University of Pittsburgh

Library System

IMPACT REPORT 2021

Contemporary Chinese Village Gazetteer Data Project

ULS LIBRARIES

Archives & Special Collections

Bevier Engineering Library

Center for American Music

Chemistry Library

Finney Music Library

Frick Fine Arts Library

Hanley Library (Bradford)

Haskell Library (Titusville)

Hillman Library

Millstein Library (Greensburg)

Owen Library (Johnstown)

Cover image: This map illustrates the geographic range of villages included in the Contemporary Chinese Village Gazetteer Data project (see page 8). Initiated by Pitt's East Asian Library, the project aims to extract and share data from our collection of Chinese village gazetteers.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LETTER FROM
THE DIRECTOR

Dear Friend of the Library,

You may already know that at present, the University of Pittsburgh is completing a "Year of Data and Society," a twelve-month exploration of the ways data can contribute to individual well-being and the greater social good. While it might not be the first thing that comes to mind when you hear "library," data has always been at the heart of what we do. After all, it is because of data and the standardization that underpins it, that you can search a library catalog using one or two keywords and retrieve highly relevant materials that span time and format.

Computerization has, of course, caused an explosion in the types and volume of data produced. The sheer size of this new landscape brings unique challenges for organizations, societies, and governments. This is especially true for libraries, which collect, describe, preserve, and share information virtually and in-person.

As we share our data expertise in support of research, teaching, and learning across campus and beyond, we note that the University Library System also produces data, as we write in our

"Stories of Data" feature. In the "Sense of Belonging," we discuss the original research we are conducting, using student photos as the data that will help us create spaces which feel welcoming to all.

The computer revolution created the need for a new skill set around using these devices efficiently and effectively. The information revolution brought a need for skills around finding and evaluating information. So too, in the data revolution, there is a need for the skills to be able to read, write, and communicate data in context. The Library is playing an active role in this too, including developing a campus-wide collaborative "Cultivating a Data Science Learning Community" project funded by the Pitt Seed Grant program.

These data literacy skills are essential in the academy and the workplace. Students will carry the skills they learn at the Library into the workforce, helping them reach their full potential.

A central role of libraries has always been preserving the cultural record and ensuring people can access and engage with it. As the type, format, and volume of information changes, we extend our tools, skills, services, and spaces to position our communities for success.

Kornelia Tancheva, PhD
The Hillman University Librarian and Director,
University of Pittsburgh Library System

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2021 LIBRARY SNAPSHOT

WE ARE HERE TO HELP THE PITT COMMUNITY...

...CONDUCT & SHARE RESEARCH

3,299,109
Searches for Articles

14,156,972
Pitt Researchers' Items Hosted

24,414
Pitt Researchers' Items Downloaded

Nearly **90%** of Pitt researchers surveyed state that the Library is important to their work

The Library publishes & hosts **more than 40** scholarly journals, all of which are freely available online

...COLLABORATE WITH EXPERTS

30,329
questions answered by library experts

We taught **877** classes & workshops with **14,160** participants

We conducted **416** one-on-one consultations (virtual & in-person)

109 classes visited Archives & Special Collections

EQUITY, DIVERSITY, & INCLUSION (EDI)

We hosted **109** diversity-related instruction & outreach events with **2,276** participants

Library workers spent **more than 530** hours at diversity-related trainings

...ACCESS RESOURCES & SPACES

6,897,097
print & electronic volumes in our collections

26,199
resources shared with other libraries

2,261,563
ebooks

3,689,528
journal articles downloaded

269,862
in-person visits

7,808
group study room reservations

2,458,298
uses of our librarian-curated resource guides

STORIES OF DATA

HOW A COLLECTION BECOMES DATA: THE CONTEMPORARY CHINESE VILLAGE GAZETTEER DATA PROJECT

Four years ago, the East Asian Library (EAL) at the University of Pittsburgh Library System (ULS) created the Contemporary Chinese Village Gazetteer Data (CCVG Data) project to produce a digital, open dataset from our collection of Chinese village gazetteers. Village gazetteers are unique primary resources that include quantitative and qualitative data on local history, genealogy, religious sites and observances, etc. Because village gazetteers are held in only a few academic libraries, the valuable information they contain has been difficult to access.

