structures in this district.



As wonderful as the architecture and scenery of this country were, the stars of the trip were the libraries and, especially, librarians. We went to eight academic libraries, archives, public libraries and special libraries. Our Cuban colleagues were gracious hosts and shared their passion for their work. Their comments sounded not all that different from what I hear in the U.S. when discussing topics like the state of new college students' library knowledge or the importance of reading to very young children. But where the difference between us was apparent was in how they carry out their work given often severe limitations in technological infrastructure and funds. Several libraries doing digitization work remarked on problems with servers and available bandwidth. The central library at the Universidad de La Habana is very interested in free

software and open access resources due to funding constraints. They are even building their own online catalog from their digitized catalog cards, probably because their budget does not allow them to purchase an online catalog system--this reminded me of what libraries in the U.S. were doing 25 years ago. Also the university library has no off-campus access to their electronic resources and only 50 terminals in their computer lab providing on-campus access for 15,000 students.



This scenario of scarce technological resources played out across the libraries we visited with

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the notable exception of the Biblioteca Médica Nacional (BMN). Cuba's national medical library has an ample computer lab as well as several terminals in the lobby for user searching. It provides web space to the medical community across Cuba, for example for conferences. A web portal connects users to its virtual library, virtual university and subject portals maintained by medical specialists. The support the BMN receives is reflected in the strong reputation of Cuban medical care and health professionals.

In general I saw many old books and journals and fewer new ones on the shelves of these institutions. Here we teach our students not everything is available free on the Internet and to use the books and subscription databases we purchase for their use. Cuban libraries on meager budgets do not have access to many of the materials they need to teach and maintain scholarship, and the Internet will not be able to fill that gap. They also lack robust interlibrary loan infrastructure. Resource sharing in Cuba is manual as opposed to our computerized interlibrary loan systems. There you make phone calls, asking around to find who might have what you need.

The Open Access movement has many friends in Cuba. Open access is generally defined as publications that are online, free of charge, and free of many copyright and licensing restrictions. The university librarians were interested in new open access resources such as our own CUNY Academic Works institutional repository. While Cuban librarians and scholars often need access to quality resources, they are more than willing to share their own scholarship through open access as well. The librarians at BMN showed us 23 open access medical journals that are published in Cuba.

Both the national library and the university library have been working on newspaper digitization projects. These newspapers are fragile materials which need to be preserved before they are damaged or age beyond usability. In Cuba, digitization refers to materials being saved in digital format such as on a DVD or drive but not necessarily made available on the web (here are the server and bandwidth issues mentioned coming into play again). As long as they have been preserved, the access can always be added later. It is important work these libraries are doing to capture these materials in digital form before it is too late.



All the effort the librarians we met in Havana expended on dealing with fiscal and technological constraints on their work likely takes up a significant part of their time. This lessens the time they have for other important work. But Cuban librarians are dedicated to providing vital services to their users, often with little material support, and are determined to do whatever they need to get the job done. ■

14th Annual Thomson Avenue Film Festival

By **Terry Parker**, *Coordinator, Media Services*

On June 9th, the Thomson Avenue Film Festival celebrated its 14th season. The festival has continued to provide our students with an opportunity and vehicle to artistically express their creative filmmaking talents. Many of the former participants have moved on to receive recognition and awards from other festivals. In the very first year, it was evident that our students had the natural ability to inspire, educate, entertain, and be visionaries.

This year we are honored to collaborate with the nationally recognized Heads Up America Program established by President Barack Obama. The main goal of Heads Up is to make community college free for everyone. Here at LaGuardia, Heads Up America and the LaGuardia Foundation underwrote a Video Contest at this year's festival which awarded free tuition for one full semester to a lucky and deserving winner. The participating students made a 60 second video that answers the question: Why Would Free Community College be Key to the Nation's Success? The winner was announced and showcased at the film festival. Additional theme-oriented student films were presented throughout the evening. These films are the original and creative works of our New Media Program students and Alumni.



