Dear LES Members,

I hope you are all safe and well! I am writing this note under circumstances I never expected: working from home as librarians and others practice social distancing in hopes of slowing the spread of a pandemic. At Queens College, classes have moved online and the in-person aspect of the library is closed for now — or, as my colleagues at CUNY Graduate Center like to say, we are open online! ACRL recommends the closure of in-person services at academic and research libraries, so — although I never thought I would say this — I hope that your library building is closed right now, too.

Furthermore, due to concerns over COVID-19, ALA has cancelled its Annual Conference. According to ACRL Insider, this is the first time this conference has been cancelled since 1945.

Despite how strange things are right now, as I look back on the year, I can say that LES has accomplished a lot. *(cont. on page 3)*
Dear LES Members,

First and foremost, we hope that this issue of *Biblio-Notes* finds you all in good health and spirits. The current pandemic radically changed many of the ways that we practice librarianship. Nevertheless, this issue of *Biblio-Notes* exemplifies the ongoing achievements of LES members and foreshadows important work that many of you will conduct as we head into the summer months.

In addition to committee updates and announcements, this issue includes Nancy Foasberg’s “Notes from the Chair,” which documents Covid-19’s impact on libraries and professional organizations. Regardless of such challenges, Foasberg underscores the LES Planning Committee’s recent advancements and the LES Research Competencies Task Force’s progress. Arianne Hartsell-Gundy, the ACRL/LES liaison to the Modern Language Association, discusses the numerous panels that she attended at the 2020 MLA convention in Seattle, WA. Matt Roberts details the work accomplished by academic librarians who participated in the Ithaka S+R/MLA Research Support Services project for Literature and Languages.

As always, we encourage you to submit articles to be published in a future issue of *Biblio-Notes*. We are particularly eager to learn how you have responded to this pandemic, and we wish you all health and safety.

All the best,
Stacy Reardon
Matt Roberts

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Biblio-Notes is a biannual electronic publication of the Literatures in English section of the Association of College & Research Libraries, a division of the American Library Association. To submit articles, photos, announcements or news items, please contact the Stacy Reardon and Matthew Roberts, editors, at biblionotes@gmail.com. Banner photo by Photo by Sanwal Deen on Unsplash.

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The Planning Committee, which was re-formed after lying dormant for a year, engaged in a long-overdue revision of the LES strategic plan. The previous Planning Committee had made some revisions in 2015, adding language that was inclusive of rhetoric and composition studies. The current committee, led by Mark Dahlquist, built on those changes to include creative writing as well. Additionally, the committee composed additional language emphasizing the section’s commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion. The new strategic plan is intended to stay in place until ALA’s SCOE project is completed. The committee is also working on a communications agreement to help set expectations for equitable communication in LES meetings. Many thanks to Mark and the committee for this important and necessary work!

Another important LES document, the LES Research Competencies, is also nearing publication. This document has been in the works for several years, with thoughtful input from many members of the section and others. The task of this year’s Research Competencies Working Group, chaired by Kristina De Voe, was to take the document to the finish line, and they’ve worked very hard to do so. In December, the Working Group partnered with the Virtual Participation Committee and the LES Social Media Coordinator, Colette Hayes, to host an event, “Collaborating for Student Success: Advancing Research Competencies in Writing and Literature,” at which they presented a near-final draft of the document and gathered extensive feedback from section members, both during and after the event. Forty-five registrants attended. Following the event, the committee revised the document, adding more language about accessibility, including information about the needs of specific groups of writers, and more. The Executive Committee approved the document at this year’s Midwinter meeting, and it’s been sent to ACRL’s Information Literacy Frameworks and Standards Committee. I think this document is excellent, and I’m excited to see it approved. Thanks to the Working Group for their diligent work on this and for carrying this document through the difficult last steps in this process!

This COVID-19 crisis has affected our Conference Planning Committee, led by Ava Brillat, which partnered with the European Studies Session to propose an intriguing session on open educational resources in Europe and the United States. The two committees were encouraged to create a forum presentation, for which they lined up exciting speakers. With ALA Annual cancelled, it is not clear whether this program may go forward. While this is certainly frustrating, I applaud the efforts of Ava and the rest of the committee, and I hope that LES will be able to host a conversation on this topic, formally or informally.

While I can’t promote LES activity at ALA Annual, I would like to promote the work of our excellent Publication Committee, who have done a great job helping us all keep in touch throughout the year. Please enjoy this issue of Biblio-Notes, and check out the LES-L list and our social media presence on Facebook (facebook.com/lesacrl) and Twitter (twitter.com/LES_ACRL). We will continue to post news of activity within the section, so stay tuned!

