

HPNL FY15 Annual Report Highlights

(compiled by Marek Sroka with additional data provided by Geoff Ross and Tom Weissinger)

HPNL Personnel

HPNL personnel in FY15 included, in addition to Marek Sroka, Interim Head of HPNL and History Librarian, Tom Weissinger, Afro-American Studies Librarian (African American Research Center), Geoff Ross, Collections and Services Specialist, Kirk Hess, Digital Humanities Specialist (Kirk also works with the Library IT unit), Marie Till, Senior Library Specialist, and Glen Martin, Senior Library Specialist, and Illinois Digital Newspaper Project (IDNP) personnel, Amy Sullivan, Project Coordinator, and Tracy Nectoux, Quality Control and Metadata Specialist.

Bibliographic Instruction

At the request of history faculty Marek Sroka, Interim Head and HPNL Librarian, provided 10 bibliographic sessions for history students. The sessions included presentation about research resources for particular areas. Each session was attended by 15-20 students. The instruction/lecture lasted on average about 30-40 minutes and was followed by questions and answers.

In addition to bibliographic sessions on specific subjects two 30-40 minute introductory sessions about library resources were provided to incoming history graduate students (requested by Prof. Kevin Mumford) and religious studies students (requested by Prof. Jonathan Ebel).

Work with Main/UGL Reference Hub

In the fall 2014 and spring 2015 semesters HPNL librarian and GA worked at the main information desk (two hours per week) and the Main/UGL virtual desk (one hour per week) as part of HPNL's contribution towards Main/UGL Reference Hub in the Main Library.

Circulating Collection and Collection Management

As part of reviewing our circulating collection HPNL staff transferred approximately 1,500 titles to the Oak Street Library Facility. This also allowed for more shelving space for incoming new books. HPNL circulated 14,390 items, renewed 17,686 items, and discharged 14,454 items.

Re-boxing of Microfilm Collection

HPNL staff has been re-boxing microfilms replacing old, acidic boxes with archival, acid-free ones. So far, more than 30,400 microfilm boxes have been upgraded, including 5,702 replaced this past fiscal year ending on June 30, 2015. This is an ongoing preservation project conducted by HPNL staff in microfilm stacks in the Main Library.

Cataloging

HPNL staff created 404 original or copy catalog records in FY15. They also created 1901 items records.

Reference Transactions

HPNL's FY215 Sweeps Week extrapolation was 880 reference questions answered.

African American Research Center

Tom Weissinger, Afro-American Studies Librarian, taught credit courses, and provided course-related instruction and reference services in the area of African American Studies and Philosophy.

Credit Courses:

Recognizing his distinguished scholarship and expertise the UIUC Department of African American Studies offered Tom's AFRO 102 course, Researching the African American Experience, in the Spring 2015 semester. Tom developed the course in 2002 and has taught it each spring since then. AFRO 102 focused on research and documentation of the African American experience and examined significant repositories of African American culture in public libraries, historically black colleges, and predominantly white universities.

Tom also taught AFRO 495, Directed Independent Readings. This was an independent study course with an Educational Policy Science and African American Studies graduate student. It was taught during Spring 2015. The subject matter was African American bibliography and research.

Course-related instruction:

Altogether Tom provided instruction for 19 sessions. These included 4 guest lectures, 9 individual research consultations, and 6 tours. The average length for guest lectures and individual research consultations was one and one-half hour. Instruction was provided to undergraduates and graduate

students from several departments: African American Studies, Educational Policy Studies, English, History, Latin American & Caribbean Studies, and Religious Studies.

Illinois Digital Newspaper Program

IDNP is funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities, to digitize culturally significant Illinois newspapers, and it has entered its final two-year phase. Illinois Digital Newspaper Project staff completed 99,079 digital files, sent 122 reels of films for digitization and wrote four essays (from March to August, 2013).

In 2014 Illinois Digital Newspaper Project (IDNP) personnel, Amy Sullivan, Project Coordinator, and Tracy Nectoux, Quality Control and Metadata Specialist moved their operations to HPNL (room 246). They began the final phase of the NEH grant that is scheduled to end in August 2015. **Chronicling America Historic American Newspapers** is a Website providing access to information about historic newspapers and select digitized newspaper pages from 1836 to 1922, and is produced by the National Digital Newspaper Program (NDNP), a partnership between the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) and the Library of Congress (LC). Under the NEH grant, the UIUC Library has been responsible for providing digital content for historic newspapers from the State of Illinois. There are currently 15 titles available from Illinois, including [The Cairo Daily Bulletin](#), [Chicago Eagle](#), [The Illinois Free Trader](#), [Rock Island Argus](#), etc.

