

WINDOWS

UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES • VOLUME 29, NUMBER 1 • SPRING/SUMMER 2022

OUTSTANDING *additions,* EXTRAORDINARY *stories* p. 12



ON THE COVER

A collection of 900 woodcut blocks is the Library's 9 millionth volume and one of several notable new additions.

Story on p. 12

BRAND REFRESH

Windows readers will notice a refreshed look throughout the magazine beginning with this issue. The new colors, fonts, and graphic elements are part of a year-long branding project to better communicate all that makes the University Libraries the open, expert, inclusive and bold organization that we are today. Creative director Aleah Howell '15, M.A. '17, led the project. Let us know what you think by dropping a note to librarynews@ad.unc.edu.

ABOUT WINDOWS

Windows is published by the Friends of the Library under the auspices of the University Libraries, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. We welcome questions and comments at P.O. Box 8890, CB #3900, Chapel Hill, NC 27515-8890 or (919) 962-1301.

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LIBRARIES ON SOCIAL MEDIA



 **unclibrary** Thank you, Tar Heels! This year's GiveUNC Day was the best ever for the University Libraries. Your 207 gifts totaled \$257,809. That will help power student success, faculty excellence, and a robust research enterprise.



 **UNClibrary** Take a peek at one of our unique items: the Peep Show. Peep shows invited people to peer into small boxes to view a series of prints, which, when viewed together, reveal a three-dimensional perspective scene.



Connect with the University Libraries on social media for creative inspiration, news, resources and more.

From the University Librarian



Photo by Jeyheun Allebaugh/UNC-Chapel Hill

at Cornell set me on the path to library leadership. It is the only institution that could have lured me away from Chapel Hill.

In this issue, you will have a chance to see up close what makes Carolina's libraries so very special. It is here in Wilson Library that you will find the four new acquisitions we highlight starting on page 12: the papers of comedian Lewis Black '70 and those of retiring U.S. Representative G.K. Butterfield; a collection of wooden blocks that tell stories of printing, history, religion and our interconnected world; and a manuscript by Omar ibn Said, a scholar kidnapped from West Africa and sold into slavery, whose story is part of North Carolina's.

You will read, as well, about the many ways that Carolina's librarians and archivists are leading on campus and in their fields, such as through a new project that uses archival records to reconstruct the experiences of enslaved individuals and a grant that advances our work to analyze Jim Crow laws through machine learning (p. 7).

Of course, none of this could be achieved without the steadfast support of friends like you. Not everyone visits Davis Library during a prospective student tour, as Catherine Paul did (p. 30). But if you are reading this, you already know that libraries have the power to transform lives. That belief has driven my entire career. I know that it will guide María Estorino in her time as interim University librarian (p. 6), and I hope it is what you have come to expect from Carolina's libraries.

While this will be my final letter to you as University Librarian, Carolina will always hold a special place in my heart. Thank you for all that you do to make the University Libraries a place to remember and to cherish.

Sincerely,

Elaine L. Westbrooks

Vice Provost for University Libraries and University Librarian

Dear Friends,

When I arrived at Carolina in 2017, I knew right away that my career had brought me to an incredibly special place, one with both a storied history and unlimited potential.

So much about these last five years has been unexpected and unprecedented. The pandemic, of course, has changed us all in ways that we are only beginning to understand. We have lived through both challenge and uplift on campus and in our nation.

Through it all, the strength, resilience and commitment of our students and faculty, the outstanding staff of the University Libraries, and dedicated friends and supporters like you reminded me every day what makes this community so remarkable.

Nothing has been more bittersweet for me than sharing that I will be returning to Cornell University July 1 as the Carl A. Kroch University Librarian. My early work



Photo by Jayhoun Allebaugh/UNC-Chapel Hill

Erica Titkemeyer, associate head of repository services, views video material recovered from the Highlander Research and Education Center.

\$500,000 grant will advance preservation of the South's audiovisual history

The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation has awarded the University Libraries \$500,000 for a fourth and final phase of the project Extending the Reach of Southern Audiovisual Sources. Archivists and digitization

specialists will develop a long-range model for preserving audio and video records of the American South at a large scale. The Foundation has supported this work at Carolina since 2014, providing \$3.4 million over nine years.

The project goals are to develop funding and staffing models so that UNC-Chapel Hill can continue this work once the grant concludes; to develop a sustainable model for providing audiovisual

preservation services to partners across the state; and to preserve materials created by or about BIPOC (Black, Indigenous and people of color) communities, members of the LGBTQ+ community, religious or ethnic groups, and people with disabilities.

Learn more: go.unc.edu/SouthernAV

Three librarians selected as leadership fellows

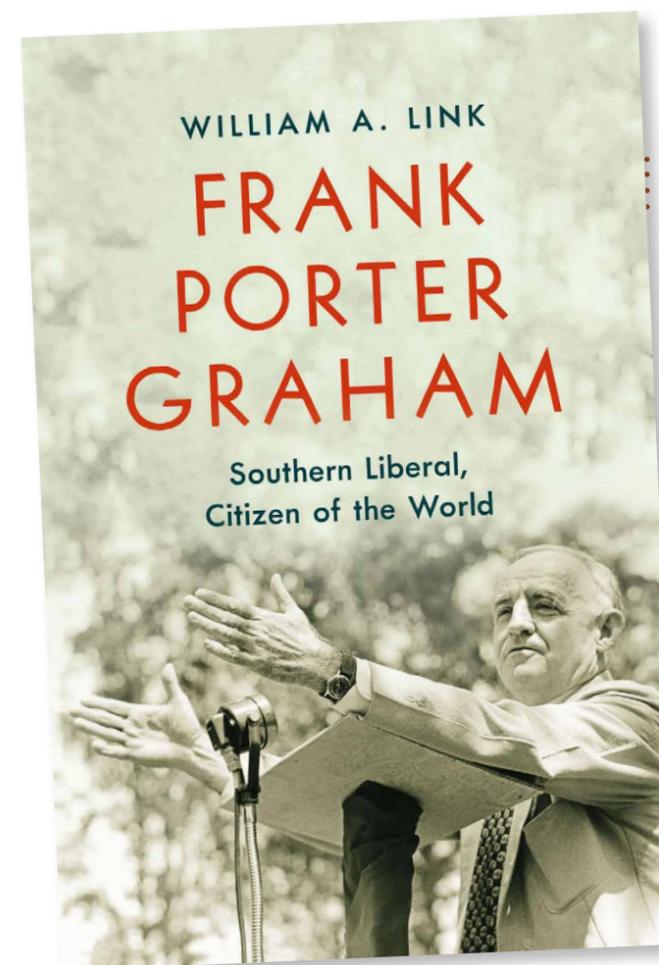
The Association of Research Libraries (ARL) has selected three UNC-Chapel Hill librarians for leadership fellowships.

Nandita Mani, associate University librarian for the health sciences and director of the Health Sciences Library, is a 2021-22 Leadership Fellow. This flagship offering of the ARL Academy develops and prepares the next generation of senior library and archival leaders.

Monica Figueroa, librarian for inclusive excellence, and Chaitra Powell, curator of the Southern Historical Collection, will be part of the 2022-23 ARL Leadership and Career Development Program. The program prepares mid-career librarians from historically underrepresented racial and ethnic groups for leadership roles in their careers and in the profession.

