

Northwestern | UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES  
**FOOTNOTES**



SPRING 2022 VOLUME 47 NUMBER 1

# FOOTNOTES

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## A dean's farewell



By now you've seen last fall's announcement that I will be stepping down this August after 16 years at the head of this wonderful organization. This is one of my last chances to address you, our biggest supporters; to express my gratitude for your commitment; and to encourage you to stay involved as the Northwestern Libraries enter a future filled with promise.

It's bittersweet to leave at this moment. After so many years of growing our services and collections and carefully cultivating a forward-looking work culture, my tenure ends with the bruising effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Yet I'm so proud of our rally in the face of this challenge. The Libraries came out of this period with renewed ingenuity and perseverance to serve our community in any way we can.

The pandemic forced us to change over a short time. Yet library work is very longitudinal, and most of the initiatives we undertake require long-term planning and sustained effort over years. Changes in leadership, technology, and community needs can throw us curveballs when we are executing a vision. This is why I view my long tenure here as a gift. I've been able to see many of

our most ambitious plans to fruition, whether it is the evolution of library culture, the growth in our digital services, or the extraordinary upgrades in our physical facilities and spaces. Even some of our archival gifts have taken 10 years to negotiate!

Two-thirds of our budget is for people; thus, two-thirds of my job is about people. One of the constant joys I have had here is seeing our people grow in their careers. When you're trying to bring change, you can't just throw money at problems; you need the right people, and you need to foster their development and diversity. I am blessed to have been surrounded by so many smart, hard-working colleagues in the Libraries.

When I took this job in 2006, then-president Henry Bienen handed me the report on the recently completed program review, the thorough third-party assessment every campus department undergoes once a decade or so. That document provided a road map for the expectations ahead for the Libraries, and I'm proud of how our team answered those challenges. Serendipitously, incoming dean Xuemao Wang will have a fresh copy of the 2022 program review to provide similar focus. I'm confident that the Northwestern University Libraries—and their librarians—are ready for the next set of ambitious goals set out by new leadership. I believe there's nothing this team can't do.

Thank you again for believing in us and helping these Libraries become the powerhouse engine for research and teaching that befits our great University.

Sarah M. Pritchard  
*Dean of Libraries and Charles Deering McCormick  
University Librarian*

# SARAH PRI

## Dean's accomplishments forge "the world-class research hub this University deserves"

**W**hen Sarah Pritchard took the helm of Northwestern Libraries in 2006, she heard one refrain from many on campus. "We don't know what's going on in the Libraries. It's like a blank to us," Pritchard recalled being told. "What do they do in there?"

Northwestern's provost agreed, telling her that whatever else needed to be addressed, the Libraries just weren't visible enough on campus.

Reflecting on her career, she gave a brief assessment of that early criticism: "Boy, have we changed that."

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Pritchard will step down in August as dean of the Libraries and Charles Deering McCormick University Librarian after 16 years at Northwestern and a total of 45 in academic and research institutions. Looking back, she is proud of how the Libraries responded to the provost's critique by becoming a proactive research partner, locus for digital innovation, and student-centered hub, and she is grateful for her long tenure, which allowed her to see her plans play out and to engage in so many collaborations.



# TCHARD



**OGLC's debut in 2011 took pressure off crowded Northwestern library facilities and provided the flexibility to reimagine spaces for students and services.**



Pritchard previously led libraries at Smith College and the University of California, Santa Barbara, but her tenure at each was about half the length of her time at Northwestern. She noted that having 16 years to lead is an increasingly rare occurrence in the academic library world.

Because research libraries are such complex organisms, she said, a shorter stint would have stymied long-term planning for expanded services, infrastructure growth, improved workflows, and cultural change, all pillars of Pritchard's vision. Such comprehensive advancements require large teams internally and broad support externally; meanwhile, budget constraints, staff turnover, and campus leadership changes can impede progress—to say nothing of the chaos brought on by a global pandemic.

“This work is lengthy and fragile,” she said. “The types of initiatives we do take so long to bring about.

It's remarkable to be in one place long enough to see things come to fruition.”

Pritchard has seen enough fruition at Northwestern to plant her own orchard. She oversaw many ambitious projects, while supporting librarians and staff to experiment with their own expressions of a responsive, service-minded institution.

A look back at Pritchard's career reveals a library organization maneuvering its way into the digital age while grappling with issues of space, service culture, and collections growth.

