



George C. Gordon Library

December 2023

We are pleased to share our news and future plans with the WPI community and our generous friends. Below we invite you to enjoy highlights including:

- new study spaces and exciting plans for creating a modern and beautiful quiet floor.
- a new digital exhibitions platform, exhibits.wpi.edu featuring Dickens's Illustrators, WPI International Students, the Foundations of Fire Protection Engineering, and more.
- new community programming and events, from WPI's welcome this spring of W. B. Gould IV, to an exhibit featuring the history of video game consoles and the founding of IMGD, with more to come this winter and spring.

Joined by our new librarians and archivists who we also introduce in this issue, the whole Gordon Library team thanks you for your partnership and wishes you every happiness in the new year! - Anna Gold, University Librarian



Placemaking at the Library

Since her arrival this spring, WPI President Grace Wang has shared her vision of **placemaking** - creating immersive learning environments that empower our students in their many hours working outside the classroom. We are inspired by her vision and are proud of how the library lives up to this promise. Each year we find ways to bring more life, light, inspiration, comfort and sense of belonging to the spaces our students use every day, and in record numbers this year.

After moving 50,000 books to the ground floor in summer 2021, in 2023 we were able to open up the library's **sunlit upper floor** and provide many popular new work areas: spaces made for groups to actively work together, interspersed with quieter individual study spaces, help make this floor a destination for hundreds of students every day.

Our next big project will be even more exciting: to modernize and transform the **lower level** (“quiet floor”) to take advantage of natural light, create more and more modern seating, adding new Tech Suites as well as new 1 or 2-person touch-down rooms that support remote interviews and team sessions. The Reflection Space – an early and beloved part of our commitment to student well-being that honors our multi-cultural campus will remain a key feature of the floor. Seed funding was provided by a generous and visionary donor, making it possible to engage the renowned architects at Shepley Bulfinch to provide a plan and project estimates that will allow us to take the first steps to make it real. Later this year we will share an update and vision for this placemaking initiative.



A New Spotlight on Digital Exhibits

In December 2023 the Archives and Special Collections team launched a beta version of our new online resource: Digital WPI Exhibits (exhibits.wpi.edu)

This exciting new feature represents the combined work of Gordon Library and Information Technology to provide a unique platform to share the richness of WPI's history, cultural heritage, and Special Collections with the world.

This Beta period will allow the team the opportunity to test the capabilities of the new system while simultaneously showcasing a preview of the types of virtual exhibition features that will become a hallmark of our increasingly enhanced digital and virtual services that enable greater discovery and access.

Six exhibits are available for patrons to browse that cover topics including International Students at WPI, Art and Literature, Fire Protection Engineering, Athletics, and campus history. The team is hard at work preparing future features that will include exhibits on Robert Goddard, the Higgins House, and many others. We welcome your feedback and hope you enjoy!



Our Community and Culture

Gordon Library's long history of cultural and community programs has been renewed this year! We are happy to share some of the highlights of events in the past year as well as a preview of what we have planned in the new year.

WPI Welcomes William B. Gould IV and Honors William B. Gould III, '25

WPI [welcomed a very special visitor in May 2023](#), William B. Gould IV, who gathered with WPI leaders, engineers, and archivists to celebrate Gould's father, WPI pioneering alumnus William B. Gould III '25.

WBG III, who enrolled in the university in 1921 as an electrical engineering major, was among the first African Americans to attend WPI. He was active in the early days of the WPI Wireless Association—which at the time was one of only three college wireless associations in the country.

Led by University Librarian Anna Gold and University Archivist Arthur Carlson, university leaders joined the event celebrating the installation of a plaque in Unity Hall that honors WBG III. The event also included a luncheon a demonstration and laboratory visit by [Professor Alex Wyglinski](#) and students from the [Wireless Innovation Laboratory](#).

Gould's son [William B. Gould IV](#) is writing a book about his father, and is notable for his own extraordinarily distinguished career in law and public service, including his work at Stanford University Law School and as a member of the National Labor Relations Board whose work in labor relations in professional sports helped resolve major league baseball's strike in 1994-1995.



Ten dogs+Three hundred students = pure joy

On a quiet Friday afternoon late in A Term, Gordon Library welcomed ten very special dogs of all sizes and breeds. For the next several hours they were surrounded by circles of WPI students who took a break from end-of-term project and course work to enjoy the calm companionship of Maple, Rika, Tomo, Fenway and other trained therapy dogs. Aided by P.A.W.S. (WPI's Promotion of Animal Welfare Society) and staff volunteers, bringing dog joy to students is one of the many ways Gordon Library helps students relax, unwind, and find a bit of peace and love.



