

noteworthy

news from the university of toronto libraries

Fall 2020



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Cover image: Staying connected during times of separation — the University of Toronto Libraries online. Photo of person holding a tablet by Bjorn Antonissen via Unplash. Above: Keeping out the cold and letting in the light — the glass has been installed on the Robarts Common. Story on page 18.

TAKING NOTE

EACH OF US HAS faced significant challenges over this past year. Wherever this message finds you, I hope you and your loved ones are as well and as whole as can be. If ever there was a year that could be considered ‘noteworthy,’ 2020 has been that year.

After nearly a decade at the University of Toronto Libraries, I have been fortunate to be part of a remarkable story. I often extol the world-class collections of our 42 libraries across our three campuses, which include almost 13 million volumes in 341 languages, 2.5 million electronic books, over 31,000 linear metres of archival materials, and more than 1.5 petabytes of digital information housed in our data centre.

But as extraordinary as this world-class collection is, it is the people that make the University of Toronto Libraries a global leader among its peers.

I am proud of our libraries’ staff who in these past months nimbly adapted to working online—learning new tools and new ways of communicating and collaborating together. It is a tribute to their professionalism, empathy and resiliency that UTL has been able to continue to meet the learning and research needs of so many students and faculty as they switched almost overnight to online teaching and learning and as the university research enterprise transformed itself to work on COVID-19.

Our generous donors have been key players during this time as well. Their critical support has made possible the investments in digital infrastructure that positioned the University of Toronto Libraries to transition deftly to remote support, meeting the academic and research needs of our community from a safe distance during an unprecedented global health emergency.



We know that the novel coronavirus is not the only pandemic in our midst; systemic racism, as well as other forms of structural discrimination, are societal pandemics that have lingered perniciously in our institutions despite the progress that has been made over the decades. At the Libraries, we are committed to redoubling our efforts to

diversify our staff and ensure that the onboarding and training programs for newly hired staff highlight our community values of inclusion, diversity, and equity. Library staff will continue their work to provide culturally accurate metadata and subject headings, building on the ongoing project to correct subject headings related to Indigenous peoples. Other concrete, measurable actions are being developed across the Libraries. Ongoing action against racism must remain at the very top of our agenda. The Libraries must be an inclusive, healthy space for all people at the very heart of the University of Toronto.

We have faced so many unique challenges this year that the word “unprecedented” quickly became well-worn. It remains my steadfast hope that we will emerge from this time as a stronger, nimbler, and more inclusive community. We will continue to find innovative ways to keep you and all our friends and partners connected and engaged with our mission in the months ahead. I expect this will be a time of discovery and fresh opportunity for all of us.

Until we see you again in person—and what a happy day that will be—we look forward to being in touch virtually. Thank you for your friendship to the University of Toronto Libraries.

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noteworthy

news from the university of toronto libraries

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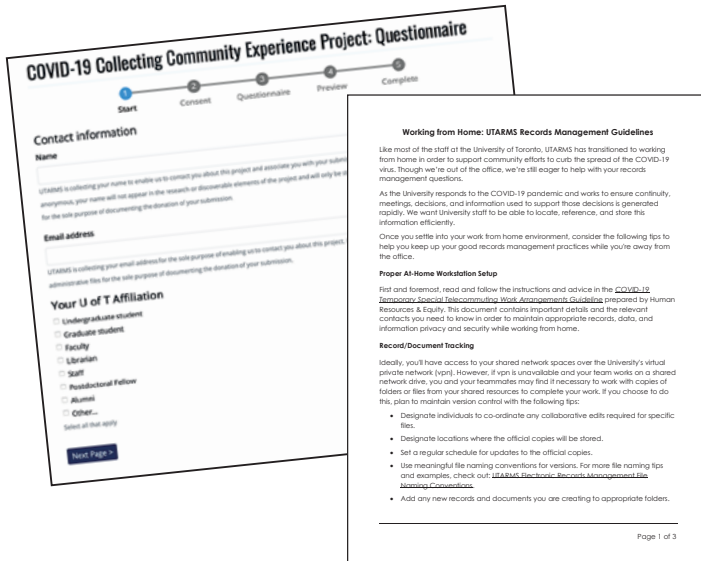
noteworthy
(ISSN 2293-3964) is published twice yearly by the University of Toronto Libraries.

Comments should be addressed to:

Noteworthy
130 St. George Street
Toronto, ON M5S 1A5
Telephone: 416-978-3553

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Once Upon a Time at the University of Toronto Libraries...

While U of T Libraries moved quickly to support the university community's research activities remotely in the spring due to COVID-19, it also sought to support student, staff, and faculty caregivers studying and working from home, with little ones around them. Thus began the weekly Online Storytime sessions, where children could log in for a live story read by librarians, freeing up some time in the caregivers' day to focus on their work or studies, or take a much-needed break.

Online Storytime sessions began in May and continued throughout the summer, with promotional support from University of Toronto's Family Care Office. The children who attended often brought their stuffed toys along and enjoyed the weekly slideshow of some amazing artwork submitted by the young audience prior to hearing librarians read their favourite story books. "My daughter loves seeing all the art every week and gets so excited to see her own. Thanks for doing this!" wrote one parent.

Many of the caregivers wrote in to share that the Online Storytime was a weekly highlight for their children. "My kids start looking forward to Storytime as soon as Storytime is over," said one parent. And so did the librarian storytellers!

Here's a quick look at the numbers:

- 📖 9 librarian readers
- 📖 14 Online Storytime sessions (from May–September 2020)
- 📖 44 books read
- 📖 68 pieces of children's art submitted
- 📖 287+ participants
- 📖 1000s of giggles and smiles (both children and librarians!)

...and they all lived happily ever after...

Above left: Online questionnaire and UTARMS Work from Home Guidelines. Above: Artwork submitted by some of the young audience members.

COVID-19

Collecting Community Experience Project

The COVID-19 pandemic through its health, social, political, and economic effects is having a tremendous impact on us all. The breadth of our experiences and responses to this crisis are key to how we will come to understand this historical moment and the many transformations to come.

The University of Toronto Archives and Records Management Services (UTARMS) is actively collecting documentation of U of T's institutional response to the COVID-19 pandemic through our records management programme for University Record transfers, capturing selected institutional websites and social media, as well as tracking the research and teaching environment as faculty adapt to new requirements and considerations. UTARMS is also interested in capturing first-person testimony from U of T's community of students, staff, alumni and faculty to document the perspectives and lived experiences of the many individuals who shape the University.

UTARMS is inviting individuals to participate in our COVID-19 Collecting Community Experience Project by submitting a questionnaire, which will be collected and preserved for future researchers to gain insight into the concerns, reflections, and reactions of U of T's community. We are seeking personal reflections that capture how this pandemic has shaped your life and speak to what you are experiencing in the classroom, at home, through your work, and research.

Discrimination NOT Allowed HUMAN RIGHTS IN ONTARIO, 1962-2002

ACCESSIBILITY, EQUAL RIGHTS, religious freedom, sexual harassment, an end to racial profiling and discrimination—discussion and advocacy for continued progress on these human rights issues continues in Ontario.

