

Libbra

*A newsletter for
faculty and the
University of Chicago
community published
with support from the
Library Society*



AN INTERVIEW WITH THE CURATOR

‘A Different Way of Learning about History’

*Ph.D. candidate
Christopher Dingwall
explores race and consumer
culture as a curator*

THE EXHIBITION *Race and the Design of American Life: African Americans in Twentieth-Century Commercial Art* runs through January 4 in the Special Collections Research Center. Rachel Rosenberg interviewed Christopher Dingwall, a Ph.D. candidate in History, to learn about his first experience as a curator and the exhibition itself.

Tell me a bit about the exhibition.

Images of African Americans have appeared on a wide range of consumer goods throughout the twentieth century, from Aunt Jemima’s pancakes to the Air Jordan basketball shoe. But these images did more than sell things. The exhibit explores how commercial art capitalized on—and gave powerful form to—widely held racist attitudes among white Americans throughout the twentieth century. It also illustrates how many corporations and designers, white and black, used graphic design to envision the place of African Americans in American society—from the nadir of Jim Crow racial segregation



continued on page 4

Diane Sperling Lauderdale, Chair; Interim Department Chair and Professor of Epidemiology, Department of Health Studies

Robert Bird, Associate Professor, Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures and the College; Chair, Department of Cinema and Media Studies

Sydney Hans, Samuel Deutsch Professor, School of Social Service Administration

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FROM THE DIRECTOR

Preparing for Crossroads

By Judith Nadler, Director and University Librarian

The historic mission of libraries—to build collections and make them available to users now and in the future—is just one aspect of our Library’s mission today.

Libraries have successfully served generations of users, making only incremental changes in an environment with stable expectations. Today, technology introduces change at a pace that was infeasible before. New technologies, changing approaches to learning and research, and dynamic user expectations raise important questions and call for informed decisions about the choices we make.

How can we respond to the expectation of broad access to exponentially growing physical and electronic collections when we have limited budgets for acquisitions?

We must explore ways to complement our local collections with collections we collaboratively build with trusted peers. Achieving the proper balance between local depth and collective breadth will be crucial to our users’ present and future information needs. We must be prepared to make these decisions wisely as options arise. With the support of a generous donation from the Rhoades Foundation through the cooperation of Julius Lewis (see page 8), we are exploring possibilities with our Ivy League colleagues through the Borrow Direct program.

How can we broker ubiquitous and easy access to information that we do not locally control?

We must invest in the development of forward-looking, linked discovery tools

built for easy discovery and access in an increasingly complex resource environment. Toward this goal, we are currently working to develop a community source, interoperable library software system, Kuali OLE, with support from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, that will allow flexibility in the choice of discovery tools.

How can we ensure long-term availability of our resources in their different forms and media?

In collaboration with peers, we must invest in the development of shared solutions for a national preservation eco-system, much of which is still in the exploratory stages. Partnering in these developments in their early stages ensures synergy and the ability to integrate local solutions into the eco-system. A generous endowment established by Dr. Albert Somit (see page 9) supports a preservation internship for young librarians.

How can we harness the power of new technologies to support new approaches to research employing a wide range of media?

New approaches can be developed through interdisciplinary and, sometimes, international collaborations among faculty, librarians, and technologists. A generous gift from Joseph Neubauer, MBA ’65, and Jeanette Lerman-Neubauer to the University is now enabling eighteen ambitious research

projects tackling complex questions through cross-disciplinary collaboration via the Neubauer Family Collegium for Culture and Society. In one, faculty and library staff are collaborating with technologists to explore how the methods of “big science” might elucidate and facilitate the humanistic understanding of music, speech, and other audio expressions via the Audio Cultures of India project (see page 6).

How can we maximize the impact of library spaces in support of user needs for study, teaching, and research?

We must build a spatial environment that provides seamless integration of study, teaching, and research with Library resources and services. We must mine the

information from our user surveys and invest in flexible solutions that meet the needs of our faculty and students. A generous gift from John Blew (see page 8) supports research and teaching with rare materials in a group study in the Special Collections Research Center while joint investment by the Library, College, and Computer Science Department (see page 7) is enabling the creation of an enhanced instructional laboratory in the John Crerar Library that supports the needs of a growing program.

How can we equip library staff to help users identify and locate information, undertake research, and synthesize and create knowledge?

