

Resources for Teaching in the Brooklyn College Archives

The Archives welcomes faculty bringing their students in for general orientation sessions (what an archives is, how we work, what we collect) or for more in-depth sessions using the resources in some way. While we ask you to contact us well in advance to schedule either type of visit, it's especially important for the in-depth ones so that we have sufficient time to work together to determine which materials will best suit your goals, and how we can provide access to them.

Examples of students using Archival materials:

1. Greg Smithsimon in Sociology has for several years brought his Research Methods classes to the Archives for 3 class meetings. Together we picked out four collections of materials that allow the students to complete the assignment designed by Prof. Smithsimon. At the first meeting the archivist gives a shortened version of the general orientation to the Archives, and then talks about the different collections the students have to choose from for their assignment. The two subsequent visits allow the students to continue their research, and have copies made of the materials they need for their papers.

In order to accommodate several students researching in one collection, and to reduce wear and tear on the documents, we created several duplicate sets of representative documents from each collection, and students are given access to the complete finding aids, so that if there are additional materials they want to see, we can retrieve those for them.

2. Professor Matthew Harrick works with the Erasmus High School STAR students for the library segment of their on-campus program, and regularly brings them to visit the archives in the fall semester for an orientation visit. During the spring semester some students select the library for their more in-depth experience, and Prof. Harrick includes time in the archives as part of that. The students select a topic in which they're interested, and the archivist finds materials in the collections that relate in some way to the topic. It may be artifacts, documents, or images.
3. A Political Science professor brought her writing seminar to the Archives and required them to write a paper telling a story based on archival sources that were chosen ahead of time by the faculty member.
4. Many History professors have used the archives to introduce their classes to the use of primary sources for writing assignments, and one of Prof. Napoli's Public History classes had a collaborative research assignment that resulted in the creation of an exhibit by the entire class in the library lobby.

So what does the Archives have that might be of interest or use to your classes or personal research? Several specific collections are mentioned below, as well as the broad collecting areas, but these only scratch the surface – the Archives has well over 500 processed collections, and more that are awaiting processing. A “collection” might be a single item, or more than a thousand boxes. All holdings are stored on-site, so retrieving them for researchers is relatively easy.

I. What we collect

a. College Records –

- i.* President’s Office
- ii.* Provost
- iii.* various departments or entities – i.e. Athletics, Mathematics, Geology, Faculty Council, etc.
- iv.* publications – Vanguard, Kingsman and 12 other student newspapers, many on microfilm, yearbooks (nearly complete run), college bulletins, student club newsletters and journals (in our Periodicals Collection)
- v.* events and other activities
 1. **Country Fair** - In May 1938, Brooklyn College hosted its first annual Country Fair to celebrate the College’s birthday with games and festivities and to promote student life on campus and to raise money for graduate students in need. The theme was chosen as a way to reproduce the carnival atmosphere created when the Ringling Brothers and Barnum and Bailey Circus pitched their tents on the site that would become the campus of Brooklyn College. By the 1950s the Country Fair had a budget of over \$15,000 with 30 committees involved in the planning of events, contests, games, shows, and concession stands. The Country Fair remained widely popular among Brooklyn College students, faculty, and the community until its demise in 1994.
 2. **Farm Labor project** – In response to a farm labor shortage during WWII, students volunteered to work on farms upstate during the summers of 1942, 43, and 44. We have documents and photographs, as well as oral histories with some of the participants.
 3. **Murray Horowitz collection** – Horowitz wrote the 50th anniversary history of the college, and the collection includes his oral history interviews
- vi.* BC Photos, George Bing collection (campus photographer, no material in collection about his Tuskegee Airmen days)
- vii.* Construction of the Midwood Campus – photos, blueprints, correspondence
- viii.* Student Protests – flyers, photos

- ix. Maps and Atlases – although our map collection is not digitized, the NYPL has an exceptional digital map collection, there is a link at the end of this document

