

Library Society



Adam Darlage explains the importance of a rare book by Christoph Erhard to his dissertation research.
(Photo by Michael Kenny)

The Power of Primary Sources

By supporting the acquisition of a rare sixteenth-century German book, the Library Society provided Adam Darlage, PhD '09, Divinity, with ready access to a primary source that was vital to his dissertation research.

Darlage's recently completed dissertation, *Priests Under Pressure in Southern Moravia: History and Identity in Roman Catholic Polemics (1575-1615)*, focuses on parish priests in what is now the eastern Czech Republic, who were torn between their duties to convert non-believers to the Roman Catholic Church and their responsibility to their income-driven feudal overlords. Central to Darlage's dissertation were two priests from the region, Christoph Erhard and Christoph Andreas Fischer.

Focusing on sixteenth-century religionists, Darlage knew that surviving primary sources were limited. Early in his research process, he enlisted the assistance of Sem Sutter, Assistant Director for Collections, and Beth Bidlack, Bibliographer for Religion and Philosophy, to locate relevant publications.

In 2007, Sutter informed Bidlack that one of the very few surviving books written by Christoph Erhard had become available: *Gründliche kurtz verfaste Historia von Münsterischen Widertauffern: und wie die Hutterischen Brüder so auch billich, Widertauffer genent werden, im Lüblichen Marggraffthumb Märhern, deren uber die sibentzeben tausent sein sollen, gedachten Münsterischen in vilen änblich, gleichformig und mit zustimmet sein* (A Basic, Short History of the Münsterite Anabaptists, and

(continued on reverse)

Welcome from Judith Nadler

It is my great pleasure to introduce the first edition of *Libra: Library Society*, a dedicated section within our faculty newsletter addressed to Library Society members.

With this special Library Society section, I wish to thank you for the important role you play as friends and ambassadors of the University of Chicago Library; I want to show you the achievements made possible through your friendship and support; and I seek to inform you of the great challenges and opportunities that the Library embraces in aspiring, with our University, to be the most dynamic learning environment in the world.

By placing this section between the pages of our faculty newsletter, we symbolically recognize the place of the Library Society at the center of our endeavors.

I look forward to welcoming you at future Library Society meetings.

With very best wishes,

Judith Nadler
Director and University Librarian

Library Society Daughter Is "On Equal Terms"

When asked what resonated with her most about the Library's current exhibition, "'On Equal Terms': Educating Women at the University of Chicago," Carol Strauss had an immediate answer: "The photo of my daughter."

Carol visited the exhibition in connection with the March 11 Library Society program, which featured a talk titled "Hiding in Plain Sight: A

History of Women at the University of Chicago," by Deborah Nelson, Associate Professor, Department of English and the College, and Director, Center for Gender Studies.

The photo of Carol's daughter Leslie Strauss, AB '73, (now Leslie Travis) is found on page 46 of the "On Equal Terms" catalogue, which was produced, in part, through the generosity of the Library Society. A copy of this catalogue will be sent to current Library Society members. The image comes from a special section of the *Maroon* devoted to "Women and the University" on May 23, 1969.

Carol believes that the photo was taken by David Travis, AB '71, who subsequently became Leslie's husband and who recently retired from the Art Institute of Chicago, where he was the curator of photography.

The exhibition "On Equal Terms" runs through July 14 in the Main Gallery of the Special Collections Research Center at the Joseph Regenstein Library. We hope that all Library Society members will have the opportunity to visit it and to reflect on their own history with the University of Chicago.



The John Crerar Library regularly mounts exhibits on scientific topics. (Photo by Lloyd DeGrane)

A Partner in Innovation

In 1959, Sol Tax, famed University of Chicago anthropologist, gathered luminaries for a centennial celebration of the publishing of Darwin's seminal work, *On the Origin of Species*. This fall, the University will once again host a world-class symposium to explore new ideas in evolution and commemorate this revolutionary work. The John Crerar Library will add to the celebration with a "Darwin 2009" exhibition from October 19, 2009 to March 26, 2010. I do hope that you will take advantage of this excellent incentive to visit Crerar in the fall.

The University of Chicago Library is not only a steward of great ideas but also a partner in innovation. The Library Society is proud to provide support for such intellectual evolution. I hope you will enjoy reading about the ways the Library and the Library Society contribute to the research, teaching, and learning needs of the University community.

With warmest regards,

Philip Burno
Library Society Chairman

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Why the Hutterite Brethren are Also Justly Called Anabaptists, in the Praiseworthy Margraviate of Moravia, Wherein there are over 17,000, in Many Ways Similar to and in Agreement with the Münsterites).

Bidlack realized the enormous value of the book, as one of only two written by Erhard about the Anabaptists and one of only two existing books about this particular branch of Anabaptists. With Alice Schreyer, Director of the Special Collections Research Center, they requested the Library Society's support in purchasing it. The Library Society generously agreed.

Primary sources such as Erhard's book, Darlage explained, "are the foundation upon which my dissertation rests." If the Library had not obtained this book, he stated, "I would have needed to go to Germany again."

"The most fundamental thing a historian needs is primary sources," affirmed Darlage. Support from the Library Society helps the University of Chicago Library to provide University scholars with ready access to such resources.