We must invest in the ongoing development of an excellent staff, conversant in emerging technologies and creative in applying their transformational power in support of study, teaching, and research.

We would like to keep you—our faculty, alumni, and friends— informed about these changes and the role you can—and do—play in preparing us to navigate crossroads. Toward that end, we have redesigned and expanded our newsletter, *Libra*, so that it not only provides news about how the Library supports research, teaching, and learning at the University but also thanks and recognizes those who join us in making this investment.

Judith Nadler
Director and University Librarian





INTERVIEW WITH CURATOR CHRISTOPHER DINGWALL *continued from page 1*

to the advent of the Civil Rights Movement.

With racial imagery, American advertisers and consumers gave social meaning to the mass produced things of modern consumer culture. Particularly for African American entrepreneurs and artists, the graphic design of race could be used as a powerful tool to claim their place as consumers and as citizens in American society.

What got you interested in this subject originally?

It comes out of my dissertation, *Selling Slavery: Memory, Culture, and the Renewal of America, 1876-1920*. There I explore how images of slavery get commodified, mass produced and consumed. I'm asking why slavery became a way to sell movies, postcards, food products, and very modern cultural products.

The exhibit came out of my curiosity about what happens next, after 1920. In a way, it's an epilogue to the dissertation I'm currently writing, but curating the exhibit is a different sort of intellectual challenge and involves different ways of thinking about how I'm using objects and

how I'm going to try to explain them to audiences. It's a way for me to explore a different kind of scholarly communication directed at a public audience rather than scholarly, academic readers.

Did your ideas about the subject evolve much as you worked on it?

Yes. Originally I thought that the exhibition would focus on racial memorabilia and would present a narrative of how racial imagery evolved over the twentieth century. The Special Collections staff was pretty keen on the idea, and Dan Meyer, the Director of the Special Collections Research Center, gave me other suggestions for collections to look at. He pointed me to sheet music and record albums, the archives of Chicago printing company R. R. Donnelley & Sons, and the Yoffee Ephemera Collection, which includes records, games, playing cards, and little figurines.

So my focus expanded from racial memorabilia to how race works in consumer society more broadly. The different collections I saw spoke to different ways that race worked and different kinds of dynamics between

graphic designers, corporations selling these images, the products they were selling, and where the products were used in the home. In the end, although each part of the exhibit advances a history that moves forward through time and shows changes, particularly in the role of African Americans as consumers and designers, I decided that each section of the exhibit should focus on a different kind of relationship between the image, its makers, and its ultimate consumers.

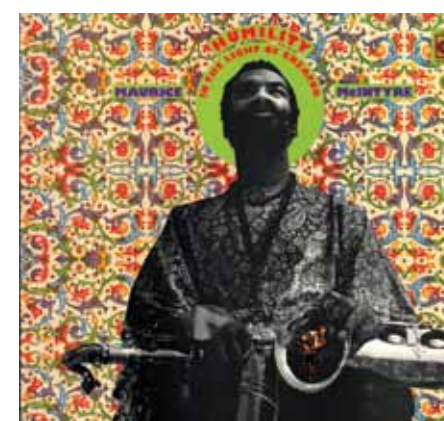
Can you tell me about some of the imagery in the exhibit?

One thing that fascinated me was how the advertisements represented blackness in abstract forms to different effects. In blackface minstrelsy, white men impersonated African Americans by blacking their faces with burnt cork, which allowed them to turn blackness into an object of hate and profit, but also to project onto it all kinds of fears and anxieties facing white working men in the new industrial age. The blackface mask was so powerful that advertisers adopted it as an image to sell modern industrial products toward the end of the

nineteenth century.

But blackness could be abstracted in other ways to project different visions of African American life. Take, for instance, the albums produced by African American entrepreneur Henry Pace for Black Swan Records in the 1920s. "Black Swan" was an allusion to a nineteenth-century black opera singer Elizabeth Greenfield, and the image of a swan on the records became a sign that signified musical talent and heritage. A more modern example would be the Nike Air Jordan jump man. A silhouette of Michael Jordan holds a basketball in mid-air. It coded blackness as physical prowess, but also transcendent flight, escape.

Obviously, some of the images on display here have been and continue to be especially painful for African Americans.



Have you given special thought to how you want to address and analyze those images in the exhibit?