Health sciences librarians publish analysis of consumer COVID-19 information

A team of four librarians from the Health Sciences Library, has published a paper analyzing the quality of consumer COVID-19 health information. "A health literacy analysis of the consumer-oriented COVID-19 information produced by ten state health departments" by Nandita Mani, Terri Ottosen, Megan Fratta and Fei Yu appeared in the Journal of the Medical Library Association (vo. 109, no. 3, 2021). The open-access paper reviewed public messaging to determine if it was understandable, actionable and clear. It also recommended strategies to improve messaging.



Sarah Wright receives professional excellence award



Photo by Aleah Howell/University Libraries

Sarah T. Wright, head of clinical and statewide engagement at the Health Sciences Library, has received the 2021 Award for Professional Excellence by a Health Sciences Librarian from the Mid-Atlantic chapter of the Medical Library Association. The

award cites Wright's long history of service and leadership in the field; her departmental leadership at Carolina; her dedication to teaching and mentoring for both librarians and medical trainees; and her contributions to medical and information science publications.

University Libraries and UNC Press publish biography of UNC President Frank Porter Graham

The latest collaboration between the University Libraries and the UNC Press is a biography of Frank Porter Graham (1886-1972), the University's 15th president. "Frank Porter Graham: Southern Liberal, Citizen of the World," by William A. Link, reveals how the personally modest public servant took his place on the national and world stage and, along the way, helped transform North Carolina.

The biography is supported by the Albert and Gladys Coates Endowment Fund for the North Carolina Collection at the Wilson Special Collections Library.

Learn more and purchase the book: go.unc.edu/Graham

CAMPAIGN UPDATES

Progress as of April 2022

With just a few months left in the Campaign for Carolina, the University Libraries is closing in on its boldest fundraising goal ever.

Gifts both large and small continue to move the University Libraries toward the \$50 million finish line by the campaign's end on December 31, 2022.

There's still time to join the many generous friends who have helped to secure a bright future for the University Libraries. Contact the Library Development Office at (919) 962-4207 or librarydevelopment@unc.edu to learn how.



LEADERSHIP TRANSITIONS

The University Libraries is pleased to welcome Jessica Aylor MPA '07 as the new director of Library development and interim executive director of Library development. Aylor is a seasoned fundraiser who comes to Carolina most recently from the Triangle Community Foundation in Durham, North Carolina. There, she held a number of increasingly responsible positions, finishing as vice president of community investment. Learn more about Aylor at go.unc.edu/Aylor.

Blue Dean, formerly executive director of Library development, left the University Libraries on March 25.

NEWS BRIEFS



Photo by Jeyhoun Allebaugh/UNC-Chapel Hill

María Estorino to be interim library leader

María R. Estorino will be interim vice provost for University libraries and University librarian effective June 1, 2022, following the departure of Elaine L. Westbrook (see p. 8). Estorino has been associate University librarian for special collections and director of the Louis Round Wilson Special Collections Library since 2017.

During her time at Carolina, Estorino has been instrumental in expanding and transforming the work of special collections by facilitating the acquisition of new collections, authoring and advising on numerous grants and proposals, and developing signature initiatives including a robust fellowships program.

Estorino has been a strong voice for the University Libraries' Reckoning Initiative and for its inclusion, diversity,

equity and accessibility work. She serves on numerous campus committees and has been instrumental in partnerships and collaborations such as the Southern Futures initiative in conjunction with the College of Arts & Sciences.

Read more: go.unc.edu/EstorinoInterim

Chaitra Powell is new Southern Historical Collection curator

Chaitra Powell is the new curator of the Southern Historical Collection (SHC) at the Wilson Special Collections Library. She began November 1, 2021.

Powell will provide vision, leadership and operational oversight for the SHC, which was founded in 1930. Since then, it has grown to hold 5,000 manuscript collections and is today the leading repository of unique materials reflecting the histories and cultures of the American South.

Powell joined the Southern Historical Collection in 2014 as African American collections and outreach archivist. She holds a B.A. in sociology and an M.A. in library science, both from the University of Arizona, Tucson.

Read more: go.unc.edu/Powell



Reckoning Initiative updates

A selection of stories highlighting the University Libraries' Reckoning Initiative in action

UNC-Chapel Hill joins project to investigate slavery and U.S. universities through archival records

Archivists at the Wilson Special Collections Library will participate in a national collaborative project to reconstruct the lived experiences of enslaved individuals at and around universities. On These Grounds: Slavery and the University takes a new approach to archival documents and the way archivists describe them.

At the heart of the project is a database built around enslaved individuals and milestones or experiences in their lives, such as being born or dying, being sold or leased, receiving medical care, being baptized or laboring in a particular location or at a trade.

The project team will comb through records from the University Archives and from the Southern Historical Collection. They will look for those hints in correspondence, contracts, diaries, business records and student records. A graduate

student will code the information and enter it into the central database.

The project builds upon longstanding work at Wilson Library, including a 2005 exhibition entitled "Slavery and the Making of the University"; support for the University's Commission on History, Race and a Way Forward; and class projects that have investigated the history of campus buildings.

Learn more: go.unc.edu/OnTheseGrounds

Grant will expand University Libraries' use of machine learning to identify historically racist laws

Since 2019, experts at the University Libraries have investigated the use of machine learning to identify racist laws from North Carolina's past. A new grant of \$400,000 from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation will allow them to extend that work to two more states. The grant will also fund research and teaching fellowships for scholars interested in using the project's outputs and techniques.

On the Books: Jim Crow and Algorithms of Resistance began with a question from a North Carolina social studies teacher: Was there a comprehensive list of all the Jim Crow laws that had ever been passed in the state?

Finding little beyond scholar and activist Pauli Murray's 1951 book "States' Laws on Race and Color," a team of librarians, technologists and data experts set out to fill the gap. The group created machine-readable versions of all North Carolina statutes from 1866 to 1967. Then, with subject expertise from scholarly partners, they trained an algorithm to identify racist language in the laws.

On the Books launched in 2019 as part of the national Collections as Data: Part to Whole project, funded by The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. Subsequent funding from the Association of Research Libraries and from an internal University Libraries grant allowed the work to continue. The newest grant from The Mellon Foundation will conclude at the end of 2023.

Learn more: go.unc.edu/OnTheBooksGrant

At the heart of the project is a database built around enslaved individuals and milestones or experiences in their lives.

—On These Grounds: Slavery and the University



A Farewell Q&A

with University Librarian

Elaine L. Westbrook



On May 31, Vice Provost for University Libraries and University Librarian Elaine L. Westbrook will leave Carolina to become the Carl A. Kroch University Librarian at Cornell University. As Westbrook's tenure at Chapel Hill ends, we asked her to reflect on her time at the University Libraries and to share some thoughts for her successor.

BY JUDY PANITCH

You came to Carolina in 2017. How has the University Libraries evolved over the last five years?

The distance that we have traveled is simply amazing. First, we are a more innovative and audacious organization, committed to standing out rather than laying low. Second, we are a bolder organization in the ways that we fulfill our mission, serve the campus community and demonstrate our value and impact for North Carolina and beyond.

Third, we are more resilient. We have been through so much in these past two years, and this has made us stronger and more agile in times of uncertainty. Finally, we are a more inclusive organization, committed to dismantling systems that perpetuate inequity. We think much more about removing barriers for users and overcoming past practices that distanced us from underrepresented communities. We believe that everyone belongs in the library and that our services, spaces and policies should make that possible. I am extremely proud of this evolution and the hard work done day in and day out by talented staff who have no shortage of brilliant ideas.

How has your time here helped you grow as a leader?

I think of my ability to lead through two distinct time periods: pre-pandemic and now. At the beginning I was very much focused on alignment, policy making and removing barriers to success—all means to changing culture. Once the pandemic hit, I began to focus more on values. What is important to us as a community? How do we take care of ourselves and each other in these perilous times? My focus shifted to cultivating an organization dedicated to equity, well-being, compassion, flexibility, empathy and community.

