

LACCHA

SAA Roundtable – Annual Report 2010-2011

Date: December 1, 2011

Name of Roundtable: Latin American and Caribbean Cultural Heritage Archives

Officers:	(Elected)	Senior Co-Chair:	Mario H. Ramírez
		Junior Co-Chair:	Silvia Mejia
	(Appointed)	Newsletter Co-Editor:	Bert Lyons
		Newsletter Co-Editor:	Luisa Yanez
		Webmaster:	Laura Buchholz
		Liaison – CARBICA	John Aarons
		Liaison – ICA	Bert Lyons
		Liaison – SALALM	Silvia Mejia
		Liaison – SAA AAC R/T	Aaisha Haykal
		Liaison – IFLA-LAC	Susan Laura Lugo, CA
		Liaison – ACURIL	Lorraine Nero
		Liaison – Cultural Property Working Group	Marisol Ramos

Report from annual meeting:

- Total membership on December 1, 2011: 195
- Election results:
 - Last year's meeting minutes were amended and approved.
 - Silvia Mejia was elected Junior Co-Chair via online ballot.
- Summary of meeting activities: Copy of proposed minutes of LACCHA Roundtable online meeting held August 24-26, 2011 will be circulated to the membership for review via listserv and via linking off LACCHA's website. The membership will vote to approve and accept the minutes at the next annual roundtable meeting in 2012. A copy is also attached hereto as **Exhibit A**.

Completed projects/activities

- Established a collaborative partnership with the *American Archivist*, and its editor Mary Jo Pugh. At the end of June, we submitted four essays on Latin American/Caribbean/Latino themes for inclusion in an upcoming issue(s). These essays were culled from the membership of the roundtable and included: Joel Blanco Rivera, “Truth-seeing and Accountability for Past Human Rights Abuses: The Impact of Archives on Latin America’s Transition from Authoritarianism and Civil Wars”; Noah Lenstra, “Power and Shaping of the Archives Profession: Foreign Missions to the Brazilian National Archives in the late 1950s”; Elizabeth Knight, “Establishing an Archive at the Charles Darwin Foundation in the Galapagos”; and Janet Ceja Alcalá, “Imperfect Film Archives for an Imperfect Cinema.”
- Sponsored a panel for the 2011 SALALM Conference, Preserving Memory: Documenting and Archiving Latin American Human Rights held in Philadelphia, PA. Titled Exhuming the Archive: Countering Impunity and Restoring Cultural Heritage in Neocolonial and Post-Conflict States, this panel included presentations by roundtable members Marisol Ramos (“Sharing Archives: The P.R. Civil Court Cases Collection Digital Project”), Tiffany-Kay Sangwand (“Tejiendo la Memoria: Strengthening Collective Memory of El Salvador’s Civil War through Transnational Digitization Partnerships”) and Joel Blanco Rivera (“Declassification and Accountability for Past Abuses: Transitional Justice in Latin America and the Impact of Declassified U.S. Government Documents”). Senior Co-Chair Patrick A. Stawski also participated on a panel titled Four Case Studies on Human Rights Archiving: Methods, Process, Content and Connections to Users, where he presented a paper titled “History in Action: Connecting Students, Scholars and Community to Human Rights Histories & Practice.”
- Redesigned roundtable newsletter, “Memoria.” Newsletter Co-Editor Bert Lyons, in collaboration with Co-Chairs Patrick A. Stawski and Mario H. Ramírez, revamped the look of the newsletter, adding more graphics, changing the formatting and soliciting articles that more reflect the international nature of the roundtable.
- Migrated existing LACCHA website to Drupal in accordance with SAA rules and regulations. This was spearheaded by the LACCHA’s webmistress, Laura Buchholz.
- Conducted inaugural online annual business meeting for the 2011 SAA conference.

Ongoing projects/activities

- LACCHA webmistress Laura Buchholz will continue to update and make more dynamic the roundtable website.
- Newsletter publication: Next issue expected in early 2012. Status: Published twice annually.
- LACCHA’s liaisons will continue to post information and items of interest to the LACCHA Listserv. Status: ongoing.
- Membership: We continue to promote LACCHA membership through the listserv, website and blog in an effort to increase participation, membership and diversity.