### **Reimagining library spaces**

Early on, Pritchard identified looming space constraints and launched a 20-year strategic plan to analyze and address the space needs of University, Deering, Mudd, and the Chicago campus libraries. The comprehensive plan informed the landmark facilities initiatives that marked Pritchard's time here, and it still holds up as a vision document, she said.

The most significant achievement is the 2011 opening of the Oak Grove Library Center in Waukegan, Illinois. OGLC is a high-density, climate-controlled shelving facility with the capacity to house three million items—and room to grow. Its debut instantly took pressure off crowded Northwestern library facilities and provided the flexibility to rethink spaces for students and services. Many areas once packed with shelves now bustle with students collaborating and creating.

In 2012 Pritchard oversaw the reopening of Deering Library's front doors, which had been closed since University Library opened in 1970. The project resulted in a redesigned entry lobby with improved accessibility, security, and climate control, as well as an expanded plaza that serves as a stage for events held on Deering Meadow. Additional renovations to Deering are now in the planning phase.

Seeley G. Mudd Library opened in 1977 as the home of the Libraries' science and engineering collections. The radically redesigned Mudd Library reopened in 2017

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## In 2012 Pritchard oversaw the reopening of Deering Library's front doors, which had been closed since 1970.

with fewer books but more technology and interactive learning spaces to accommodate new ways for librarians, students, and faculty to work together creatively—a hallmark of Pritchard's vision for library spaces.

### Embracing the digital age

Under Pritchard's leadership, Northwestern Libraries navigated the evolution of librarianship in the digital information age. The explosion of new ways that information is now retrieved, archived, and shared has posed an ongoing challenge for the library profession.

For the last decade, the Libraries have experimented with digital services that support and disseminate the scholarly output of Northwestern faculty. For example, the open-access repository Arch allows Northwestern researchers to easily deposit their research and data for long-term preservation and access. Those digital files are publicly available as part of an academic movement to increase the openness and reproducibility of research.

Offshoots of that experimentation are the creation of a digital publishing librarian position, helping Northwestern scholars disseminate their work more widely; a digital image repository; and ongoing endeavors to develop innovative software for digital audio and video preservation.

Josh Honn, the digital humanities librarian whose position was established to support researchers creating and sharing work digitally, said Pritchard supported teams that wanted to try new things, allowing them to experiment autonomously.

"As digital humanities grew, Sarah was always willing to put digital trends in the foreground," he said.



Left to right: President Morton Schapiro, Pritchard, and Deering family members Nancy McCormick (with her children Sebastian and Cyra) and Stephen Strachan in 2012.

"I feel very grateful that I've been able to build my role in a way that is responsive and useful for the Northwestern community."

### Staffing and structures

Pritchard revised the focus of many librarian positions during her tenure, creating specialists in data management, user experience, digital archiving, copyright, and Asian studies. The Northwestern University Black Alumni Association worked with her extensively in 2017 to ensure support for preserving the records of the Black student experience in University Archives. The archivist for the Black experience position was established as a temporary role with funds from the Office of the Provost. Pritchard made it permanent.

"Dean Pritchard is a trailblazer for enriching Northwestern's ability to preserve the histories of the Black experience at Northwestern, past, present, and future," said Charla Wilson, the first archivist to hold the new title. "She showed an unwavering commitment to allocating resources toward this initiative. I'm grateful for her tremendous support of this work."

Pritchard also advocated for librarians to be regarded as faculty members and to be included in the Faculty Senate. Librarians gained that status in 2011 and subsequently have elected senators every year and contributed significantly to several senate committees. Pritchard has encouraged librarians to advance their professional roles as instructors, research investigators, and authors in library and information sciences.

### Expanded collaborations and collections

When Pritchard commends the Libraries' increased visibility on campus, few examples are as obvious as the organization's expanded collaborations with the Block Museum of Art. The Libraries and the museum have increasingly worked together on dynamic projects with researchers and artists, museum-driven workshops in library spaces, and numerous exhibitions, including the blockbuster *A Feast of Astonishments*, centered on the avant-garde cellist Charlotte Moorman's archive, held

by the Charles Deering McCormick Library of Special Collections and University Archives. Elsewhere on campus, Pritchard joined with the Chabraja Center for Historical Studies to launch the very successful annual lecture series on the history of the book, and she expanded the Libraries' engagement with the Buffett Institute for Global Affairs, the Alice Kaplan Institute for the Humanities, and the Affordable Instructional Resources network.