Discrimination Not Allowed: Human Rights in Ontario, a new online exhibit curated by Amal Hussien, a second-year Master of Information Studies student at the Faculty of Information, explores the history of human rights in this province, highlighting significant decisions made by the Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario (HRTO—formerly named the Ontario Board of Inquiry from 1962–2002). The HRTO is an administrative tribunal created to hear cases brought forward under the Human Rights Code of Ontario.

The decisions of the Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario and the Board of Inquiry tell a story of evolving attitudes and laws related to sexual orientation, disability, creed, race and sex from a uniquely Ontarian perspective. On display is a selection of books, newspaper clippings and reports, drawn mainly from the University of Toronto Libraries' collections, alongside a selection of the Board of Inquiry's Decisions from 1962 through 2002.

This online exhibition of the HRTO Board's decisions was possible thanks to a previous digitization project of the University of Toronto Libraries in partnership with the University of Guelph, the University of Windsor, York University and Internet Archive Canada. Prior to being digitized, this unique paper collection was

housed at the Ontario Workplace Tribunal Library (OWTL) in the form of loose-leaf materials within binders. It was not available anywhere else in either print or digital format. Access to this collection was therefore very limited and resources were not available to preserve this at-risk material.

In 2013, UTL partnered with OWTL to create metadata for all 734 Decisions and have them digitized and preserved by the Internet Archive. The collection, now housed in the Internet Archive's Canadian Government Publications Portal, is freely accessible to the public, discoverable by individual case and full-text searchable.

This collection is an invaluable source of information for Ontario citizens, legal practitioners, students and researchers interested in the study of discrimination and harassment on the basis of race, sex and disability. Sam-chin Li, Government Information Librarian at UTL coordinated the digitization project with contributions from Heather Buchansky, Mary Gu, Jesse Carliner and Margaret Wall of UTL. Martha Murphy (OWTL), Simone O'Byrne (Ontario Government Libraries Council) and Andrea Mills (Internet Archives Canada) were also heavily involved with the project.

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DISCRIMINATION NOT ALLOWED: HUMAN RIGHTS IN ONTARIO

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RACE AND ETHNIC ORIGIN

Michael McKinnon v. Ontario Correctional Services

On November 29, 1988, Michael McKinnon, a Canadian of Aboriginal descent and an employee of the Toronto East Detention Centre, voiced his concern to the Ontario Human Rights Commission (OHRC) regarding constant racial taunts and slurs being levied at him by his co-workers following his Cree wedding. After conducting an investigation, the OHRC found the detention center to be "redolent with racism". It ordered the Ministry of Corrections to provide anti-racism training for its staff, to award McKinnon and his wife (a fellow employee) the promotions they had been denied, and to move McKinnon's supervisor to a different prison. Additionally, his four supervisors were ordered to pay McKinnon a total of \$20,000 in damages. Unfortunately, these reparations failed to stop the abuse and McKinnon returned to the Commission on two more occasions. Again the OHRC upheld his complaints, and again its orders were defied by the Toronto East Detention Centre.

After 23 years and at the age of 55, McKinnon decided he could not continue to fight and settled his case out of court in 2011. Although both the OHRC and the government tout

Above: The case of Michael McKinnon v. Ontario Correctional Services.

COLLABORATION

Deepening Global Partnerships DURING THE COVID-19 Pandemic



OVER THE FALL TERM, THREE vital partnerships of the University of Toronto Libraries (UTL) implemented by the Cheng Yu Tung East Asian Library have been renewed. These are regarded as critical and meaningful partnerships during the COVID-19 global pandemic to support diversity and equity in collection development and management.

TAIWAN RESOURCE CENTER FOR CHINESE STUDIES (TRCCS) PROGRAM WITH THE NATIONAL CENTRAL LIBRARY (TAIWAN)

The Taiwan Resource Centre for Chinese Studies (TRCCS) at UTL was officially opened in the Cheng Yu Tung East Asian Library on September 23, 2015, and is the first TRCCS in Canada. After five years of successful and fruitful cooperation with the National Central Library (NCL), Republic of China (Taiwan) in creating and maintaining this special program at the East Asian Library, UTL has renewed this partnership by signing a cooperation agreement renewal with the NCL.

Under the renewed agreement, the National Library will continue to donate books related to Taiwan and China Studies, and provide access to crucial electronic

resources in Taiwan and China Studies to the UTL. In addition, as part of the program, the East Asian Library will organize public events such as lectures, film screenings and exhibitions by inviting scholars, writers and artists in the field of Taiwan and China Studies.

The East Asian Library has invited Dr. Awi Mona (Chih-Wei Tsai) of the Graduate Institute of Financial and Economic Law, National Dong Hwa University, who is Director of the Research Center of Indigenous Education, National Academy for Education Research, to give a virtual talk on Taiwanese Indigenous legal issues in January 2021.

The East Asian Library has been collaborating with the NCL for many years in the digitization of ancient Chinese books and in Taiwan Academy Spotlight Projects, as well as the Library's strategic direction of positioning the East Asian Library as a learning and collaboration community.

TIBETAN STUDIES COLLABORATION WITH COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES

With the University of Toronto hosting Canada's most prominent Tibetan Studies program, and Toronto itself hosting the

world's largest Tibetan community outside of Asia, in 2013, the UTL undertook a partnership with Columbia University Libraries to develop our Tibetan Studies collection. As a result of this partnership, the University of Toronto's Cheng Yu Tung East Asian Library now holds the largest Tibetan collection in Canada, making it the country's principal resource for knowledge about this important region.

Given the successful outcomes of the Tibetan Studies partnership since 2013, the University of Toronto Libraries has now renewed this cooperation agreement. The new collection development and service agreement is for a further three years, and includes jointly sponsored acquisition trips to enhance the Tibetan collections of both universities, a shared point of service for research consultations, original cataloguing of Tibetan materials acquired by both institutions, as well as a newly expanded addition to the agreement, original cataloguing of unique titles acquired only by the University of Toronto Libraries.

The faculties and students of both institutions will continue to enjoy the benefits of the innovative service model created by this partnership.

COLLABORATION

KOREAN COLLECTIONS CONSORTIUM OF NORTH AMERICA RECEIVES GRANT FOR 2020–2023

The Korean Collections Consortium of North America (KCCNA) was established in 1994 with the aim of sharing resources and supporting Korean studies teaching and research programs in North America. To reduce duplication of resources and optimize effective use of limited budgets, specific subject areas for collection development and acquisitions have been divided among member institutions, allowing each to specialize. Consortium member institution materials purchased under this grant program are then loaned free of charge to any Korean Studies scholar or student anywhere in North America. The KCCNA has thirteen member institutions including the University of Toronto. The University of Toronto has been a consortium member since 1997, and is the only member institution in Canada.

