

Points of Contact, Points of View

Asking Questions in Yale Library Special Collections

Yale Library's special collections document human experience across time and culture. *Points of Contact, Points of View* mines the collections to reveal instances of unique expression and meaningful cultural intersection. This exhibition provides views into the library's collections and the research processes that foster new insights. Organized around broad topics that are of abiding interest to researchers—cultural knowledge and ways of knowing, varieties of self-expression, direct records of experience, and the distinct but interrelated matters of injustice and forms of protest—the exhibition celebrates the collections as sites of questioning and critical thinking, creativity and curiosity, activism and understanding.

Points of Contact, Points of View explores research questions as avenues into special collections. Research relies on curiosity, investigation, and creative thinking; students approach books and documents through a series of questions. The resulting research processes allow students to understand ideas and communities in and across time and to question their own knowledge, organizing assumptions, and possible biases.

Visit the video screens outside of the Gilmore Music Library, near the Poorvu Center, to view a selection of audio-visual materials that highlight this important format across special collections.

Creator unknown. Central Asian writers with the American writer Langston Hughes, Tashkent, 1933.
Photograph

Langston Hughes Papers (JWJ MSS 26, Series XII, Box 459, Folder 11105)

Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library

Arthur Lake. Letter to O.C. Marsh describing dinosaur bone with sketches, May 23, 1877.

Manuscript correspondence

Othniel Charles Marsh Papers (MS 343, Series I, Box 20, Folder 799)

Manuscripts and Archives, Sterling Memorial Library

Creator unknown. Cloth dolls used in missionary work in China, 1930s. Shown are an evangelist and servant. Set also includes depictions of a grandfather, grandmother, farmer, farmer's wife, son, daughter-in-law, daughter, and nurses. Realia

Lorenzo and Ruth Bennet Morgan Papers (RG 125, Series V, Box OV4)

Divinity Library Special Collections

Creator unknown. Prayer roll in Middle English and Latin, 1435–1450. Possibly intended as birth girdle.

Ink on parchment

(Takamiya MS 56)

Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library

Bikini Kill. *GirlPower* #2, 1991. Riot grrrl zine.

Photocopy

Queer Zines, Magazines, and Newspapers Collection (MS 1847, Box 2, Folder 13)

Manuscripts and Archives, Sterling Memorial Library

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Points of Contact, Points of View celebrates research processes and shows how library collections inspire and activate critical thinking. The exhibition title provides a frame for thinking about curiosity and questioning: collections document “points of contact” between individuals, cultures, and countless unique “points of view.” Encounters with collections allow us to see into diverse cultures, leading to new understanding and ideas, thus shaping a researcher’s “point of view.” In this way, Yale Library’s special collections foster new scholarship, while encounters—points of contact—with collections offer opportunities to contemplate our changing present tense with a dynamic understanding of its relationship to past times and communities.

The questions throughout this exhibition consider collection materials as subjects of new research. Research may begin with seemingly simple questions, such as: *Who made this? What was it used for? How did it survive to the present moment?* New questions emerge from the answers, and hypotheses are tested. Yale Library’s collections allow researchers to explore connections, intersections, and engagements across fields of knowledge, eliciting new perspectives on age-old questions and new understandings of diverse human experiences across time and culture.

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Albert Bergeret. "Docteur," *Les femmes de l'avenir* (Doctor, Women of the future), 1902. Series depicting female models posing as women working in various professions. Photographic postcard
Stanley B. Burns, M.D., Historic Medical Photography Collection (Ms Coll 76, Series I, No. 58)
Medical Historical Library, Cushing/Whitney Medical Library

Leslie Marmon Silko (Laguna Pueblo). Author's note about the final pages of her novel, *Ceremony*, written on the box containing the annotated manuscript, 1970s. Cardboard box
Leslie Marmon Silko Papers (YCAL MSS 637, Box 3, Folder *Ceremony*)
Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library

Dennis Cusick (Tuscarora). Box used by missionaries for collecting contributions, 1821. Painted box with velvet flap
Missionary Ephemera Collection (RG 221, Series I, Box OV12)
Divinity Library Special Collections

Albert Dodd (B.A. 1838). Diary kept while a student at Yale College, describing his relationships with men and women, July 29, 1836–October 14, 1837. Opening shows excised pages. Manuscript volume
Albert Dodd Papers (MS 1343, Box 1, Folder 1)
Manuscripts and Archives, Sterling Memorial Library

T. Vardapillay. Selections from *Seventy two specimens of castes in India*, February 2, 1937. Created by Vardapillay and presented to Reverend William Twining by Daniel Poor. Manuscript volume (Nkp24 837p)
Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library

Duke Ellington. "The Golden Broom and the Green Apple," 1965. Manuscript score (Misc. Ms. 404)
Gilmore Music Library Special Collections

Mary Serjant. *Mary Serjant, her booke, scholler to Eliz Bean, Mrs [mistress] in the art of writing and arithmetick*, 1688. Manuscript volume (Osborn fb98)
Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library

Visit the video screens outside of the Gilmore Music Library, near the Poorvu Center, to listen to the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra perform “The Golden Broom & the Green Apple” conducted by Erich Kunzel in 1970.