In 2015, Northwestern Libraries were a founding member of Chicago Collections, a consortium of local cultural heritage institutions that collaborate to preserve essential archives of Chicago-area history. Pritchard helped develop the original organizational structure and later served as president for three years. She also gave full-throated support to the unprecedented move by the Big Ten Academic Alliance to share resources more intentionally, envisioning the management of all member institutions' collections as a single collection accessible to all.

## PRITCHARD HONORED WITH 2022 DEERING FAMILY AWARD

Northwestern Libraries' Board of Governors bestows the Deering Family Award annually to those who have demonstrated a substantial commitment of time, resources, and energy to the organization. This year, it seemed more than fitting that the honor would go to the retiring dean and University librarian herself, said Jennifer Mullman, director of development for the Libraries.

"Sarah's ability to share her enthusiasm about the Libraries has been fundamental to getting others excited and invested in us," Mullman said. "She is very comfortable with the development work and always willing to take the time to meet with donors and make them feel appreciated."

In addition to being a donor herself, Pritchard has been a tireless fundraiser for the Libraries. During Northwestern's seven-year **We Will** campaign, she oversaw \$78 million of giving, with gifts supporting all the campaign's major target areas: collections, facilities, technologies, and public programs. Over her entire tenure, that total amounts to \$94 million.

Upon discussing the nomination of this year's award recipient, the Libraries Board of Governors praised her for these successes and more.

"Sarah's tenure has been nothing short of extraordinary," said board chair Stephen Strachan. "The Libraries have kept pace with the University's ambitions by becoming the world-class research hub this community deserves."





**On campus and with alumni and donors, Pritchard has consistently asserted that world-class research institutions need world-class libraries.**

Such partnerships underscore the value of growing the collections that serve the unique needs of Northwestern University. To that end, Pritchard has secured new endowments for Turkish, Asian, gender and sexuality, economics, transportation, and other collections. Special collections growth has been a point of pride, in particular the arrival of the massive archive of legendary *Chicago Tribune* publisher Robert R. McCormick.

“Sarah has emphasized the importance of having balance in our collections,” said D. J. Hoek, associate University librarian for research and engagement.

For example, academic libraries are expected to acquire the books, journals, databases, and other resources that are essential for any research institution. “At the same time, there are aspects of our collections—rare books, archives, areas of extraordinary collecting depth—that set us apart and make our Libraries a unique destination for researchers,” he said. “She snapped that into focus for us, and it led us to think more holistically about our collections strategy.”

### **Northwestern University Press**

Northwestern University Press, which reports to the dean of libraries, had been operating in the red for decades when Pritchard came aboard. She hammered out a new business plan with then provost Dan Linzer, and by 2013 the Press was operating in the black and

thriving in a period when many of its peers were struggling.

She has appointed two new directors since 2009, most recently tapping poet and Press editor Parneshia Jones for the role. The Press has also implemented several forms of digital publishing and received multiple grants, including support from the

Andrew Mellon Foundation to advance open access and increase diversity in the publishing workforce.

### **Tireless advocacy**

Running like a current beneath Pritchard’s accomplishments is her tireless advocacy for the Libraries and their staff. Whether on campus or with alumni and donors, she has consistently asserted that world-class research institutions need world-class libraries.

“It required persistence to shift our image on campus to one of academic engagement and partnership, and I’m proud of my role in that,” she said. “The Libraries are in a radically better place than they were in 2006.” Pritchard’s stature was recognized more widely on campus in late 2010, when she was granted the title of dean, the first librarian at Northwestern to be so designated.

Her husband, Neal Blair, remains a professor with Northwestern’s departments of civil and environmental engineering and earth and planetary sciences, and the couple will continue living in Evanston for now. Pritchard hopes to maintain an active engagement with Northwestern arts and community groups.