Yes, absolutely. That's something I've been thinking a lot about. I don't want to show these images gratuitously. They come from a dark time in American history when this was a part of everyday life. But I think to leave it at that would be a huge mistake because we are not yet over this history. The blackface images are not just some bygone, antiquarian caricature; they were here at the heart of the birth of our modern mass culture, and we are still dealing with that legacy. But these images change. African Americans protested, revised, and transformed the imagery and changed the terms by which images of race could be figured in consumer culture.

I'm trying to show this material in a way that provokes thought about how race is still a big part of consumer culture. I hope that, after you see this exhibit, you can go outside and see a sign or a billboard with an African American figure on it and ask yourself how it plays on the same kind of tropes, feelings, and associations that were used in earlier racial imagery in American design, as well as how the imagery has changed.

TOP LEFT, Roger Lewis and Harry Olsen. *Jazzin' the Cotton Town Blues*. TOP CENTER, Christopher Dingwall with album covers: King Oliver, Louis Armstrong, and Freddie Keppard, *New Orleans Horns*; and Kenny Burrell, *Kenny Burrell*. TOP RIGHT, album cover: Roscoe Mitchell Sextet. *Sound*. BOTTOM, Kalaparusha Maurice McIntyre. *Humility in the Light of the Creator*. All items held by the Special Collections Research Center, The University of Chicago Library.

So you have important educational objectives for visitors to this exhibition. Are there other ways you expect to use your curatorial experience in your teaching?

Right now I'm a preceptor and supervise history seniors as they write their BA essays, and I'll be teaching a course of my own in the spring. I hope to bring these students to Special Collections to show them the range of materials available there: books and printed material but also things that you wouldn't expect a library to have, albums and three-dimensional objects, consumer goods. They offer a different way of learning about history.

Visit the associated web exhibit at lib.uchicago.edu/e/webexhibits/raceanddesign

Born in the Library

The Neubauer Collegium kicks off its first programming year with Library collaboration

THE NEUBAUER FAMILY COLLEGIUM for Culture and Society opens its doors this fall on the premises of its first home—the Joseph Regenstein Library. As scholars from around the world meet here to investigate complex questions that transcend any single discipline or methodology, they draw on the collections, spaces, and staff expertise of the University of Chicago Library.

“The Library has long been a mecca for scholars,” said Judith Nadler, Director and University Librarian. “We are delighted to continue this tradition by working closely with the Neubauer Collegium to enable the investigation of big questions in the humanities and humanistic social sciences.”

“Libraries have always been the great laboratories of the humanities, so it is particularly fitting that we should spend our infancy nourished by the generosity of the Regenstein,” said David Nirenberg, the Roman Family Director of the Neubauer Collegium for Culture and Society. “And our relationship will always remain close, even after we move into our own building. After all, the Library’s treasures are one of the greatest attractions that bring scholars from all over the world—including our Neubauer Visiting Fellows—to Chicago.”

Three events exemplify the Neubauer Collegium’s collaboration with the Library.



Postcard titled “Bombay Dancing Girl.” Courtesy of the Digital South Asia Library, <http://dsal.uchicago.edu>. The Graham Shaw postcard collection is forthcoming on that site late in 2013.

Audio Cultures of India: Sound, Science, and History

One of the first events on the Neubauer Collegium calendar, the “Audio Cultures of India” workshop brought project team members and other interested scholars together in Regenstein on September 16 and 17. A second workshop will follow in New Delhi, India, immediately after the opening of the University’s India center at the end of March 2014. The workshops are part of the larger Neubauer Collegium funded project, *Audio Cultures of India: New Approaches to the Performance Archive*.

Directed by Professors Philip V. Bohlman and Kaley Mason of the Department of Music and by Bibliographer for Southern Asia James Nye and Cataloger and Assistant Southern Asia Librarian Laura Ring of the Library, workshop participants from the University and other institutions are gathering to investigate how the methods of big science might elucidate and facilitate the humanistic understanding of music, speech, and other audio expressions. They are exploring the scientific analysis of sonic recordings, the history of sound in South Asia, and the intersection of audio with such related material artifacts as texts and images. The participants include computational scientists, statisticians, and physicists as well as South Asian specialists in ethnomusicology, linguistics, anthropology, literature, history, geography, and libraries.