El Lissitzky. *Had gadyah* (An only kid). Kiev:
Kultur-Lige, 1919. Book
(2011 +190)
Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library

James Van Der Zee. Scene in a religious play, 1935.
Photograph
(JWJ MSS File 7)
Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library

Kezia Stiles. Sampler of her family register, 1772.
Embroidery on cloth
Yale Objects Collection (RU 104, Box 46)
Manuscripts and Archives, Sterling Memorial Library

John Trusler. Memoirs, part two, 1809. Manuscript
volume
(LWL Mss Vol. 71)
Lewis Walpole Library



Injustice

Library collections are limited by necessity. It is impossible for any library or archive to include evidence of all events, cultures, or modes of knowledge. A critical aspect of research in the humanities, then, is coming to understand who is represented and who is not in the documents preserved from the past. Researching matters of justice and injustice, questions about whose voices are recorded—and whose are not—are essential to framing research questions. How do societies and systems enact justice? When

does this become unjust? Whose rights are in question? Who is trying to create social change? What power imbalances do these remnants of activism or protest represent? How do era and geography impact our understanding of civil and human rights?

Libraries are themselves products of specific times, cultures, and biases. How do library collections reveal the values, views, and biases of the past? How can we understand gaps in the historical record?

النضال | *An-Nidal: Organe tunisien de la Révolution Arabe* (The Struggle: Tunisian voice of the Arab Revolution), no. 2, March/April 1969. Periodical Mustapha Khayati Papers (GEN MSS 1480, Series XVIII, Box 8, Folder Writings about Activities in the Arab Lands, 1968–1972)
Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library

Aaron Hughes. “Chantelle Bateman, Marine Corps Iraq Veteran, Marching to Stop the Deployment of Traumatized Troops, October 2010” in *War Is Trauma*, Pittsburgh: Justseeds Artists’ Cooperative, 2011.

Poster

(Folio N7433.4 J88 W37 2011)

Haas Arts Library Special Collections

Noriaki Tsuchimoto. Diary kept while in prison, 1952.

Manuscript volume

Noriaki Tsuchimoto Papers (MS 2115, Series II,
Box 14, Folder 1)

Manuscripts and Archives, Sterling Memorial Library

George Cruikshank. *Death or liberty!, or, Britannia & the virtues of the constitution in danger of violation from the gr[ea]t political libertine, Radical Reform!*, London:

G. Humphrey, 1819. Etching

(819.12.01.02+)

Lewis Walpole Library

Rachel Romero. *Decent housing is a basic right*, 1975.

Poster

Rachel Romero Collection, Print Collection

Medical Historical Library, Cushing/Whitney

Medical Library

Bruce Cratsley. Gay parade, New York City, 1992.

Photograph

Bruce Cratsley Papers (MS 1836, Box 6, Folder 3)

Manuscripts and Archives, Sterling Memorial Library

Protesting

Encountering documentary evidence of protest and resistance, researchers are confronted with immediate questions about political or social context, the work of activism, and the expression of dissent. Who wields power and who protests against it? How do protesters make their voices heard? What is the role of activism in creating social change? What stories do remnants of protest or activism tell us? How do such documents shape our understanding of injustice in the past and in the present?

Exploring documentary records of protest, resistance, and activism, one might also begin to wonder about how evidence of various forms of protest came to be collected by a research library. Who collected this and why? What documents exist that reflect other views? What positions or voices might not be available in a library collection? How can a researcher address such gaps in the story?

Creator unknown. Broadside for Frederick Douglass lecture on American slavery, 1840s. Undated template for announcing future lectures. Poster

Walter O. Evans Collection of Frederick Douglass and Douglass Family Papers (JWJ MSS 240, Series II, Box 8 Broadside)

Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library

Creator unknown. Tote bag, 2017. Cloth ephemera Catalunya Independence Movement Ephemera Collection (MS 2099, Box 1, Folder 14)

Manuscripts and Archives, Sterling Memorial Library

Joseph Cinqué (Amistad captive also known as Sengbe Pieh). Letter to Roger Sherman Baldwin, February 9, 1841. Manuscript correspondence Baldwin Family Papers (MS 55, Series I, Box 212, Folder 5)

Manuscripts and Archives, Sterling Memorial Library

Rupert Garcia. *Free Nelson Mandela and All South African Political Prisoners*, 1981. Poster
Immanuel Wallerstein Collection of African Liberation Movement Posters (MS 1865, Box 3)
Manuscripts and Archives, Sterling Memorial Library

Self-expression

One challenge in using special collections objects for research is trying to understand the agency of the creator or subject. In photographs, especially, how engaged was the subject in their own self-representation? What were the sociocultural conventions of the photograph's time and place, and how did they impact the subject's pose, dress, or gaze? What influenced the photographer's framing of the subject, and how might that contribute to our analysis of the object?

