Ellen Chodosh Joins NYU Press

Book History Brought Up to Date

Old Media Meet Digital Forensics
Introducing Two New Libraries

Two new NYU campuses—and libraries—opened in fall 2014, one on Saadiyat Island, Abu Dhabi, and the other in Shanghai’s vibrant Pudong district. In Abu Dhabi, the library sits atop the multilevel Campus Center, a central gathering point. Photos 1 and 2: An airy stairway leads up to the main reading room and the service desk; 3: Students and faculty use this resource for digital and data support; 4: The main reading room. In Shanghai, the 15-story Pudong building is a vertical campus. Photos 5-7: The reading room and service desk; 8: The library entrance. Cover, top to bottom: The skylit ceiling and reading room 15-story Pudong building is a vertical campus. Photos 5-7: The reading room and service desk; 8: The library entrance. Cover, top to bottom: The skylit ceiling and reading room. In Shanghai, the 15-story Pudong building is a vertical campus. Photos 5-7: The reading room and service desk; 8: The library entrance. Cover, top to bottom: The skylit ceiling and reading room.

“Students and faculty in Shanghai and Abu Dhabi come to the library for brilliant personal service as well as access to all NYU Libraries’ resources.”
—Dean of Libraries Carol A. Mandel

Ellen Chodosh Named Director of NYU Press

Ellen Chodosh, formerly of Oxford University Press (OUP), has been named director of NYU Press, effective September 15, 2014. NYU Press is a unit of the Division of Libraries.

“NYU Press is a leader in developing sustainable academic publishing programs in the context of a rapidly changing publishing environment,” says Carol A. Mandel, Dean of the NYU Division of Libraries. “In our search we looked not only for deep expertise but also for the ability to engage with the tough issues of scholarly communication today. NYU Press has great momentum. Ellen Chodosh is ready to step in and continue our forward motion.”

American University of Beirut Brings Rare Content to Online Collection

The founding partners of Arabic Collections Online (ACO), a new, NYU-led project to digitize Arabic content and make it available to researchers around the world, have now been joined by American University of Beirut Libraries (AUB), one of the oldest academic collections in the Middle East, dating from 1862 and rich in rare titles on a wide variety of subjects. According to Guy Burak, librarian for Middle Eastern and Islamic studies, one of AUB’s most exciting contributions will be Iraqi state publications from the first half of the twentieth century. ACO now contains more than 200 volumes, including Arabic grammar, rhetoric, ethics, history, poetry, and literary criticism. Up to 300 titles will be added per month, drawn from the libraries of NYU, Columbia, Cornell, and Princeton, as well as AUB. The five-year project, funded by NYU, Columbia, Cornell, and Princeton, as well as AUB. The five-year project, funded by NYU, is designed to digitize Arabic content and make it available to research students, historians, the material format of text itself. So much so that Charlotte Priddle (r), Librarian for Print Books in Fales Library, and Professor Paula McDowell (l) of the English Department, designed a new book history course that updates the subject for digital natives. They will begin team-teaching Papyrus to PDF: An Introduction to Book History Now, in spring 2015. Priddle has been hosting visits to Fales Library by McDowell’s undergraduates for several years, sessions so popular that students suggested an entire course. The NYU Humanities Initiative awarded a development grant and high praise for the creativity of the curriculum.

“Book history investigates the production, dissemination, and readership of all kinds of textual materials, from papyrus to e-books,” says Priddle. “Our course offers a survey of key issues, historical moments, and transformations from oral culture to hypertext. To book historians, the material format of text itself matters. Working with external partners will help students learn how to ‘read’ books, manuscripts, and other texts not only as vehicles of meaning but also as meaningful artifacts in themselves.”

“Digital millennials, it turns out, are fascinated by the materiality of print. So much so that Charlotte Priddle (r), Librarian for Print Books in Fales Library, and Professor Paula McDowell (l) of the English Department, designed a new book history course that updates the subject for digital natives. They will begin team-teaching Papyrus to PDF: An Introduction to Book History Now, in spring 2015. Priddle has been hosting visits to Fales Library by McDowell’s undergraduates for several years, sessions so popular that students suggested an entire course. The NYU Humanities Initiative awarded a development grant and high praise for the creativity of the curriculum.

