Friday, March 13, 2015
1:15-2:15

Diversity and Collaboration: Making Hidden Mexican, Jewish, and Chinese Collections Discoverable

Panelists:

- Felicia Piscitelli, Associate Professor, Special Collections Cataloger, Cushing Memorial Library & Archives, Texas A & M University
- Anton DuPlessis Curator, Colonial Mexican Collection, Cushing Memorial Library & Archives, Texas A&M University
- Laura Leone, Director of Archive and Library Services, Center for Jewish History
- Rachel Miller, Senior Manager for Collection Services, Center for Jewish History
- Zhijia Shen, Director of the East Asia Library, University of Washington
- Jing Liu, Chinese Language Librarian, University of British Columbia

Abstract:

This panel includes three papers on projects that have leveraged international, cross-institutional, and regional collaborations to increase access to collections representative of different ethnic and national groups.

The first paper, "The Deceased Preaches His Own Eulogy, or Training Students to Provide Access Points on Discovery Level Records," addresses the question of whether students with no prior cataloging experience can create discovery-level records by outlining a methodology whereby hispanophone students, with a brief period of training and a written instruction manual, input bibliographic data into a template in four stages. This project entailed collaboration between two units—Special Collections and Cataloging within the Texas A&M University Libraries, and between the Texas A&M Libraries and two librarians from Mexico.

The second paper, "All History is Local: Expanding Access to American Jewish Archival Collections," details a multi-phase initiative of the Center for Jewish History and the American Jewish Historical Society (AJHS) to enhance access to

archival collections at regional Jewish historical societies on the Eastern seaboard. The project's primary goal is to boost online representation and collection visibility from a local to a national level. The first phase, through a series of repository site visits, focused on relationship building and information gathering, as well as the migration of a test batch of collection-level records into AJHS's Portal to American Jewish History. Presenters will describe the initial phase and potential future phases of the initiative.

The third paper, "International Collaboration to Reveal Rare Chinese Materials Hidden for Half a Century," discusses the international collaborative project between University of Washington Libraries and University of British Columbia Libraries (Canada) to reveal the hidden treasures of Chinese language materials, including rare books, special collections, archival materials, etc. printed from the 14th to the early 20th century. This project involves collaborative project planning and management and resource sharing, staff exchange and training between the two institutions across national boundaries, and with academic libraries in China. The paper will also demonstrate how international collaboration can optimize libraries' capacity and resources to accomplish difficult tasks, and outline challenges of working with policies, laws, and regulations of different countries.

As library and archival services become more globalized and collections more diverse, the need for regional, national, and international collaborations will continue to grow. The lessons learned and experiences described by these three papers will serve to encourage and to inform an increase in collaborative efforts on future CLIR-funded projects.

Papers:

All History is Local: Expanding Access to American Jewish Archival Collections, by Susan Malbin, Laura Leone, Rachel Miller, Rachel Harrison, Sarah Ponichtera, Christine McEvilly, and Kevin Schlottmann

The Deceased Preaches His Own Eulogy: Training Students to Provide Access Points on Discovery Level Records, by Felicia Piscitelli, Lisa Furubotten, Anton duPlessis, Alma Beatriz Rivera Aguilera, and Ángel Villaba Roldán

International Collaboration to Reveal Rare Chinese Materials Hidden for Half a Century, by Zhijia Shen and Jing Liu