Console Wars: A Smashing Exhibit

WPI Archives opened its major 2023-24 annual exhibit, [Video Game Console Wars: 1976-2001](#) on October 27 to a capacity crowd of students, faculty, and games enthusiasts. The exhibit of historic consoles and games also told the story of WPI's Interactive Media and Games Development (IMGD) Program, one of the earliest gaming programs in the nation, and featured games produced by IMGD students.

After welcoming and opening remarks from the Library and Archives, Professor and IMGD Program Chair Gillian Smith shared historic reflections on the founding of IMGD. Attendees enjoyed Halloween-themed refreshments and hours of gameplay on several retro consoles.

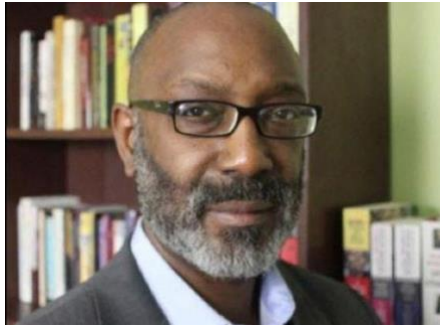
According to University Archivist Arthur Carlson, the interactivity of the exhibit, "reintroduces a new generation of students to what the library has to offer. It's an active learning environment that hosts a variety of events that cater to everybody." Professor Smith added, "I think the exhibit is a good reminder that if you're a student here, everything you do while you're here is something that contributes to WPI's future history."



Conversation with Author Trent Masiki Opens 23-24 Meet the Author Series

WPI Africana Studies [Professor Trent Masiki](#) opened this year's Gordon Library "Meet the Authors" series on November 27 with an in-depth conversation about his new book (UNC Press 2023), [The Afro-Latino Memoir: Race, Ethnicity, and Literary Interculturalism](#). Interviewing Masiki was [Professor Jorge Santos](#) (Holy Cross, English and Ethnic Studies), whose own research concerns graphic novels that have emerged as a vehicle for alternative stories and experiences of the American Civil Rights Movement. A lively and fascinating discussion touched on racial and ethnic identities across different American and Central and Latin American cultures, and how the memoir genre has been considered a lesser form of literature when compared with novels, short stories and poetry, yet can have many qualities in common with the traditional novel of education (*Bildungsroman*).

Meet the Authors events planned for 2024 will include an opportunity to learn [about two books published by DeGruyter](#) in their new series, [Integrated Global STEM](#), featuring many WPI faculty and student authors.

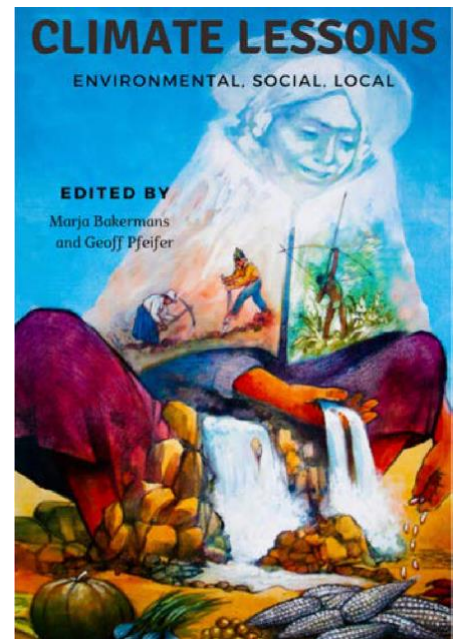
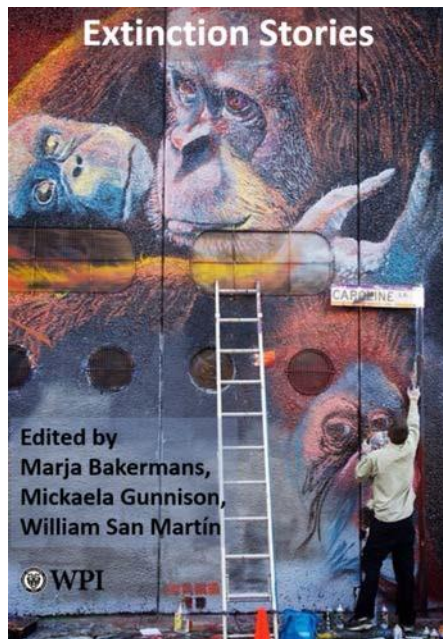


More cultural events and programs are coming this winter and spring!