“I will always be a librarian to the core,” she said. “It is an amazing field of work that expands learning and ennobles people across the globe. But I’m looking forward to having more time to actually read books all the way through.” ■

# First purchase from dean's fund nets composer's archive

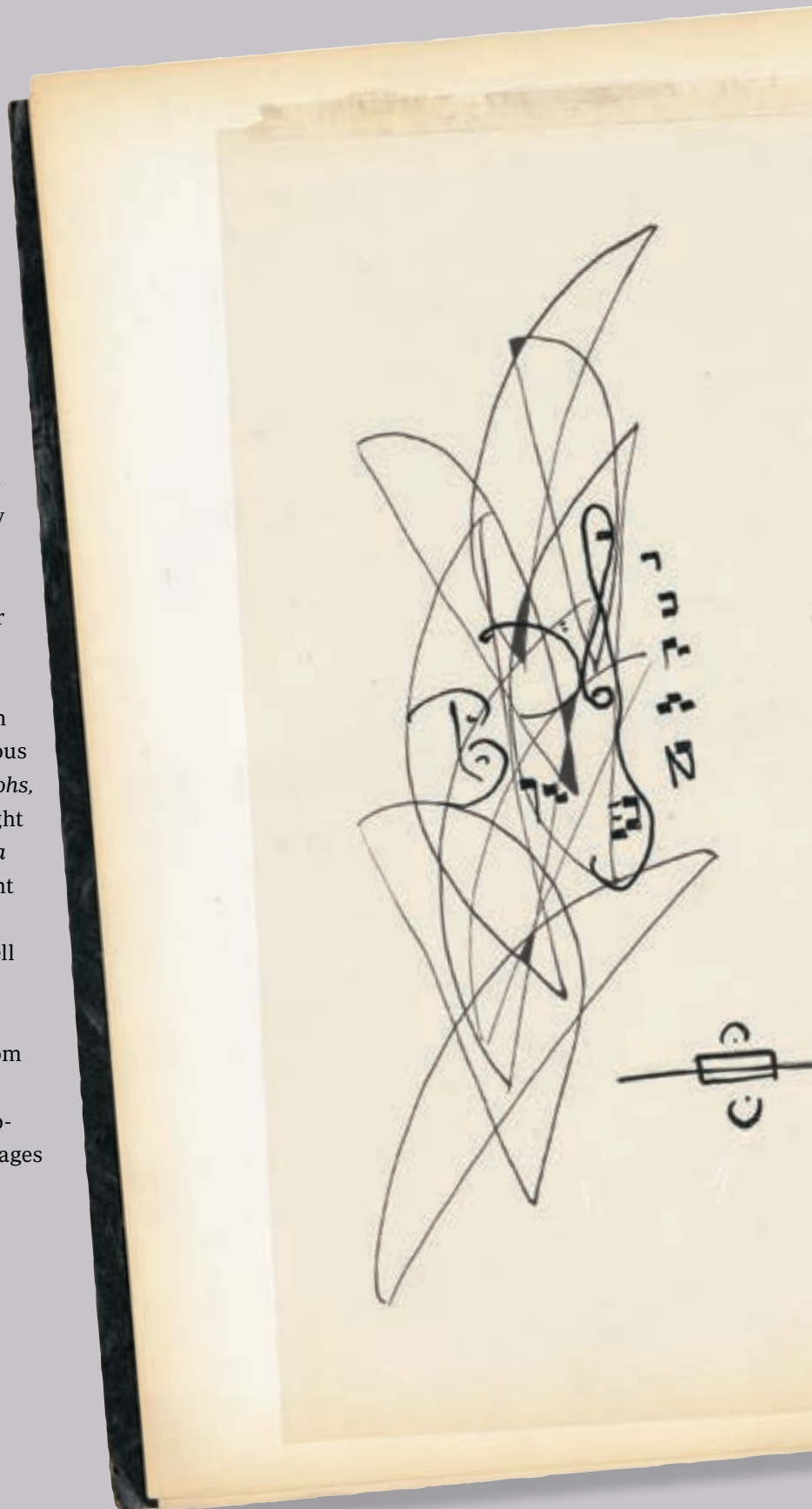
**T**hanks in part to the Wilbur and Kathleen Pritchard fund, established by retiring dean of libraries Sarah Pritchard, the Music Library has acquired the extensive archive of composer Halim El-Dabh (1921–2017). El-Dabh was a pioneer of electronic music and a frequent collaborator of choreographer Martha Graham.

According to curator Greg MacAyeal, the Egyptian-born American composer makes an ideal subject for the Music Library's rare holdings because of the way his archive complements those of other musical innovators already represented there, including John Cage, Sun Ra, and Glenn Branca.