I know that I am a stronger leader now than when I arrived, and I owe this improvement largely to the people who report to me and to the tremendously talented and dedicated staff of the University Libraries. I have grown as an advocate to ensure that the Library is at the table and gets what it needs. I have learned how to be a better storyteller to demonstrate the power of libraries. I have improved my ability to communicate why libraries are critical to democracy and an essential piece of social infrastructure to help students and communities thrive. The largest growth area for me has been in learning how to be a leader dedicated to advancing equity, inclusion and accessibility—to make our organization stronger and truly accessible to all.

What accomplishments are you most proud of during your tenure?

I'm proud of the work that we did to create the Sustainable Scholarship Initiative (sustainablescholarship.unc.edu). I don't know if our campus truly understood how bold we were in canceling our big contract with the major publisher Elsevier. It makes me proud of the researchers who have made sacrifices and the Library staff who managed a great deal of change yet continued helping people get what they need. Our subject liaisons and technical services staff did the heavy lifting that made this all work.

The Reckoning Initiative (library.unc.edu/reckoning) has also been transformational. We have agreed that being a more inclusive and equitable organization starts with us. Many organizations love to talk about inclusion. We want to DO something. We have increased the diversity of our organization by more than 35% since 2017. We virtually eliminated fines because they harm those who can least afford them. We have begun refining our appointment and promotion procedures and have analyzed

“My focus shifted to cultivating an organization dedicated to equity, well-being, compassion, flexibility, empathy and community.”



compensation with an equity lens. We have prioritized making digital collections accessible to all. We are a leader in community-driven archives. We are learning together about racial equity and how inequity negatively impacts everyone. All these actions are a result of a dedicated staff committed to doing great work on this campus and in the profession. I'm proud of the fact that we are known for this work and that our peers look to us for guidance and expertise.

Finally, I'm tremendously proud of the way our staff launched into action at the beginning of the pandemic to help each other and to sustain well-being across the organization. The focus on well-being was not really in place before the pandemic, but I've come to believe that it is essential for a healthy organization, not just during a crisis, but all the time.

What do you most want people to know about the University Libraries?

People should know that the University Libraries touches and engages every part of the University. Not only do we help students learn, but we also help them become skilled creators of knowledge. The Library makes possible the research, teaching and clinical work of scholars at Carolina through the collections we build

and the expertise of librarians and archivists. The fact that we preserve human knowledge for future generations is a unique responsibility. The collections we acquire today will drive research long into the future.

I also want people to know that, despite the pandemic, despite hits to the budget, the University Libraries is strong and just getting better. With the leadership team and staff that are in place, the phenomenal support of faculty and administrators and the Friends of the Library Board of Directors, things are in excellent hands.

What advice would you have for Carolina's next University Librarian?

Other than embracing the amazing Library staff, the campus community, donors and alumni, I would say that it's important to build and nurture strong partnerships and coalitions. Student groups, faculty, staff and administrators all need to know how the Library can add value to whatever they are doing. The University Libraries can help any and every unit achieve its goals and objectives, so make those connections and opportunities. You are in a very special place that believes deeply in public service and the greater good. The University Libraries is essential to every part of that mission. ▲

Outstanding additions, extraordinary stories

BY JUDY PANITCH

At the 1988 rededication of Wilson Library as a special collections library, Alexander Heard, chancellor of Vanderbilt University and a former dean of Carolina's Graduate School, told those assembled: "These consequential intellectual resources joined here together make the Louis Round Wilson Library a glorious treasury of human experience."

Nearly 35 years later, that treasury continues to expand and extend. At the heart of it all: the human experience in its astonishing variety, plus the commitment of librarians and archivists to preserve and make these items open for use.

In these pages, enjoy a closer look at four collections that have recently become part of the Wilson Special Collections Library. Each one has stories to tell.



A selection of woodcut printing blocks from the Propaganda Fide press. Photos on pages 13-17 by Johnny Andrews/UNC-Chapel Hill)

THE BLOCKS THAT MADE BOOKS

A collection of 900 woodcut blocks from the Propaganda Fide Press is the University Libraries' 9 millionth "volume."

BY CLAIRE CUSICK

The 9 millionth volume recently acquired by the University Libraries isn't a book. It's a collection of approximately 900 woodcut printing blocks from the Propaganda Fide Press, dating from 1625 to 1850. The blocks' role as printing technology, and in global history, makes them valuable to research in many fields, and also a tribute to books and bookmaking.

The Sacra Congregatio de Propaganda Fide ("Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith") is a college of the Catholic church, now known as the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples. To aid in the church's mission to spread the faith throughout the world, it established its own press in 1622. The press produced materials in various languages, including guides for priests trying to learn a new language and publications that communicated Catholicism's tenets.

The collection contains blocks in many languages, with a heavy concentration in East Asian and Middle Eastern languages, Slavic, Greek and other global languages.

Elizabeth Ott, Frank Borden Hanes Curator of Rare Books at the Wilson Special Collections

"If you're studying iconography in books, if you're studying the production of images, if you just want to know how woodcuts were used to produce illustrations or art prints, you can find out from these objects."

Library, said she expects these objects to benefit many scholars. "From an art historical perspective, they have a lot of value. If you're studying iconography in books, if you're studying the production of images, if you just want to know how woodcuts were used to produce illustrations or art prints, you can find out from these objects," she said.

"It's also a collection of great value to people who are studying how religion has been taught and disseminated," said Ott. "Religious conversion was a major driving force for the study of languages in Europe. European knowledge of other cultures was made possible, in part, by the production of religious texts in various languages."

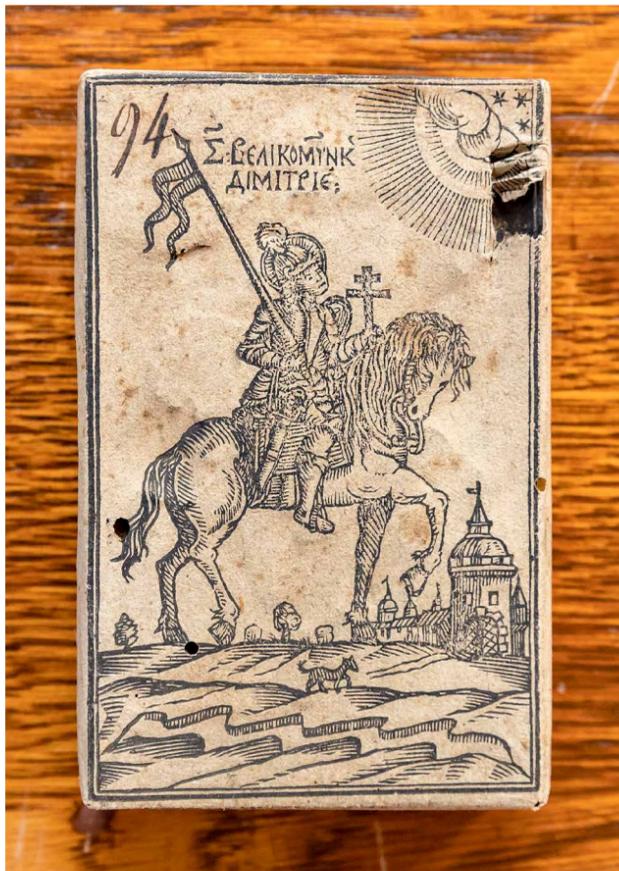
The blocks were purchased with funding from the John Wesley and Anna Hodgkin Hanes Foundation and the Whitaker Library Foundation. The Hanes family's commitment to Carolina's libraries began in 1929, when it gave the gift that first established the Rare Book Collection. Through its foundation, it has since given every milestone millionth volume to the Library. Officials believe the tradition is unique among research libraries.

