

Word from the Stacks...

SHU's Ryan-Matura Library Newsletter

Spring, 2005. Volume I, Issue 1

Banned! The Right to Read and other Minor Topics

By Kim Macomber & Lylah Franco

Love him or hate him, *The Daily Show's* Jon Stewart is a funny man. As anchorman of Comedy Central's mock news show, Stewart does quite a job of reporting, making sure to satirize, demonize, or just plain humorize the sanctity of national news coverage.

But Stewart's new best-selling book, *America: A Citizen's Guide to Democracy Inaction*, is causing a ruckus. In fact some groups so dislike the book, which is written in the form of a mock history text complete with an introduction by "Thomas Jefferson," that they're willing to strike it from the shelves. So far two Mississippi libraries have tried to ban the

book and Wal-Mart refuses to sell it.

Why would anyone want to ban this book or any other book for that matter? The freedom to read any book at any time was not always available to the public.

IN THE BEGINNING:

Public libraries and freedom of information have developed right alongside The United States' ideal of democracy.

If you read the American Library Association's "Library Bill of Rights" carefully (you can find it on page 7), you will realize that the current American system of library service is based upon democratic values, an ideal often touted in today's political climate. What is truly

amazing is that the belief that libraries should be available to a broad range of citizens came into being 45 years before America became a nation. Our history is rich with people who believed in providing opportunities for many to have access to education.

Benjamin Franklin and his friends established a subscription library in Philadelphia in 1731. Due to the high cost of books, they pooled their resources to provide access to books for more people. The members were primarily what would now be considered middle-class citizens, not scholars.

Thomas Jefferson was also a great advocate of learning.

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And don't miss out on the...

FREE MONEY!!!

See page 8 for details. Get yours while it lasts!

New Staff Update

During our efforts to improve Library services, we have been gradually adding staff positions. As a result of these improvements there have been a number of additions and changes to the Library staff since the beginning of fall semester. Please welcome and congratulate the following :

NEW FACES:

Mandy Buckley. Ms. Buckley is the Library's Evening Circulation Supervisor. She comes to the Library from People's Bank where she was a Customer Service Associate. She earned her

B.A. in Media Studies from Quinnipiac University.

Susan Dowdell. Ms. Dowdell is new to the Library Reference Desk on Saturdays. She earned her M.L.S. from Southern Connecticut State University and a B.S. in elementary education from the University of Connecticut. Ms. Dowdell is library media specialist for the Seymour Public Schools and works in various capacities as a volunteer in the Beacon Falls Public Library.

Ron Fontaine. Mr. Fontaine supports reference ser-

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What We're Up To: Better Books & Faster

Every year, the Library does a survey of the University's student body and faculty to try to gauge how we can improve our services. The surveys are always rather helpful in planning services for the years to come.

One of my regrets has been difficulty in finding a forum to answer the questions posed and comments made on the "essay" portion of the questionnaire. I'm happy that the new Library Newsletter gives me an opportunity to address some of the topics raised by the students and faculty.

Many of the comments made in last spring's survey dealt with the condition of the Library's collection. Comments such as "the books should be up-dated," "get better books," "there are books . . . older than me, and I'm 38," are expressions of a legitimate concern, especially among the students.

Here are the actions that the Library's staff are taking to help improve the library's collection:

Some of the problems that patrons face in finding what they need in any library relate to the quality of the library's catalog. We have hired an

experienced professional cataloger and set in place some standard enhancements that we believe will improve access to the collection we have.

We have begun a thorough inventory of the Reference Collection, the Library's key source for information and the first stop for research projects. This inventory has allowed us to improve the cataloging of these materials, to renew and fill in some sources that have been allowed to lapse, to identify weaknesses in the collection and to acquire new materials.

We have added \$210,000.00 to the acquisitions budget over the last two years. This addition has allowed us to establish an annual budget for maintaining the Reference Collection, but has also provided the resources needed to acquire many new primary and secondary sources of information on all subjects of inquiry by our patrons.

We have hired a Collection Development Librarian charged with coordinating the continuing growth of the collection and with examining ways in which we can improve the overall quality of library re-



Mr. Dennis C. Benamati, University Librarian

sources.