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Photo: Rebecca Pittam (1–4), Kylee Madison Borger (5–8)

NetGen Readers Want More Book History
What’s up with Julia Kim in the Digital Library Technology Services (DLTS) department, working with archaic technology like floppy disks and a version of Photoshop from 1999? “Media archaeology,” she says. Kim is digging for answers to an urgent question: Now that archivists are meeting the challenge of preserving born-digital material, what is the best way to make it discoverable and accessible?

Lisa Darms, senior archivist in Fales Library, and Donald Mennerich, digital archivist, designed a research project around this quest and proposed it to the National Digital Stewardship Residency (NDSR) program of the Library of Congress and the Institute of Museum and Library Services. The project was one of five funded, and it brings Kim to DLTS on a nine-month residency. A graduate of the Tisch Moving Image Archiving and Preservation program, Kim was selected by NDSR to work with Darms and Mennerich on born-digital material from the Fales Library Downtown Collection: the Jeremy Blake Papers and the Exit Art Archive.

“I find this project incredibly interesting because it is relatively unexplored territory for our field,” Kim says. “I’m seeing how policy happens.”

Kim is rapidly expanding the skills that won her the fellowship. “I’ve become fluent with multiple imaging techniques: hardware, software, and tools to image removable media,” she says, adding that she can now experiment with live-capture and explore write-blocked laptops. Kim is also learning about the non-technical side of archiving. “I participate in an archivists’ working group that standardizes new procedures,” she says. “I’m seeing how born-digital content needs to be processed and made available systematically, but we haven’t had the tools. Only in the past several years has digital forensics become a specialty.” Where did the tools come from? “They were developed for criminal investigation,” Kim says, explaining that the complexity of the project requires a multidisciplinary approach. “We draw from computer science, digital humanities, and art conservation, among other fields.”

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One of Kim’s favorite aspects of the work? “Each day brings a new wrinkle or unexpected problem,” she says. “And most of the time there’s no real best practice to follow.” To Kim, that’s why she’s here.

For a high school freshman in Flemington, N.J. Latin turned out to be not only a fascinating introduction to the ancient world, but also the gateway to a brilliant career. Professor Emeritus Mervin Dilts taught in NYU’s Classics Department from 1969 to 1997, working in Greek textual criticism, religion, and history, and translating Greek texts. Dilts had begun work on his Master’s degree in Classics at Indiana University when he made his first trip to Italy. He has since been back “forty or fifty times,” he estimates.

Dilts, a longtime supporter of the Libraries who helped build its Classics collection, recently gave Fales Library his lovingly amassed 149-volume collection through British auction catalogs and online booksellers. Each title conjures an image of travel in the grand style: “Six Months in Italy” by Richard Lassels, coiner of the term “Grand Tour.”

When in Rome, Dilts, who also earned his PhD in Classics at Indiana, could often be found in the Vatican Library. Other favorite places include Trastevere, the Campo de’ Fiori, and the galleries of the Villa Borghese—“a must,” he says. An afternoon in Fales Library with a volume or two from the Mervin Dilts Collection might be the next best thing.
New Faces

ANDREW BATTISTA
LIBRARIAN FOR GEOSPATIAL INFORMATION SYSTEMS
Formerly: Information Literacy and Reference Librarian, University of Montevallo, AL.
Education: PhD, English Literature, University of Kentucky; MA, MA and MLS, English Literature, University at Buffalo, NY; BA, English Literature, Eastern University, St. Davids, PA.

In my position, a new one, I am building spatial data collections to support research and promote geospatial literacy across departments. Geospatial Information Systems (GIS) has traditionally been the purview of experts, but now students and faculty in humanities, social sciences, and urban studies are using cloud-based platforms to do their own geospatial analysis. I collaborate with faculty to design geospatial projects for their curricula, and help students find data and manipulate the tools they need for projects like mapmaking. I want students to use Data Services as a resource where they can problem-solve through spatial thinking.

