

Arts & Humanities Council Meeting of April 4, 2024

10:00-11:30 am

Facilitator: L. Cunningham

Minutes: M. Hamed

In attendance: Abby Scheel, Adnan Malik, Jeremy J Ott, José Adrián Barragán-Álvarez, Lynn D Cunningham, Mohamed Hamed, Ruth E Haber, Virginia Shih, and guest: Cynthia Esha Rahman

Agenda

1. Announcements (5 min.)
 - a. Jeremy J Ott: DeGruyter representative will be at Berkeley on April 24 at 2PM in Doe 303. An email in this regard will be sent to Selectors soon.
 - b. Mohamed Hamed: Recently Mohamed traveled to Qatar for an AI conference focusing on Arab libraries and Middle Eastern resources. The conference included useful presentations such as using AI in Arabic cataloging, or enhancing access to Islamic manuscripts, and more. Mohamed will have a presentation about it for AHC in the future.
2. Guest: Cynthia Esha Rahman, student curator of current exhibit in the SSEAL (20 min.)
The presentation entitled: Bearing Witness: Female Reproductive Justice Narratives, Bangladesh 1970-1990s.

The topic covers the struggle of Bangladeshi women for reproductive rights that had its genesis in the sexual violence and war crimes perpetrated against Bangladeshi women during the Liberation War in 1971, which resulted in at least 200,000 raped women, and about 25,000 of these women were pregnant as a result of the war. As a result of this the Rehabilitation Center was established where women were treated and had abortions.

This was the subject of Cynthia's thesis for which she traveled to Bangladesh and interviewed workers and victims at the rehabilitation center. She also discussed what American women activists wrote about this. The Second Wave American feminism activist Susan Brownmiller wrote about this in her book "Against Her Will". In addition, Cynthia talked about how Harvey Karmen performed abortions using the super coil which was not approved in the US. In the 1980s the Rehabilitation Center changed to Family Planning Center where again the non clinically proven contraceptives were used on Bangladeshi women, who had to go through a lot of hardship to be treated for the side effects.

The exhibit has newspaper articles, letters, photos, pamphlets, and other archival materials that have been collected by the student in person or using Berkeley collection.

For example, the archives of the Sunday Times and Ms. Magazine. Both were used in the student's research and in the exhibit. In addition, Gale Academic was very useful.

Among several campus units that helped, the study was mainly sponsored and funded by the Center for Race and Gender studies. In addition, there is a Berkeley professor (Malcom Potts) who was serving in the Center, so the student was able to use his scrapbook in the research and the exhibit.

Adnan also mentioned three main challenges with this project: 1) the language that they tried to use about the war and the war crimes, 2) speaking about abortion and all the sensitivities here in the US and in Bangladesh, 3) the discussion about the western feminism and third world feminism.

Abby also helped the project by connecting the exhibit team with the Sexual Violence resources on campus which was very useful for the exhibit team. Abby mentioned that Path to Care program on campus has resources specific for South Asian Americans addressing sexual violence alongside their other programs.

The exhibit will be up until the end of the semester.

3. Demo of new JSTOR Images (Lynn 10 min.)

Artstor is an image database that has 2 millions of art images. Jstor and Artstor are both under the same company Ithaka, where they are sunsetting Artstor and will migrate the content in Artstor to Jstor. Artstor will not be available after August 2024. At this point, the art images are already in or are in the process of being migrated to Jstor.

Lynn walked the group through Jstor platform and showed that there are two big parts of the main page, where researchers can search for "All content" including images, or "Images" only. Lynn also showed the search features and differences between searching in all content vs images only.

Berkeley collections and subscription content of images will be also available in the new interface.

4. Around the table (all)

- a. Abby: Brittany (Bee) Lehman, the Literatures & Digital Humanities Librarian in the Arts & Humanities Division will start next month. Their first day will be May 13th. Abby is asking for ideas for the onboarding for them. No office spot yet, but it could be either in 438 or 212-218.
- b. Jeremy: Is in his first term as the chair of GNARP, the German resources group affiliated with CRL (which is going through a massive restructure). One of the major projects GNARP is working on is the bylaws review. Jeremy set up the review taskforce in which they identified more than 30 elements which they

recommend revising. This is the first week of a two week period for voting on the new bylaws.

- c. Lynn:
 - i. Spoke about the Eclipse exhibit popup exhibit, and that Library Communication wrote a [news story](#) about it.
 - ii. Lynn and Abby are co-curating a new exhibit in Brown Gallery. The exhibit will include some artists' books from the Art History/Classics Library, and the Environmental Design Library. It will run from Sept. 2024 to March 2025.
- d. José:
 - i. Spoke about the Bancroft roundtable entitled "The Price We Paid": Bancroft's Alaska and the Worth of History to Empire" by Ian Halter.
 - ii. Lynn then asked a question about the Chancellor's [reckoning committee](#) to respond to the [proposal to unname Bancroft Library](#). José explained the committee's main job and that the committee will propose some ideas for moving forward.