Project Team

Haihui Zhang, Head, ULS East Asian Library, and Project Lead

Ruoyun Zheng, Project Coordinator of the Student Team

Prof. Daqing He, Associate Chair, Dept. of Informatics and Networked Systems

Our collection contains gazetteers spanning fifty years (1949-2019) from approximately 3,000 villages. Along with Professor Daqing He from Pitt's School of Computing and Information, ULS East Asia Librarian Haihui Zhang, working with other colleagues and students, established 18 categories and 147 subcategories of data. Rather than simply scanning text, the CCVG Data project team converted the physical materials into digital datasets that can be sorted, exported, manipulated, visualized, and shared online across different systems and platforms.

During processing, each gazetteer is carefully examined and labeled. Then the data is manually extracted and entered into a digital data platform. Finally, the data entries are proofread and uploaded to the CCVG Data website. Website visitors can freely browse, search, and download data labeled in English and Chinese. Researchers can also view an interactive map of the village locations to contextualize the data further.

In August 2019, CCVG Data completed its first stage as a pilot project and opened the first 500 village datasets for teaching and research. Today, more than 307,000 data points from 2,000 villages have been extracted and made available for download. The CCVG Data project represents the coming together of library resources, librarian knowledge, and robust information technology to create a one-of-a-kind global scholarly resource. Researchers have taken note. In the past year, the project team was invited to give workshops at Harvard University, the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor, and Duke University at Kunshan, among other places. Recently, Pitt hosted the Conference on Rural Society and Politics in China to highlight research findings that used data from the CCVG Data project. More than 80 scholars attended virtually and in person, including participants from Germany, mainland China, and Hong Kong.

CODING IN OUR COMMUNITY

Last spring, ULS Digital Scholarship Services worked with community partners to create a coding course for high school students offered through Pitt's Community Engagement Centers (CECs). Pitt's CECs are embedded, collaborative, University-sponsored spaces that bring resources, educational opportunities, and support to Pittsburgh's Homewood and Hill District communities.

ULS librarians Gesina Phillips, Tyrica Terry Kapral, and Dominic Bordelon designed a course titled "Introduction to Programming Concepts with Python" and led online sessions twice a week for three weeks with help from a graduate student assistant. The course focused on a hands-on introduction to computational thinking and basic programming principles. During the sessions, high school students worked with variables, data types, and functions to develop basic programming and coding skills.

> **"At the CEC we aim to help bridge the digital divide that exists within the community. Through Library programs at the CEC, we are seeing the gap close as more residents gain exposure and training in computer programming and languages. We're ensuring that everyone has access to these skills and the opportunity to explore more concepts in computing sciences and information technology."**
>
> – Marlo R. Hall, Outreach Coordinator, Hill District CEC

This spring, in partnership with the Hill District CEC, our team taught the third iteration of the course to a group of eight middle- and high-schoolers over several weeks. The students each completed a small coding project and spent the last class sharing their work with their peers. Our team also taught a one-off workshop for high schoolers, "Think Like a Programmer," at the Homewood CEC during their 2021 summer Learn & Earn program.

These activities are a part of the ongoing digital inclusion efforts of the Hill District CEC. We look forward to future opportunities to collaborate with all of the CECs and participate in digital skills initiatives throughout the Pittsburgh community.