I'm pleased to say that the Library staff is growing in size and expertise, and that because of this growth, we are able to assist our patrons in ways we never could before. They are dedicated to serving the students, faculty, staff and the University, and they do it gladly.

If any of our readers have questions about Library rules and regulations, please contact me. I will be happy to discuss them.

Dennis C. Benamati
University Librarian

Library Takes on New Multimedia Specialist

The Library is pleased to announce that Xiaohua (Cindy) Li has accepted the position of Digital Library/Multimedia Specialist. This is a redesigned position left vacant with the transfer of Xiaoping Zhang to the position of Cataloging Assistant.

Cindy is known to most of you as Head of the Blackboard Assistant Desk located in the Library and Adjunct Professor

of Computer Science. She received a B.A. in English Language from Liaoning Normal University and an M.S. in Computer Science from Sacred Heart. She is also candidate for the Master of Library Science degree at the University of Pittsburgh.

Cindy's immediate responsibilities will be to provide and promote the Library's reserve and e-reserve services. As

she reaches stride in this area, we expect the service to grow to include the creation of learning objects—text, image, audio and video files—for use by the faculty in creating online and technology enhanced courses. At that point, she will coordinate her activities with the Director of Instructional Technology.

Please congratulate her.

Faculty / Student Spotlight

“Give Me Books or Give Me Death!”
Prof. Steven Michels

The World Within itself
Daniel Thomas



What? No more books?!!

In my favorite episode of *The Twilight Zone*, Burgess Meredith—you probably know him only as Rocky’s manager—plays a bespectacled bank teller whose love for reading constantly diminishes his work performance. While on break, he locks himself in a vault to avoid being disturbed. When he emerges, he is shocked to

discover that the neighborhood, and presumably the world, has been destroyed by a nuclear exchange. While surveying the destruction, he stumbles across the city’s library, where books are scattered throughout the rubble. After finding a random book, he plops himself down to enjoy his good fortune, only to slip and watch his glasses shatter as they hit the ground. The episode ends with our hero sobbing and we do not know how he gets on, but are left with the distinct impression that he will kill himself if he is unable to read.

There are many lessons to take from this frightful tragedy. For one thing, make sure you bring an extra pair of glasses to the apocalypse. The greater lesson is that books make life worth living.

It turns out that *books* and *liberty* both have a similar Latin root, the word *liber*. It might be a coincidence, but it draws our attention to the relationship between knowledge and freedom. If you and I lived at any other time or in any number of places on the Earth today, our days would be filled with strenuous physical labor and basic concerns for food, shelter, and clothing. In that respect, what we at universities spend our time doing is hardly work; it is closer to what the Greeks would call leisure, or even contemplation, an activity that Aristotle thought was required to be a free citizen in a democracy. We don’t have to look far for examples of totalitarian societies restricting individual liberty—oftentimes in the form of the written word.

Spending an afternoon in the library, in your dorm room, or sitting on the grass reading is an opportunity made possible by a countless number of people whom you’ve never met: American Revolutionaries and the Framers of the Constitution; the

If you are looking for a place to read, to study, to be alone, to gather your thoughts, or to just unwind between classes, then look no more. There is only one place that I recommend and only one place that I guarantee you’ll never get bothered or interrupted. I call it

the Sanctuary of time; other people call it *The Library*. Though it’s been overlooked many times the library at Sacred Heart is the safe haven of our campus. Many people fail to understand the use of the building they pass everyday going to class. The *Ryan-Matura Library* is actually open to everyone, and not just for studying. I use it to get away from the world, to get into my own zone and my own space, and to enjoy the simple pleasure of reading

a good book, or writing (which helps me cleanse my soul). It’s open more than you’d believe. Monday thru Thursday it’s open from 8:30am until Midnight. The weekend hours are just as convenient. If you haven’t stopped by there yet, I urge you to. The staff is wonderful and when you need help on that 7 page research paper they won’t let you down. They never let me down. I give it a five star rating and a lot of people would agree with me when I say “There is just no place like the library to get away from the stresses of the world.” If you don’t believe me check it out your self. I promise you that you won’t be disappointed.

