

Full Programme

PANEL ONE 'Political Ephemera from the Library of Congress'

1. **Pamela Howard-Reguindin** (Field Director, Library of Congress Office, Rio de Janeiro)

'Brazil's Popular Groups Microfilm Collection from The Library of Congress'

The Library of Congress Rio Office has been actively collecting printed materials issued by a variety of Brazilian organizations and groups since 1966. This selective collection of pamphlets, serials and posters organized by the Rio Office, has been microfilmed by the Library of Congress Photoduplication Service, in cooperation with the Overseas Operations Division and the Preservation Microfilming Office. The collection makes accessible to researchers a body of primary materials, mostly non-commercially produced and difficult to acquire and obtain, which is basic to the study of grass-roots political and social movements in Brazil.

Brazil's Popular Groups: 1966-1986 was conceived as a means of documenting popular movements that came with the end of Brazilian military rule and the inauguration of Brazil's New Republic in 1985. The twenty-year retrospective collection is followed by supplements for 1987-1989, 1990-1992, and annually thereafter. The total content has now surpassed 20,000 documents.

Content: The documentation includes newsletters, house organs, reports, collections of clippings, brochures, resolutions of congresses, educational manuals, independent news services, catalogs of publications and handouts. Geographically, all states of Brazil are represented in the collection.

Organization: The collection is arranged by subject, with fourteen broad topical groups: Agrarian Reform and Land Issues; Human and Civil Rights; Children and Youth; Labor and Laboring Classes; Educational and Communication; Political Parties and Issues; Ethnic Groups: Blacks, Indians, Others; Religious Organizations, Ecumenica Groups and Movements; Urban Activism; Environment and Ecology; Women and Feminists; Homosexual and Bisexual.

Within each subject group, pamphlets are followed by serials arranged alphabetically by title. With each microfilm set three indexes - author, title and publisher - are provided for pamphlets and serials. A web-based index for the entire collection is available on the LC Rio Office home page at: <http://www.loc.gov/acq/ovop/rio/bpg>.

2. **Dr. Angel D. Batista** (Area Specialist, African and Middle Eastern Division, Library of Congress)

'Africana Ephemera in the Library of Congress'

The Africana ephemeral collection in the Library of Congress consists of approximately 25,000 items documenting the evolution of post-independence sub-Saharan African political, economic, social, and cultural history. Included within the scope of the collection are current as well as retrospective materials issued by government and international agencies; as well as by political, labor, social, religious,

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feminist, education, and cultural organizations. The significance of the collection is its size, as well as, the uniqueness and rarity of many of the items. Holdings comprise approximately 25,000 items and includes pamphlets, leaflets, conference papers, research reports, policy papers, and speeches by eminent African political statesman. Particularly impressive also is a unique collection of African posters and election memorabilia.

The Africana ephemera collection is an invaluable resource for researching a broad spectrum of African political, economic and social issues.

PANEL TWO 'Building Collections of Political Ephemera'

3. **Professor Chris Saunders** (Historical Studies Department , University of Cape Town)

'Liberation in southern Africa and the Digital Imaging Project of South Africa: a historian's perspective'

The paper will begin by discussing the completed first phase of the DISA project, in which anti-apartheid periodicals relating to the struggle for liberation in South Africa were put online. The paper will then consider the ongoing second phase of the DISA project, and especially the way in which choices have had to be made about which material to select for inclusion. The paper will discuss the relationship between DISA and the regional Aluka project, as well as the value for the historian of online sources relating to the liberation struggle in southern Africa generally. Questions of finding appropriate source-material and using it for research purposes will be addressed, and the paper will conclude by speculating on the future of online initiatives of this kind.

4. **a) Giorgio Miescher** ((M.A.), historian, curator of the Poster Collection at Basler Afrika Bibliographien, currently completing a PhD on Namibian history)

'Posters as a historical source.'

This paper will deal with posters as a neglected source for African history, in addition to aspects of collecting and archiving.

- b) Dag Henrichsen** (PhD, Namibian historian, curator of the Papers and Manuscript Archives at Basler Afrika Bibliographien)

'Solidarity movements, political ephemera and African history: The case of the Maoist 'kämpfendes africa', Zurich 1969-1986.'