The Cheng Yu Tung East Asian Library is pleased to announce that it has successfully obtained a renewal of the Korea Foundation's grant support under the Consortium agreement, under which the University of Toronto Libraries will receive US\$15,000 per year in budget support for Korean Studies-related materials from 2020 through 2023. The new grant allows member institutions to acquire electronic resources up to US\$5,000. This generous support will enable the UTL to have the financial stability to continue to expand its Korean Studies resources during the uncertain COVID era.

The University of Toronto Libraries is enormously grateful to our friends and supporters whose financial donations support collection development and continuing access to important online resources.



Facing page: Distinguished film scholar from Taiwan, Professor Ru-Shou Robert Chen of National Chengchi University, was invited to give a talk on Taiwan Cinema and the Specter of the Martial Law as part of the Taiwan Lecture on Chinese Studies (TRCCS) Program on November 7, 2017. This page, top to bottom: Loose-leaf pecha pages (Cheng Yu Tung East Asian Library collection). Tibetan pecha collection at the Cheng Yu Tung East Asian Library

THE Other Pandemic OF 2020

IT WOULD BE QUITE AN UNDER-statement to say that 2020 was a turbulent year. The tense sociopolitical climate across the world was exacerbated by the arrival of the COVID-19 pandemic. Racial tensions in the United States reached a tipping point on May 25 when George Floyd was killed by police during what should have been a non-violent encounter. The civil and social unrest that followed has been percolating throughout our collective consciousness ever since. Once again, a vein of systemic racism and institutional bias that must be confronted have resurfaced.

Unfortunately, Canada has not been exempt from the reality of systemic racism. There is a long and troubled history of discrimination against Black and Indigenous peoples in this country. As well, the rise in Islamophobia has been well-documented in statistics and in the news. And, during the pandemic, we have witnessed a dramatic and disturbing surge in anti-Asian racism in North America. Tragically, these are the lived realities of Canada's minority populations. These phenomena represent a societal

pandemic that must be called out and uprooted.

As we acknowledge these societal failures, and the failures in our midst, we also recognize the legacy of trailblazers among us: the many librarians, students, faculty, staff and friends of the libraries who have courageously led the charge against discrimination and systemic racism. This year, the

Inclusion, Diversity and Equity (IDE) Committee has taken on an ambitious work plan, including promoting events, reviewing recruitment practices, and raising general awareness around these issues. Communities of practice around Indigenous matters and IDE-based student hiring have been formed.

In the late spring 2020, a working Anti-Racism Statement committee was formed to draft not only a statement, but also a list of concrete, measurable actions to be taken as we strive within our community to be explicitly anti-racist. The Anti-Racism Statement can be found [here](#). We recognize that the work to combat racism in our own context is messy, uncomfortable, disquieting, deeply personal and humbling. But it is necessary work that will be ongoing. The University of Toronto Libraries is committed to being a diverse and inclusive space providing equitable access to all our members.

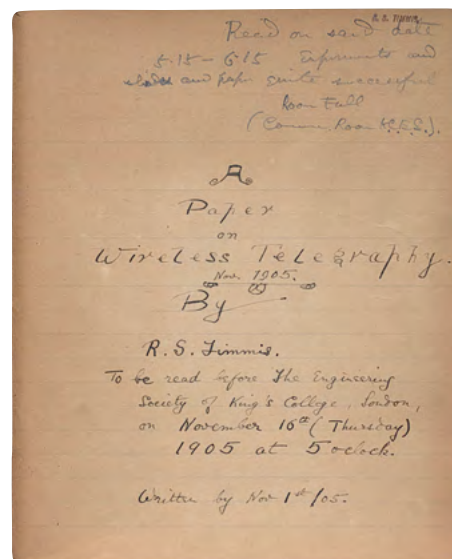


Demand AND Supply: THE FISHER LIBRARY IN 2020

THIS YEAR I WAS SUPPOSED TO have celebrated St Patrick's Day lunch at Harbord House, local favourite among the librarians, with the new Director of Advancement, Michael Cassabon. Instead, I sat in my study, miles away, trying to figure out how to work from home when my whole professional life revolved around the physical artifacts that were now suddenly beyond my reach. For me and my colleagues, the separation from vellum and paper, leather and cloth, printed books and handwritten manuscripts that give delight to our normal daily routines was, quite frankly, heart-breaking, especially in those first few weeks of spring. The staff of the Fisher, however, proved to be as resilient as the materials with which they worked. With the assistance of the central library's IT

department, people quickly transitioned to the virtual world, determined to make good use of their time on projects long left on the backburner. In preparation for the coming transition to the new library services platform in January 2021, for example, tens of thousands of older Fisher catalogue records were individually examined and corrected so that users will now have a more uniform searching experience when we finally go live this winter. It was important, however, that the staff have a variety of other diversions to relieve the possible tedium of that single activity, and among the most popular was doing transcriptions into Word of the numerous English-language bound manuscripts in our holdings. (More recently, we have begun using a new transcription software called "From the Page" which will make the juxtaposition of original and copy even clearer for the researcher.) Manuscripts, of course, are by definition unique items. No two are exactly the same, even if they are copies of the same text. The vast majority of the

Fisher manuscripts have never been published, but many have been digitized. Nevertheless, whether in hard copy or digital surrogate, researchers must still read through them in their entirety to discover what hidden information they contain. There are several problems with this. First, many younger scholars today are challenged by cursive writing. Second, researchers have become increasingly reliant on doing keyword searching in published works to expedite their investigations. Now that our



staff have created more legible, searchable documents that will eventually be attached to the corresponding digital images found on our website, we hope that a new generation of researchers will discover the pleasure of dealing with primary source materials. For our staff too, these exercises have proven to be enjoyable experiences. We have endeavoured to assign texts to the transcriber's interests, so that we have the chance to time travel back to worlds that personally attract us, whether that's an eighteenth-century battlefield or a Victorian kitchen. We have all learned so much more about, and from, the hand-written records



Above: A manuscript from the transcription project. Left: The Fisher teaching studio in the Maclean Hunter Room.

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of our ancestors than we would have, had we been physically in the Fisher these past months.

While the physical library remains closed to the general public, the Fisher staff have been working hard to provide digital surrogates of texts for researchers who continue to reach out to us for assistance from around the globe. Between May and September, for example, some 750 scans of our documents were made and delivered, and that was before the Fisher even formally resumed limited reference services at the beginning of October. In the first three weeks of that month alone, we provided another 1500 images scanned from our books and manuscripts. We also continue to collaborate with instructors both at U of T and beyond in the virtual classroom. The Maclean Hunter Room, where teaching and public lectures would normally take place, has been turned into a broadcasting studio, with our librarians the stars of these online classes, using a panoply of halo lights and document cameras to deliver the quality instruction for which the Fisher is renowned. Other initiatives, such as the new online blog *Through the Revolving Doors* and the *Between the Pillars* podcasts are helping to keep the Fisher visible and relevant in these extraordinary days. Above all, we hope that they will both inform and entertain our friends and colleagues, near and far.