THE YEAR OF DATA AND SOCIETY AT THE ULS

Last summer, the Office of the Provost declared the 2021-2022 academic year the Year of Data and Society. Data plays an important and complex role in society, with the ability to both empower and marginalize. During the Year of Data and Society, the Pitt community was encouraged to think critically about the data we collect, use, and leave behind through our scholarly work, education, institutional operations, and digital lives. **We are proud to be a part of three projects that received Year of Data and Society Grants.**

Open Scholarship and Research Impact Challenge - Open scholarship refers to the philosophy and practice of improving the reproducibility and rigor of research by sharing data, code, protocols, and results. The Open Scholarship and Research Impact Challenge (March 28 - April 8, 2022) included a wide range of learning opportunities and activities that provided practical tools to make research more accessible, reproducible, and connected to public welfare.

Dominic Bordelon (ULS), Ryan Champagne (Office of Sponsored Programs), Helenmary Sheridan (Health Sciences Library System)

Understanding Civic Resilience in Homewood and Surrounding Neighborhoods -This project will develop a nuanced understanding of racialized information contexts and how disinformation affects communities of color to generate new data on the observed prevalence of disinformation and its effects. Together with community members, the team will build the Homewood Digital Civic Asset Map, which will provide in-depth data and analysis of digital spaces used by residents.

Daren Ellerbee (CEC in Homewood), Lara Putnam (Dept. of History), Rachel Rubin (ULS), Beth Schwanke (Pitt Cyber)

Digital Humanities Research Initiative Residency Program Seed Grant -This project will design and host a series of ongoing residencies for the Digital Humanities Research Initiative (DHRX). The residency program will help grow the DHRX program and increase university-wide understanding of and engagement with the role of computing and data in the interpretive disciplines.

Chelsea Gunn (School of Computing and Information), Annette Vee (Dept. of English), Kate Joranson (ULS), Alison Langmead (Dept. of History of Art and Architecture and School of Computing and Information)
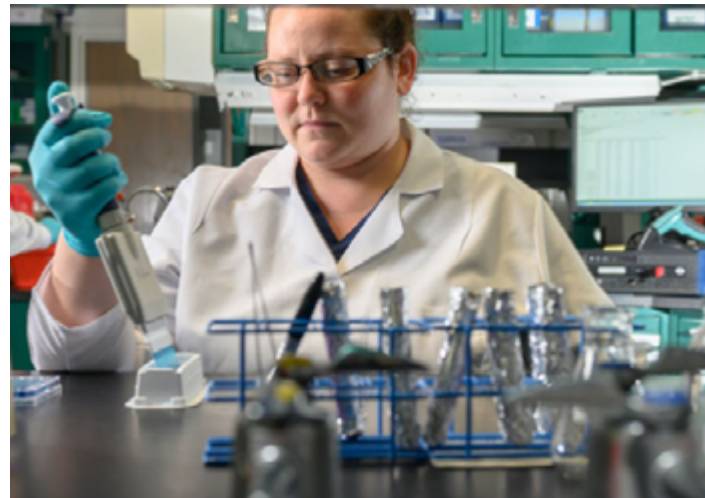
SUPPORTING RESEARCH
IN THE SCIENCES

HELPING RESEARCHERS MANAGE DATA

Working with data is a common research activity that takes many forms. The University of Pittsburgh Library System (ULS) offers data-related services throughout the research lifecycle, including developing computational skills, finding the right tools, writing data-management plans for grants, and looking for accessible data storage. Our experts host consultations with individuals and small groups, workshops for the Pitt community, and training sessions for classes. We also provide drop-in office hours and individual support by appointment to meet researchers where and when they need assistance.

Data sharing is a research practice increasingly required by funders. The idea is that the work of one research project can then more easily build upon another and that the results can be reproduced and verified by others. In a recent online training, the ULS Digital Scholarship Services team discussed motivations, considerations, and methods for sharing data with attendees. Services like this help researchers responsibly, accurately, and sustainably share their work. No matter what aspect of data a researcher is grappling with, ULS experts, including our dedicated Research Data Librarian, are ready to assist.