Both papers will be linked, as posters played an important role in the history of the solidarity movement in question, and as visuals, in general, are important in researching African history, whether they are produced in Africa or, in the case of solidarity movements, in Europe or in both continents at the same time. In both papers, questions of archiving will be explicitly dealt with.

PANEL THREE 'The Production and Use of Historical Ephemera'

5. **Peter T. Johnson** (Princeton University)

'Documenting Latin American Civil Society'

Since the eighteenth century civic associations have provided the basis for many aspects of democratic practice in Latin America. Citizens drawn together around common interests develop experience in negotiating a consensus and perfecting leadership skills. Often these groups derive their *raison d'être* from the societies in which members live. Ranging from self-help groups, to cultural organizations and political movements, these associations have over the years proven critical for the well being of the societies that nurtured them. The advent in the 1960s of military governments, taking power through the overthrow of elected governments, led to the reduction in the position of many of these associations either through banishment, censorship or fear.

To address this vacuum in society foreign governments and foundations sponsored the creation of think tanks and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), the latter often dedicated to human rights issues. During the 1960s – 1980s the charges and visions of these NGOs evolved with society itself to embrace such concerns as family planning, ethnic and racial discrimination, labor rights, gender issues, civil rights, and environmental protection. In the course of fulfilling their missions, these organizations created and distributed vast amounts of documentation designed for a variety of reading publics. Donor agencies received slick annual reports, but at the grassroots level, materials proved more practical, even didactic. This latter category of imprints provides invaluable insights into the conditions within a country or region, reveals the strategies of the sponsoring agencies, documents language use, and offers information on areas and communities generally lacking more formal imprints such as newspapers and news magazines. This ephemera becomes the basis for scholarly studies on the people and issues of these communities.

Based upon twenty-five years of experience working with these NGOs and similar organizations in the identification and collection of documentation, this paper discusses the prevailing issues within these organizations that relate to the conceptualization, creation and distribution of documentation. Of particular concern is the content itself in light of target reading populations. The advent of the Internet in the mid-1990s casts new challenges on some organizations with constituents having Web access; however, for many organizations the Internet has only enhanced internal communication and broadened knowledge of the wider world. The target populations for these groups remain without knowledge of or access to the Internet, and hence still rely upon the printed word, tape recordings, or visual presentations. The paper concludes with observations about the potential and implications of meshing the traditional methods of creation and distribution of information with that coming through the Internet.

6. Dr Matthew Brown (Department of Hispanic, Portuguese and Latin American Studies, University of Bristol)

'Using Political Ephemera for the History of Hispanic America'

This paper explores the opportunities provided by political ephemera for historians of Hispanic America. The fragmentary nature of many local and national archives in the region means that historians have had to develop innovative methods to reconstruct

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and analyse the history of post-independence countries. During the colonial period the Spanish imperial state was particularly successful and comprehensive in archiving its communication with and governance of the American colonies. After independence, however, the chaos and turmoil of wars of independence and civil wars made keeping collections difficult and often impossible. Surviving ephemera often provide unique insights into societies in transition. In the twentieth century archives often suffered similar problems meaning that for many subjects and many historians, material and sources remain fragmentary and often frustratingly inconclusive. The paper uses the examples of rare Colombian archival materials to give a sense of the possibilities that are available for the imaginative and creative researcher.

7. **Marika Sherwood** (Senior Research Fellow, Institute of Commonwealth Studies)

'Using Ephemera to Reconstruct Histories of Organisation and Protest'

While I presume that ephemera are of vital importance to family historians, they can be equally crucial to political (and other historians). It was when I realised this, in the course of researching, for example, the life of Claudia Jones in Britain, that I began to keep everything sent to me as editor of the Black & Asian Studies Association's *Newsletter*. All those flyers for meetings, all those petitions to sign, all those reports of small associations, and of events, all those small pamphlets - they are the stuff of history. This is especially so, of course, for organisations whose papers get binned when they disband, for all those meetings that the media choose not to report, for all those whose memoirs lie forgotten in some drawer. . The situation is even worse in 'colonial' archives. For example, in Kenya I spoke to archival staff who had to carry out the files to the bonfire in the Archives' courtyard as the British were preparing to leave! In Ghana, not a single Confidential file remains, and thus almost all political history is lost except for what remains in the British National Archives. This can be a treasure house, but only a small selection of files is kept. So much history is destroyed and sometimes one is left with nothing but ephemera to reconstruct histories of organisation and protest.