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Lorena Ramírez-López

Assignment 1

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Search for Chilean Cinema using NYU AVERY
FISHER and FUNDACIÓN DE IMÁGENES EN
MOVIMIENTO

For this assignment, I chose to investigate a specific topic in order to best compare the effectiveness and ease of two institutions. For example, I looked into Chilean cinema and based my choice of institutions on its title and Internet content as well as their appropriate connection to the topic; in this case, I decided on the NYU AVERY FISHER Center (AFC) due to its mission on collecting various formats of not only American audiovisual works, but also international works and the Moving Image Foundation (FIM) from Chile since it was under the Index of Latin American countries from the website of Public Moving Image Archives and Research Centers¹. I expected the latter² to be associated with Chilean film and have a greater chance for both availability and access to the collections. I also expected to find more information and materials on Chilean cinema compared to an American institution like NYU, which even though it does collect international film, the Avery Fisher Center is limited on what it collects based on funding and copyrights of international content.

When one visits the FIM website, automatically there is an issue of access based on the fact that the entire site is in Spanish. As someone who can only access the organization's collections via the website, the organization is already limited to only Spanish speakers interested in film academia and cinema. There is no option to translate the web page into English or another language as it is now common with some International websites to ensure availability (and understanding) of information and materials to a greater audience. However, if one was able to read and comprehend Spanish then navigating the website is fairly easy. On the site's home page, FIM introduces the organization as a private, non-profit entity. One of the tabs visible on the home page is a link to FIAF; this is accompanied by the statement in the introduction that FIM is one of the first Chilean foundations to be part of the FIAF. Therefore, one can already expect that type of policies and ethics this organization will have because FIAF has standard

regulations and statutes for all of its members. However, FIM's website seems to be neither accessible nor completely functional. For example, the site seems fairly new and incomplete as FIM has yet to establish an online catalog system; there is no list about the collections it has; there are no search option; there is not even a viable contact page. The email addresses given on both the staff and contact pages do not work.³ FIM seems to be more useful and accessible via its facilities in Chile. Although I have not visited the organization, the website was provides a description of the facilities on site. However, the accuracy of this description is questionable. The organization is found in Santiago, the capital of Chile. Since the mission of the organization focuses on the "rescue, restoration, preservation and diffusion of national cinema...in hopes to use these audiovisual works for education and an audience who want to gain a greater understanding on the country's national identity and historical memory..."⁴ the facilities include a video library of 650 titles on both nitrate and acetate films; a museum of 320 artifacts related to the history of cinema; a library specifically on cinema; and screening rooms for people to watch their collections.⁵ Yet despite the metadata given on the website and also from the FIAF site, these collections are all on-site so that a person who is not in Chile has neither physical nor intellectual access.

In comparison, NYU AVERY FISHER presents its collections via physical, virtual, and intellectual access. As a university-based archive, AFC services the students and faculty of New York University. Any student or faculty member with a valid NYU ID can use the collections for free. The collections are not readily available to the public. AFC is located on the second floor of BOBST. The layout and space dedicated to these audiovisual works are separated based on format and occupancy. The floor is divided between the "dark" and "light" side depending on the user's preference and the type of format they are viewing. The majority of the audio equipment

(record players, cassettes players, CD players) is grouped on the “light” side of the room while the DVD players and other visual media equipment are on the less lit side of the room. There are screening spaces dedicated for a class. For individual use, there are multiple workstations for single occupancy or a max of 3-4 people. To search for the materials, one can only use BOBCAT online. There is no physical catalog on-site at AFC. BOBCAT, the NYU library’s 24/7 system, uses a keyword search for all of its materials. This search can be refined to only the AFC collection and type of format (audio, score, video). One can narrow down the results based on: availability (whether its streaming online or at the library), subject, language, author/creator, genre, and publication date. It definitely would have been easier to search via BOBCAT rather than a physical catalog (even if AFC had one) due to the fact there are over 40, 000 audiovisual materials on-site. Nonetheless, for either method, one has to first fill out a “Media Request Card”⁶ and present it to a staff member to retrieve the materials. Each individual material has a call number that is assigned when the item arrives at AFC. None of these materials are cataloged on-site. Instead they are cataloged nearby in an institute called KARMS and once it has been processed it is brought to AFC where it is given a call number.⁷ The call number system is a combination of the format and the order number in which the item was received into the collection so only staff has access and knowledge of where the items are. All materials are commercial items, such as DVDs, bought from the distributor. There are laserdiscs, but these formats along with VHS are being held in an off-site building in New Jersey for preservation. It would take 1-2 business days if the item was requested. The “Media Request Card” is presented to a staff member; generally staff is undergraduate student on work-study. Nonetheless, there is always a main university staff member available like Amy Valladares, who is one of the managers at AFC. Depending on whether the item is part of the Non-Reserved or Reserved

collections, students do have the option to check out a DVD for an entire day and return by 10:45PM when AFC closes. A student can only check out a Reserved DVD for three hours. All of the AFC policies are on BOBCAT and vary whether one is a student or faculty member of NYU.

The information in BOBCAT is organized in a convenient manner for someone who has knowledge of the system and aware of the type of collections the university library has. However, it's very possible for one to overlook and not know the extent of the collection because of access and promotion of the information. The staff members aren't particularly engaging, offering information on the collections or events that are occurring at the library. However, the NYU staff is more readily available and accessible than the FIM staff. A student can easily email, ask in person, or even text the members of the NYU library and main staff AFC. The contact information for FIM is not valid. Although FIM's collection is housed and preserved in the same building, the titles or types of materials in the collection are not available to search and investigate. The AFC collection isn't necessarily related to the Barbara Goldsmith Preservation Department, but one has the option to search what is part of the collection and actually request items not on-site via interlibrary loans. I had expected to find more information or access on Chilean cinema through the Fundación de Imágenes en Movimiento, but instead I found more DVDs through AFC, although the extent of the collection is nowhere near complete nor appropriate for someone doing research since the majority of these films are popular commercial DVDs.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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2. United States. National Film Preservation Board. A/V Conservation. *Public Moving Image Archives and Research Centers*. Library of Congress, n.d. Web. 27 Sept. 2013. <<http://www.loc.gov/film/arch.html#Latin>>.

However, there already is a problem with access and accuracy, as the link to the other option: Cinemateca Nacional de Chile- does not exist because it has not been updated to its new website under the National Cultural Center of Chile <http://www.ccpim.cl/sitio/category/cineteca-nacional/>

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5. *Fundación de Imágenes en Movimiento*. Fundación de Imágenes en Movimiento de Santiago de Chile. Web. 27 Sept. 2013.
6. Media Request Card
7. Q&A. Amy Daken Valladares, 30 Sept. 2013.