The composer was also a longtime professor of music and African ethnomusicology at Kent State University. His archive includes the vast majority of his compositional work, including an excerpt from *Clytemnestra*, one of his most famous collaborations with Graham; *Music of the Pharaohs*, which has been the soundtrack of the nightly light show at the Giza pyramids since 1961; and *Opera Flies*, composed after the 1970 killing of four Kent State antiwar protesters.

His work as an ethnomusicologist is also well represented, with several works incorporating African, Persian, and Indian percussion. The archive, purchased with supplemental funds from the Music Library and the Herskovits Library of African Studies, also includes hundreds of audio-tapes, including recordings made in African villages and performances by El-Dabh. ■

This manuscript for *A Woman Clytemnestra A Duality* (1958) is identified as “a drama in visual, hearing, and reflective perception” in the Halim El-Dabh archive. Acetate sheets bearing musical notation and abstract sketches are affixed over lyrics and other notations.



Woman Chorus

Voice of Clytemnestra

Voice of the Women

Man Chorus

Voice of the People

The Chorus:

The Mind

The Time



# Exploding tenacious myths about Madagascar

## Historian's pathbreaking papers come to the Herskovits

**T**he unexpected death of historian Pier Larson in 2020 left Nathan Marvin absolutely gutted. The subsequent news that Larson's archive would be coming to Northwestern Libraries was the only balm Marvin could imagine in that bitter moment.

Marvin is a former student of Larson who shared his interest in the history of Africa's Indian Ocean region. Beyond that, Marvin said, Larson was working on research that would upend decades of unexamined assumptions that maligned the Malagasy, the native people of Madagascar.

"I was so upset, because he had just sent me the manuscript of a chapter of pathbreaking work," said Marvin, an assistant professor at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock. "Pier made his career tearing

down myths about the Malagasy diaspora. He was going to completely correct a problem in the scholarship about the French colonization of Madagascar."

A widely perpetuated version of history held that the Malagasy were so powerful in the 17th century that they "pushed out" French forces, Marvin said. In truth, the violence against the Malagasy by the French was severe and had lasting effects on Madagascar society. Yet that's not how the history has been recorded, he said.

"When the French decided they had a right to take over Madagascar in the 19th century, they used this story as the justification," Marvin said. "Pier's work showed this was a piece of propaganda that was so stubborn that modern historians were still repeating these false claims. He was piecing it together with painstaking detective work."

Left: Library assistant Gene Kannenberg and Esmeralda Kalé, curator of the Herskovits Library, examine maps and other materials in the archive of Pier Larson.



**“The Herskovits is one of the most comprehensive collections of African material worldwide and is a place Pier knew well. His work can now be easily found and used by the widest possible scholarly community.”**

Larson’s research also showed that the French of the 17th century were developing their colonization techniques in the Indian Ocean region and applying the lessons elsewhere in their empire, including against North American Indigenous peoples—a powerful addition to a history that has largely ignored the impact of the Indian Ocean islands on the French colonial world, Marvin said.

Larson’s archive—including the manuscript Marvin extolled—is now a part of the Melville J. Herskovits



Library of African Studies. Larson’s wife, Michelle Boardman (left, with Larson), knew her husband’s work had more fruit to bear and thus needed

to be made available to other Africanist scholars.

“The Herskovits is one of the most comprehensive collections of African material worldwide and is a place Pier knew well,” Boardman said. “His work can now be easily found and used by the widest possible scholarly community.”

If any English-speaking scholar were going to correct the written history of this part of the world, it was going to be Larson. Born in Paris to missionaries from the Midwest, then raised in Madagascar, Larson was fluent not only in English but in French and Malagasy. These proficiencies positioned him uniquely among English-speaking scholars to navigate Madagascar’s national archives and translate documents that contain narratives in multiple languages. A Johns Hopkins University professor since 1998, Larson specialized in the history of Madagascar and the Indian Ocean islands, including the effects of slavery and French colonization on the region. His findings

helped integrate Indian Ocean communities more firmly in the study of Africa.

“Because of its uniqueness, Madagascar has often been absent from narratives about the role of Africa and its diasporas in world history,” Marvin said. “Pier was always centering the whole of African history—all of it.”