- *Daniel Thomas is a double major in Business and Philosophy and a graduate of Bassick High School in Bridgeport.*

“Greatest Generation”—Tom Brokaw’s name for the generation that survived the Great Depression and defeated the Nazis; and even today’s soldiers, who are stationed in places we like to argue about.

- *Steven Michels is an assistant professor of political science at Sacred Heart. He has a Ph.D. from Loyola University Chicago, and has been here since the Fall of 2002.*



Daniel Thomas



This issue’s topic:

Passionate Patrons!

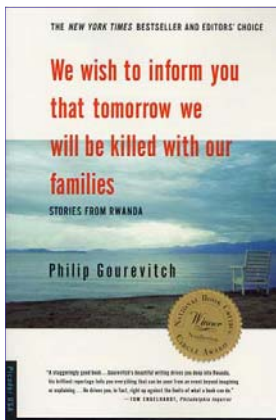
What makes the library unique in an age of ‘information anywhere?’

convenient. If you haven’t stopped by there yet, I urge you to. The staff is wonderful and when you need help on that 7 page research paper they won’t let you down. They never let me down. I give it a five star rating and a lot of people would agree with me when I say “There is just no place like the library to get away from the stresses of the world.” If you don’t believe me check it out your self. I promise you that you won’t be disappointed.

- *Daniel Thomas is a double major in Business and Philosophy and a graduate of Bassick High School in Bridgeport.*

Book Notes

By Lylah Franco



We wish to inform you that tomorrow we will be killed with our families: Stories from Rwanda

By Philip Gourevitch

During 100 days in 1994, 800,000 people in Rwanda, a tiny nation in central Africa, were murdered. In scenarios that horrified even experienced war correspondents, teachers killed students, doctors killed patients and thousands were killed in the churches where they sought refuge. The only difference between the killers and their victims was “ethnic identity”: the killers were Hutus, the victims Tutsis. These two groups speak the same language, practice the same religion (Christianity) and share so many traits that anthropologists cannot decide whether

they fit the criteria for separate ethnic categories.

In his award-winning book about the Rwandan genocide Philip Gourevitch, a staff writer at *The New Yorker*, thankfully does not linger long over the bloody details, instead focusing on the events that preceded the genocide, the stories of victims and killers and the reactions of the international community.

The villains of these stories are many and sometimes as colorful as they are disturbing: the Belgian colonialists who issued ethnic identity cards and made Tutsis the masters of Hutus, the “Hutu Power” leaders who urged citizens towards genocide using talk radio and pop songs, the French government that continued to supply Hutu Power with military support throughout the genocide and the US-led UN that took a firm hands-off stance even after the full gravity of the situation was disclosed.

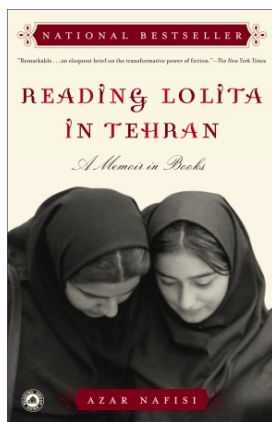
The heroes are fewer, but they do shine brightly, most notably Paul Rusesabagina, the Hutu manager of a European hotel in the Rwandan capital of Kigali, who kept over a thousand Tutsis alive armed only with a well-stocked bar, a fax machine and nerves of

steel. (Look for versatile African-American actor Don Cheadle as Rusesabagina in the recently released *Hotel Rwanda*.) An equally compelling, although controversial, character is Paul Kagame, the current president of Rwanda. A soft-spoken Tutsi with wire-rimmed glasses, Kagame grew up in a refugee camp. By his early thirties he was leading the Rwandan Patriotic Front, which although greatly outnumbered managed to take Kigali and stop the genocide. One of the few Westerners remaining in Rwanda at that point was Major General Romeo Dallaire, the French Canadian leader of the UN peacekeeping force. Dallaire’s desperate attempts to warn his superiors that massacres of civilians were imminent went unheeded. His force stripped to 400 men and given an order to not use weapons, Dallaire was condemned to watch the genocide unfold with his hands tied. An ethical man tortured by guilt, Dallaire became suicidal after returning to Canada.