Ultimately, what can we speculate or know when both subject and creator are unknown?

Other forms of self-expression raise similar questions. Can we understand how the lived experience of an artist impacts a specific example of their work? How might familial relationships help us to better understand the intertwining of sibling artistry? How evident are the traces of the lived experience of each creator as a work is re-expressed and re-interpreted across media by different artists?

Will Wilson (Diné). Portrait of Josett Monette,
2nd Year Law Student, UNM, Citizen of the Turtle
Mountain Band of Chippewa, 2013. Photograph
Critical Indigenous Photographic Exchange
Collection (WA Photos Folio 184)
Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library

Creators unknown. Three portraits of unidentified
African American women, dates unknown. Tintype
photographs

Historical Picture Collection (MS 713, Series II,
Box 1B, Folder 11, Items B312-B314)
Manuscripts and Archives, Sterling Memorial Library

James Weldon Johnson. “Lift Ev’ry Voice and Sing,”
1899. Manuscript volume

James Weldon Johnson and Grace Nail Johnson
Papers (JWJ MSS 49, Series II, Box 83, Folder 642)
Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library

Visit the video screens around the corner outside of
the Gilmore Music Library, near The Poorvu Center,
to view a virtual performance of Shades of Yale
singing “Lift Every Voice and Sing.”

Carl Van Vechten. Two portraits of Ram Gopal,
April 21, 1938. Photographs
Carl Van Vechten Papers (YCAL MSS 1050, Series VI,
Box 372, Folder 5305)
Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library

J. Rosamond Johnson. “Lift Ev’ry Voice and Sing,”
date unknown. Music manuscript

J. Rosamond Johnson Papers (MSS 21, Series XIX,
Box 6, Folder 11)

Gilmore Music Library Special Collections

Augusta Savage. “Lift Ev’ry Voice and Sing,” also
known as “The Harp,” 1939. Miniature reproduction
of a sculpture designed for and displayed at the
New York World’s Fair. Metal

James Weldon Johnson Collection (JWJ MSS 136,
Art)

Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library

Knowing

Objects in special collections challenge researchers to try to understand how the cultures or creators they represent captured and transmitted knowledge about the world they inhabited. The wide range of this knowledge is reflected in the diversity of formats in which it is captured: maps, scientific treatises, visual art, creative writing, correspondence, diaries, and more. What purpose was the object intended to serve for the person who created it? How does the object convey cultural knowledge, and how

can we access and try to understand cultural context? Whose perspectives and knowledge are privileged in the object, and whose are missing or perhaps misrepresented?

Creator unknown. 지도첩 | Chidoch'ŏp (Atlas),
18th century. Atlas of the Chosŏn dynasty, Korea.

Manuscript volume

Yale Association of Japan Collection (YAJ K4.1)

Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library

La Société française des chrysanthémistes. *Répertoire de couleurs pour aider à la détermination des couleurs des fleurs, des feuillages et des fruits* (Directory of colors to aid in the determination of colors of flowers, foliage and fruit). Paris: Librairie horticole, 1905. Book (QC495 S66)

Haas Family Arts Library Special Collections

Johannes de Sacro Bosco. *Sphaera mundi* (Sphere of the world). Venice: Guilelmus Anima Mia,

Tridinensis, 1491. Book

(Incunabula J-410 Goff)

Medical Historical Library, Cushing/Whitney

Medical Library

Noah Webster (B.A. 1778). Notes for dictionary entries, 1820s. Manuscript fragments
Webster Family Papers (MS 527, Box 5, Folder 1)
Manuscripts and Archives, Sterling Memorial Library

Brian D. Tripp (Karuk). *Piled Rocks, If We Don't Touch Them, We Feel Bad*. Panamnik, California:
Brian D. Tripp, 2018. Artist's book
(N7477.4 T74 P56 2019)
Haas Family Arts Special Collections

Commercial Press, Ltd. (Shanghai, China). Printing sorts of Chinese characters in wooden crate, 1912–1949. Movable type
Collection of Chinese Printing Sorts (AOB 98)
Haas Family Arts Special Collections

Creator unknown. الناس في منبع النيل ومخرجه وزيادته
ذكر كلام | *Dhikr kalām al-nās fī manba‘ al-Nīl wa-
makhrajihī wa-ziyādatih* (What people say about the
source of the Nile, its outlet, and its increase), 1655.