EIMMY SOLIS
LIBRARIAN FOR BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS
Formerly: Reference Associate, Business & Government Information Services, NYU.
Education: MLS, Long Island University Palmer School; MA, Business Education, NYU, BA, Economics, University of California, Berkeley.

I monitor shifts and trends in business and economics—for example, the growing importance of data to competitive intelligence, which brings faculty and students to me for help teaching with and using a variety of data and spatial analysis software, including DataStream and Bloomberg. Another trend that keeps getting stronger is entrepreneurship. More and more students, graduate and undergraduate, are thinking about starting their own businesses. As they develop business plans, they come to me to find sources and tools for identifying industry trends, demographics, and financial data.

APRIL M. HATHCOCK
SCHOLARLY COMMUNICATIONS LIBRARIAN
Formerly: Reference Librarian, Coleman Karseh Law Library, University of South Carolina School of Law.
Education: JD, LLM, International and Comparative Law, Duke University School of Law; MLS, University of South Florida; BA, Psychology and French, Agnes Scott College, Decatur, GA.

In academia, there is widespread respect for the scholarly communication cycle and intellectual property rights. But people are not always aware of a copyright issue in their work until a librarian they consulted for something else points it out to them. Technology evolves rapidly, the law slowly, so new ways of using and creating copyrighted material are often not neatly covered by existing statutes. My goal is to raise awareness among faculty and students about their rights and responsibilities as creators and users of copyrighted material. The issues extend beyond intellectual property to an entire spectrum, from open access publishing to effective management of research materials and more.

Preserved by NYU, Screened at MoMA

Film has been documenting American life for a hundred years, perhaps nowhere as intimately as in home movies and other nonprofessional work. The historical art of amateur filmmaking was celebrated in November at the Museum of Modern Art’s 13th annual film preservation program, To Save and Project, co-sponsored by the NYU Orphan Film Symposium. The screening featured a 17-minute drama, The Abbakadabba Coopora, by acclaimed amateur filmmaker and NYU alumnus Robbins Barstow, whose work, according to The New York Times, chronicled “the ordinary doings of ordinary people in mid-century America,” and “formed the cornerstone of the recent home-movie revival.” Run by pacifists, Abbakadabba Farm in Port Murray, NJ, provided summer recreation for children from inner-city Newark, NJ. Barstow, who worked there, directed, shot, edited, and hand-titled the film in 1941, naming it for a “coopora,” or “non-cooperating kid.” The film is in the University Archives and was preserved by the Libraries’ Barbara Goldsmith Preservation and Conservation Department with a grant from the National Film Preservation Foundation.

More Seats, Light, Comfort at Bern Dibner

Bern Dibner Library at the NYU Polytechnic School of Engineering renovated its main floor this past summer with new lighting and increased seating capacity. Renovations of the upper level are scheduled for summer 2015. Photos: Elena Olivo

Frank Gives Research Papers to Tamiment

Miriam Frank’s Out in the Union: A Labor History of Queer America (Temple University Press, 2014) is based on 20 years of interviews and a very large body of archival material now housed at Tamiment Library, where Frank was an archival assistant in the 1980s. An NYU alumna (BA, MA, PhD), Frank has been a faculty member for 30 years in General Studies and Liberal Studies.

Frank deeply admires the union members she chronicles in her new book. “These creative organizations were inventing collective bargaining of domestic partner benefits, building union programs for AIDS in the workplace, and forming political coalitions to defend LGBT communities and unions from right-wing attacks,” she says. Tamiment, she adds, is the obvious home for her papers because it “has broken new ground in preserving the history of progressive activism in LGBT communities. I am thrilled that my interviews and documents will become part of that historical record.”
The popular, new, occasional Friday evening music series in the Mamdouha Bobst Gallery, sponsored by the Libraries’ Avery Fisher Center for Music and Media, features a variety of Steinhardt student musicians. On October 31, the program included composer Steve Reich’s Mallet Quartet, performed by the NYU Percussion Ensemble. L to r, Russell Fisher and Luis Jacome on vibraphones, and Adam Holmes and Greg Auffredou on marimbas. Information: kent.underwood@nyu.edu