

## [SLIDE] Introduction

- [Beth will frame and introduce]

→ Today talk about my project funded by the Henry Luce Foundation

Project focused on:

- Missionary Research Library Archives and the William Adams Brown Ecumenical Library Archives
- MRL is 150 collections that are grouped by geographic location from missionaries themselves, missionary organizations, and others involved in the similar activities.
- The Ecumenical collection, comprised of about 30 collections, documents the modern ecumenism, or study of Christianity, movement.
- The majority of these records are from the mid-1800s to the mid-1900s, although the earliest item is from the 1600's.

## Nature of collection

- So you may be thinking, missionaries and the study of Christianity – that must mean Theologians are the bulk of our users  
→ **Want to say right off the bat...**
- That assumption is incorrect!
- While yes, we do serve theologians, we have a much wider audience than just that.

## [SLIDE – Various Collection Pictures]

- Collections contain unique cultural depth, geographic breadth, and historical importance. The material can be of interest and use for historians, anthropologists, economists, and medical researchers, among others.
- Missionaries and organizations were the “first responders” or at least first to document the locations outside of the culture itself.
- Fully-processed collections are now accessible

→ **Point out information on the slide**

-Dental clinic in China from the 1920s

-Photograph from American Constantinople Relief, 1912-1914

-Map showing aid from Armenian and Syrian Relief

-Paper coins that were to be burned at funerals in China (Hume papers, 1914)

-Handwritten note from someone who worked with Native Americans in USA

- Of the 116 individual researchers who used the collections in-person from 2011-2014, how many of those do you think were from theological schools or churches?
- **6 people.** That means 95% of the people coming to research at Columbia University were **not from theological schools.**

So where were these researchers from?

### [SLIDE] – Map of US

- Kept track of researchers throughout grant, only those using MRL and WAB archives. This does not show those using other collections in archives, or even Rare Books
- →116 individuals, some of whom came multiple times

### [SLIDE] – Map of international

→ See the last page of your handout

Almost all of the continents

- Trying to raise awareness across Columbia's campus and beyond
- As Beth likes to say, "Burke Library – Not just for theologians anymore!"
- Exhibit at Butler which was in the few display cases for a few months showing some surprising things from our collections
  - Poster campaign

### [SLIDE] – Completed Projects

- **PROMISED:** 3 years, 573 Linear Feet
- Process, arrange, describe and make available.
- Assistance of interns and work study students.
- **Actual:** 776 linear feet of archives in 183 collections

### [SLIDE] - Scope

- All of the collections now have MARC records with updated information and also include the link to the finding aid
- Created new MARC records to assign BibIDs as necessary. It was also during this time that I was able to suppress records as needed. Over the years, some items had been given individual BibIDs even though they were part of the MRL archival collection. **This has made the catalog and the results for researchers easier to understand, more streamlined and efficient.**

- Even though there was a 200 Linear Feet difference in what was promised and what was actual, we still exceeded the goal of processing.
- Grant proposal stated we would process 15 linear feet per month.
- Over the course of the grant, we processed on average 19 linear feet per month.
- My best month was when we did about 73 Linear Feet in one month.

### **[SLIDE] - Conservation/Preservation**

- Increased use means increased threat of damage
- All of the materials are in new acid free boxes and folders.
- An Esther Scroll from the 1600s had a special box created for it.
- Some materials digitized to increase ease of access as they are used and requested often, and we wish to preserve the originals
- a filmstrip from the Church of South India was scanned thereby preserving its contents
- An online display of G.E.E. Lindquist Native American photographs:  
<http://lindquist.cul.columbia.edu/>.

Thanks to Janet Gertz, Alexis Hagadorn and their teams for assisting us.

### **[SLIDE] – Providing Access**

#### **Providing Access**

- How have we done this?

→**Luckily for us, it is a little bit easier than this!**

#### **Finding Aids**

### **[SLIDE] – Unlinked versus linked**

- On the left side, it was just a list of what we had by title. Couldn't tell you very much about the stuff, or how it could help your research
- Now there is a sea of blue! So many links
- This sight now makes Beth very happy
- All keyword searchable

### **[SLIDE] - EAD**

- EAD, encoded archival description, is an international standard for XML markup maintained by the Library of Congress in partnership with the Society of American Archivists. The goal of EAD is to make collections more accessible to users and to reduce the complexity of finding aids.

- RBML and Avery using EAD, copied with RBML was doing
- EAD files were created from the MARC records, which sped up the creation of the individual aides.
- At this time the collections all have an EAD file, and many of them have fully encoded container lists for boxes and folders.