New projects/activities

- Two panels were submitted for consideration to the SAA Program Committee for the National Conference in San Diego in 2012. The first, titled “From Hidden Collection to International Incident: The John Cutler Papers and the Guatemala Syphilis Experiments,” features panelists Marianne Kasica, University Archivist, University of Pittsburgh, Archives Service Center; Robert Richards, Director, National Archives at Atlanta; and Paul Lombardo, Bobby Lee Cook Professor of Law, Georgia State University College of Law. The second is titled “A Bilingual History – Promoting Spanish Language Collections To Tell the History of the American West and Mexico” and includes Nicole Cuadra, Librarian II, San Francisco Public Library; Teresa Mora, Supervisory Archivist, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley; and Jean Spencer, Outreach and Publications Coordinator, Center for Latin American Studies. Status: Awaiting notification from the Program Committee.

Diversity initiatives

- Michelle Gachette will remain in her role as LACCHA’s representative on SAA’s Diversity Committee.
- We will continue to support and advocate for SAA’s diversity initiatives, and for greater diversity throughout the profession.

Questions/concerns for Council attention

None at this time.

Respectfully submitted,

Mario H. Ramírez
Senior Co-Chair

Attachments: Exhibit A – Proposed Minutes for LACCHA’s Annual Membership Meeting held online from August 24-26, 2011

Exhibit B – Summary of LACCHA’s 2011 Panel Presentations

Exhibit C – Summary of LACCHA’s 2012 Panel Proposals

Cc: Silvia Mejia, LACCHA Junior Co-Chair
Bert Lyons, LACCHA Newsletter Co-Editor
Deborra A. Richardson, SAA Council Liaison

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SAA Roundtable – Annual Report 2010-2011

EXHIBIT A

Proposed Minutes
LACCHA Annual Membership Meeting (Online)
August 24-26, 2011

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SAA Roundtable Meetings I August 24-26, 2010

Annual Meeting **DRAFT**

- 1) The fourth LACCHA business meeting was held online and it ran from August 24-August 26, 2011.
- 2) Senior Co-Chair Patrick A. Stawski called the meeting to order at 10:50am. He welcomed LACCHA members and noted that this meeting marked the end of his tenure as Senior Co-Chair. He then welcomed Silvia Mejia as the new Junior Co-Chair with Mario H. Ramírez assuming the post of Senior Co-Chair.
- 3) Reports:
 - a. Lorraine Nero, West Indiana and Special Collections Librarian, University of the West Indies, St. Augustine. Liaison: ACURIL.
Nero reported on a number of items, including:
 - The ACURIL Conference 2011 was held in Tampa, Florida with the theme "The Role of Libraries and Archives in Disaster Preparedness, Response and Research." The two cases focused on throughout the discussion were Hurricane Katrina and the earthquake in Haiti.
 - Members of ACURIL were instrumental in making the IFLA 2011 conference successful in Puerto Rico and Dr. Luisa Vego-Cepeda, Executive Secretary of ACURIL, was the conference coordinator for IFLA 2011.
 - The ACURIL community was saddened by the passing of past Executive Secretary, Mrs. Oneida Rivera de Ortiz, on Friday, November 12, 2010. The LACCHA community joins its colleagues in acknowledging the contributions she made to the development of ACURIL in the region.
 - The 2012 conference will be held in Haiti June 2012.
 - b. Marisol Ramos, Library Liaison to Latin American and Caribbean Studies, Puerto Rican and Latino Studies, Spanish and Anthropology, and Curator of Latin American and Caribbean Collections, University of Connecticut, Storrs
 - Reported on LACCHA and AAC Roundtable sponsored events.
 - Specifically discussed the panel entitled "Faces of Diversity: Diasporic Archives and Archivists in the New Millennium," which was featured at SAA 2011 in Chicago. She summarized the proceedings of the panel and stated that

it was quite a success. Over 70 people attended and Ramos believes that it was one of the more highly attended LACCHA and AAC roundtable sponsored events in recent history.