ENHANCED STEM RESEARCH SUPPORT

In 2021, the ULS science libraries consolidated collections, staff, and services into the Bevier Engineering Library. This union of resources allows our science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) librarians to devote their time to maximum impact activities like ongoing consultations for research projects, connecting them with library research data management services, in-class student instruction, and research support for faculty.

"This is an amazing opportunity to rethink the libraries' STEM research and learning services. This project will allow us to collocate expertise, reimagine spaces, and align our services and collections with the innovative and entrepreneurial approach of STEM faculty and students."

– Rachel Rubin, ULS Associate University Librarian for Research and Learning

CULTIVATING A DATA SCIENCE LEARNING COMMUNITY

Members of our Digital Scholarship Services (DSS) unit are excited to be on the team for the "Cultivating a Data Science Learning Community" project, funded by the Pitt Seed Grant program. Led by co-PIs Gesina Phillips (DSS), Matthew Burton (School of Computing and Information), and Melissa Ratajeski (Health Sciences Library System), the team will also include Tyrica Terry Kapral and Dominic Bordelon from DSS and Helenmary Sheridan and Carrie Iwema from the Health Sciences Library System.

This collaborative project will address the growing demand for informal data science training across disciplines at Pitt by building a sustained learning community. Complementing informal instruction, the project will also support learners during and after workshops, host events, and maintain a space for further learning and collaboration.

STARTING RESEARCH ON SOLID FOOTING

Providing scholars with accurate information and trustworthy expertise is a core value of librarianship. Towards this goal, our librarians answer research questions, offer one-on-one consultations, and host workshops like "It's in the News: Navigating News and Online Information," which introduce strategies for responsible news and information consumption. We also generate librarian-curated resource guides, such as the #CheckYourFacts LibGuide, which provide tools to evaluate the reliability of information.

Along with Library efforts to strengthen the critical information skills of our community, we are partnering with organizations throughout the Pitt community to advance these goals. Last summer, the Pitt Disinformation Lab (PDL) was established in the Institute for Cyber Law, Policy, and Security. This initiative connects and empowers communities to convert disinformation campaigns into tools for future resilience. The Library is an official PDL partner, with Political Science Liaison Librarian Chris Lemery serving on a subgroup focused on community resilience efforts. Future subgroup meetings will explore creating grassroots community narratives and news sources.

**"What makes the PDL novel…is our hyperlocal focus on Western Pennsylvania and our face-to-face education of, and dialogue with, Pittsburgh community members. We're seeking to understand residents' entire online and offline information environment to build civic resilience to disinformation."**

– Chris Lemery, ULS Political Science Liaison Librarian & PDL Representative

This spring, the Disrupting Health Disinformation project was selected as a part of the 2022 Pitt SEED grant cohort. For this project, a collaboration with the School of Nursing, the Health Sciences Library System, the Center for Teaching & Learning, and other partners will develop a series of Open Access training modules targeted toward combatting false and inaccurate information in nursing, a critical skill for patient care.

CULTIVATING CREATIVITY
FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Our libraries are a place of connection – where important conversations happen, and ideas take life. Here are a few of our favorite ways the Pitt community expressed creativity at the University of Pittsburgh Library System (ULS)!
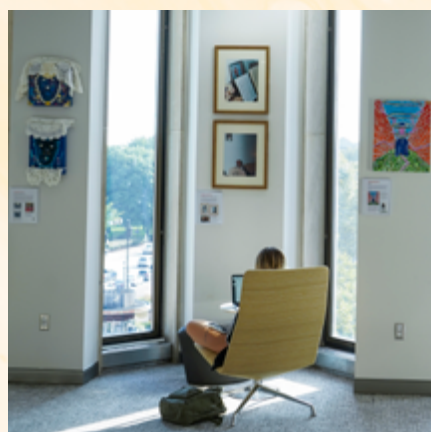
ART FOR AUGUST

Last fall, the ULS hosted "Art for August," a new August Wilson House initiative that supports local artists by commissioning original work celebrating the legacy of the Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright. Ten selected Pittsburgh-area artists created contemporary art that paid homage to the influence of Wilson's work and life. The artwork was displayed on the newly renovated third floor of Hillman Library.