(Left to Right) LaGuardia President, Dr. Gail Mellow; first place winner, Jedglen Sandoval; LaGuardia Heads Up America Coordinator, Remy Patrick Lavilla

The 14 Annual Thomson Avenue Film Festival is sponsored by the Humanities department, the Media Studies department, the Library Media Resources Center, and the Student Government Association. ■

New DVD Loan Service Available to Students

By **Terry Parker**, *Coordinator, Media Services*

Students with validated CUNYfirst credentials will now be allowed to participate in a new trial DVD loan program. Until now, students were only allowed to borrow and use DVDs within the cozy confines of the Media Lab, or access titles via the on-campus only Streaming Media Service. Although the Library has over 1,000 DVD titles, the initial trial period will cover only 60% of the collection. The remaining titles will be available immediately in the Fall term. The collection consists of a vast array of documentaries and feature films covering many genres and subjects such as Action, Dramas, Business, Romance, Science Fiction, Political and Social Sciences, Natural and Applied Sciences, Sports, Travel, Mathematics, Comedies, History, Gender, and Ethnic studies. Many of the titles are captioned for students with special needs. The loan period for each DVD will be 4 days, with the application of late fees when warranted. ■

LaGuardia Librarians Visit United Nation's Dag Hammarskjöld Library

By **Alexandra Rojas**, *Coordinator, Reference & Ian McDermott*, *Instruction Librarian*



On April 15, 2016, members of the Library Association of the City University of New York (LACUNY) were treated to a tour of the United Nations' Dag Hammarskjöld Library, organized by Dr. Kanu Nagra of the Borough of Manhattan Community College and Alexandra de Luise from Queens College. Ramona Kohrs, the Library's outreach and development coordinator, provided an excellent tour of the physical space and a thorough overview of the library's services and collections.

Named after the second Secretary General of the U.N., the Dag Hammarskjöld Library's primary function is to support the research of U.N. community: member states' delegates and Secretariat staff. They accomplish this crucial service by collecting and preserving the U.N.'s official documentation— dating back to its previous incarnation as the League of Nations, established in the wake of World War II. Today, the Library collects books and periodicals concerning international affairs in addition to official U.N. publications: treaties, speeches, maps, voting records, and other documents relating to the General Assembly and Security Council. In particular, the Library contains a remarkable map collection, notable for its breadth of map types relevant to the study of conflicts, corporate history, and colonial studies, among other topics. All materials published after 1980 are discoverable via the Library's online catalog, UNBISnet; a card catalog is available for earlier publications.

Dag Hammarskjöld Library's staff also presented on their digitization efforts, reference services, and outreach efforts. Digitization of past and current documents is ongoing to increase accessibility. Over 17 million documents have been digitized to date. The Library has created excellent online research guides using the LibGuides platform to assist users. These guides are available in the six official languages of the U.N.: Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian, and Spanish. Online access is critical because, sadly, visitors are infrequently allowed to visit the U.N. due to security concerns. Since September 11, 2001, gaining access to the U.N.'s physical plant is difficult. This is obviously a shame as it limits access to the goings-on of a vital institution (we were told people used to stop by and watch the General Assembly) and prevents researchers from accessing a rich and unique library collection.

The U.N.'s headquarters (completed in 1952) is a marvel of midcentury modernism and houses fine examples by then-contemporary artists. The team commissioned to design the site included masters Oscar Niemeyer and Le Corbusier. The open floor plans flow into one another, a poignant symbol of the U.N.'s goal of international peace and solidarity. The Library, opened in 1961, was designed by Harrison and Abramovitz and Harris, a New York



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Faculty and Staff Highlights