Regarding oral histories, the Archives is working on digitizing the recordings we have, so that they can be uploaded to the College's digital platform Illumira (Brooklyn.illumira.net). If we have transcripts, those will be uploaded as well. And speaking of oral histories, the Archives has the interviews with former *Vanguard* staffers done by historian Adina Back in the late 80's. Those will also be uploaded with transcripts. The subjects of those interviews talk not only about the experience of working on the paper and having it shut down by President Gideonse in 1950, but also about their family backgrounds and growing up in Brooklyn. Some of the staffers were WWII veterans.

b. **Faculty –**

- i. *Harry Slochower* - professor of German and Comparative Lit who refused to tell a Congressional committee in the 1950's whether he had been a Communist Party member. Was dismissed as a professor of German and comparative literature at Brooklyn College. He sued for reinstatement, and in 1956 the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that he had been denied due process of law. He was reinstated with more than \$40,000 in back pay but was suspended almost immediately on charges that he had made false statements under oath at the Senate hearing. Before a scheduled departmental trial, Dr. Slochower resigned.
- ii. *Elmer Luchterhand* - professor of sociology, studied the effects of stress on man from a sociological perspective --including the massive stress perpetrated on individuals who survived in concentration camps during World War II. In the last twenty-five to thirty years of his life, Professor Luchterhand studied, researched, and interviewed survivors of World War II in order to better understand the lasting effects they experienced because of their incarceration. The collection is composed primarily of transcripts of the interviews.
- iii. *Stuart Schaar* - material is primarily Professor Schaar's research regarding his teachings and/or his writings. The papers incorporate items from the early part of the twentieth century in Tunisia as well as other North African and Middle Eastern countries. Documents include correspondences, class notes and syllabi, writings by Professor Schaar and newspaper clippings. The collection also includes audio and videocassettes mostly on the Mideast, as well as a large collection of artworks. We also have Prof. Schaar's book collection (3000+ vols.) on the Middle East and North Africa.

- iv. *Hess Collection* - The collection encompasses Dr. Robert L. Hess's life both before he arrived at Brooklyn College and during the time (1979-1992) that he was president of Brooklyn College until his death. We also have the Hess rare book collection (3000+ volumes), which focuses on Ethiopia and the Horn of Africa. The Hess family endowment gives the Archives money every year to support and add to the collection, so we have branched out from strictly books, and have added manuscripts and photographs, primarily related to the Italian colonial period in Ethiopia. There is currently an exhibit in the library co-curated with Prof. James DeLorenzi from John Jay College. It focuses on Ethiopia's role in world history from the classical era through the twentieth century, paying particular attention to the complex modern relationship between Ethiopia and Europe. The exhibit looks at the Amharic and Ge'ez literary heritage of Ethiopia, the development of European orientalist scholarship devoted to Ethiopia, the struggle between Italy and Ethiopia the League of Nations (1934-35), and the Italian colonization of Ethiopia (1935-41).
- v. *Jerry Krase collection* – his research and photographs of Brooklyn neighborhoods. The digitized photographs will be uploaded to ILLUMIRA when we have finished creating the metadata for each image.

II. Alumni

- a. Shirley Chisholm – material related to her presidential campaign in 1972 from both Barbara Winslow of the Shirley Chisholm Project on campus, and Shola Lynch, who produced the documentary about SC, *Unbought and Unbossed*
- b. Rhoda Karpatkin – on the Vanguard staff when the paper was closed by President Gideonse in 1950, student activist
- c. William Alfred – went on to become a Harvard professor and playwright – wrote “Hogan’s Goat” which was Faye Dunaway’s Broadway debut