Thanks to all of you for a great year, especially the chairs of the committees, past chair Christine Ruotolo, and vice-chair/chair-elect Brian Flota. It is your work that keeps LES humming along. My term as chair will end at the beginning of July, but I look forward to working with all of you into the future.
2020 MLA Convention Report
Arianne Hartsell-Gundy

In my role as the ACRL LES/ESS liaison to the Modern Language Association, I attended the 2020 MLA Convention in January. This year’s theme was “Being Human.” It is always hard to summarize everything that happens at a large convention like MLA, but some major themes this year included public humanities and advocacy, the #metoo movement, and prison literature.

A highlight for me was a session sponsored by the Advisory Committee on the MLA International Bibliography called “What is Humanities Research Now?” (308). It focused on a study cosponsored by the MLA and Ithaka S+R. Librarians reported on the findings from their institutions, with a focus on different topics, such as digital humanities, public humanities, research and instruction, scholarly communication and copyright, interdisciplinary nature of literary scholarship, and special collections. It was a well-attended session with some important questions, especially a great conversation about how to define what public humanities is. Some of the individual reports are now online, and I think they are well worth reading. Read more details on this study in Matt Roberts’s article in this newsletter.

I went to many other sessions, but I’m going to highlight two other
ones that I found interesting. One was “Making, Preserving, and Curating Born-Digital Literature” (594). This session was sponsored by the Electronic Literature Organization, and I found it very interesting to hear the steps they are taking to preserve these electronic literature projects, including using retro machines and relying on metadata. Another session I went to that I found very interesting was “Comics and the Digital Humanities” (659). This session also made me think about preservation in terms of what we are trying to do to preserve both physical and web comics.

This year was my first year on the Advisory Committee for the MLA International Bibliography. Our committee met during the convention, which provided me with a great opportunity to meet other librarians and faculty members on the committee. We discussed next year’s MLAIB related programming for the convention, so I can provide you with a sneak preview now. The topics will be about impact metrics in the Humanities and celebrating the MLAIB’s centenary year with a panel remembering its history and looking towards the future. Being on this committee has given me an interesting perspective on committee work at MLA and a deeper understanding of the work it takes to make a tool like the MLAIB. I would definitely recommend to both LES/ESS members that they consider getting involved with an MLA committee.

If you’re unable to attend MLA in person, here’s an easy way that you can keep up with what happens at the convention from Twitter. Panels at MLA are assigned a number, and frequently participants at the conference use these numbers with a hashtag and the letter “s” on Twitter, which makes it easy to find. You can look up Session Listings and then go on Twitter to see if anyone was discussing that session. It can also be helpful to add the #mla20 hashtag to help narrow the results. For example, there was a great discussion on Twitter around the session “From Exclusion to Access: Disrupting the Academic Prestige Economy” (486) (see screenshot).

I’ll leave you on a fun note. The last year or two I’ve been lucky enough to take part in a cultural excursion. This year I went to the Chihuly Garden Tour and Glass Blowing Demonstration. Any fans of Netflix’s show Blown Away can probably relate to how exciting it was for me to see a glass blowing demonstration in person!

As always, I would love to hear from you if you have suggestions on topics related to MLA that you would like me to address in the future!

Arianne Hartsell-Gundy Librarian for Literature and Theater Studies Duke University arianne.hartsell.gundy@duke.edu
What is Humanities Research Now? Librarians in Ithaka S+R Research Support Services Program

Matthew Roberts

In April of 2018, Ithaka S+R announced plans for its tenth Research Support Services project. This particular initiative would document the research practices of faculty in literature and language departments throughout the United States. Partnering with the Modern Language Association, Ithaka S+R enlisted librarians from thirteen academic institutions to participate in the project.

In November 2018, participating librarians met at Georgetown University where they trained with the project’s managers, Danielle Cooper and Rebecca Springer. Working closely with these representatives from Ithaka S+R, librarians learned to conduct semi-structured interviews with faculty at their home institution, code their interview transcripts, and organize their data into a report that represented their local research. While the project primarily utilized more qualitative research methods, Dr. Jonathan Sauceda (Rutgers University, Music and Performing Arts Librarian) believed that he could have benefited from a more explicit introduction to statistical methodologies. Nevertheless, many of these individual reports and now complete and accessible at each institution’s scholarly repository and inform Ithaka S+R’s forthcoming capstone report, which will be broadly publicized and released in spring 2020.

At this year’s annual MLA convention, several librarians who participated in this project gathered together as part of a panel organized by the Modern Language Association. The panel, entitled “What is Humanities Research Now” addressed a variety of important topics—panelists and audience members discussed issues related to digital humanities, public humanities, and information seeking behavior—that each institution represented in their particular report. The panel was well attended and inspired thoughtful discussion among all participants.