- Media Services received an Appreciation of Service award from the Student Government Association (SGA).
- Professor **Dianne Gordon Conyers** was elected the ACRL/NY chapter interim president for 2016.
- Professor **Silvia Lin Hanick** published "Identifying Threshold Concepts for Information Literacy: A Delphi Study," written with Lori Townsend, Amy R. Hofer, and Korey Brunetti in *Communications in Information Literacy* 10.1. She also presented at LaGuardia's inaugural First Year Experience Conference and was a featured speaker for ALA's Library Instruction Round Table program titled "The Wonderful World of Library Instruction: Pedagogy and Practices to Inspire Teaching" on June 26 in Orlando, FL.
- Professor **Elizabeth Jardine** and Loretta Capuano presented the poster "One Right Answer: A Community College Library's Leap into Knowledge Management" at IFLA's 82nd World Library and Information Congress. She organized a panel presentation titled "Academic Works: Putting Our Assumptions on Trial" on March 25 for the LACUNY Scholarly Communications roundtable at Bronx Community College. Her trip to Cuba was covered in *Library Journal*, "CUNY Librarians in Cuba | Peer to Peer Review" - <http://lj.libraryjournal.com/2016/03/academic-libraries/cuny-librarians-in-cuba-peer-to-peer-review/#>.
- Professor **Galina Letnikova** published "CUNY Libraries Faculty Collaboration for Information Literacy Project Survey" in CUNY Academic Works institutional repository with Professor Barbara Gray from the CUNY Graduate School of Journalism.
- Professor **Ann Matsuuchi** published "The Doctor's Original Face: Watching Doctor Who Episodes as Buddhist Koans" in *Implicit Religion* 18.4 (2015): 485-497. DOI: 10.1558/imre.v18i4.29088. Prepub version is in Academic Works: http://academicworks.cuny.edu/lq_pubs/32/. She also published encyclopedia entries for: "Gay and Lesbian Asian Americans," "Japanese American Internment," and sidebars: "Executive Order 9066," "Hirabayashi v. the United States" and "George Takei" in Dong, Lan, ed. *Asian American Culture: From Anime to Tiger Moms*. Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2016. Print.
- **Ian McDermott** received a MA in Art History from Purchase College, SUNY.
- **Christopher McHale** received a MEd in Higher Ed. Administration from Baruch College.
- Professor **Alexandra Rojas** presented and organized the LACUNY Reference Roundtable, OneSearch Revisited: Impact on Reference and Instruction on April 1 at the Graduate Center. She attended the LEAD Workshop sponsored by the Council of Chief Librarians, was elected chair of the Academic Standing Committee and presented a poster session at the CUNY Research in the Classroom conference on March 11 at John Jay College.
- Professor **Catherine Stern** presented at the 2016 LACUNY Dialogues on Library Space on April 7.
- **Phillip Torres** received an AA in Writing and Literature from LaGuardia Community College.
- Professor **Alexandra Rojas**, Professor **Francine Egger-Sider** and Professor **Jane Devine** published "The Evolving Impact of The Invisible Web: Exploring Economic and Political Ramifications" in *Journal of Web Librarianship* 9.4 (2015): 145-161. DOI: 10.1080/19322909.2015.1077183
- Professor **Alexandra Rojas** and Professor **Dianne Gordon Conyers** presented "Integrating Information Literacy into Assignments" at ACRL/NY Instruction/Information Literacy Discussion Group on February 20.
- The LaGuardia Library was well represented at the 2016 SUNYLA Annual Conference/Binghamton University, June 8-10. Professor **Alexandra Rojas** and Professor **Dianne Gordon Conyers** presented "Designing Information Assignments for Literacy: An Open Web Resource." Professor **Francine Egger-Sider**, Professor **Louise Fluk**, Professor **Steve Ovadia** and **Christopher McHale** presented "Weeding without Walking: A List-Based Approach." ■

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architecture firm. The reading room is open and airy with excellent examples of modern Scandinavian furniture (Hammar skjöld was Swedish and we were told he played a role in selecting the furniture). The Library's beautiful reception room features a curving, waveform wall and ceiling made of wood on one side, and floor to ceiling windows on the other. Unfortunately, it is closed even for staff due to security concerns—it is adjacent to an on-ramp to the FDR Drive and therefore vulnerable to attack (which was covered by the New York Times). However, attendees were granted access to this lovely space—a perfect place to conclude the tour. One can only hope these spaces will eventually be open to all once again. ■