While the virtual world and the surrogate documents we create to supply its immediate needs are so important right now, nothing will ever replace the artifacts themselves; at least, not for those of us who work in and love the Fisher. It is my hope that we can all safely return to this wonderful space as soon as possible and open our doors so that the general public can once again marvel at our architecture and experience the awe and wonder associated with turning the pages of a book that has seen so many hands do the very same, through wars, upheaval, and pandemics. For now, we do what we can while we await happier days.

P.J. Carefoote



Open Access to Scientific Research: A Matter of Life and Death

THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON THE research landscape in 2020 was almost immediate. As the pandemic spread and the number of infections ballooned, governments and NGOs like UNESCO called on scientific publishers to make all research related to the novel coronavirus freely available.

The international scientific community met those calls with a rapid response. Several organizations began sharing their research openly and many major scientific journals dropped their subscription fees for articles related to COVID-19, making them widely accessible.

The idea of providing free access to research has long existed in the academic community, but a much deeper understanding of “open access” (OA) came out of the *Budapest Open Access Initiative* in 2002, where OA was defined as free, unrestricted access to research, where there is no financial or copyright barrier between the reader and the output. In other words, OA means

making intellectual property free to access online, instead of behind subscription-only paywalls.

Over the last twenty years, academic libraries all over the world have carried out projects to begin to make publicly-funded research immediately and freely available to the public. The University of Toronto Libraries (UTL) strongly supports initiatives that eliminate paywalls and reduce the cost of access to taxpayer-funded research in an effort to make U of T and Canadian research as widely available as possible.

The pandemic has raised an interesting question that will linger long after a vaccine is distributed: if the global scientific community can rise with such alacrity and effectiveness in making research available to combat COVID, what other complex global challenges might benefit from an open approach to science and research in all fields?

You can read more about Open Access Support at UTL [here](#).

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BRINGING SOME *Harmony* (TO A YEAR OF DISCORD

THE TRANSITION TO REMOTE work may not have been simple or easy, but the challenge to remain engaged with the constituencies of Canada's premier music library presented an opportunity for staff to prioritize all of those 'someday' projects.

Just a month after lockdown began library staff launched a new blog, *Notes from the Music Library*, offering windows into the rare book collection, tips on how to access digital music scores, and important information on library services during the pandemic.

The University of Toronto's Music Library is the largest music collection in Canada, boasting over 300,000 books, scores, and periodicals. The Harvey Olnick Rare Book Room contains over 2,600 volumes exemplifying the history of music, music editing, performing, and printing—from liturgical manuscripts and early printed treatises to first editions of Mozart, Haydn, Beethoven, and Gershwin to early Canadian sheet music and tune books.

The Music Library also holds nearly 200,000 sound recordings stored on everything from wax cylinder phonographs to Blu-rays. However, a large part of that collection had been virtually hidden until the pandemic.

More than 100,000 long play (LP) vinyl records spanning the latter half of the twentieth century had been obscured in closed stacks and had been discoverable only

through a card catalogue (we sometimes have to explain to students what a card catalogue is!) and a computer database to which few people had access. Making the LP collection discoverable is a massive undertaking, but it has been a perfect work-from-home project for members of the library staff. As the LPs become catalogued, discoverable, and available for circulation, anyone with a borrower card (and a turntable) will be able to discover the breadth and depth of this collection, and enjoy the crackles and pops distinctive to vinyl.

During this time of physical distancing, the Music Library's archivist has been conducting virtual visits with community members to examine potential archival and rare donations. Music Library Archives holds materials that document contributions by individuals from the University of Toronto's Faculty of Music to music creation, performance, education, and research. The Archives include the manuscripts, correspondence, programs, photographs, and recordings of artists such as Edward Johnson, John Beckwith, Talivaldis Kenins, Udo Kasemets, the Hart House String Quartet, Phil Nimmons, Rob McConnell, Ron Collier, and Kathleen Parlow.

If you are interested in, or have questions about, donating materials to the Music Library Archives, please contact Rebecca Shaw, Music Archivist (r.shaw@utoronto.ca).



Right: Title page and opening page of first part of Carlo Gesualdo's *Madrigali del Venosa a Cinque Voci*, Vol. 1: Tertia Impressione. Venice: 1616.

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Information Literacy IN AN Era OF Fake News

IN THE MIDST OF THE PANDEMIC, experts are raising alarms about another public health threat: an ‘infodemic’ of online medical misinformation and disinformation about COVID-19.

In an effort to fight the spread of faulty facts, Vincci Lui, a librarian at the Gerstein Science Information Centre, has put together a new online library resource for the U of T community: “How can I spot misinformation about the coronavirus and COVID-19?”

“Everyone’s glued to their phones and looking at things popping up on their news-feeds,” says Lui, who specializes in bioethics, health policy, and public health.

“It became very apparent that, along with thousands of journal articles coming out every week about COVID-19, some of the reporting on this information is a little incorrect, some is being misinterpreted, some has been taken out of context and some has been misrepresented or made up completely.”

It can be difficult for people to parse the large amounts of new information about COVID-19 coming in every day, according to Lui—especially for those who have little experience in reading medical research in journal articles. That’s why she created a short tip sheet to offer resources for fact-checking and dispelling COVID-19 myths.

The tools include Google’s Fact Check Explorer for COVID and the Coronavirus and the World Health Organization’s



Kevin Butz via Unsplash

Health Alert on WhatsApp. It also offers tips on how to read virus-related social media posts and news articles with a critical eye. For example, the resource page prompts readers to ask whether stories that popped up in their Facebook feeds “use biased or loaded and politicized phrases like ‘Wuhan virus’ or ‘big pharma?’”

Lui created the resource as part of a larger online guide designed as a “one-stop shop” of information resources for U of T researchers, students and faculty members who are studying and doing work around COVID-19.

The guide includes weekly fact-checks addressing common COVID-19 myths and false claims with evidence-based answers.

Misinformation is information that may be rooted in truth but is ultimately incorrect. For example, a newspaper article may inadvertently misinterpret a scientific paper or take its findings out of context. Similarly, findings from faulty scientific studies also continue to be disseminated online long after they have been discredited. There are also growing concerns that the traditional safeguards against bad science, such as peer review, are being eroded due to the need for

timely results during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Disinformation, by contrast, is information that deliberately misleads people, potentially with a politically motivated goal to sway public opinion. A recent study by Carnegie Mellon University found more than 100 narratives containing false information about COVID-19—many of them circulated by bots, or automated software programs.

Disinformation can also be spread by sources usually viewed as authoritative, including politicians and world leaders. Outgoing U.S. President Donald Trump, for example, has been called out by the medical community for numerous false statements about COVID-19, including a suggestion that disinfectant be used through “injection inside or almost a cleaning.” While disinfectants can kill viruses on objects and surfaces, injecting or consuming disinfectant, or applying it to skin, can lead to poisoning and death.

Facebook and Twitter posts have also circulated making the extremely dangerous suggestion that people ingest, inject or cover themselves with bleach, which is poisonous

How can I spot misinformation about the coronavirus and COVID-19?

Every day there's new and sometimes conflicting information and research coming out about COVID-19 origins, prevention, symptoms, treatments, and potential cures or vaccines.