Manuscript volume

(Landberg MSS 365)

Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library

Abū Sa‘īd ibn Ibrāhīm al-Maghribī. الأطباء والعلماء
كتاب كنز الحكماء ومطلب | *Kitāb Kanz al-ḥukamā’ wa-
maṭlab al-aṭibbā’ wa-al-‘ulamā’* (Treasure of the
wise and quest of doctors and the erudite), 1612.

Manuscript volume

(Manuscript Arabic 3)

Medical Historical Library, Cushing/Whitney

Medical Library

Interview with Ellsworth R., conducted by Stephen Bressler, November 12, 1992. The subject, a World War II veteran and New Haven native, describes harrowing experiences late in the war near Dachau, the site of a Nazi concentration camp.

Fortunoff Video Archive for Holocaust Testimonies
(HVT-3236)

Manuscripts and Archives, Sterling Memorial Library
tinyurl.com/yul-ellsworth

Interview with Joel Thompson (M.M.A. 2020)
conducted by Libby Van Cleve for the Oral
History of American Music project, March 6, 2019.
Thompson, a composer, describes the inspiration
for his choral composition *Seven Last Words of the
Unarmed*, which premiered in a 2015 performance by
the University of Michigan Men's Glee Club.

(OHVII, Item OHVII 57 a)

Gilmore Music Library Special Collections

tinyurl.com/yul-thompson

Conversation with Dolores Huerta recorded by Jacques Levy, April 16, 1969. Huerta, organizer for the United Farm Workers and 2021 recipient of a Doctor of Humane Letters from Yale, explains difficulties involved with community organizing. Jacques E. Levy Research Collection on Cesar Chavez (WA MSS S-2406, Series I)
Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library
tinyurl.com/yul-huerta

Jon Lewis. Dolores Huerta with bullhorn, 1965.
Photograph
Jon Lewis Photographs of the United Farm Workers Movement (WA Photos 466, Box 23)
Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library

Duke Ellington. “The Golden Broom and the Green Apple.” Performance by the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Erich Kunzel, 1970.
Track 8 on *Orchestral Works*, MCA Records, Inc., 1989.
Compact disc
(MCA Classics MCAD-42318 box 125)
Gilmore Music Library Special Collections
tinyurl.com/yul-broom

Duke Ellington. “The Golden Broom and the Green Apple,” 1965. Manuscript score. The manuscript is a rough sketch of partially worked-out ideas, rather than a completed score. The page above corresponds to the melody that the oboe and then the trumpet play in the audio selection.
(Misc. Ms. 404)
Gilmore Music Library Special Collections

Lorraine Hansberry Speaks Out: Art and the Black Revolution, released circa 1972. LP record. Hansberry, the first African American female author to have a play performed on Broadway (*A Raisin in the Sun*) and a well-known member of the civil rights movement, discusses integration on a radio symposium, “The Negro Writer in America,” January 1, 1961.

(Caedmon TC 1352)

Gilmore Music Library Special Collections

tinyurl.com/yul-hansberry

Lorraine Hansberry. *Lorraine Hansberry Speaks Out: Art and the Black Revolution*, circa 1972. LP record sleeve

(Caedmon TC 1352)

Gilmore Music Library Special Collections

Interview with Willie Ruff, (M.M. 1954) conducted by Jack Vees, May 18, 2000. Recorded for the Oral History of American Music project, Ruff, jazz musician and Yale School of Music Professor Emeritus, explains the way the “electric intrusion” of television affected jazz and music in New Haven. (OHV, Item OHV 306 a-f)

Gilmore Music Library Special Collections

tinyurl.com/yul-ruff

Solomon Sir Jones. 29 silent films made by Jones, a Baptist minister, businessman, and amateur filmmaker in Oklahoma, 1924–1928. 16mm film Solomon Sir Jones Films (WA MSS S-2636, excerpt showing Jones from Film 16, remaining excerpts from Film 1)

Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library

tinyurl.com/yul-jones

James Weldon Johnson and J. Rosamond Johnson.
“Lift Every Voice and Sing.” Performance by
Shades of Yale. 2021. Digital recording of virtual
performance. A student a cappella group founded to
celebrate music of the African Diaspora performing
the Johnsons’ famous work, often referred to as the
Black National Anthem.

Used with permission of Shades of Yale
tinyurl.com/yul-voice

J. Rosamond Johnson. “Lift Ev’ry Voice and Sing,”
date unknown. Music manuscript

J. Rosamond Johnson Papers (MSS 21, Series XIX,
Box 6, Folder 11)

Gilmore Music Library Special Collections