- c. Bert Lyons, Folklife Specialist/Digital Assets Manager, American Folklife Center, Library of Congress: Newsletter Co-Editor and Liaison to ICA.
 - Stated that this year LACCHA reformatted its newsletter and moved from a Microsoft Word-based design to an InDesign template for production of the digital document.
 - A call was put out for submissions in mid-January. After an initial delay, a broad selection of articles and vignettes were submitted by the membership.
 - The newsletter was sent out to the LACCHA list, other lists of interest, and published on the LACCHA website.
- d. Aaisha Haykal, Processing and Outreach Archivist, Avery Research Center for African American Research and Culture. Liaison: Archivists and Archives of Color Roundtable.
 - Deborra Richardson from SAA Council addressed the changes and initiatives that SAA has undertaken to increase diversity in the archival profession, such as increasing the number of Mosaic Scholarships given and having the *American Archivist* include more articles about diversifying archival education.
 - The Harold T. Pinkett Minority Student Award winners, Kelly E. Lau and Melvin J. Collier, were congratulated.
 - Other topics of discussion included the 2012 Archives Leadership Institute (that aims to cultivate leaders within the archival profession) and the fact that there should be more archivists of color at this institute so that their issues and voices are heard. There are \$600 scholarships that one can apply for to cover the cost of the institute. Look out for announcements about it.
 - Two representatives from national library associations presented on what their organizations are doing to diversify the profession. Mark Puente, from the Association of Research Libraries (ARL) spoke about two of the association's programs: the Initiative to Recruit a Diverse Workforce (IRDW) and the Career Enhancement Program (CEP) (which is no longer funded). ARL has also received funds for a Music Librarianship Program (<http://www.arl.org/news/pr/ARL-MLA-DII22june11~print.shtml>). Kathryn Plumb Brooks, from the Rare Book and Manuscript Section (RBMS) of the American Library Association, came and distributed copies of the ALA diversity policies and the RBMS diversity toolkit (<http://www.rbms.info/committees/diversity/index.shtml>).
- e. Silvia Mejia, Special Collections Librarian, Massachusetts State Library, Liaison: SALALM.
 - Reported on the LACCHA sponsored panel, "Exhuming the Archive: Countering Impunity and Restoring Cultural Heritage in Neocolonial and Post-Conflict States," held at the annual conference of SALALM Philadelphia, PA this year.

- The panel was a success and the roundtable was encouraged to submit future panels and individual paper proposals.
- 4) This year's set of LACCHA volunteers and liaisons were confirmed:
- a. Silvia Mejia will serve as our liaison to SALALM
 - b. Susan Laura Lugo will serve as liaison for IFLA-LAC
 - c. Bert Lyons will serve as liaison to ICA and Newsletter Co-Editor
 - d. Michelle Gachette will serve as LACCHA's standing representative on SAA's Diversity Committee
 - e. Laura Buchholz will serve as Webmistress
 - f. Aaisha Haykal will serve as AAC liaison
 - g. John Aarons will serve as CARBICA liaison
 - h. Marisol Ramos will serve as liaison to the Cultural Property Working Group
 - i. Lorraine Nero will serve as liaison to ACURIL

There being no further business for consideration, the meeting was adjourned at the end of the day, August 26, 2011.

Notes from LACCHA blog and email communications with liaisons– August 24-26, 2010

Latin American and Caribbean
Cultural Heritage Archives Roundtable
ESTABLISHED FEBRUARY 7, 2008

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EXHIBIT B

Summary of
LACCHA's 2011 SAA Conference Panel Session

One LACCHA-sponsored panel was presented at this year's conference of the Society of American Archivists. Below is list of speakers, with paper titles, brief descriptions of the panels and final comments provided by Session Moderator, Marisol Ramos.

Session Title: Diasporic Archives and Archivists in the New Millennium

Description of panel: Diasporic groups are leaving their mark in the United States through community centers and archives, and by joining the ranks of the archival community. In the process, they are changing archival practice itself. The speakers addressed the impact of minority archivists and diasporic collections on our profession and challenged the concept of what Diasporas are in the archival context.