Unfortunately, medical misinformation is spreading even faster. Sometimes, it's scientific studies being badly misinterpreted. Other times, it's more deceptive. Buying into misinformation could lead to dangerous consequences for your health and the health of your loved ones.

The next time someone shares a COVID-19 'fact' via text or social media, verify it before you share it! Use this checklist to protect yourself from the COVID-19 [infodemic](#):



1. Verify what fact-checking organizations have to say:

- [Google Fact Check Explorer](#) on the Coronavirus
- [CoronaVirusFacts/DatosCoronaVirus Alliance Database](#) - International Fact-Checking Network (IFCN), Poynter Institute



2. Confirm what the CURRENT medical evidence says from authoritative health-focused sites:

- [iHealth Facts](#): Check the reliability of a COVID-19 claim, which is verified against the current scientific literature
- [Snopes Medical](#): Check internet rumours and stories - like your cousin's Facebook post about sipping garlic water to fight the coronavirus (Spoiler: it doesn't work!)
- [WHO \(World Health Organization\) Health Alert on WhatsApp](#): Message the service to get official and up-to-date COVID-19 statistics, protective measures, mythbusters, and more



3. Read beyond the headline (or copied + pasted Facebook post):

if ingested, can cause severe damage to the skin and eyes, and will not protect you against COVID-19. Others have shared conspiracy theories that 5G mobile broadband networks spread COVID-19, which, on top of the fact that viruses cannot be spread via radio waves or mobile networks, is proven false by the rate of the COVID-19 spread in countries that do not yet have 5G mobile networks.

A short, conspiracy-laden film called *Plandemic: The Hidden Agenda Behind Covid-19* was viewed tens of millions of times on social media before YouTube and Facebook began removing it for violating community guidelines. It, too, has been debunked as disinformation.

“There’s a combination of misinformation—problematic news reporting and

misinterpretation of journal articles and scientific studies—along with just outright fake news, information that’s taken as fact and spread, but is just something that someone made up,” says Lui.

Both disinformation and misinformation about COVID-19 are equally problematic, according to Colin Furness, a U of T professor who is cross-appointed with the Institute of Health Policy, Management and Evaluation at the Dalla Lana School of Public Health and the Faculty of Information.

“Both encourage people to engage in behaviours that end up being quite dangerous,” he says. “And it may discourage people from engaging in behaviours needed to keep themselves safe.”

Making matters worse, once a person has consumed COVID-19 misinformation or

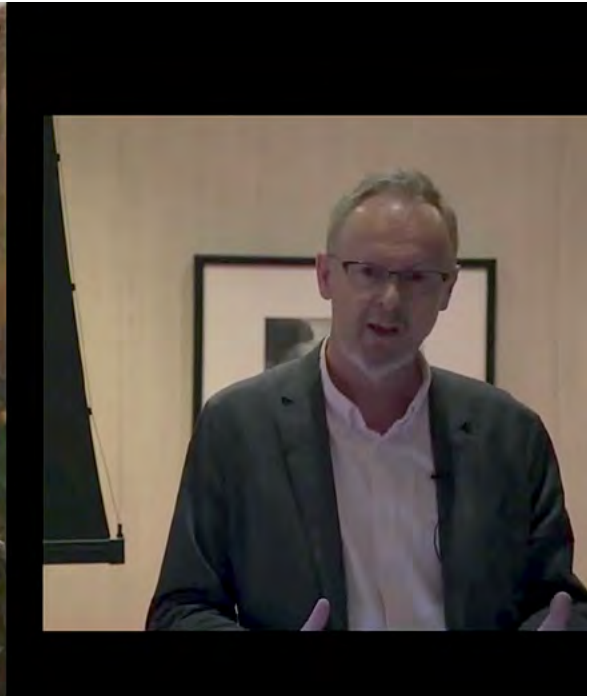
disinformation, it can become difficult to convince them that it is inaccurate, particularly if they do not have an understanding of public health or how viruses work.

Lui says individuals can help their friends and family members fact-check misinformation and disinformation online.

“Usually whenever I get sent something [about COVID-19], I will then do a quick fact-check and then send the information I find to them and just gently say, ‘Oh, did you see this? Actually, this has been disproven,’” she says.

“You’re not going to necessarily convince them just by saying, ‘that’s not true,’ but I try to show them what the evidence is saying.”

Article by U of T News



Jumping ON THE Bandwidth Wagon

ANTIQUARIAN MEETS HIGH-TECH

As it became apparent that in-person gatherings in the Fall would not be possible during the pandemic, the Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library staff was forced to think on their feet so as to address the challenge of staying connected with the Fisher's community of Friends while being physically remote in the absence of in-person gatherings.

The entrepreneurial spirit, hard work, and quick wit of individuals at the Fisher, supported by the Advancement and ITS departments, led to the virtual launch of the 2020/2021 endowed lecture series online. This initiative was made possible in part by the donor community, whose support facilitated this nimble turn to online delivery in the virtual library space. The Libraries, including the Fisher, were able to remain "open" through various stages of lockdown in large part because of critically important donor support.

It will be a good day when physical gatherings are safe to resume, and it will be a

very happy day indeed when the Friends of the Fisher can re-assemble in person. These times of being together in one another's presence have been greatly missed. But, if one silver lining has emerged from this challenging time, perhaps it is this: with the Fisher's lectures delivered online, friends from all over Canada—and indeed from all over the world—are now able to attend online lectures and visit digital exhibits.

Thanks in large part to our community of Friends, the Fisher Rare Book Library continues to be a national treasure—and it's a treasure that should be shared nationally. Of all that this year brings us, the library community is grateful for the opportunity to think creatively and apply new technology in order to amplify the Fisher's presence here in Canada and beyond.

THE "EMANCIPATION" OF ENGLISH LITERATURE

On September 24, Friends powered up their computers and mobile devices and joined one another across the miles to enjoy the

Above: Dr. Thomas Keymer gives the Alexander C. Pathy Lecture on the Book Arts . Facing page, top to bottom: Poster advertising the joint Fisher Library and the Anne Tanenbaum Centre for Jewish Studies webinar. Dr. Margaret E. Schotte delivers the John Seltzer and Mark Seltzer Memorial Lecture. Lecture images are from video files by BespokeAV.

COMMUNITY

twenty-first annual Alexander C. Pathy Lecture on the Book Arts. Dr. Thomas Keymer, University Professor and Chancellor Jackman Professor, University of Toronto, held the distinction of being the Fisher's first virtual speaker. In his lecture, *Authorship, Print, and Sedition in Eighteenth-Century England*, Professor Keymer considered the consequences for print culture of seditious libel prosecution, and drew conclusions from exemplary cases involving authors and other book-trade professionals between 1630 and 1820. This annual lecture is generously endowed by Alexander Pathy.

THE FINE ART OF SELLING BOOKS TO SAILORS

Friends reconvened on November 5, when Dr. Margaret E. Schotte, delivered the twenty-second annual John Seltzer and Mark Seltzer Memorial Lecture. Her lecture, titled *For Merchants and Mariners: The Business of Nautical Manuals*, focused on the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, which saw an explosion of printed manuals dedicated to the science of navigation.