III. Brooklyn

- a. *Politicians & Civic leaders*, including William Augustus Jones, a civil rights leader and pastor of Bethany Baptist Church (the Archives received a grant in Fall 2019 to digitize nearly 800 of Rev. Jones’ sermons and put them online), Adele Cohen (former state assemblywoman), Rhoda Jacobs (also state assembly), Emily Jane Goodman, former State Supreme Court justice (as an attorney, she was very involved in tenants rights issues in the 1970’s), Susan Alter, first Orthodox woman elected to NY City Council, and a strong advocate of women’s rights, particularly support for Orthodox women seeking a religious divorce (all four women are BC alums); John J. Rooney, US Representative for the 14th District from the early 1940’s to 1974 – 700+ box collection covers constituent and other correspondence on social issues

including immigration, military service, social security, early funding for cancer research, affirmative action and more, plus topics including the Alaskan pipeline, housing projects, and the Gowanus Canal, plus his voting record

- b. *Brooklyn History* – The Archives tries not to compete with Brooklyn Historical Society and Brooklyn Public Library in their areas of collecting, but there is some overlap - maps, photos, newsclippings, books
- c. *YWCA of Brooklyn* – 1888-2011, a large, recently opened collection with lots of potential for research on women in Brooklyn, 6000+ photographs, link to finding aid (collection guide) at the end of this document
- d. *Coney Island and Astroland*
- e. *Postcard collection* – Over 400 postcards from all neighborhoods of Brooklyn, from a set put out by the *Brooklyn Eagle*.

IV. Other collections

- a. Kaplan boxing – one of the largest in the country; at least one book has been published from this collection – Stars in the Ring, about Jewish boxers; there are a few other, smaller boxing collections
- b. Loretta Bender – prominent child psychologist at Bellevue
- c. Annie Smith Peck – 19th and early 20th century mountaineer, 4 authors researching books on her, 1st one published two years ago
- d. Phoenix – Brooklyn paper, great photograph collection, reporter's notebooks
- e. TV & Radio: Levenson & Freeman

Freeman (BC alum) - The Papers of Devery Freeman are primarily comprised of Devery Freeman's writings, movie and television scripts in particular, which are contained and bound in some instances within beautiful bindings. Most of the scripts were written for movies, radio and television shows. The dates they encompass are from the 1940's through the 1960's. There is material that he scripted for the Armed Services Radio shows during the time Mr. Freeman served in World War II; there are scripts for movies like *The Yellow Cab Man*, *The Fuller Brush Man*, and *Taps*; ones written for television like *The Thin Man* series, as well as radio scripts, specifically ones written for *Baby Snooks*, a popular radio show in the 1940's. In addition, there are also videotapes that were prepared for a number of the above-mentioned scripts.

There is some correspondence in this collection as well, mainly from television studios written in the mid-1950s, and some promotional material regarding several of the shows and movies that appeared with Mr. Freeman's byline. Finally, there are a few photographs and contact sheets taken on the sets of TV shows like *Pete and Gladys* and *The Thin Man*.

Levenson (TV/Radio, BC Alum) - The Sam Levenson collection contains materials that pertain mainly to his years as a humorist, writer, and performer. There are published and unpublished manuscripts, typescripts and articles that he wrote, newspaper columns and reviews of his books. In addition to his radio and television scripts, monologues, lectures and routines, there are multitudes of jokes indexed on cards in very specific categories (such as dogs, birthdays, grandparents, etc.). There are filmed and recorded appearances among the aural tapes, phonographs, kinescopes, 78 RPM records, and addresses Mr. Levenson made at graduations, luncheons and dinners. There is also correspondence (both professional and personal), date calendars, directories of professional appearances, name directory card files, photographs of Levenson, some in caricature form, others that are head shots. There are also many press clippings, plaques, citations and awards Sam Levenson received. Included here as well are nearly forty boxes of personal reference books.