In conjunction with the exhibit, the ULS and Pitt's Center for Creativity presented the "Photo to Fabric" workshop led by fiber artist LaVerne Kemp, one of the artists selected by the August Wilson House, in Hillman Library's Text & conText Lab. This engaging event introduced Pitt students, faculty, and staff to many different techniques as they created pillows adorned with personal photographs. The ULS also hosted "Reclaiming the Legacy," a virtual discussion about reclaiming the Black archive through art. The conversation, moderated by Pitt doctoral candidate Amanda Awanjo, featured "Art for August" artists including Brandon Jennings, Charlotte Ka, and Dominick McDuffie.

STUDENTS DESIGN EXHIBITS FOR NEW DIGITAL WALL

Under the guidance of our Archives & Special Collections experts, Pitt undergraduate students created custom exhibits for the interactive digital wall on the third floor of Hillman Library. The 20-foot-long, 5-foot-high display provided a unique cinematic canvas to bring these student exhibits to life. New exhibits will be added a few times a year as a part of the course curriculum and independent fellowships.
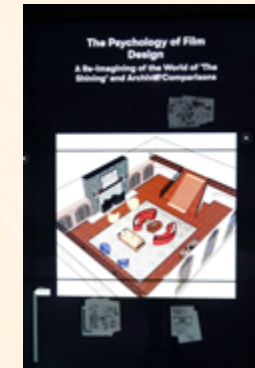
"Get With the Program: A Guide to Musical Analysis and Storytelling, including Archival Comparisons"

Curated by Chloe Weiss, 2021 Honors College Creative Arts Fellow and undergraduate student in Music and Creative Writing.

This exhibit examined music as a storytelling device, following the artistic journey from page to performance. Using a first-person perspective, Weiss offered insights into her experience engaging with ULS Finney Music Library materials and her thoughts while working with the Beyond Measure choir.

"The Psychology of Film Design: A Re-Imagining of the World of The Shining and Archival Comparisons"

Curated by Jillian Werbisky, 2021 Honors College Creative Arts Fellow and undergraduate student in Psychology and Theatre.

Werbisky's exhibit showcased the scholarly intersection of psychology and production design by completely re-imagining The Shining. The project redesigned six primary locations from the horror film to fit the romance genre and drew comparisons with George A. Romero Archival Collection materials.

SPACES TO EXPLORE & EXPERIMENT WITH MULTIMEDIA

Over the last several years, the ULS has created multiple spaces to support media creation, including an audio production booth and a video recording room. The recently renovated third floor of Hillman Library features the brand new Text & conText Lab. A collaboration with Pitt's Center for Creativity, this space provides an active environment for the creation, manipulation, and reassembly of text. In 2021, the Text & conText Lab hosted its first in-person classes and workshops, including the Art for August events mentioned in this article!

As the role of multimedia grows on campus and in the world at large, and as career opportunities in media production expand, we seek to develop spaces, technology, and services that support this field. With that in mind, the renovated ground floor of Hillman Library will be home to new Video and Audio Media Labs, large-scale sound-isolated "black box" video and audio recording spaces, editing rooms, and podcasting booths. These spaces will be located next to an expanded Media Production Equipment & Services (MPES) department where students can borrow equipment, get instruction on its use, and use it in nearby media creation areas.

In addition to the consumer and professional-grade technology available via the MPES, the Media Labs will be where faculty work with ULS experts to experiment with emerging media technologies and identify possibilities for their use in research, teaching, and learning. Once opened, the Media Labs will provide service-oriented spaces for anyone from beginners to experts to explore creativity and advance media literacy.