In the fall of 2014 Tracy Nectoux became a new Project Coordinator after Amy Sullivan had left the University of Illinois Library for a job at Rutgers.

Preservation of Illinois Cultural Heritage: Newspapers

The most significant 2014 donation to HPNL included print copies of *Daily Illini*, culturally significant independent student paper at the University of Illinois. Under the agreement with the University of Illinois Library, negotiated by Marek Sroka and Jason Quackenbush (Library Development Office), the Illini Media Company donated 250 bound volumes of *Daily Illini*, ranging in date from 1926 to 2013, to the University of Illinois Library. The newspaper will be accessible to researchers interested in student life and culture at the University of Illinois.

Another important donation included two portfolios of Spanish-American War newspapers received from the Illinois Valley Community College Jacobs Library. The donation includes the 1898 issues of *Chicago Journal* and the *Chicago Dispatch*, including multiple “extra” editions. All but one of the issues are new to our collection.

Another significant “digital” acquisition included the microfilming and digitization of a unique and historical newspaper from Cairo, Illinois, namely *Cairo times-War Eagle series* (nos. 108-186 from August-November 1865). After successful negotiations, the owner agreed to lend the paper to us so that it can be microfilmed and digitized as part of the NEH IDNP. Eventually, HPNL purchased this rare title from the owner.

The preservation of Illinois historical newspapers contributes to the public welfare of the citizens and educational and cultural institutions of our state. It is a great example of how UIUC Library helps local Illinois communities to preserve their cultural heritage. Other acquisitions and donations: 66 microfilm reels of *Daily Calumet* (1901-1937) copied from the collections of Chicago Historical Society (negotiations started by Mary Stuart and completed by Marek Sroka in 2014).

Collection Development

The major 2014-15 acquisition included *African-American Newspapers (1827-1988)*. A wide-ranging collection, African American Newspapers, 1827-1998 complements our largest collection of digitized African American newspapers, *ProQuest Historical Black Newspapers*. While *ProQuest Historical Black Newspapers* covers the major, metropolitan black newspapers of the 20th century, *African American Newspapers, 1827-1998* provides access to a broader range of publications, especially the black press of America's smaller cities, and the few extant issues of the earliest black newspapers, most of which were previously available only on microfilm or in smaller digital collections scattered around the Internet. Highlights of the collection include the Huntsville, Alabama Gazette (1881-1894); the Indianapolis Freeman (1888-1916); the Savannah, Georgia Tribune (1875-1922); the Kansas City Advocate (1916-1926); the Topeka Plaindealer (1899-1931); the Cleveland Gazette (1883-1945); the Wichita Negro Star (1920-1952); the Kansas City Plaindealer (1932-1958); the Arkansas State Press (1941-1959); the Mississippi Free Press (1961-1964); the Rockford, Illinois Crusader (1952-1971), the Wichita Times and Kansas Weekly Journal (1972-1981); the Milwaukee Star (1967-1977); the Chicago Metro News (1973-

1990); the Racine, Wisconsin Courier (1976-1992); and the Grand Rapids, Michigan Afro-American Gazette (1991-1995)

Other important digital and online collections HPNL acquired, included resources such as *Oxford Bibliographies Online: Atlantic History* and *Oxford Bibliographies Online: Jewish Studies*; *ProQuest The Black Freedom Struggle in the 20th Century: Organizational Records and Personal Papers*; and digitized historical newspapers collections such as *ProQuest Historical Chinese Newspapers* and *Caribbean Newspapers (1718-1876) from the American Antiquarian Society*.

HPNL negotiated the purchase of the Royal Society microfilm collections. These are primary sources for the study of the history of science originally from the archives of the Royal Society in London, including journal books of scientific meetings, 1660-1800, miscellaneous manuscripts, letters and papers of Sir John Herschel, and letters and papers of Robert Boyle.

In 2014, HPNL received 20 microfilm reels of the Adam Matthew “Sex and Gender” collection, Part 3: Equal Opportunities and Pay, donated by Rice University in Houston, Texas.