On December 5 the library co-sponsored a World Cafe, inviting a cross-campus conversation among faculty and staff about WPI and the [UN Sustainable Development Goals](#). Future World Cafe's are planned for the spring.

In February, a long-standing community event, [ART | WPI](#), will return to Gordon Library - a celebration of the art and artistry of our creative and inspiring staff and faculty. Submissions will be accepted at the University Archives from Jan. 9 to Feb. 16 2024.

In Spring 2024, we will open the first phase of a new and exciting collection of board games for play by WPI students: the collection is a gift of the family of a beloved faculty member, [Dean O'Donnell](#), who assembled a remarkable collection of board games before his death in 2022. The collection will be located on the main entrance level. It is being readied for use in the library in a partnership with IMGD Professor [Adryen Gonzalez](#), a team of students, and IMGD Program Director and Professor [Gillian Smith](#).



Promoting Inclusion in STEM Courses with Open Educational Resources

For several years Gordon Library administrators Lori Ostapowicz-Critz and Anna Gold have been collaborating with WPI faculty colleagues on projects that help WPI students use and create course materials that are free to

students - and can bring a taste of WPI's exceptional teaching to anyone in the world.

These materials, known as Open Educational Resources (OERs) not only make courses more affordable, aligning with one of WPI's core strategic initiatives, but can create a more inclusive and empowered experience for students. In 2022 this librarian-faculty team won its first [Women's Impact Network](#) (WIN) grant, with its pilot program, EMPOwER (**E**ngaging **M**ore **P**owerfully, **O**penly with **E**ducational **R**esources) to support WPI faculty creation and use of Open Educational Resources (OERs), with an emphasis on projects that expand the recognition and representation of women and BIPOC students in STEM.

The pilot year's faculty have begun sharing their experience through the OER website's blog, including this post by Prof. Natalie Farny, "[Empowering Students to Develop Their Scholarly Identities.](#)"

The OER team was thrilled to receive a second year of WIN funding and an even larger grant, allowing them to support even more faculty in this work in 23-24.

The library's support for OERs also includes extensive [guides to OER resources](#) that can be used in a STEM-rich curriculum like WPI's. In addition the library's digital repository, Digital WPI, now features a [growing collection of OERs created by WPI, for the world.](#)



Gordon Library staff news

We are pleased to welcome several new colleagues to Gordon Library. They look forward to meeting and working with you!



Mackenzie Harrington is our newest colleague, joining Gordon Library as a Research & Instruction Librarian in November 2023. Mackenzie previously served as a Research and Outreach Librarian at McLaughlin Research Corporation, where she supported the Research Commons and Science and Technology Library and Classified Archives serving the Naval Undersea Warfare Center (NUWC). Mackenzie also brings extensive experience with public library services and executive management support. Her Master of Library Science and Information Science and BA in English and Literary Studies are both from the University of Rhode Island.





Gillian McCuiston joined WPI in February 2023 as our Access and Outreach Archivist, coming to WPI from the University of North Carolina where she completed her MLS and helped direct the Student Health Coalition Archive project (SHC), documenting collaborative efforts between college students and underserved communities to increase access to healthcare in the rural American South from the 1960s-1980s. In addition to her MLS Gillian completed her BA in Intercultural Studies and Community Development. At WPI Gillian is spearheading efforts to create a more inclusive institutional memory, and played a central role in creating the Archives' 2023-24 exhibition featuring Video Game Console Wars and WPI's Interactive Media and Games Department (IMGD).



Brenda Cummings joined WPI in December 2022 as Department Head for Access Services & Outreach, coming to Gordon Library with extensive experience as Director of Public Services at Brandeis University, where she led multiple meaningful campus partnerships across many library service and outreach programs. At WPI she leads the team that coordinates access to library collections and resources, including managing use of library study spaces and technologies, supporting student wellness programs, and delivering interlibrary loan services, as well as liaising with library partners in diversity, accessibility, student outreach, and campus communications. Brenda's BA in history is from Worcester State University, and she completed her MLIS at Syracuse University.



Elizabeth (Liz) Dufresne joined the library's permanent staff in July, 2022, as Strategic Collaborations and Web Communications Librarian. Since graduating from WPI (ME '14) Liz worked in a major engineering firm (Pratt & Whitney) and began graduate work toward a masters degree in organizational psychology. Liz has a passion for research, for sustainability including DEI, and for building community. Liz's responsibilities in the library include leading the effort to document WPI's contributions to and impact on global sustainable development goals (UN SDGs), in partnership with the Global School and the Office of Sustainability; providing support to faculty in curating their WPI online presence; and leading the library's web communications strategies to ensure accessibility and usability.



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