Neubauer Collegium Launch Panel Discussion: William Kentridge and Jane Taylor

Following an opening lecture on October 3 in Mandel Hall delivered by internationally acclaimed South African artist William Kentridge, Regenstein’s Room 122 was the site for a panel discussion and reception featuring Kentridge; South African writer, curator and scholar Jane Taylor, a frequent visiting professor at the University of

Chicago; and David Nirenberg, who moderated. Speaking on “The Virtues of Bastardy: Mixed Metaphors and Collaborations in the Studio,” Kentridge and Taylor discussed their experiences collaborating with artists ranging from puppeteers to writers to opera singers on projects such as Taylor’s play *Ubu and the Truth Commission* and Shostakovich’s opera *The Nose*.

A Worldwide Literature: Jāmī (1414-1492) in the Dar al-Islam and Beyond

This project is developing a research agenda on intellectual trends in the post-classical Muslim tradition by studying the reception of works by the luminary fifteenth-century ‘Abd al-Rahmān Jāmī. The Library’s Southern Asia Department is assisting Professor Thibaut d’Hubert in the preparation of a digital collection and searchable corpus of Unicode texts comprising Jāmī’s works and the Indian commentaries published by Naval Kishore in the nineteenth century. The project is benefiting from well-established bonds between the Library and colleagues in Lahore, Pakistan, who are undertaking digitization of the texts by Jāmī and with the ARTFL Project (Project for American and French Research on the Treasury of the French Language) on campus for presentation of the texts in collaboration with the Digital South Asia Library.

On November 14 and 15, specialists working with languages ranging from Persian, Ottoman Turkish, and Arabic to Malay, Chaghatay, Chinese, Sanskrit and Bengali are scheduled to attend a conference at the University of Chicago Center and the College de France in Paris. They will study comparatively, for the first time, the variegated impact of Jāmī’s works on the post-classical Islamic intellectual traditions, and particularly on the formation of new vernacular literary idioms.



New Computer Science Instructional Lab in Crerar

THE NEW COMPUTER SCIENCE INSTRUCTIONAL LAB (CSIL, pronounced see-sill) opened this fall on the first floor of the John Crerar Library. Replacing the smaller Regenstein CSIL, also previously known as the MacLab, the new CSIL offers expanded resources for teaching and student work to support a growing College computer science program.

The construction and operation of CSIL at Crerar is the result of a partnership between the Department of Computer Science, the College, and the John Crerar Library. “The College is pleased with a strong collaborative effort that will yield important resources for student learning and creative engagement with technology,” said John W. Boyer, Dean of the College.

“Both the Library and CSIL are laboratories for study and teaching at the University,” said Judith Nadler, Director and University Librarian. “In its new location, CSIL will maximize its affinities with collections and services at the John Crerar Library.”

CSIL in Crerar offers 92 computers—up from 74 in the lab in Regenstein—and provides more suitable space for individual lab sessions. “With 80 computers in four teaching areas and 12 additional small group and general user workstations next to the labs, CSIL in Crerar is designed to support a rapidly growing computer science program in the College,” said William Sterner, Director of CSIL. “Computer Science considers the live interactions between students and staff to be an essential component for the best educational use of the facility.”

The Lab is located on the west side of Crerar’s first floor, with exterior windows on one side and interior glass walls on the other. “It’s delightful to see it up and running, with students engaged in their classes and work,” said Barbara Kern, Co-Director of the Science Libraries. “The first floor of Crerar is a real hub of activity now, with students in CSIL on one side of the glass wall and faculty, students, and researchers on the other side using library resources and consulting with reference librarians. The upper floors remain the silent study and research spaces that Crerar is well-known for providing.”

“We’re very pleased to participate in a partnership that supports the growth of an important University program,” said Andrea Twiss-Brooks, Co-Director of the Science Libraries. “CSIL will support this growth of Computer Science now and in the future.”

“The Library, the Department of Computer Science, and the College will continue to work together to think about exciting possibilities for the future,” Kern said. “For now though, we are simply enjoying the view.”

powered by gifts



Students examine rare materials in the Special Collections group study now named for John Blew.

Interacting with Collections: A Gift from John Blew

THE RENOVATED SPECIAL COLLECTIONS RESEARCH CENTER, located in Regenstein on the pathway to Mansueto, cannot be missed by passersby. The rare materials and welcoming spaces visible through its glass doors beckon students, faculty, and visitors alike. Since its recent redesign, expansion, and upgrades, the Center is also the perfect destination for interactive and collaborative study, where researchers work to discover, study, and analyze primary sources together.