That’s why Esmeralda Kalé, the George and Mary LeCron Foster Curator of the Herskovits Library, believes the contemporary study of Africa will continue to be served by the archive, which is filled with oral interviews, videos, research notes, class materials, and three unpublished manuscripts. Larson’s carefully cataloged photographs include archival documents, in some cases the only digital copies of these primary source materials, as well as images of African art, topography, landscapes, historic structures, and people.

“Larson crisscrossed the globe for decades, undertaking archival research in a methodical manner, inventoring the archives he was studying and transcribing tens of thousands of documents,” she said. “His inventories, photographs, and transcriptions are therefore an extremely rich resource for anyone doing research in this area.”

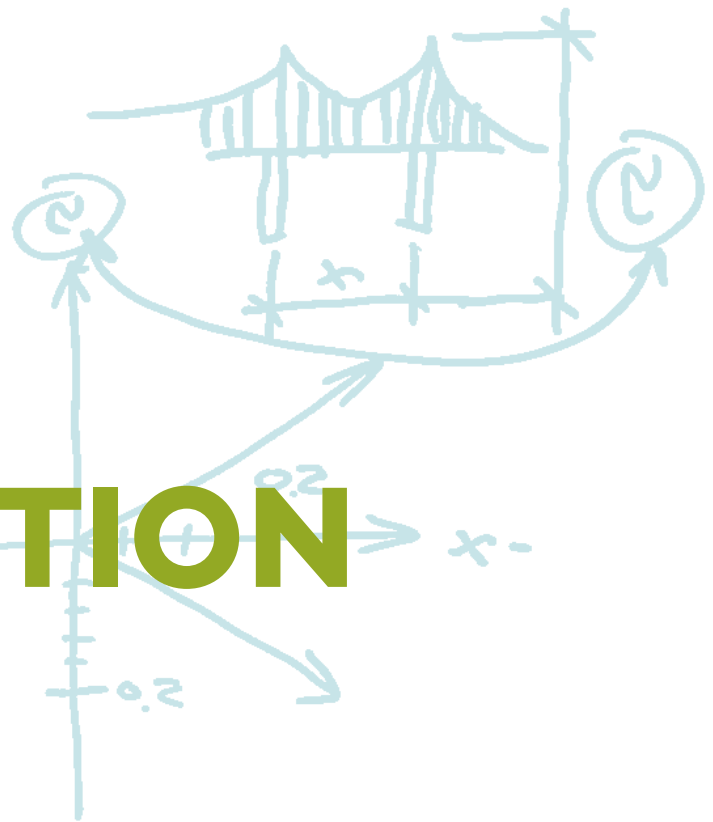
Boardman collaborated with Larson’s brother Norge and sister-in-law Arlene Libby to provide a generous gift for processing the collection and making the material accessible.

“We know this is an archive that will be in demand. People are already inquiring about it, and we are so grateful for the support to process it quickly,” Kalé said. “We will make it accessible to generations of scholars who will get years of use from these materials.”

Marvin was overjoyed to hear the archive will live on at the Herskovits, because so many scholars have threads to pick up from Larson’s research and carry forward.

“His work is important. Absolutely one of a kind,” he said. ■

# HERE TO HELP: VIDEO PRODUCTION STUDIO



**H**aadi Moochhala '21 looks directly into the camera to address his audience: assistant professor Nina Weida, who will be grading this senior capstone presentation in Chicago Field Studies.

Brightly illuminated and standing before a staid black curtain, Moochhala could be in a professional recording studio to give this talk about the private equity industry. But when the topic turns to the corporate acquisition process, a graphic appears between him and the camera and he begins to doodle on it while facing the camera.

“After five to seven years, [the firm] decides they have found a lot of value in this company and they realize their investment on it,” he says, using colorful markers to sketch bars on a mock timeline. His green and pink pen marks glow like neon as he writes notes in midair—forward facing to the viewer but seemingly backward from his perspective—leaving the viewer to wonder, “How is he doing that?”

The secret is the Video Production Studio in Mudd Library. The VPS houses two recording technologies: The simplest is a traditional one-camera setup formerly known as the One-Button Studio; the speaker hits “record” and begins a presentation, lecture, or job talk. When finished, users simply download their recording to their own machine.



The second station, the one Moochhala and his classmates were using for their capstones, is the lightboard, an invention of mechanical engineering professor Michael Peshkin. The lightboard includes a specially built glass “chalkboard” between the speaker and the camera. The speaker addresses the camera as normal and writes over projected digital slides; integral lights illuminate the writing, giving pen marks a vivid pop. The camera flips the final image so it appears that the speaker has mastered an unnatural, backward-writing style that is perfectly legible to the viewer.