Amalia Skarlatou Levi

Ph.D. Student

University of Maryland

The “Wandering Jew” in the Age of Web 2.0: Crowdsourcing the Sephardic Diaspora

Amalia Levi’s presentation focused on Sephardic Jews—a sub-group of the Jewish Diaspora. She started her discussion by pointing out that records are as dispersed as people and that there is a need to understand why in order to improve the understanding of the group itself. She called for a questioning of labels such as diaspora, ethnic or minority because in most cases they focus on one group within a diaspora to the detriment of other less vocal or powerful groups. For example, she described Sephardic Jews as a minority within a “bigger” minority, a small voice that may get lost in the larger discussion of the Jewish diaspora.

Like many other groups inside the greater Jewish Diaspora, Sephardic Jews lost their memory and records through war and forced expulsion. Sephardic Jews (mostly of Iberian, North African and Middle Eastern descent) were expelled from Spain at the beginning of the colonization of the New World. Many Sephardic Jews migrated to Latin America, but in the early 20th century they traveled to the United States, where they were rejected or ignored by the predominantly Ashkenazi (Northern and Eastern European) community. This rejection had an impact on the way memory was preserved and defined, and how group membership was claimed. The case of the Sephardic Jews challenges established definitions and ideas of what it means to be Jewish and the type of records preserved.

Levi then introduced the idea of expanding the role of the individual in these communities, transforming them into active participants as defined by online crowdsourcing. She emphasized that there needed to be more than one voice heard in the process of preserving memories of any given group and that providing tools by archives that already have a presence online is the right way to go. She mentioned that there is still a level of mistrust toward users and their memories, but she proposed that a crowdsourcing environment that invites both archivists and users to share their stories and builds trust among all participants could be useful model; finding ways to vet stories that are acceptable to all members and which enhance the relationship between archivists and members of less known, less mainstream minority groups.

Levi did not give any specific examples of such crowdsourcing environment—although she is attempting to do so in her dissertation—but as a Sephardic Jew herself, she conveyed her feelings about the needs to open up our understanding and questions of labels such as Jewish Diaspora and to allow other voices to be heard.

Dr. Carolina A. Villarroel
Brown Foundation Director of Research
University of Houston
Recovering the U.S. Hispanic Literary Heritage

Dr. Villarroel's presentation focused on explaining the rationale for creating the *Recovering the U.S. Hispanic Literary Heritage* Project and its importance in recovering, preserving and giving access to the documentary heritage of Hispanics in the United States. She explained that the presence of Hispanics in the United States goes back to the colonial period when three-quarters of the North American continent was part of the Spanish crown. In addition, during the 19th century, many Latin Americans and Caribbeans moved to the United States (primarily as political refugees) and were very active in writing about and sharing their ideas. These voices were rich and varied. For example, José Martí was an exile in New York City and continued his struggle to free Cuba from Spanish colonialism.

Unfortunately, for many decades there was a denial of such voices or contributions to the literary cannon in academic circles in the United States. Dr. Nicolás Kanellos, founder and director of Arte Público Press, started this project several years ago and published a book in the 1990s titled *Recovering the U.S. Hispanic Literary Heritage*, authored by Ramón A Gutiérrez, Genaro M Padilla and María Herrera-Sobek. This book documented the literary heritage of Hispanic American in the United States from the Spanish colonial period to the 1960s. Most recently, Readex digitized Hispanic American newspapers identified in the book that dated from 1808-1980. [We do have access to this database]

This project is not yet done and there are still many materials that need to be discovered, recovered and preserved for future generations. Dr. Villarroel felt that this project has helped expand our knowledge and added new perspectives to U.S. history; in which Hispanic American contributions are rarely acknowledged.

Ann M Massmann
Head, Public Services
University of New Mexico
Indigenous Peoples and the Great Documentary Diaspora

Ann Massmann's presentation focused on a discussion of the challenges confronted by Native Americans in finding any documentation regarding their history and heritage. The challenges are many. Among these are the fact that materials are scattered throughout the United States and Europe, and that materials come in multiple forms and include artifacts, paper, photographs, ethnographic notes and audio-recordings. Although laws are in place to recover some of these

materials, and return it to their creators, there are still many challenges in locating and identifying these materials.