John Blew, an enthusiast of American history and a serious collector of Americana, is a longstanding friend of the Library and a champion of Special Collections. Through his generous support of Special Collections' renovation project, he has helped make possible the kind of group study space students and faculty frequently requested.

"I was delighted to support the renovation and expansion of the Special Collections Research Center, and I'm especially pleased that my contribution will enable it to host more groups of students—especially undergraduates—and will allow them to work on projects together," said Mr. Blew. "The experience of viewing and handling rare books and manuscripts in one of the SCRC's group study rooms adds a level of immediacy to a course that can be achieved in no other way.

"Introducing students to the pleasure and, often, the excitement that comes from direct exposure to these materials in physical form is especially important, I believe, in this digital age, when so much learning centers on electronic sources," he added.

Mr. Blew's gift is a contribution to scholarship, learning, and inquiry. In recognition of his generosity, the new group study within Special Collections has been named for John Blew.

Cooperative Collection Building with the Ivy League: Enabled by Julius Lewis

UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO faculty, students, and staff are now borrowing circulating materials on an expedited basis from the libraries of Ivy League universities and MIT as a result of the University of Chicago Library's participation in the Borrow Direct consortium, which began this summer.

Over time, Borrow Direct will facilitate more than rapid collection sharing. "The Borrow Direct project provides a venue to explore future models for shared collection building that include both print and digital forms," explained Judith Nadler, Director and University Librarian.

The launch of Borrow Direct at the University of Chicago was made possible by a generous gift from the Rhoades Foundation with the cooperation of Julius Lewis, AB'50, AM'54. When asked why support for libraries is important, Lewis answered on a grand scale: "Libraries contain civilization." A life member of the Library Visiting Committee, which he joined in 1985, he has donated annually to the University of Chicago since 1971.

Announcement of Chicago's participation in Borrow Direct was well received on campus. "Both personally and on behalf of the faculty and students of the art history department, I want to thank you and your staff for negotiating for Chicago to enter the Borrow Direct program," Professor Christine Mehring, Chair of the Department of Art History, wrote Nadler upon reading the news. "Having used it frequently while I was a faculty member at Yale, I know colleagues and students will benefit from it greatly and daily."



William Schlaack (right) exchanges ideas on best preservation practices with Head of Conservation Ann Lindsey.

Internships that Preserve Collections: A Gift from Albert Somit

AS THE 2013 MARY AND SAMUEL SOMIT Preservation Intern at the University of Chicago Library, William Schlaack spent six weeks this summer helping staff to prepare for a broad range of potential challenges. Deliberating with Preservation Librarian Sherry Byrne and Head of Conservation Ann Lindsey, Schlaack assisted in crafting a response and recovery plan to ensure that the Library's physical collections are protected and properly treated in the event of an emergency.

Thanks to the generous gift of Dr. Albert Somit, AB'41, PhD'47, the Somit Preservation Internship provides a hands-on experience for students entering the fields of preservation, digitization, and conservation, complementing the classroom education they receive in academic programs. Throughout a long career as a professor, Executive Vice-President of SUNY-Buffalo, and eventually President of Southern Illinois University, Dr. Somit has believed firmly in providing growth opportunities for students that have an immediate impact on the students as well as their host institutions.

By creating this endowed internship, Dr. Somit has helped the Library to sustain its collections into the future and has provided students like Schlaack with an excellent opportunity to launch their careers. "I have learned an extraordinary amount," said Schlaack, "regarding not only preservation administration but also how to be an effective and collaborative librarian in a world-class institution."

thank you

We wish to thank and recognize our donors of gifts and grants who have pledged or contributed \$250 or more between July 1, 2012, and June 30, 2013, to the University of Chicago Library. Through their generosity, these individuals and foundations have supported the Annual Fund, the Library Society, Library endowments, and special projects.

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WEB EXHIBIT

Building for a Long Future: The University of Chicago and Its Donors, 1889-1930

lib.uchicago.edu/e/webexhibits/building

The University of Chicago's remarkable and distinctive success in the world of higher education cannot be understood without recognizing the daring and vision of an extraordinary group of resolute donors whose generosity continues to sustain the University they made possible. Based on a 2001 gallery exhibition mounted at the suggestion of Dean of the College John W. Boyer, this web exhibit explores the numerous motivations of the early contributors to the University of Chicago.