The Whitaker Library Fund, established in 1960, has helped to extend the University Libraries' holdings of English and American literature, as well as continental European books and manuscripts.

"The millionth volume tradition is not just about celebrating the Library," said María R. Estorino, associate University librarian for special collections and director of Wilson Library. "It is about our commitment to making the creation and transmission of knowledge in so many forms accessible to the residents of North Carolina. That this commitment is shared by the Hanes and Whitaker families demonstrates the power and impact of philanthropic partnerships."



Elizabeth Ott (right), Frank Borden Hanes Curator of Rare Books at the Wilson Special Collections Library, and María Estorino, associate University librarian for special collections and director of Wilson Library, look at woodblocks from the Propaganda Fide Press collection in the Fearington Reading Room at Wilson Library.



The blocks are in various sizes and shapes, Ott said. Some are long and skinny. Some are the size of an 11" x 17" poster. All are .918 inches thick – a standard measurement called “height to paper” that allows for a piece of paper to be pressed flat against the blocks during the printing process.

They are wrapped in “printer’s waste,” a term for spare paper containing mistakes or overruns. These wrappings provide clues to the time and circumstances in which they were created. “There’s an archive within the archive that is the printer’s waste,” Ott said. “There are a lot of layers and depth to this collection.”

The original Hanes endowment to the University charged the Library with studying the origin and development of the book, Ott said. “We are a major research university, and we support all the different kinds of research that go on at UNC,” she said. “But we have this foundational mission to study the origin and development of the book.

The Propaganda Fide collection speaks powerfully to where we have been and where we are going. It teaches us how information circulated during a historical period when books were the major technology by which people communicated ideas.”

The collection also calls to mind the interconnected nature of our world, even during an era when we think of people as culturally isolated. “Traditionally, when we have studied European history, we have studied it in isolation,” Ott said. “But so many of these countries — Spain, Italy, France, England and the Netherlands — they were going around the world and creating colonies that funneled money and resources back into Europe, and that enabled so much of what we think of as European history. This collection shows us one aspect of how that worked, and how ambitious a project colonialism was. This collection allows us to see how even our most historic collections are also a global research collection.” ▲



A CAREER IN WORDS AND LAUGHTER

The collection of Lewis Black '70 documents the Carolina alum's early activities as a playwright and parts of his comedy career.

BY CLAIRE CUSICK

Though Lewis Black '70 is best known as a comedian embodying cathartic anger on stage and in popular segments on The Daily Show, he began his career as a drama major at Carolina. He wanted to be a playwright and spent the two decades after graduation pursuing that goal: buying and running a theater with friends, serving as playwright-in-residence for theater companies and festivals, and writing 40 plays.

"I wrote all this stuff, I kept it all," Black said. "I don't know why. I was a writer, so I kept everything, to go back to it."

Black, who has won Grammy Awards for his comedy albums and has written three best-selling books, recently donated his plays, television pilot scripts and materials from his comedy career to the University Libraries. They will be part of the Southern Historical Collection at the Wilson Special Collections Library.

Winifred Fordham Metz, media librarian and head of the Media & Design Center at the Undergraduate Library, helped connect Black with the Southern Historical Collection. She said the Lewis Black Collection will have immediate impact on teaching and research.

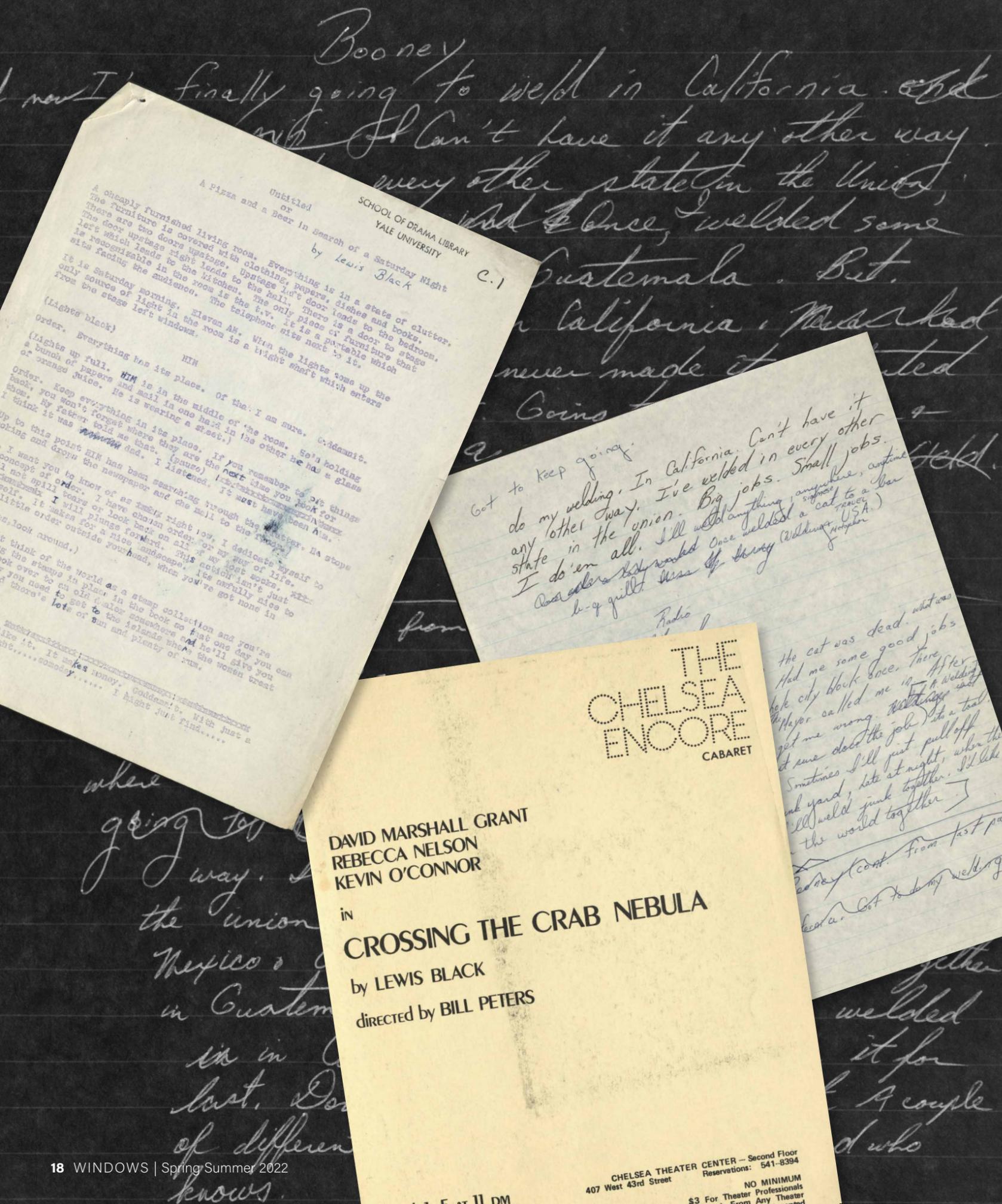
"The items that Lewis has shared with us run the trajectory of his creative writing, his public service, and much of his media career," Metz said. "Students always benefit by hearing from people who are actively working in their fields of study. The fact that

he began his career while he was a student at Carolina and wants to share those beginnings is especially generous. It can inspire students and give them more confidence in their own creative projects."