- f. Anthropology: Dr. Willoughby Waterman – (Faculty, Soc./Anthropology) The Papers of Dr. W. C. Waterman consist of materials pertaining primarily to his teachings and research. Since Dr. Waterman taught classes on sociology, anthropology, and criminology, the items found here cover topics related to agriculture, behavior, education, health, family and marriage, population, prostitution, psychology, religion, urban society, and welfare. The collection also contains correspondence, both professional and private.
- g. English: Friend, Rosten, Hill, Grebanier, Marshall
Bernard Grebanier (English prof) - This is a small collection donated by Professor Grebanier consisting of a complete typed and edited manuscript of his book, Playwriting: How to Write for the Theatre published in 1961. In addition, there is a folder of correspondence. Also a folder of several examples of his published writings and a diary containing hand written poem entitled, The Twelfth Disciple.

Paule Marshall (alum): On April 9, 1929, Paule Marshall was born in Brooklyn, New York. Inspired by her mother, and other poets in the New York City and Barbadian communities, Marshall began writing at the early age of 10. Shortly thereafter, and influenced by her Barbadian-American heritage and her knowledge of African rituals and mythology, she became a fan of many African-American writers such as Zora Neal Hurston and Paul Lawrence Dunbar. Fast forward to 1953, Paule Marshall was a Brooklyn College graduate who went on to become a writer for the magazine *Our World*. It was during this point in her life where she began writing her first novel Brown Girl, Brownstone. Other major works of Marshall's include The Chosen Place; the Timeless People (1961) and The Fisher King (2000). In this collection you will find an incomplete typescript from one of Paule Marshall's published works, her first novel, Brown Girl, Brownstone.

Norman Rosten: This collection contains items such as original drafts of published works, photographs, playbills, interviews, reviews, correspondences, and scripts. There is also some publicity material for his screenplay *A View From the Bridge*, an original radio script for *Death of a King*, as well as final revisions. In addition, there are newspaper clippings, magazine articles and some interviews Mr. Rosten gave during his term as Brooklyn's Poet Laureate (1979-1995).

Robert Friend (BC Alum) - This collection of material is comprised primarily of Robert Friend's writings – as poet, translator, and educator. The papers are divided into correspondence; written works; translations; reviews; publications; and memorabilia.

Hyacinthe Hill (BC Alum) - she would become famous for her writings that include *Breasts and the Woman* (poetry) and editing *Great American Poets North Atlantic Issue*, 1973. There were also the anthologies like *World Bahai Anthology*, 1951; *Adventures in American Poetry*, 1954; *New Age Anthology of Poetry*, 1955; *Exile*, 1957; *Golden Year* (Poetry Society of America, 1910-1960); *Sing Loud for Loveliness*, 1962; *The Writing on the Wall*, Doubleday, 1969; *International Who's Who in Poetry Anthology*, 1972; *New Orlando Anthologies*, Volumes I, II, and III, 1973, and other collections. Ms. Hill's poems have been published in periodicals and newspapers nationally and abroad, although another important facet of her life was her great interest in astrology.

V. **Books**

Hess, covers Ethiopia and the Horn of Africa, many languages, including Amharic and Ge'ez (Ethiopian) – over 3000 volumes

Schaar – Middle East, over 3000 volumes

Kaplan – over 1000 books on boxing

General – (several thousand) these were books likely donated by early faculty and/or pulled from the shelves due to age and potential value; we recently submitted a grant application to obtain funding for conservation work on over 125 volumes that have been languishing in our stacks for decades, some of these include a 16th century book of Catholic Church doctrine, in a native language of Mexico – Nahuatl, *Colloquios de la paz, y tranquilidad christiana, en lengua mexicana*, by Juan de Gaona, and a 1st edition of an influential 16th century book on music theory, *Le Istitutioni Harmoniche*, by Gioseffo Zarlino. We have literature, medical books (a 1642 edition of Vesalius' *De humani corporis fabrica*), political theory, poetry (Lucan's *Pharsalia*), history and travelogues.

All books can be found in the library catalog, and many but not all of the archival collections.

VI. Digitization

- a. Academic Works – some photos and manuscripts
 - i.* Academic Works is not well-suited to host archival materials, and we have not added material to our page there for nearly two years. The Archives is working on other ways to provide access to the listing of processed collections