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For information about making a gift to the Library, please contact Yasmin Omer, Director of Development, at 773.834.3744 or yasminomer@uchicago.edu.

Gifts of Special Books and Collections

The Library gratefully accepts gifts of special books and collections. A highlight from 2013 was this unique collection from Alfred Willis.

Alfred Willis Collection of African American Popular Fiction

Alfred Willis, a 1986 graduate of the Graduate Library School at the University of Chicago, presented a collection of over 1,200 paperback volumes of African American popular fiction, chiefly romance novels. The collection includes a copy of *Entwined Destinies* by Elsie Washington (writing under the pseudonym Rosalind Welles), published by Dell in 1980 and described as the first mass-market paperback original written by an African American to feature African American characters. All the major writers, series, and imprints in this genre are very well represented.



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By Stephen M. Stigler, Library Society Chairman and Ernest DeWitt Burton Distinguished Service Professor, Department of Statistics and the College, and Member, Committee on Conceptual and Historical Studies of Science

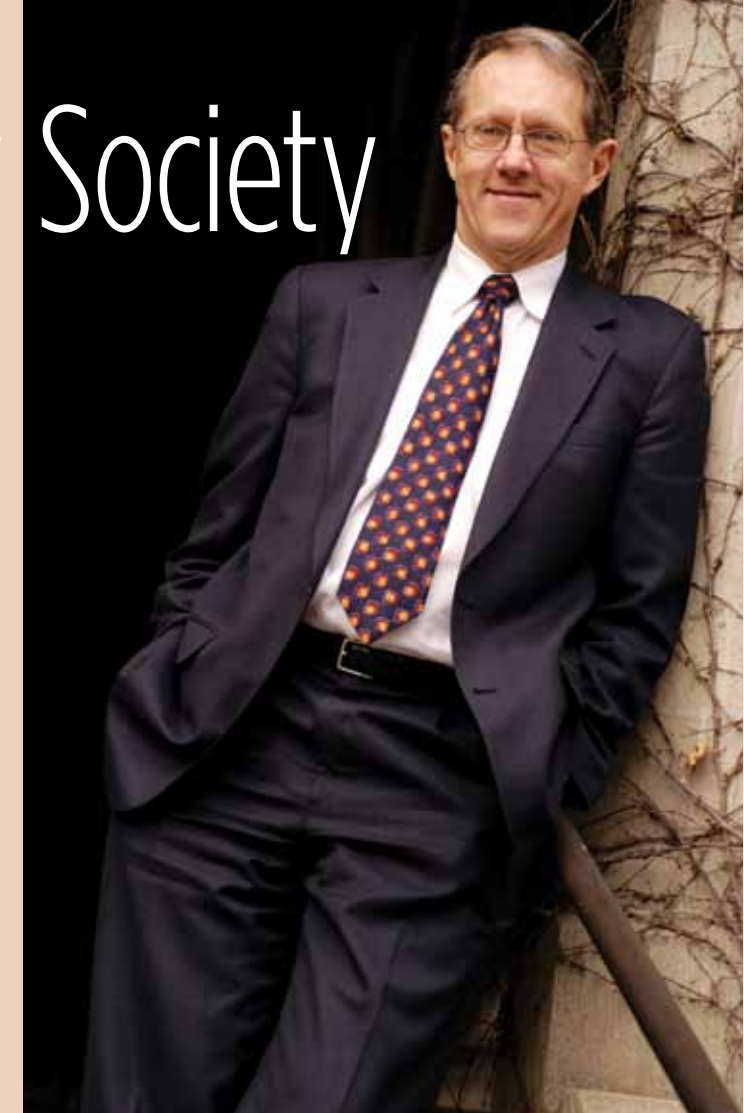
WHEN YOU RECEIVE AN INVITATION to "Visit Our Web Page!" does your heart skip a beat in eager anticipation, and do you clear your weekend schedule for the joys of exploring every link? I thought not. Great libraries are and will always be more than web pages—think of the ancient library of Alexandria, with every learned scroll of the era, or the fictional library of Borges, which held every work ever published as well as every conceivable work that could be published.

The University of Chicago Library is closer to Alexandria and Borges than to a web page, with its wonderfully deep and well-curated physical collections and exhibits, and we are alone among major research libraries in the U.S. in that we have taken action to keep our collections entirely "on site" for the next two decades, including at the magnificent new Mansueto Library. The Library Society serves as a bridge between the greater University community and the Library.