Jason Tomberlin, head of special collections research and instruction, said that Wilson Library already holds Black's published works, DVDs and even photographs from his student productions at Chapel Hill. The archival materials add a new dimension, said Tomberlin. "Students can see first-hand the process that an artist goes through in developing and refining their work. That's something you would never know without these primary source documents."

"Students can see first-hand the process that an artist goes through in developing and refining their work."

In addition to finished plays, and versions in draft for each, the collection contains memorabilia, including a poster from "Feast," which Black wrote while he was a Carolina student. After "Feast" sold out its run at the Great Hall of the Carolina Union, it toured other colleges in North Carolina with help from a grant from the N.C. Arts Council.





Black speaks to associate professor Michelle Robinson's American studies course, "Comedy and Ethics," during a visit to campus in April.

Black has a vivid memory of "Feast" getting a standing ovation in Greensboro, and what a highlight that was. "I turned to this friend of mine and said, 'It's never gonna get any better than this,'" he recalled. "I should have walked away at that point, but it was so much reinforcement that it was like oh, like wow, yeah, I can do this again."

While at Carolina, Black was awarded a Shubert Fellowship for playwriting. After Carolina, he studied at the Yale School of Drama. He had some success as a playwright. "The Deal," a dark comedy about business, was made into a short film in 1998. In 2011, his play "One Slight Hitch" was produced at the Williamstown Theatre Festival and then again in 2012 at both the ACT Theatre in Seattle and The George Street Theatre in New Brunswick, New Jersey.

Black's writing process for plays is different than for his standup comedy, he said. Although he reveres comics who write everything down, Black said he only makes notes. His process of refinement and revision comes onstage.

For his standup act, Black said, "I write notes down. And then I remember it. I write on stage. That's what I do. I write in front of people. It's what I've done from the very beginning."

The very beginning of Black's comedy career came during his last summer in Chapel Hill, at the Cat's Cradle. While touring "Feast," he had done question-and-answer sessions with audiences and had become more comfortable with public speaking. When a friend and "Feast" collaborator invited him to do standup between a band's sets, Black said yes.

"I was awful," he wrote in his 2005 memoir, "Nothing's Sacred." "I mean really dreadful, like scary bad. I found it much harder than the nerve-shattering experience of watching one of my plays being performed. I don't know if there is anything like standing up in front of a group of people and trying to make them laugh."

Still, he kept at it while pursuing his theater career. It was a way to make money while trying to write plays and get them produced.

"I had no desire to become a comic. None, zip, none at all," Black said recently. "It was a way that I could get my writing read and heard, which was a lot easier than sending off a play. I really wanted to be in theater. I wanted to be a playwright."

When Black was in his 40s, he was in frustrating negotiations with a theater in Houston about staging one of his plays, "The Czar of Rock 'n' Roll." He went across town to a comedy and magic club called Spellbinders, he said. After seeing him do 15 minutes of standup, Spellbinders offered him a headlining gig for one week that paid as much as he was getting for the entire run of the play across town. "And I went, that's that," he said about giving up the theater to focus on comedy.

Black said he was honored to have his papers kept at the Library. "To have the Library ask for my work is huge for me," he said. "I feel honored that they are interested in what I wrote."

Metz said the collection also shows how Black has successfully moved from medium to medium in his career, bringing similar skills to each. Now in his 70s, Black has begun a successful podcast, "Rantcast," in which he invites listeners to submit something they'd like him to rant about, and he does.

"He's continually iterated himself through the years, all the while keeping up his writing and performance work," Metz said. "That variety, persistence and acumen would speak to any kind of entrepreneur, any kind of innovator. He clearly has a lot to offer UNC students and faculty."

While he is headed back out on the road for shows this winter, Black said he is eager to visit campus and work with students who are using his papers or who have questions about writing for the stage or screen. He still remembers the first time he saw Chapel Hill. "I got off the Trailways bus and walked up the street, got to the old campus and felt like I was home," he said. ▲





Photo by Jon Gardiner/UNC-Chapel Hill

Outstanding additions, extraordinary stories

FROM NORTH CAROLINA TO CONGRESS

Rep. G.K. Butterfield's papers document his family's history in Wilson, North Carolina, and his decades of public service.

BY CLAIRE CUSICK

Throughout his life as civil rights activist, lawyer, judge and legislator, U.S. Rep. G.K. Butterfield has always been interested in history. He's also a self-described "novice archivist" who has accumulated – and carefully labeled – boxes of materials from each chapter of his life.

"I've always been history-minded," Butterfield said. "I've accumulated boxes, and I've labeled each box." The result is a wide-ranging collection of papers and photographs from his family in Wilson, North Carolina, and his own career.

Butterfield has donated the collection to the

University Libraries. They will become part of the Southern Historical Collection at the Wilson Special Collections Library.

"I'm 74 years old, approaching 75 years old, and I know it's time for me to release this valuable trove of information to somebody who can appreciate it, who can preserve it and share it," Butterfield said.

Butterfield has represented North Carolina's 1st Congressional District for nearly two decades and is a past chair of the Congressional Black Caucus. He announced on Nov. 18 that he will retire from

Congress at the end of the current term.

"We're honored to welcome Congressman Butterfield's materials to Wilson Library," said Chaitra Powell, curator of the Southern Historical Collection. "Students, faculty and researchers will benefit greatly from his carefully kept memories of an encyclopedic life."

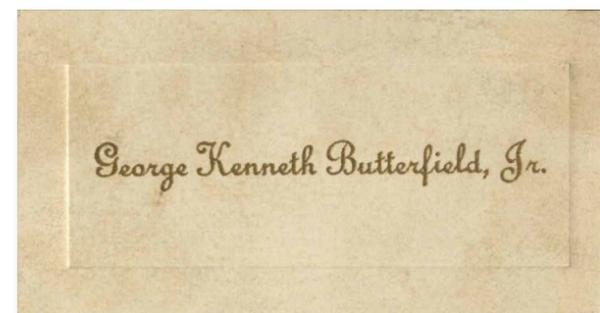
Butterfield's father, G.K. Butterfield Sr., emigrated from Bermuda in 1917, at age 17; later volunteered to serve the United States in World War I as a non-citizen; and then graduated from Shaw University in Raleigh, North Carolina, and Meharry Medical College School of Dentistry in Nashville, Tennessee. He practiced dentistry in Wilson, North Carolina, for 50 years; helped found many organizations including the Wilson branch of the NAACP, Men's Civic Club and the Old North State Dental Society; and was the first Black person elected to the Wilson City Council.

"It's time for me to release this valuable trove of information to somebody who can appreciate it, who can preserve it and share it."

Butterfield's mother, Addie Davis, was a native of Wilson County who met Butterfield Sr. while she attended high school, also at Shaw. She was a classroom teacher for 48 years.

Butterfield grew up watching his parents advocate for voting rights for African Americans. In high school and college, he helped lead civil rights protests.

After earning his undergraduate and law degrees at North Carolina Central University and serving in the U.S. Army, Butterfield returned to Wilson



PAGE 22: Rep. G.K. Butterfield visits the Wilson Special Collections Library to examine items from his donated collection and meet with library staff.

BELOW AND LEFT: Details of memorabilia from Butterfield's papers.