In this talk, Dr. Schotte explored the diverse marketing strategies used by Dutch, English, and Spanish publishers to attract readers. In certain regions, sailors were viewed as too illiterate to buy books, but in others, they were the expert authors. As this

lecture demonstrated, booksellers, publishers and authors alike worked to develop robust markets across maritime Europe, ultimately profiting from the spread of new nautical knowledge.

Dr. Schotte, who worked for a number of years in the antiquarian book trade, is currently an associate professor of history at York University. She teaches courses on early modern history, science, and the history of the book.

This annual lecture is generously endowed by Mrs. R. Dorene Seltzer.

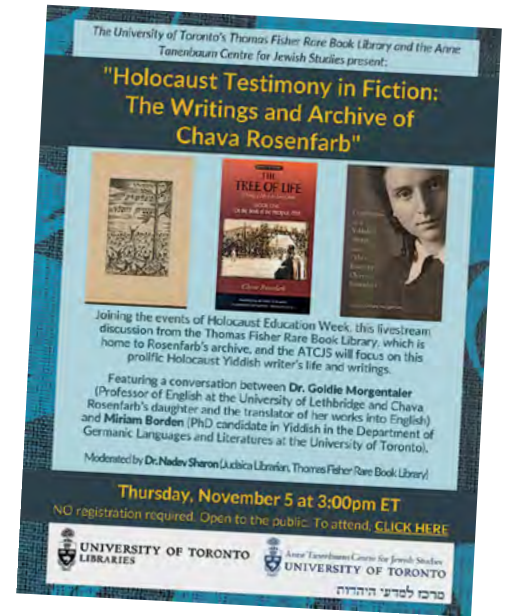
Miss a lecture?

To hear all of our past lectures visit the 'Listen to Lectures' page of the Fisher Library website at <http://fisher.library.utoronto.ca/audio>.

JEWISH STUDIES AT THE FISHER

The sudden pivot to online events and virtual gatherings engendered new collaborations for the Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library and some of its staff.

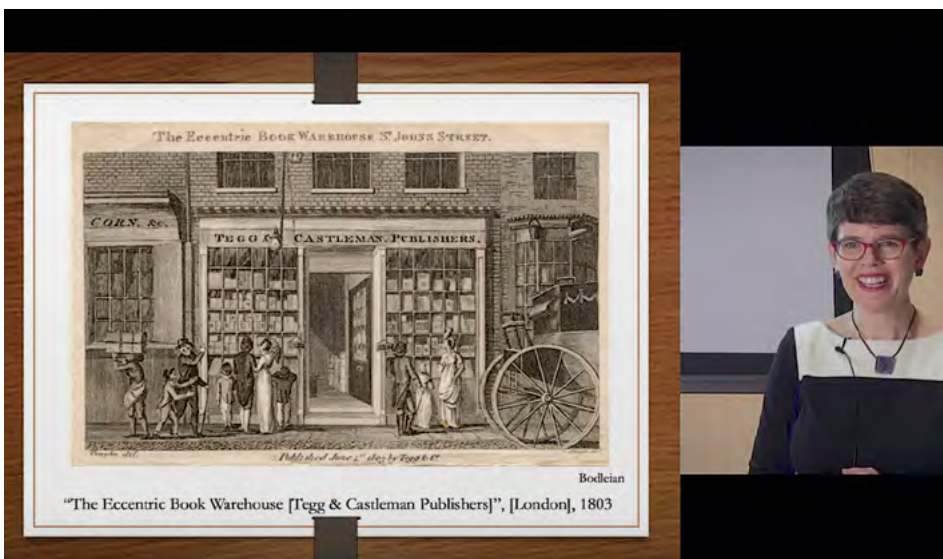
On November 5, the Fisher Library and the Anne Tanenbaum Centre for Jewish Studies held a special webinar in conjunction with UJA Federation of Greater Toronto's annual Holocaust Education Week. The webinar, entitled "Holocaust Testimony in Fiction: The Writings and



Archive of Chava Rosenfarb," focused on the biography and literary career of Holocaust survivor and prolific Yiddish author, Chava Rosenfarb (1923, Lodz, Poland–2011, Lethbridge, Alberta), whose archive is held at the Fisher Library.

Speakers Miriam Borden and Dr. Goldie Morgentaler provided a stimulating discussion about Chava Rosenfarb, one of the major Yiddish novelists of the second half of the twentieth century, to around one hundred virtual attendees. Miriam Borden is a PhD candidate in Yiddish in the Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures at the University of Toronto. Dr. Morgentaler, a Professor of English at the University of Lethbridge, is Chava Rosenfarb's daughter; she translated the latter's works into English.

Rosenfarb's *magnum opus*, *Der boym fun lebn* [=“The Tree of Life”], is a trilogy that chronicles the life and destruction of the Jewish community of Lodz during the Holocaust. In contrast to the post-war writings of most survivors—which were written in the form of testimonies, memoirs, and other non-fiction accounts of their experiences—Rosenfarb's trilogy is a work of fiction, and the choice to write an account of the real-life destruction of her community in this genre was one of the





issues which this live virtual conversation focused on. Other points of discussion included Rosenfarb's position as a female Yiddish author; her writing in Yiddish in the New World, in post-war Canada, and her doing so while the natural audience of Yiddish-speakers was gradually fading; Morgentaler's role and experience of being the translator of her mother's writings; and the choice to donate this important archive to the Fisher Library.

Highlighting other areas of the Fisher Library's Judaica collections, on December 14, the Fisher collaborated with the Jewish Public Library in Montreal for a joint virtual presentation sponsored by the Dr. Michael D. Paul Rare Books Initiative of the Jewish Public Library. In this virtual event librarians from both libraries presented a small corresponding selection of rare books from each institution, focusing on the interesting histories of the works, their editions, or their owners. Works presented were incunabula editions of the works of the ancient historian Flavius Josephus, important early editions of works of the prominent statesman, philosopher, and Bible commentator Don Isaac Abravanel, as well as a manuscript and early editions of the Zohar, the most important work of Kabbalah, or Jewish Mysticism.

To learn more about the Fisher's Judaica collections and how you can support their

development, please contact Jewish Studies Librarian Nadav Sharon, PhD at nadav.sharon@utoronto.ca.

SOMETHING'S HAPPENING AT THE MEDIA COMMONS ARCHIVE

Many departments at the University of Toronto Libraries have had to adapt radically to life and work during the COVID-19 pandemic and the Media Commons Archives (MCA) has been no exception. Not only did workflows and daily tasks change, but staff had to completely rethink outreach strategies, and out of that rethink the MCA Virtual Event Series was born. The series is an ambitious slate of virtual screenings and conversations—one per month—to highlight the unique and valuable collections held within the archives.