Ms. Massmann advocates the idea of harnessing the power of the web to help identify where collections may be, and even to create a portal or place in the web to centralize this knowledge for the benefit of Native American groups and scholars. Some of the issues and ideas she provided were similar to those presented by Amalia Levi.

Final Comments:

These three presentations have the following things in common:

- They pointed out the important role of archives as a form of outreach. Getting institutions to share their holdings with the original creators or their descendants, which until recently did not know about and/or have access to these materials.
- They asked us to challenge our ideas about labels and acknowledge that there is not one history but multiple histories, all demanding their own voice.
- They asked us to work collaboratively with other institutions, but also with the communities that they served and/or documented. Also to be mindful that a “community” can be populated with multiple voices/groups, and you need to capture all of them to have a richer picture.
- Finally, they asked us to take advantage of today’s social media tools and technologies to bridge the distance between archives and communities.

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EXHIBIT C

Summary of 2012 SAA Conference Panel Proposals

Session Title: From Hidden Collection to International Incident: The John Cutler Papers and the Guatemala Syphilis Experiments

Session Abstract: Historian Susan Reverby's discovery of the 1946-1948 Guatemala syphilis experiments through her archival research in the John C. Cutler Papers, then held at the University of Pittsburgh, resulted in an international incident and a Presidential apology from the United States to Guatemala. The incident was the subject of an investigation by the Presidential Commission for the Study of Bioethical Issues which will result in changes to ethical practices in biomedical research. John Cutler kept the experiments which he led secret, yet later decided to donate the collection to the University of Pittsburgh, enabling their future discovery. This session will explore the myth of the Cutler Papers as a hidden collection by examining the management of the collection through the stages of accessioning, processing, online finding aid, to access and use. The collection also brings up issues related to control and transparency in relation to government records. After Reverby raised awareness of the collection, it was closed and later transferred to the National Archives. The National Archives then digitized the collection and made it available online. That the collection documents abuses of human subjects in US sponsored syphilis experiments in Guatemala raises ethical and privacy concerns regarding the protection of those subjects. This session will allow archivists and a historian directly involved with documenting the experiments to discuss this case.

Panel Format: Discussion Panel

Chair/Moderator: Joan Echtenkamp Klein, Baird Curator for Historical Collections, University of Virginia Health Sciences Library

Speaker #1: Marianne Kasica, University Archivist, University of Pittsburgh. Archives Service Center

Speaker #2: Robert Richards, Director, National Archives at Atlanta

Speaker #3: Paul Lombardo, Bobby Lee Cook Professor of Law, Georgia State University College of Law

Proposer: Phoebe Evans Letocha, Collections Management Archivist, Alan Mason Chesney Medical Archives, Johns Hopkins University

Endorsed by: LACCHA

Session Title: A Bilingual History – Promoting Spanish Language Collections To Tell the History of the American West and Mexico

Session Abstract: This session focuses on providing access to Spanish-language primary source material. Representing varied experiences with describing, providing access to and introducing users to such sources, the speakers will discuss their successes and challenges in these ventures. As former Spanish colonies and Mexican territories, California, New Mexico, Arizona and other Southwestern states share a history and identity that has been shaped by numerous cultures and communities. Much of that history was recorded in the Spanish language. Especially important for the study of Southwestern history is the past and current connection to Mexico. The speakers will address the challenges of describing non-English collections at the same level as their English counterparts, their approaches to bringing these resources to new audiences, and their efforts to make available a more comprehensive history of an extraordinarily diverse region.

Panel Format: Discussion Panel

Chair/Moderator: Theresa Salazar, Curator of Western Americana, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley

Speaker #1: Nicole Cuadra, Librarian II, San Francisco Public Library

Speaker #2: Teresa Mora, Supervisory Archivist, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley

Speaker #3: Jean Spencer, Outreach and Publications Coordinator, Center for Latin American Studies

Proposer: Theresa Salazar, Curator of Western Americana, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley

Endorsed by: LACCHA