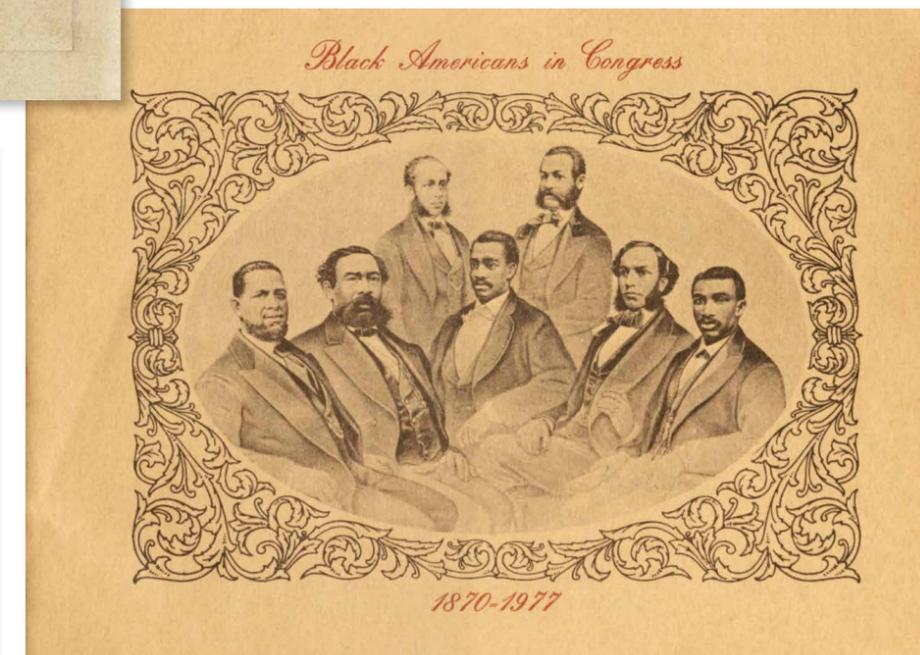
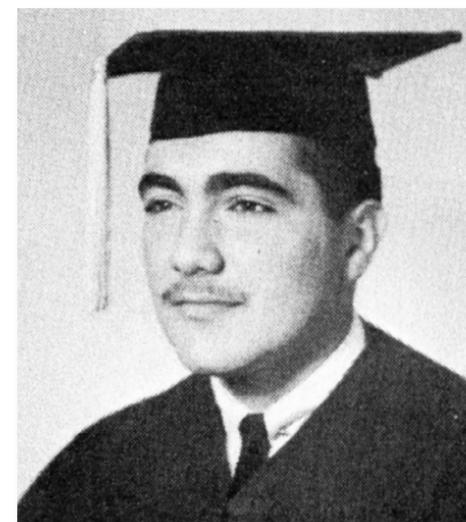




Photo by Jon Gardiner/UNC-Chapel Hill

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“I’m known in Congress as the photographer, particularly in the Congressional Black Caucus,” he said. “I’ve taken over 20,000 pictures.”

.....

Butterfield said he is pleased to know that his collection will be well taken care of and will be made available to anyone who might benefit from it. His physical and digital assets will contribute to the African American Family Documentation Initiative at the Southern Historical Collection and will complement oral traditions in the community.

“History in the African American community is very rich, but it needs to be preserved,” he said. “Those of us who possess these nuggets of history will be silenced one day, and unless we pass it along, and in an appropriate medium, it will be forever lost. We won’t be able to preserve all of them, but we can certainly preserve as many as we can capture.” ▲

perspective. I think that they’ll find a research community and students and faculty who are eager to dive into them from day one.”

to open a law practice with his friend Milton F. “Toby” Fitch Jr. and later with James A. Wynn Jr. In the 1980s, Butterfield litigated voting rights cases as cooperating counsel with the NAACP Legal Defense Fund. He was elected superior court judge in November 1988. In 2001, North Carolina Governor Mike Easley appointed Butterfield to the Supreme Court of North Carolina. Then, in 2004, he was elected to Congress to represent the state’s 1st Congressional District.

Butterfield began taking his own photographs and collecting memorabilia while conducting congressional business, including diplomatic trips abroad. “I’m known in Congress as the photographer, particularly in the Congressional Black Caucus,” he said. “I’ve taken over 20,000 pictures. After all of these years, I just had a whole mountain of information.”

Butterfield’s years in Washington allowed him to witness the historic presidency of Barack Obama, the nation’s first Black president. His collection of memorabilia from Obama’s presidency is unique, Powell said.

“Butterfield had the idea to get President

Obama’s autograph whenever they were together at important events, including State of the Union addresses, and funerals of important figures such as the Rev. Clementa Pinckney,” said Powell. “It may be too early to examine President Obama’s legacy, but G.K. Butterfield chose to document it, taking his own photographs and collecting materials. It’s fascinating to see this perspective on a historic presidency, all eight years of it.”

Butterfield’s materials add to the already-rich collections at Wilson Library, said Nicholas Graham, University archivist.

“The material that Rep. Butterfield is donating includes the history of Wilson, North Carolina, especially the evolution of Wilson’s Black community,” Graham said. “He has materials from his legal career where he worked on important voting rights cases in North Carolina.”

Butterfield’s materials will join other congressional papers collected at Wilson Library, Graham continued. “Documenting and preserving North Carolina and national politics is an area of focus for our collection. Congressman Butterfield’s materials lend a distinctive viewpoint, a distinctive



Photo by Jon Gardiner/UNC-Chapel Hill



.....
“The manuscript shows the way in which religion and racism were deeply intertwined in the slavery institution in America.”

the Civil War. McClellan may have been given the document at a hot springs resort that the Owen family visited.

The manuscript “shows the way in which religion and racism were deeply intertwined in the slavery institution in America,” said Ernst, who is the co-author of a forthcoming book about Said titled “I Cannot Write My Life.” Understanding the document, and the context of its creation, requires knowing something about Said’s life.

The biographical details of Omar ibn Said’s life are somewhat fragmentary, said Ernst, although Said left behind a slim autobiography and was the subject of newspaper coverage during his lifetime.

Scholars agree that Said studied Islam for 25 years in seminaries in what is now Senegal. According to Ernst, Said’s writings reveal an intimate familiarity

with Arabic poetry, Islamic theological literature, law and grammar, in addition to other subjects.

Said was kidnapped, taken across the Atlantic and sold into slavery in the United States in 1807. He ended up enslaved by James Owen, a politician and plantation owner in eastern North Carolina.

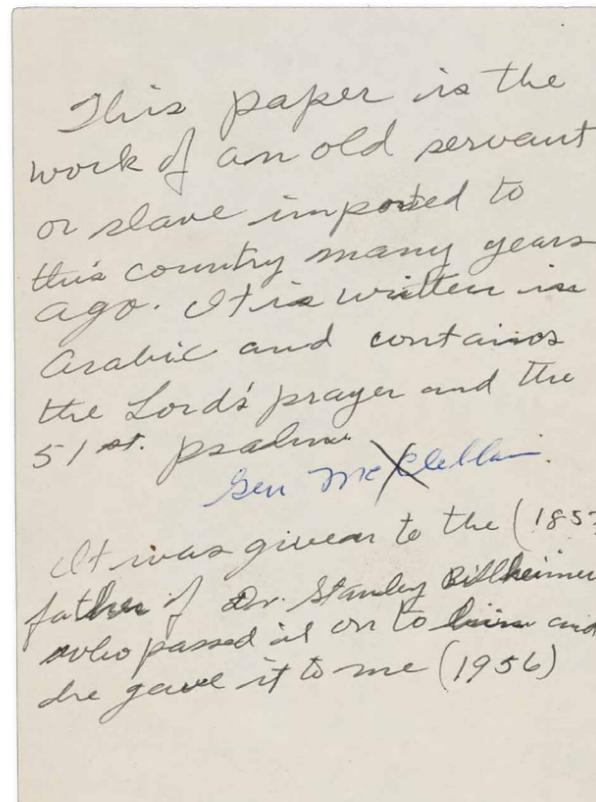
But other facts of Said’s life have been distorted by the historical record. Contemporary newspaper accounts handed down a narrative that scholars now reject. Those accounts insisted that Said had no desire to return to Africa after his kidnapping, that he was content with his enslaved status, and that he converted to Christianity.