On September 30, MCA Assistant Media Archivist Christina Stewart presented the inaugural virtual event—a screening of the rare silent film *Bright Lights of Broadway* from 1923—using a digitized version of a film print from the Richard Scott collection (the collection in which Stewart identified a lost 1924 film, *Secrets of the Night*). Starring Doris Kenyon, Harrison Ford (no, not that Harrison Ford), Lowell Sherman, and Tyrone Power Sr., this film tells a tale about the pitfalls of giving up love to pursue (and ultimately falling prey to) the bright lights of Broadway. This beautifully coloured tinted

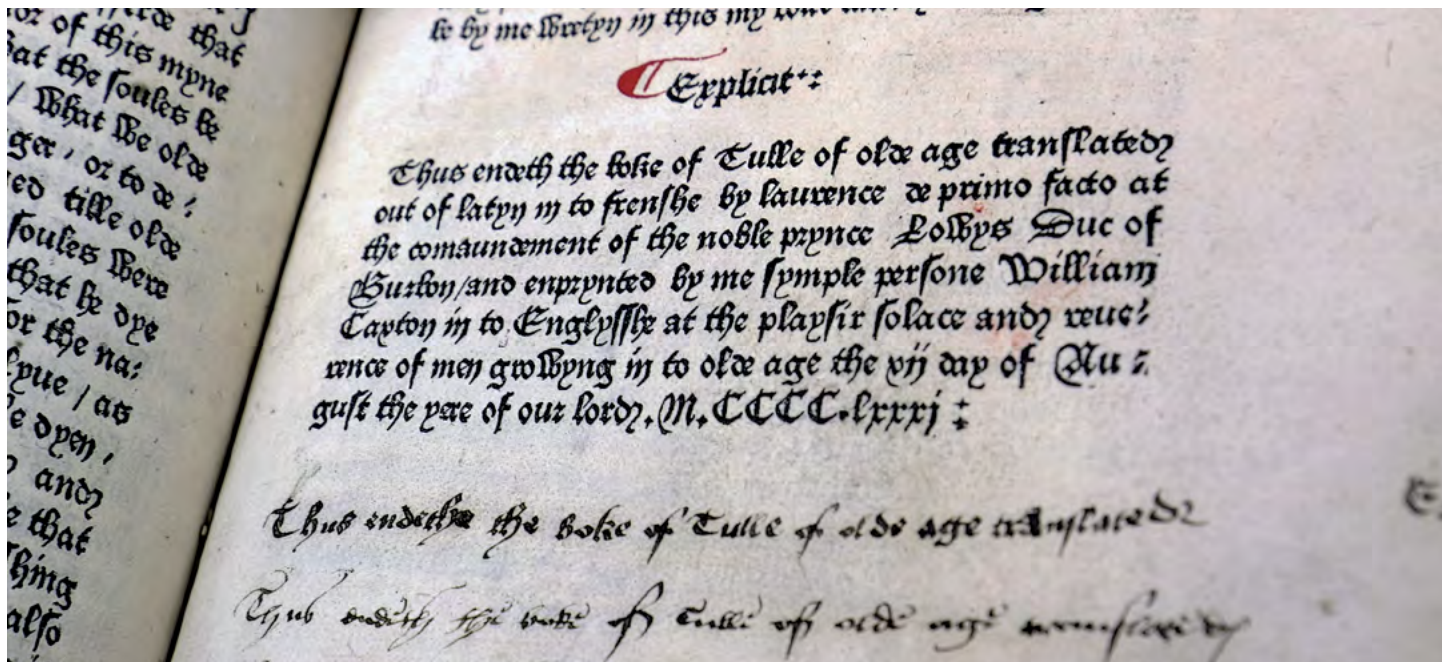
film also had musician Jordan Klapman performing musical accompaniment.

On October 29, MCA Assistant Media Archivist Rachel E. Beattie presented something completely different: a panel on horror film and horror film fandom in Toronto entitled *Hogtown Horror*. The panel grew out of work that Beattie did on The Toronto Film Map, a co-production with the Map and Data Library to map films set in Toronto. The panel featured film critic and programmer Geoff Pevere, as well as U of T Cinema Studies Institute PhD students Kate Russell and Erin Mick. The panelists walked attendees through the film and film culture that makes horror in Toronto so incredibly unique.

And on November 29, Media Commons hosted *Mario Prizek: A Queer Toronto Broadcast Pioneer*, highlighting one of the MCA's most popular collections. This virtual event included a screening of "The Golden Bull of Boredom", an episode from the 1965 CBC television drama series *Eye Opener*, and clips from his personal home movies, along with a panel discussion.

Mario Prizek was a ground-breaking writer, director, and producer at the CBC from 1951 to 1985. With style and grace he deftly navigated the complicated pitfalls of a society where his homosexuality was not accepted. Through the many plays, operas, ballets, and other programming he helmed at the CBC he made an immeasurable impact on the Canadian broadcasting world. Prizek also designed his own clothes, was a talented costume designer, made shockingly beautiful home movies, created amazing paintings, and wrote poetry. The event celebrated the man behind this amazing archival collection in all his startling contradictions. Panelists Dan Bazuin (former co-owner of This Ain't the Rosedale Library) and U of T Cinema Studies Institute PhD student Daniel Laurin discussed Prizek's impact on Canadian culture and the implications of the fact that his archive straddles the worlds of personal and professional archival collections.

CELEBRATE



Building ON YOUR Support

THE LASTING POWER OF LEGACIES: LEON KATZ

Leon Katz was a pioneering businessperson who came to Canada by way of Spain after the Nazi invasion of France, where he grew up. In 1948, he invented and patented a flickerless fluorescent lamp before founding Canada X-Ray Ltd. Over three decades, with his wife Johanna's help, he also became a serious collector of Canadian books and art, eventually creating a two-volume book consisting of hundreds of paintings, sketches, prints, collages, autographs, music scores, poetry and prose.

Top: A page from the Caxton *Cicero*, the oldest English language book in Canada.

Leon Katz died in 2000 at the age of 94 and, along with his collection, left a bequest to U of T's Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library. Visit us here to discover how, twenty years later, Leon Katz's legacy continues to thrive at the Fisher.

RECOGNIZING AND REWARDING UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCHERS

Emma Sullivan, a third-year undergraduate student, had never heard of Pelizaeus Merzbacher Disease (PMD) before starting as a research student in the lab of Ronald Cohn at the Hospital for Sick Children.

Now, not only is she familiar with the rare, genetic nervous system disorder, she is one of six winners of the 2020 Patricia and

Peter Shannon Wilson Undergraduate Research Prize for her research paper on genetic treatment options for the disease.

"The most important thing I learned through this process is to ask questions. Either as experts or sounding boards, discussing complications with others helped me several times to adjust my perspective so I could find information where I hadn't previously been looking," says Emma, who is pursuing a double major in cell and molecular biology, and health and disease.

This year's Patricia and Peter Shannon Wilson Undergraduate Research Prize winners all demonstrate similar novel approaches in their work. U of T Libraries awards six prizes of \$1,000 each year to undergraduate students from all campuses and disciplines for research they conducted while completing coursework.