Gourevitch wisely leaves the answers to the most difficult questions (such as can democracy be established in

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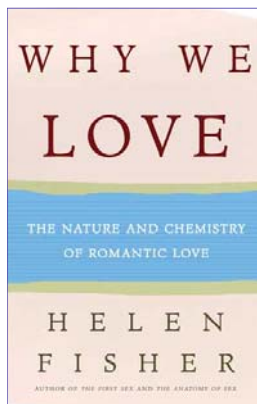
countries with little economy or infrastructure) to the reader. What he provides are not simple tales of good versus evil, but stories of individuals and institutions that, caught in the insanity and politics of war, chose to act monstrously, heroically, or not at all.



**Reading Lolita in Tehran:
A Memoir in Books**

By Azar Nafisi

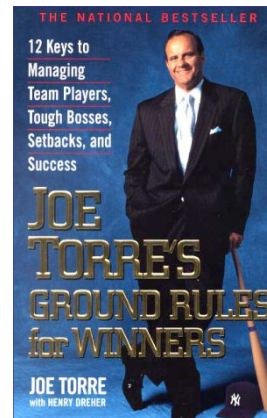
Iranian professor Nafisi's beautifully written memoir of leading an illegal reading group for female students in the mid 1990s. Poignant, inspiring portraits of young women whose minds remain unbound by the restrictions of their society. The memoir is built around their discussions of Western classics, including a fresh, insightful take on the controversial *Lolita*. Perfectly suited for class discussion or reading groups, the book includes questions for discussion and suggested reading (familiarity with the novels discussed is helpful, but not necessary). Azar Nafisi was expelled from the University of Tehran in 1997 for refusing to wear the veil and now teaches at Johns Hopkins University.



Why We Love: The Nature and Chemistry of Romantic Love

By Helen E. Fisher

Ever wonder why you or a friend can't get over a lost love? It may be biological. Brain scans of those in love look surprisingly similar to those of addicts who have recently injected cocaine or heroin. In *Why We Love*, Fisher, an anthropologist at Rutgers University, scientifically explains, without completely demystifying, how people fall in love. With equal doses of poetry and modern medicine, she thoroughly describes the process she believes is "deeply embedded in the architecture and chemistry of the human brain."



Joe Torre's Ground Rules for Winners: 12 Keys for Managing Team Players, Tough Bosses, Setbacks and Success

By Joe Torre & Henry Dreher

Characteristically down-to-earth advice from the Yankees manager. Torre's "12 Keys" include Maintain Serenity (As Best You Can) and Dealing with Tough Bosses Parts I, II and III (he makes a disclaimer at the beginning of Part I that denies he's writing about George Steinbrenner). Fans will enjoy Torre's anecdotes of working with legendary sports figures, and almost any reader will find something useful coming from his voice of experience.

The Final Word:

We Wish to Inform You... - by Philip Gourevitch

&&&& Please read this!

Reading Lolita in Tehran - by Azar Nafisi

&&&& Great for literature students, reading groups, and those interested in women's studies.

Why We Love - by Helen E. Fisher

&&& A good alternative for Valentine's Day reading.

Joe Torre's Ground Rules - by Joe Torre

&&&& A quick and easy read with plenty of practical advice for life in the workplace.

Banned! The Right to Read and other Minor Topics

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"Whenever the people are well-informed, they can be trusted with their own government" (Thomas Jefferson to Richard Price, 1789). He believed that in order for democracy to work, the people, not just the leaders, had to be educated. Jefferson was well-known for his extensive library, supposedly the largest in America at the time. When the British burned the capital in 1814, Jefferson sold his private collection, at cost, to the Library of Congress to replace books lost in the fire.