The biblical passages Said rendered in Arabic were once proffered as evidence of his conversion.

According to Ernst, “This narrative was designed as a defense of slavery. It is false. We know that in his very first document that he wrote in 1819 he asks to return to Africa. And the repeated statement that he never wanted to do so is obviously false. So, what we are faced with is a situation where people wanted to take over the story of his life and use it for the defense of slavery.”

How should modern readers interpret this manuscript, which contains theological passages from two religions?

Ernst theorizes that the Owen family often asked Said to write a biblical text in Arabic as a curiosity for other members of the Southern elite. Said would oblige, sometimes including a Quranic text, possibly unbeknownst to his English-speaking company.



PAGE 26: Ambrotype of Omar ibn Said, circa 1855 and manuscript written by Said containing Psalm 51, circa 1856.

LEFT: An accompanying document traces the provenance from the Rev. Thomas Charles Billheimer (1842-1923) to his son, the Rev. Stanley Billheimer (1872-1964).

Outstanding additions, extraordinary stories

RELIGION AND RESISTANCE

Omar ibn Said’s handwritten manuscript contributes to understanding of the enslaved Islamic scholar’s life.

BY EMILY JACK

A document recently acquired by the University Libraries is contributing to scholars’ understanding of the life of Omar ibn Said, a 19th-century enslaved Islamic scholar. Said, kidnapped from West Africa and enslaved in North Carolina, was renowned for his Arabic writings.

The newly acquired manuscript, created in 1856, is a document addressed by Said to his enslaver, James Owen. It contains an Islamic blessing and two biblical texts: the 51st psalm and the Lord’s Prayer.

Eighteen examples of similar documents written by Said are currently known. According

to John Blythe, assistant curator of the North Carolina Collection, the item is the first to come to light in many years. The Library has digitized the manuscript, now part of the North Carolina Collection at the Wilson Special Collections Library, and shared it online.

The document includes notations by other people who have handled it. According to Carl Ernst, William R. Kenan, Jr. Distinguished Professor of religious studies at UNC-Chapel Hill, one of them appears to be General George McClellan, who later became famous as a Union general during

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ. صلى الله عليه وسلم سيدنا محمد ﷺ
 كتب في سنة ١٠٠٠ هـ في سنة ١٠٠٠ هـ وكتب في سنة ١٠٠٠ هـ
 وكتب في سنة ١٠٠٠ هـ في سنة ١٠٠٠ هـ وكتب في سنة ١٠٠٠ هـ
 من سنة ١٠٠٠ هـ في سنة ١٠٠٠ هـ وكتب في سنة ١٠٠٠ هـ
 = = = = =
 العزور الخمسون سائر
 51th Psalm
 ارحمني يا الله يا رحمن يا رحيم ومثل الخثرة راقتك تعمو انبيي وتغسلني كثيرا
 من اثمى ونظفني من خطيى: لانى عارف اقص وخطينى املى في الخليلي:
 لك وحدك اخلاءة والشرف امدك ستحقه لى تصدق في افوالك ونخلبه
 انا حوكت: لانى هانذا بالاثم خيرا بى وبالحطايا ولد تسمى امسى:
 لانى هانت هويك الحدال اعلمتنى خبايا وبها افسى حطمتك: تنضح على
 زوفك بانقاء وتغسلنى بابيض مثل الثلج: سمحنى سرورا
 وفرحا وتبتلع حطامى المنونحة: اصرق وجهى عن خطاياى
 وجميع اثمى تموهها يا الله: فلما هرا تخلصنى يا الله وروحى
 مستفيسا حدى: فى بلانى: لا تطرحنى من بين يديك ولا تنزع عنى روح
 قدسك: اعلمنى بهيمة خلاصك وبروحك فادرس تبتنى: لا علم الفلكافين
 كرفك واليك ترجع المناجعون: خلصنى من الماء يا الله اخلصنى لى يبيح
 بحد لسانى: يارب تفتح سبى ويتطوى بى تسبحون: لانى لوشيت
 انى بايع كنت اعطيتها وايضا محرقات السوا لم تسرحها: يا بايع الله
 ارواح منواخ قلب منسوق سنوا فح هذا يا الله لا تزلله: انعم يارب على
 مهيبون بمدرتك وابى حصون ارشليم: حينئذ تدرس تدب بايع الحدال
 والوفوء التاملية حينئذ ترتجع العجول على مغراهم والديابوليا:
 تحت

This paper was given
 to me in the summer
 of 1857, by Gen.
 of N. C. whom I met at
 the Red Sulphur Spring,
 Va. - He said the work
 of an aged servant
 man, imported many
 years ago.
 Omar

The Lord's Prayer
 يا ابانا الذى فى السموات يتفعدنا
 السمى: قاضى ملكوتك تكور مشيتك
 كما فى السماء وعلى الارض: خبزنا
 الذى للغد اعطنا اليوم: وانجبرنا
 ما علينا كما نجبر نفس امر
 لنا اهلينا: ولا تخذلنا
 التجار بلكى نجنا من الشرير
 بلاركى والقوى والملط والمجيد الى
 الابى اامين
 اسمعصراى ديبا ابن عا اده
 واما من جهة امهان بريد
 برة الله ضربه
 تحت

LEFT TO RIGHT: Psalm 51 front, Psalm 51 back, and the Lord's Prayer manuscript written by Omar ibn Said.

It illustrates the presence of Islam as a religion and Arabic as a language in the American South in the earliest part of American history.

Yasmine Flodin-Ali, a graduate student at UNC-Chapel Hill who studies race and Islam in the U.S., said these documents provoke questions: "Did Omar directly tell someone, hey, this is X, Y, Z? Or did people not really care what he was saying and just chose to interpret the documents as they wanted to?" Said was one of a few known enslaved Muslims from Africa who left documents, but "ultimately it's impossible to know" what percent of the enslaved population in the U.S. were Muslim, said Flodin-Ali. "The fact is that their complex histories and backgrounds were not of interest to slave owners." Flodin-Ali points out that nearly all the records related to enslaved people survived because they were preserved by their enslavers. As a result, our picture of their lives is incomplete. "There's all this work that

was written directly by [Said], so trying to analyze that and think about what are the limits of the archive, what can the archive tell us, has been really exciting." The newly acquired manuscript adds to the number of texts Said quotes in his writings, opening new avenues for scholarly analysis. But the document also holds lessons for non-specialists for several reasons, according to Ernst. For one, it illustrates the presence of Islam as a religion and Arabic as a language in the American South in the earliest part of American history. Said's relationship to a prominent North Carolina family is also noteworthy: James Owen's brother John was a governor of North Carolina and a trustee of the University for 20 years.