We sponsor exhibits at the Special Collections Research Center to bring highlights of the collections to attention, and we hold meetings to bring this community of common interests together for discussion and celebration. The meetings' speakers are drawn from our own faculty as well as from an international community of scholars with strong Library interests; they have included Nobel Prize winners and Assistant Professors, always with a perspective that is fresh and new to the audience. Often the meeting is followed by a dinner with conversation with other members and representatives of the Library.

We also support faculty, staff, students, and visiting scholars who use the Library by enabling the acquisition of needed books and electronic resources. In addition, our donations support the Library by funding exhibition catalogues and this very publication—*Libra*.

We invite you to join us; if you would like to come to our next meeting to sample the community of members, we would welcome you to do that as well. To learn more, visit (sigh) our web page: lib.uchicago.edu/e/alumnifriends/libsoc. Or contact Yasmin Omer, Director of Development, at yasminomer@uchicago.edu.



Upcoming Library Society Speakers

Wednesday,
March 12, 2014
Glenn Most
Visiting Professor,
Committee on Social
Thought, The University
of Chicago; Professor of
Greek Philology, Scuola
Normale Superiore di
Pisa (Italy)

Spring date to be announced
Robert Darnton
Carl H. Pforzheimer
University Professor
and University Librarian,
Harvard University

For more information
or to register, visit
[lib.uchicago.edu/e/
alumnifriends/libsoc/
events14.html](http://lib.uchicago.edu/e/alumnifriends/libsoc/events14.html).

Desiderata

Thanks to Library Society members' generosity last year, more than \$38,000 was raised to acquire essential titles for the Library. We are seeking additional funding for the following titles:

Kadharbatcha S. Saleem. **Combined MRI and Histology Atlas of the Rhesus Monkey Brain in Stereotaxic Coordinates**. London: Elsevier Academic Press, 2012. — \$250

Geoffrey Cantor, editor. **The Great Exhibition: A Documentary History**. London: Pickering & Chatto, 2013. Four volumes. — \$625. The Great Exhibition of 1851 was the first industrial exhibition of international scope. This edition contains over 140 sources including periodical articles, sermons, poems, tracts, cartoons, letters and journal entries.

Encyclopedia of Religion, e-version. Macmillan. — \$2,550.

You may also want to choose among additional titles online at lib.uchicago.edu/e/alumnifriends/libsoc/Desiderata.html.

To support the purchase of one of these titles, please send a check for the full cost, with the title in the comment field, to The Library Society, 1100 East 57th Street, Room 180, Chicago, IL 60637. You may also call Barbara Palmer-Bostick at 773-702-7695. Thank you for your generosity.

Libra can be found online at lib.uchicago.edu/e/libra.

Judith Nadler *Director and University Librarian*

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EXHIBITIONS



Race and the Design of American Life:

African Americans in Twentieth-Century Commercial Art

Special Collections Research Center
 Exhibition Gallery

October 14, 2013 - January 4, 2014

IMAGES OF AFRICAN AMERICANS have outfitted myriad mass-produced consumer goods in the twentieth century, joining the politics of race to the stuff of everyday life. How has graphic design shaped the relationship between race and consumption? Drawing from collections of food packaging, print advertisements, children's books, album covers, and toys, this exhibit traces the vexed history of racial design, from stark racist caricature to the productions of black-owned advertising firms.



From Sausage to Hot Dogs:

The Evolution of an Icon

The John Crerar Library, Atrium

October 29 - December 31, 2013

THE HOT DOG is an American creation, and Chicago even has its own style. But where did this popular food come from and how did it develop? This exhibit looks to the hot dog's origins in sausage-making practices brought by European immigrants to the Midwest. We consider techniques used in neighborhood butcher shops and the rise of industrial meat production. Homemade recipes and artisanal makers past and present are also examined.



Firmness, Commodity, and Delight:

Architecture in Special Collections

WEB EXHIBIT: lib.uchicago.edu/e/webexhibits/firmnesscommodityanddelight

DRAWN FROM THE HOLDINGS of the Special Collections Research Center, this exhibition suggests the diversity of the Library's architectural rare books, manuscripts, and archives and their rich potential for research across a broad range of topics in the arts of building and design. Included are theoretical works and popular manuals, records of the University's physical development, papers of urban planners, postcards and ephemera, photographs, and architectural drawings and blueprints.