→Thanks to Stephen Davis, LDPD and Terry Catapano among others for getting us up to speed on this venture.

### **[SLIDE] - Academic Commons**

Some of you may remember when the Columbia Library website was updated about two years ago? During this time, the URLs were changed from “libraries” to “locations” in the update. Well, this made all of our hyperlinked finding aids within all of the documents go dead; everything linked in Voyager; and it also made anything linked outside of Columbia go dead as well. Ultimately an edit was created in Voyager so that the files were redirected to the appropriate place. However Beth and I wanted to think of a way that perhaps this could be prevented in the future; perhaps with a stable link?

- Creation of a finding aid can be very time-consuming – a lot of research goes into these documents and many people consider them to be publications.
- emailed Rebecca at CDRS to get her take on it, and she agreed and welcomed the inclusion of finding aids in Academic Commons
- (Thank you for that and for all of the other work at CDRS!).
- New tool for usage statistics. It has been very interesting to see when the items are being downloaded, and throughout the lifetime of the upload what has been important.

Some collections that we had thought might be used often, or would be controversial, have actually barely caused any stir. We have more finding aids to upload but we are in the process of doing just that.

### **[SLIDE] – Social Media**

- So, we did all these great things with our archival collections –How did we tell the public about this?
- Social Media! Started in 2012, one year into project to start advertising

- Twitter and Facebook pages for the Burke and started posting on there regularly about collections
- Wrote and solicited articles for the Burke Library Newsletter; since I was in charge of it, it was greatly focused on the MRL and WAB collections.

### **[SLIDE] - Blog**

- I created project blog, and I think this where we really shined.
- Populated with articles written by me, interns & student assistants.

### **[SLIDE] – Examples of collections in project blog**

- Quotes
- Gripsholm Prisoner Exchange (1943)
- Love letter from a missionary (who died soon after)
- Withdrawal of Assyrian Christians in Persia, 1918

### **[SLIDE] – IMPACT and OUTPUT**

#### **[SLIDE] – Publications and Me**

#### **Reference, Consultation, Presentations?**

So has any of this been successful? The finding aids are all on the web, they are in Voyager, EAD, and showing up in a variety of results through CLIO. I've seen them used in Wikipedia, and google in general picks up these results.

- Led many presentations that included MRL and WAB materials.
- displayed and spoke about MRL and WAB materials during Union Theological Seminary's orientation, Union's alumni days, Union's Hebrew and Greek classes, admitted students day
- New York Genealogy and Bibliography Society
- Provided material for an architectural class on Modern Chinese Architecture, and the Columbia University Class, "Modern China Documents and Bibliography Course" taught by Professor Eugenia Lean.
- promoted the project at conferences
- Two updates on the project to SAA's *Academic Archivist* (Spring 2013) and ART's *Metropolitan Archivist* (Winter 2013) and wrote an article for an issue of *Mid-Atlantic Archivist*.
- Hosted two talks by researchers who have used the MRL and WAB collections: (1) Scott Lisbon, recipient of a 2014 Library Research Award

who used the MRL collection, and (2) Heather White, 2014 Burke Library Scholar in Residence who used the WAB collection.

### **[SLIDE] - Intern program**

- One aspect of my work as an archivist and information professional, and something that I have always enjoyed and been passionate about, is working with future professionals.
- Beginning in January 2012, I was able to have some assistance
- Overall, 14 library school interns and 5 work-study students, 8 other work-study students who helped with special projects.
- All of the library school interns were matriculated in a local graduate school specializing in library science, with some of the students taking specialized courses and training in archives, preservation and records management.
- One international intern was from **ENSSIB** (*École Nationale Supérieure des Sciences de l'Information et des Bibliothèques*), a renowned library school in Villeurbanne, France.
- Some of the students and interns had more experience than others. Some have taken more classes or are further in their studies.
- Regardless of this, I have developed an internship program that all of the students are held to, whether they are taking the experience for credit or not.
- The point of the internship is for the student to fully understand what it means to be a processing archivist. They take collections from beginning to end, write the finding aids, advertise on social media, digital asset management, and MARC records...
- Throughout semester students write blog posts.
- The first is on their first day, where they write about their expectations, hopes, dreams, etc... The student blogs throughout the semester, and finally their last day they write a final reflection post.

And, this program is working! Even at the end of their internships, they may not know what is next but they know the value of what they have learned and done hands-on.

### **[SLIDE] - Quotes from interns**

- Tracked the employment status of the library school interns who worked on this project.
- Of the 14 library school interns, four are still in school. The other 10 all have jobs in the field or in related positions.
- 5 have become archivists at institutions such as
  - Princeton University
  - Center for Jewish History
  - the Brooklyn Academy of Music
  - Winthrop Group
  - American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee.
- Other past interns are now employed as catalogers, user experience designers, adjunct faculty, and customer order clerks at the following institutions:
  - Poet's House
  - Columbia University
  - Farmingdale State College.