One of our newest digital initiatives focuses on inclusivity: "The Blue, Gold and Black Digital Archive: Reflections of the Black Pitt Experience Through the Years." The Archive collects and shares materials that reflect the incredible variety of experiences and memories of Black students, faculty, and staff at Pitt. It also supports new storytelling initiatives by creating online exhibits in partnership with classes, alumni, and student groups. After months of work behind the scenes, we announced the Archive during the 2022 K. Leroy Irvis Black History Month Celebration. If you are a current or former member of the Pitt community, we encourage you to share your stories and photos!

Our library colleagues are equally important in creating an inclusive library system. We are adding strategic hires focused on fostering equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI), including our new Liaison Librarian for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion at the Pitt Bradford campus. In this role, Jenelle Johnson leads the Hanley Library's EDI engagement efforts on campus and in the greater Bradford community. To increase the Library's standing as an active EDI partner and promote our related services and activities, Johnson will collaborate with EDI officers on the Bradford campus, ULS colleagues, and community members.

In addition, we are revamping a position to provide strategic and programmatic leadership for EDI initiatives that advance diversity as a critical component of social, academic, and intellectual life at the ULS and within the greater University community. This position will be an integral part of our leadership team and will engage with Pitt's Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion and Pitt's Community Engagement Centers, and build a robust network of partnerships across the University and region to develop opportunities for cooperative projects.

Strengthening a Sense of Belonging

Visitors come to the University of Pittsburgh libraries for many reasons. From finding resources for research to consulting with a library expert to working with our community focused special collections, transformative moments and conversations happen here. With such diverse audiences, we strive to ensure that all our visitors feel welcome in both our physical and digital spaces.

While the programmatic changes and improved physical accessibility brought by the Hillman Library Reinvention continue, we have recently launched the "Belonging at Pitt Libraries" initiative. In this project, we work with Pitt undergraduate students to explore the elements of physical spaces that help them feel they belong in these spaces. Participants tell their own stories through photographs, reflections, and discussions, all of which will shape our work as we create spaces that are welcoming to all.

Along with the physical spaces, the University of Pittsburgh Library System (ULS) seeks to enhance the accessibility of our digital environments. This endeavor is especially relevant considering the Library's increasingly virtual interactions with the world. As our digital book, journal, and textbook collections continue to grow, we prioritize partners whose content meets or exceeds recognized accessibility standards. As well as advocating for accessibility, we also support open scholarship initiatives that aim, in part, to reduce economic barriers which limit access to scholarly content.

The Library belongs to our communities, and we are happy to do the joyful work of creating physical and digital environments that are welcoming to all.

THANK YOU
2020–2021 Donor Honor Roll

It is with tremendous gratitude that we recognize the following alumni and friends whose generosity helps the University Library System facilitate the pursuit of knowledge, research, and creativity by Pitt students and faculty, as well as by scholars worldwide.

This honor roll of donors recognizes individuals who have made contributions to the University Library System between July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021. Donors who have given at the $1,000+ levels are members of the University Chancellor's Circle.

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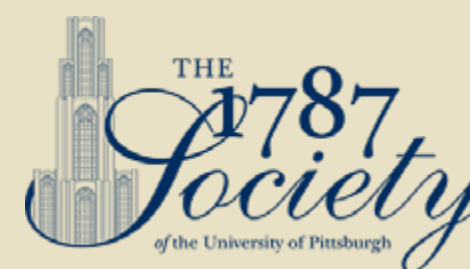
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August Wilson Archive Grand Opening - Spring 2023

We invite you to join us for a week of programs celebrating the opening of the August Wilson Archive for research in spring 2023!

With partners Pitt Theater Arts, the August Wilson House, and the August Wilson Society, and more, we will bring together artists, scholars, educators, and students to celebrate this important milestone.

For updates on the grand opening celebration and related news, sign up for our new quarterly Black Arts & Culture in the Archives newsletter!

Take a look at the first issue (published in March) to meet the August Wilson Project Archivist, read about the acquisition of the Rob Penny papers, and catch a glimpse of the 1984 Kuntu Repertory Theatre performance of *A Raisin in the Sun*.