And locally, Said's story is part of our history, said Flodin-Ali. "It's so direct. He's in Fayetteville, he's in Wilmington in parts of his life." This document joins other materials related to Omar ibn Said in Wilson Library, including two photographs of Said. Some of these materials were loaned to the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture in 2017 for the museum's Slavery and Freedom exhibition. A guide (go.unc.edu/SaidGuide) created by North Carolina research and instruction librarian Sarah Carrier points to Said-related materials in Wilson Library, as well as those in other libraries. Taken together, the materials "broaden our picture of enslaved individuals," said Blythe. ▲

“The centerpiece of my experience at Carolina”

Catherine Paul '93 traces the roots of her career to her experience as a student employee in Davis Library.

BY MICHELE LYNN

As a Carolina undergraduate, Catherine Paul '93 worked in Davis Library to earn extra spending money. She did not expect her junior- and senior-year part-time job to play a formative role in her career.

“Since I was spending a significant portion of my time reading and studying in Davis Library, working in the library was a good fit,” says Paul. Her role, which she laughingly describes as “sort of simple grunt work,” entailed typing up acquisition cards for the books that librarians were adding to the collection.

Reflecting on the past 30 years, Paul—professor emerita of English at Clemson University—recognizes how her student job helped shape her professional journey. Her first book, “Poetry in the Museums of Modernism: Yeats, Pound, Moore, Stein,” explores relationships between four modernist poets and the museums that helped shape their writing. “Part of what I thought about in that project is how people build collections, and how they think about the items collected as something larger than just the objects themselves,” says Paul.

Looking back, she was surprised to realize the similarities between that research and what she learned as a student library worker. “When I watched the collection professionals decide what to choose, I guess I started to understand that a collection is created with intention,” she says. “In thinking through the dissertation that became my first book, I asked questions similar to what people who develop the collections in a research library think about.”

A self-described “heavily archival scholar,” Paul has worked in a variety of libraries—including the National Library of Ireland and the British Library—doing research for her dissertation and as a professional scholar. “Libraries feel like really important places and I think that it was spending time in Davis as an undergraduate that started my feeling that way,” she says. Having spent time in so many libraries also makes Paul realize how lucky she was as an undergraduate to have the library resources offered by Carolina.

“When I visited Carolina as a prospective student, my parents took me into Davis Library,” Paul remembers.



“My dad told me to type some books I like into the online catalog to see if they had them, and even though I tried to be difficult, everything was there.”

While working toward her master’s degree and doctorate at the University of Michigan, Paul again worked in the library, in part because of her enjoyable undergraduate experience. “The people I worked with (at UNC-Chapel Hill) treated the student workers so well, took us really seriously as employees and as people, and respected what we were doing as students,” she says. “It gave me very high expectations about how I should be treated as an employee.”

Paul pays forward her love of the University Libraries by supporting it financially. “Davis Library was the centerpiece of my experience at Carolina,” she says. She recalls attending a Tar Heels football game a few years ago with a friend who had season tickets. “When I was a student, I had no real investment in Carolina sports,” Paul says. “We were walking through campus to get to the game, and when we walked past Davis, I said, ‘This is what Carolina is to me.’” ▲

END NOTE

“

We’ve all had those frustrating moments when we can’t find the webpage we need or the self-checkout machine at the grocery store takes too long. In user experience, we call those moments pain points, and my goal is to remove any potential pain points for our users whenever they interact with our library services.

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Todd Smith joined the University Libraries in 2021 as user experience research and design librarian. He is an alum of the Carolina Academic Library Associates program, a partnership between the Library and the School of Information and Library Science that prepares selected graduate students for careers in academic librarianship.

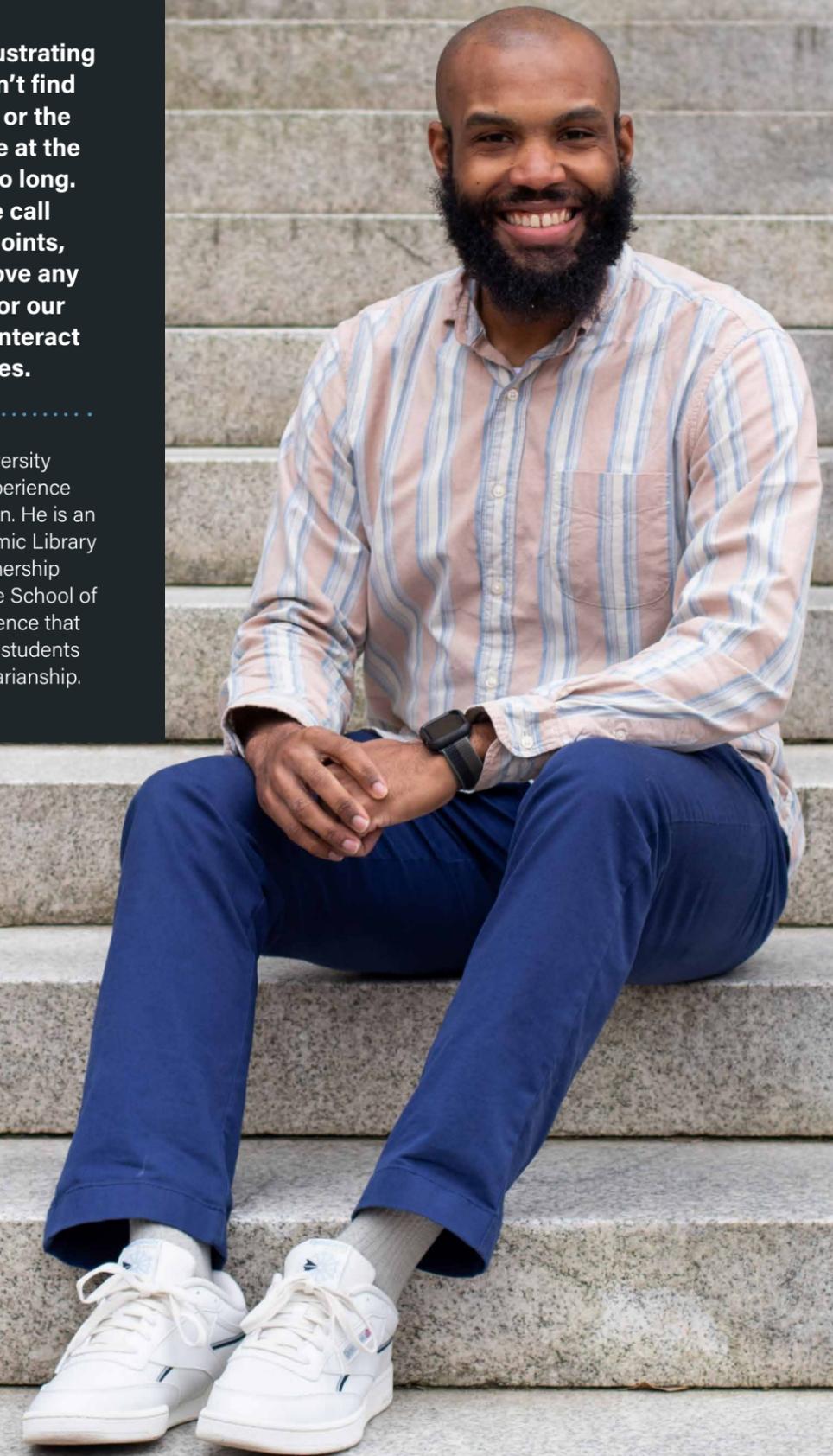


Photo by Aleah Howell/University Libraries



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The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Campus Box 3920, Davis Library
Chapel Hill, NC 27514-8890

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A SEED LIBRARY TAKES ROOT

Tar Heels welcomed spring by starting plants from the Kenan Science Library's new seed library. *Learn more: go.unc.edu/SeedLibrary*

Photo by Jon Gardiner/UNC-Chapel Hill