In interviews about his invention, Peshkin has said he wanted a way to record an engaging lecture without turning his back to the viewer to write on a board. His



Ted Quiballo, instructional technologies librarian, and student employee Hector Ontiveros Morales demonstrate the lightboard. Above, a view from the video camera's perspective, recording their mock lecture; at left, a view of the computer screen showing the final product: the image has been flipped, and the writing is legible to the viewer.

lightboard let him face the camera while writing and gesticulating as much as he wanted. Peshkin made his invention open source, and now other schools and departments at Northwestern—and educational institutions all over the world—are building their own.

Ted Quiballo, the instructional technologies librarian who oversees the VPS, said that when the service came online with the 2017 reopening of the new Mudd Library, its initial users were faculty teaching a “flipped classroom.”

“Many professors like being able to record 5- or 10-minute lectures they can share with their students in advance,” he said. “That way students can get the lecture ahead of time, and then the professor and students can spend their time together discussing it.”

Since its debut, use of the service has been growing. Several classes now require students to record oral projects in the VPS, from public speaking classes in the School of Communication to negotiation classes in the Pritzker School of Law. In those courses, a professor may hold one class session in Mudd so Quiballo can take students 10 at a time for a quick tutorial.

And then there are the students trying to get a leg up on a job interview.

“Some students like to create a presentation to attach to their resume,” Quiballo said. “Employers get blown away when they see this.”

The VPS can be reserved on the Libraries website and is completely self-service. ■

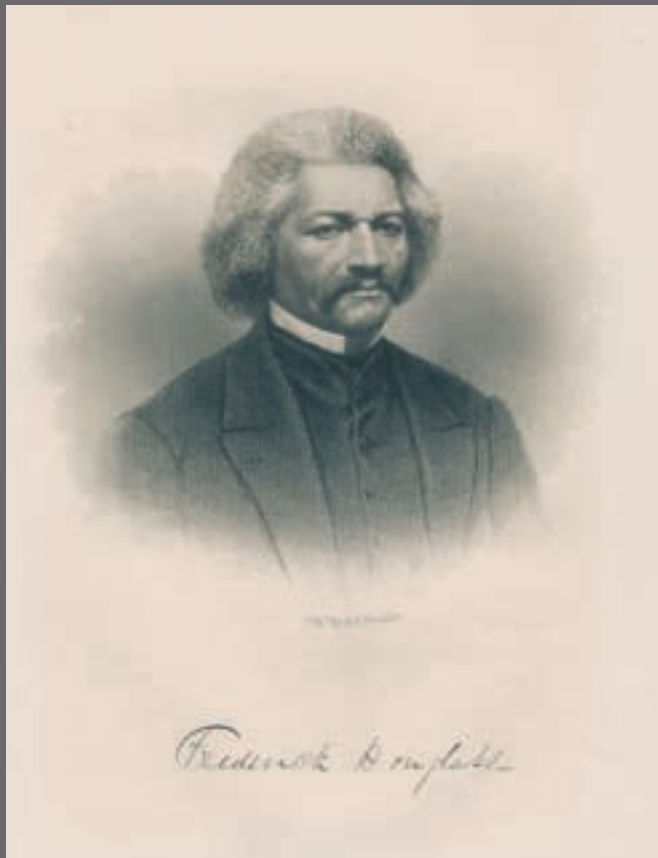
# FOOTNOTES

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## Freedom for Everyone

*Slavery and Abolition in 19th-Century America*  
Deering Library | June–December 2022

To coincide with Northwestern's first observance of the now federally recognized Juneteenth holiday (June 19), this Libraries exhibit tells the story of slavery and abolition in America through the lens of rare materials held here. *Freedom for Everyone* contrasts the forces arrayed against each other during the pivotal 19th century, from the coldly transactional documents of ownership that reduced fully realized humans to mere property to the forceful writings of Frederick Douglass exhorting a nation to change.

Frederick Douglass portrait from Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Men of Our Time* (Hartford, 1868), a collection of biographies that included contemporaries like Abraham Lincoln and Ulysses S. Grant. Charles Deering McCormick Library of Special Collections and University Archives.