"We are incredibly grateful to generous friends like the Wilsons," says Michael Cassabon, UTL's Director of Advancement. "Patricia and Peter understand that this award catalyzes research at the undergraduate level and adds a wonderful layer to the students' overall experience." He added: "In the future, we hope others will follow the

CELEBRATE

Wilson's example...so that we have even more student-focused awards and programs available through the Libraries."

With the generous endowment by Patricia Wilson and Peter Wilson, the Patricia and Peter Shannon Wilson Undergraduate Research Prize provides students with an opportunity to reflect on their information-seeking experience, showcase their research to an audience beyond the classroom, and promotes excellence in undergraduate research at the University of Toronto.

The student winners this year were Kiera Farrell-Beaulieu (second year, Innis College), Tegan Ridge (fourth year, St. Michael's College), Colin Stewart (fourth year, University College), Emma Sullivan (third year, Victoria College), Sally Walker-Hudecki (second year, Trinity College), and Braden Zufelt (fourth year, Trinity College).

While U of T Libraries typically hosts an in-person reception to recognize the prize winners, the event could not be held this year due to a limit on gatherings of people during the COVID-19 pandemic. Instead, U of T Libraries has celebrated this year's winners online, where the student scholars share what winning this prize means to them.

"This award is quite unique; for me, it's both an acknowledgment of oft unseen hard work and a solid motivator to continue developing my research skills," says Tegan Ridge, for her project on the sound world of Othmar Schoeck's 1927 music drama, *Penthesilea*.

Kiera Farrell-Beaulieu notes that, "winning this prize has been the most significant achievement both in my personal life and in my career thus far at the University of Toronto." Kiera was awarded for her research paper on the opioid overdose epidemic among youth in Ottawa.

The student winners also reflected on what they learned about the information-seeking process and libraries while conducting their research. Braden Zufelt, whose

prize-winning paper on the myth of Anglo-French hostility to German reunification from 1989-90, explains, "Prior to my investigation, I had not fully understood the wealth of databases available through the University of Toronto Libraries, specifically those housing historical newspapers. Noting the availability of these databases has led me to a greater appreciation of libraries not only for the resources they offer, but also for the institutions themselves."

ROBARTS COMMON CONSTRUCTION CONTINUES

Even through the pandemic, progress has continued on the construction of Robarts Common, the signature project of the Robarts Library renewal initiative and one of the most important capital projects on campus today. The curtain wall (glass enclosure) is now complete, protecting the building's interior from exposure to the elements.

The five-storey building will add about 1,200 new study spaces to Robarts Library. The new building will be flooded with natural light, making the overall environment inviting, accessible, and inspiring for students.

The revitalization was conceived to provide Robarts Library users with improved facilities which allow them to conduct rigorous research and excel in their studies. The extraordinary philanthropy of Drs. Russell Morrison and Katherine Morrison, along with the generosity of over 1,000 individual donors, has allowed us to achieve this goal at last.

"Our donors are vital to the work of the libraries. They support our expert staff, unparalleled collections, cutting edge technologies and user-centered services essential to the University's mission to prepare global citizens and meet global challenges," said Larry Alford, University Chief Librarian.

To keep an eye on the construction's minute by minute progress, check out the Construction Cam!

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FRIENDS

OF THE THOMAS FISHER
RARE BOOK LIBRARY

Let Us Welcome You!

The 'Friends' organization was founded in 1984 to bring together those who are committed to strengthening the Library's outstanding collections and dedicated to encouraging a greater awareness of the Library's resources. We encourage you to join the Friends and support the Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library. Benefits include invitations to lectures and special events, and the Friends' newsletter, *The Halcyon*. Evening lectures are designed to appeal to the interests of the Friends and to highlight the special collections of the Library. Catalogues of exhibitions displayed in the Fisher Library are available upon request.



FOR MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION:
<http://fisher.library.utoronto.ca/donations/friends> or call 416-978-3600.

YOUR SUPPORT

Online Exhibitions

Exhibits U of T showcases digitized materials from University of Toronto Libraries collections. A selection appears below. The complete list is [here](#).

[U of T Engineering Buildings \(1878–2018\) 140 Years of Stories](#)

This exhibit spans the 140-year-history of the buildings and spaces used by the Faculty of Applied Science & Engineering at the University of Toronto.

[University of Toronto Libraries at 125](#)

This exhibition explores its history from 1892 to the present day.

[U of T Showcase 150](#)

In recognition of Canada 150, campus archives and special collections came together to showcase their unique, diverse holdings within the context of 150 years of Canada's historical narrative.

[The University of Toronto: Snapshots of its History](#)

This exhibition was mounted in the Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library in 2002 as a part of the University's 175th anniversary celebrations.

[The State in the Bedroom—The Evolution of Reproductive Rights in Canada](#)

Robarts Reference librarians Patricia Bellamy, Jesse Carliner, Nicholas Worby, and iSchool practicum student Tina Sabourin curated this exhibit to coincide with the Berkshire Conference of Women Historians and promote UTL special collections.

[The Sandford Fleming Fire: Recollections Forty Years Later](#)

In the early morning hours of February 11th, 1977, a fire ravaged through the Sandford Fleming building at the University of Toronto.

[Making History: Contributions of Faculty Members in Science and Medicine](#)

This exhibit is comprised of 30 photographs drawn from the University of Toronto Archives, the Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, the Hospital for Sick Children Archives and the grandson of John Gerald FitzGerald.

[In All Of Us Command: Story of an Anthem](#)

Discover the compositional context of "O Canada" and examine different versions of the piece from the Music Library's extensive Canadian Sheet Music Collection.

[Global Summitry Archive](#)

The Global Summitry Archive, created by the Global Summitry Project (GSP) at the Munk School

[Fashion Plates from the Collections of the Library & Archives, Royal Ontario Museum](#)

This virtual exhibit is intended to assist researchers and students in providing a brief look at the subject of fashion plates.

[Dr. Tony Pawson Tribute](#)

Dr. Tony Pawson (1952–2013) revolutionized our understanding of the way our cells work in health and in disease.

[Dentistry Library 120th Anniversary](#)

From rare books, to e-books, to dental artifacts, the Dentistry Library offers a unique look at the profession, past and present.

[Crime and Punishment at 150: Global Contexts](#)

To commemorate *Crime and Punishment's* resounding triumph and influence, a two month exhibition was held at Robarts Library in 2016.

[Canadian Law and Canadian Identity](#)

This exhibit explores the intersection between Canadian law and Canadian identity.

[Canada's Oldest Profession: Sex Work and Bawdy House Legislation](#)

This digital exhibit complements and expands upon the physical exhibition of the same name, displayed in Robarts Library from March 8th to June 1st, 2016.

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HOW DO WE PROTECT THE WORLD'S MOST VALUABLE KNOWLEDGE?

Knowledge is as fragile as it is valuable. Archives can be lost, destroyed, or buried in an avalanche of data. University of Toronto Libraries (UTL) is a world-class organization, not only for how it preserves its vast holdings, but also for its nimble response to massive digital change. From collecting and digitizing rare works to organizing an exponential growth in information, UTL both safeguards the world's knowledge and puts it in the hands of those who seek it, when and where they need it.

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