New UAB Libraries Exhibit Features Material on the History of Mental Health

We are pleased to announce a new exhibit located at Sterne Library, “Mental Health: A Complicated History.” This exhibit discusses the history of mental health and includes key themes such as the development of early diagnosis methods like the Rorschach test, the misdiagnosis of mental diseases, and specifically, female hysteria, an overview of PTSD and war-time trauma, the history of asylums and more. Some of the UAB Libraries items featured include an electro-shock therapy machine (circa 1960s & 70s); a first edition of the *Yellow Wallpaper* (1892), a short story highlighting the controversial “rest cure” to combat neurasthenia; a letter written by a World War I veteran on his struggle with shell shock; and many other unique items. Come visit Sterne Library today to view this exhibit!
The UAB Libraries hosted a booth at the Opening Ceremony of the World Games on July 7 to showcase some of the emerging technologies available to library users. The booth included Turning the Pages, an interactive software that allows users to flip through rare materials from Historical Collections (exhibited by Peggy Balch and Anna Kaetz in the below image); a 3D printing station along with examples of various 3D printed objects; and virtual 360 degree videos to show visitors some of the different areas in the libraries (exhibited by Dean Gonnerman and Dorothy Ogdon in the above image).

In addition to highlighting library technology, the booth also provided UAB swag, and promotional material for users to learn more about additional library resources and services (Luke Menzies hands out material in the above image). This well-attended event provided those visiting Birmingham with a close up view of the innovative things happening at the libraries, as well as some of the rare materials housed in the Reynolds-Finley Historical Library. To reward the success of the booth and the exciting things being exhibited, the UAB Libraries were awarded the UAB World Games silver medal by Dr. Pam Benoit, the Provost of UAB (pictured below).
Introducing the New Curator of the Alabama Museum of the Health Sciences

We are pleased to introduce the new Curator of the AMHS, Christina McClellan! After receiving a B.A. in History from the University of Alabama, Christina graduated from the University of Colorado at Boulder with a M.A. in History and a M.S. in Museum and Field Studies. Christina McClellan is currently serving as the Education Manager for UAB’s art museum, AEIVA.

Her passion is making museum exhibitions and collections accessible to as many disciplines as possible. Her interdisciplinary programs, tours, and collection tours experiment with different ways of approaching tough issues, foster discussion, and help visitors challenge their own assumptions. In addition to education, Christina has worked in every area of the museum including collections management, visitor services, and more.

In 2019, Christina co-curated with UAB Archivist Tim Pennycuff the Unfolding UAB: 50 Years of Photography from the UAB Archives at AEIVA for UAB’s 50th anniversary. Christina is currently adjunct faculty with UAB’s Department of Art and Art History where she teaches a 400/500 level Special Topics course on Museum Studies and an annual internship course with the museum.

Christina will assume her new role on October 3. In the meantime, she shares the following message:

“I have always found the Alabama Museum of the Health Sciences, as well as all of the Historical Collections at UAB Libraries, to be a true gem on UAB’s campus. I am excited to join such a wonderful team and explore all that the AMHS has, can, and will offer through exhibitions, programs, and collaborations for our campus and greater community.”

Please join us in welcoming Christina as the newest member of the UAB Libraries!

Highlights from the Collections

The Reynolds-Finley Historical Library has recently partnered with the UAB Libraries Digitization and Digital Preservation Department to digitize one of our rarest items, Feldtbuch der Wundartzney (1517). Written by military surgeon Hans von Gersdorff, this work contains some of the most instructive, hand-colored illustrations of Renaissance surgical procedures, including plates of leprosy, St. Anthony’s fire and setting broken bones. It also famously contains the first printed illustration of an amputation (above image).
The UAB Libraries continue fundraising efforts to create a Historical Collections Gallery to showcase, promote, and celebrate the richness and depth of the UAB Historical Collections. The gallery (blueprint included on the left) will be centrally located on the 2nd floor of the Lister Hill Library. It will provide a space to the three Historical Collections units - Reynolds-Finley Historical Library, Alabama Museum of the Health Sciences, and University Archives - who have limited options to promote their materials in physical exhibitions in a way that does the collections their due justice and underscores their value and impact.

The gallery exhibitions will be connected to programming, events, curricular developments, guided tours, and more to better reinforce the educational and outreach aspects of the collections. The libraries continue to work with donors and the UAB Office of Advancement to raise $750,000, which is the projected cost of the gallery infrastructure and technology.

Please help us promote and support this transformative project that will bring the invaluable historical collections to the next level.