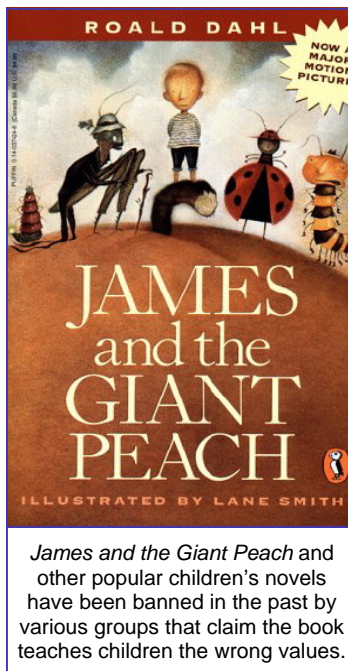
The first "free" public library (meaning that it was supported by taxes) wasn't established until 1833 in Peterboro, NH. By this time the people's desire for public education grew beyond public schooling and inspired new, public centers of literature and knowledge. This movement continued to spread throughout the rest of the century, from urban areas to small, rural towns.

By the end of the 1800's, many Americans believed that libraries went hand-in-hand with education since knowledge was provided through the written word: books. Also, the shift towards "equal education" was happening. Andrew Carnegie made a huge impact in furthering this ideal when he decided to "help those who help themselves" by funding many library buildings and collections throughout the country. Between 1886 and 1919, Carnegie funded 1,679 library buildings in the United States alone. His one main concern was that these libraries be "free" to patrons. His foundation continues to this day, promoting the idea of education in order for people to have opportunities for advancement. However it would take decades

before libraries would become a bastion for equal access to information, as they are today.

BANNED BOOKS:

In May of 1953, the American Library Association and American Book Publishers Council adopted the "Freedom



to Read Statement" which clearly states that the Constitution provides Americans the freedom to read. The statement proposes that people should have access to the widest possible variety of material and must be allowed to choose what they want to read. (See page 7 for an excerpt)

I recently scanned through a list of "The 100 Most Frequently Challenged Books" of the 1990's (aka most often banned) and was amazed—even appalled—that many of these books, which I have read and enjoyed, are banned by many schools and public libraries. I freely admit that I love to read children's books, so I was

rather disturbed to discover that some of my favorites have been banned at various times for various reasons. One such book, for example, is *James and the Giant Peach*, a popular children's novel that Disney adapted for the big screen. When I heard that it was banned in some places, I remembered what a wonderful story it was and had to re-read it.

One reason people want books banned, especially children's books, is that they feel the books demonstrate bad behavior and actually teach children to think or behave badly. Perhaps if we encourage our children to think for themselves, they will be able to understand what the author is attempting to convey. If children can learn to comprehend the content and meaning of books, they may grow into adults who will understand the subtleties of life, think critically and be able to truly participate in a democracy.

Why do people feel that they can decide what other adults can not read? Many of the banned books are those written at the high school reading level or above. I read most of these books in middle- and high-school. One of the reasons that *To Kill a Mockingbird* was banned by some schools was because some thought it teaches racism. However, I consider it to be a historical novel that teaches us to fight racism.

If the book banners had their way, and we were allowed to read only those books that provide a narrow, limited view of a "good" world, where would we be? How would we be aware of people, situations, cultures, emotions that we have not personally experienced? How does such complete censorship allow

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us to use our imagination? How does this prepare us for living in a free and democratic society?

Perhaps understanding why the American library system was created will help us appreciate the resources that are currently available to us. Americans have access to more information today, both physically and virtually, than ever before. Although at times libraries may not seem worth their cost in tuition and taxes, think of the cost to our culture, our education, and our lives if we let those libraries fade away.

- *Lylah Franco has worked in the Acquisitions Dept. of the library for five years. She received her BA in English Literature in 1998 from Southern Connecticut State University and is a graduate student in Financial Management at SHU.*

- *Kim Macomber has been a Reference Librarian at Sacred Heart for over four years. She received her Masters of Library Science in 1996 from Southern Connecticut State University.*

Instructions:

Cut along the dotted line to make yourself a bookmark of the library's hours and phone numbers (located on the reverse side of this page).

The American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights

The American Library Association affirms that all libraries are forums for information and ideas, and that the following basic policies should guide their services.

1. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.
2. Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.
3. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.
4. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.
5. A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.
6. Libraries which make exhibit spaces and meeting rooms available to the public they serve should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.

Adopted June 18, 1948. Amended February 2, 1961, and January 23, 1980, inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 23, 1996, by the ALA Council.
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"Word from the Stacks..."

Vol. 1, Spring 2005

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The Ryan-Matura Library

**Normal
Spring Hours:**

Mon - Thurs
8:30am to
Midnight

Friday -
8:30am to
6:00pm

Saturday -
9:00am to
5:00pm

Sunday -
12:30pm to
Midnight

Spring Break:

Sun, March 6
12:30pm to
8:00pm

March 7 - 10
8:30am to
11:00pm

Fri, March 11
8:30am to
4:30pm

Sat, March 12
9:00am to
5:00pm

Sun, March 13
12:30pm to
11:00pm

Easter Holiday:

Wed, March 23
8:30am to
6:00pm

March 24 - 28
CLOSED

Tues, March 29
8:30am to
Midnight

Phone Numbers:

Renewing Items:
(203)371-7702

Reference Help:
(203)371-7726

The Ryan-Matura Library at Sacred Heart University

FREE MONEY!!!

What is a library?

- A house of books?
- A provider of information?
- A quiet place to study?

What do *you* think a library is? Show us by participating in our poster design contest. Create a poster depicting what you envision the ideal "library of today" to be.

- First Place - \$100.00**
- Second Place - \$50.00**
- Third Place - \$25.00**



Rules:

Use at least 8.5 X 11, but not bigger than 11 X 17, paper, canvas, board, etc.

One or more persons may collaborate on a single poster.

Posters may consist of painting, drawing, collages, photographs, or any combination of materials. Content may not contain anything obscene.

All submissions become the property of the library; none will be returned to the artist(s).

Submissions must be received at the circulation desk no later than Friday, 3/18/05.

The staff of the library newsletter will select the five entries to be considered for final consideration.

The five posters will be displayed in the main level display case from Tuesday, 3/29/05 to Monday, 4/18/05.

The student body will vote on those five entries to determine the winner, second place and third place by completing ballots located in the library at the Circulation desk. The voting deadline is Friday, 4/15/05.

The winning poster will be framed or mounted and hung in the library.

New Staff Update

- Continued from Page 1 -

vice on Monday and Wednesday evenings. His full-time position is as a reference librarian with the Bridgeport Public Library. Some members of the S.H.U. community may remember Mr. Fontaine from his days as a full-time librarian here in the late 80's. He earned his M.L.S. and a B.A. in French from the University of Rhode Island.

Ramona Islam. Ms. Islam covers the Reference Desk on Sunday evenings. She received a B.A. in Fine Arts from Alfred University, an M.L.S. from Kent State and an M.A. in Educational Technology from Fairfield University. Her full-time commitment is at Fairfield's DeMenna-Nyselius Library where she is Senior Reference and Educational Technology Librarian.

FAMILIAR FACES IN NEW PLACES:

Libby Knapik. Ms. Knapik was formerly a member of the evening and weekend reference staff. She has been employed as a library consultant and worked as a customer service representative for ProQuest, Dialog and other information service provid-

ers. She holds a B.S. in natural resources and M.A.L.S. from the University of Michigan and an M.B.A. from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. Ms. Knapik coordinates the Library's Instructional Services and Information Literacy programs.

Lisa Elwell. Ms. Elwell has moved from evening/weekend reference to a new part-time cataloging position. She received her A.S. in dental hygiene from the Forsyth School for Dental Hygienists, B.S. in forensic science at the University of New Haven and her M.L.S. from Southern Connecticut University. She is also a part-time reference librarian at Housatonic Community College.

Xiaoping Zhang. Most folks are familiar with Xiaoping Zhang's work at the Circulation Desk and with reserve services. She has now moved to a newly created cataloging assistant's position. Ms. Zhang received a B.A. degree in music performance at Sichuan Conservatory of Music, a Master of Music Performance from Ball State University. She formerly held a position as cataloging assistant at the University of Bridgeport Library.