### **Future Applications for Interns**

I think this is something that could perhaps be standardized or shared across the Columbia Library System. We are about to meet for the next round for the Primary Source Intern program, and I've already shared with Adrien Hilton at RBML my thoughts and what I think we can do to make that program even better. Perhaps there are other ways we could standardize this across the board.

### **[SLIDE] - Researcher Visits**

On February 4<sup>th</sup> last week, I attended an Archivist Roundtable of Metropolitan New York meeting. The title of the meeting was "Archives Matter," with Society of American Archivists president Kathleen Roe. She said during the question and answer session, "It doesn't matter how much you process if nobody comes." Well luckily for us, people have been coming!

- 2010 until the end of 2014, the total number of researchers consulting the MRL and WAB collections grew each year. From July 2011 until December 2014, the number of researcher visits and boxes requested doubled.
- 2012 is when the social media began, and a big increase in requests there can be seen.
- MRL and WAB collections make up 17.5% of the total archival collections at the Burke.

**[SLIDE] - Library Research Awards**

We have seen an increase in requests for collections via the Library Research Awards program.

- Three awardees of the Library Research Awards have used collections in MRL and WAB, since they are now discoverable

**Amy O’Keefe, Graduate Student, University of California San Diego (2013)**

**Project:** *In the War but Not of the War: The Protestant Public Sphere in WW-II-era China*

**Collections:** Burke, Missionary Research Library Archive

**Matthew Unangst, Graduate Student, Temple University (2013)**

**Project:** *Making East Africa: Colonialism, Race, and Islam*

**Collections:** Burke, “Missionssammler” and “Berliner Missionsberichte”

**Scott Libson, Graduate Student, Emory University (2014)**

**Project:** *The Christianization of Capital: The Business of Mission Movement Fundraising, 1865-1929*

**Collections:** Burke; Missionary Research Library Archive.

We have even had people who applied for the Library Research Awards, but did not receive them, but then pay their own way to come to the library to access the collections.

**[SLIDE] - Outputs of researchers**

One way in which we can measure the impact of this project is through the output of these researchers. As I stated, the growth of the questions and usage of the collections has increased significantly over the life of the project. But what have they been doing with this stuff?

- 116 individuals contacted
- The response rate from about half
- Responders included students, faculty, professors, independent researchers and an independent documentary filmmaker. We found that there are a variety of research products (completed and in progress) as a result of this project.

**[Point out the handout bibliography]** These are just from **in-person** visits



The following list provides additional details on these research products: Products, both in-progress and completed: Books (9); Articles (4); Research Papers, Theses and Dissertations (43); General research and genealogy (2); film (1); programs, presentations or symposiums (5).

Again, these people are from a variety of locations and institutions internationally.

### **[SLIDE] – Laying the Groundwork**

What have we learned?

→ People want this stuff.

- The moment finding aids go up, we start noticing the increase of requests.
- Sure, people would love to have things conveniently online – however that is not always possible. When people want to see the collections, they will come.
- Recently received an email from a relative from someone whose collection we have, offering us more photographs to go along with our current collection. This person may never have known about us were it not for the new finding aid.
- Overall profile of Columbia has gone up because of this project.
- Over three years, we regularly updated our social media accounts, blogs, and website with the new collections. This has caused all of our collections to have an increased usage.
- More people know about us, and they know about Columbia on an international scale.
- We know that the collections are having an **impact on research, teaching and learning**. The bibliography alone shows over 60 people putting out new scholarship and having new discussions and discoveries, all because of the Luce Project and what we made available.
- One researcher using the Pliny Fisk Papers said about the material, **“This was not only critical to my PhD research, it was groundbreaking.”** Many researchers said that the Columbia collections provide documents that are not available anywhere else in such complete form.
- I’ve developed a strong internship program that is directing new professionals successfully into the field.

**How can others in the committee meeting apply this themselves in the future?**

- The internship program that I have created could be one such way to apply this method across the board.
- Large scale, multi-year projects raise the status of Columbia and it is paying off.
- Physical processing may seem like a thing of the past, but there is still a very real need and desire for it.
- Maybe those in copyright or CDRS do not deal with the physical archives themselves, but the work done in the archives funnels out into the community and brings up new and interesting ideas for all of us to discuss.

**[SLIDE] – THANK YOU!**

- Thanks Damon for being the PI!
- **Questions?**

**THE END**