Overall, librarians perceived the project favorably. The opportunity to work with Ithaka S+R and MLA to conduct this research enabled librarians to develop a more nuanced understanding of faculty and their research processes and interests. As Dr. Guy Burak, Alla Roylance, and Dr. Amanda Watson from New York University underscore, “nearly everyone we interviewed described their research as crossing disciplines in one way or another, and some have changed fields over the course of their careers.” Such
inter- and even trans-disciplinary research means that faculty often travel to other countries and sometimes publish for international audiences. On this topic, Dr. Paula Carns (University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign) observes that while libraries and archives continue to digitize their collections, certain faculty believe that it is beneficial to work with their primary source material in person. For instance, some faculty work in countries plagued by political instability or lack the resources to maintain collections, let alone make them accessible.

Ithaka S+R’s capstone report will illuminate a number of opportunities and challenges that academic libraries and librarians will face in the coming years. These issues may pertain to pre-existing concerns. As Heather Cole (Brown University) states, “one of the things we found most interesting were the incredibly varied ways that faculty began searching for material for their research. Only a few began with our library catalog; some started with WorldCat or Google Scholar, some start with Amazon. The faculty did not seem aware of how different platforms return results based on the terms of a given search, but they all knew their searches were lacking, and were anxious about the materials they might be missing.” Such anxiety could inform anticipated areas of concern or change, particularly given that many academic libraries maintain collections that continue to grow even as their capacity to hold such material diminishes.

Whatever the case may be, Darby Fanning (University of Utah) emphasizes that communication among librarians, faculty, and institutional administrators often requires tact and diplomacy, as it is important that future conversations do “not ruffle feathers that would very likely be taken as a strong slight and severe criticism to the institution.” However such discussions may take place, the Ithaka S+R Research Support Services Report for Literature and Language will provide librarians, faculty, and university stakeholders with a common language to discuss researchers’ activities across the U.S. and identify opportunities to support scholars more broadly.

To read Ithaka S+R’s initial press release for the project, please visit https://sr.ithaka.org/blog/announcing-a-new-project-on-language-and-literature/

For more information about the MLA sponsored panel, as well as links to existing local reports, please visit: https://sr.ithaka.org/events/rebecca-springer-at-the-modern-language-association-annual-convention/

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Preserving, Retaining, and Incorporating Materials in Our Collections
Carla Brooks and Leslie Madden

The Collection Development Discussion Group met online on February 14, 2020. Approximately fourteen people participated in the informative discussion.

Preserving Access to Digital Materials

The discussion began with talk of preserving born-digital materials, but quickly moved to support of digital humanities projects. Participants’ institutions are at various stages in support of digital humanities. Some have dedicated teams in the library to support projects, while others are working to build programs. At many schools, librarians are support partners, providing liaison support to the researchers and technology specialists. Challenges the participants discussed include setting up DH programs, gaining relevant skills, and prioritizing projects.

Print Retention Collaborations

Major construction projects, need for more student study space, and increasing lack of shelf space have necessitated weeding projects for many libraries. Discussion centered on how weeding projects were organized, criteria for retention, and collaborations with other institutions. Almost every discussion participant had been involved in a weeding project recently. Some were small-scale projects involving one or two specific collections, while others involved entire collections. Some weeding projects were homegrown using spreadsheets with information about e-resource availability and other local copies of print materials, while several participants’ libraries used OCLC’s Green Glass software for their major weeding projects. Green Glass inventories a library’s collections, allows for granular views at the subject level, and compares collections to other selected libraries’ collections. In at least one case, Green Glass was used at the consortium level, which allowed one or two libraries to be “retainers” of selected materials. Other libraries could make the decision to retain or safely withdraw items with the assurance that another library in the system would have the items should a need arise. Popular items were kept at each location. The discussion then moved to collaborative collection development. One

Increasingly, discussion attendees are being asked to not only assist with literature questions, but also questions related to art associated with literary works. In some cases, identification of art pieces is needed, in other cases, locating art for inclusion in printed texts or lessons.
example is the cooperation between UNC Chapel Hill, Duke University, and NCSU. These libraries have been building their collections collaboratively and providing resource sharing for many years. They even had a joint library catalog dating back to the early 1990s.

**Incorporating Art Works in Literature**

Increasingly, discussion attendees are being asked to not only assist with literature questions, but also questions related to art associated with literary works. In some cases, identification of art pieces is needed, in other cases, locating art for inclusion in printed texts or lessons. Several participants discussed recommending and teaching ARTstor. One participant mentioned working with a class on 18th century literature studying the art, music, and politics of the era as they related to the literary works. ARTstor was instrumental in finding photographs and information about 18th century book illustrations, engravings, and other art works of the time period. A few discussion participants also mentioned using freely available images to make their research guides more appealing.

**Looking to ALA Annual**

The discussion wound down around potential topics for ALA Annual. Suggested topics include:

- Diversity and inclusion in collection development
- Collection development for gaming – RPG, language and writing, storytelling
- Collecting ‘zines.
- Small press materials
- Ways to acquire materials from vendors not approved by the institution

Carla Brooks, English, African & African American Studies and Communications Subject Librarian, University of Michigan-Dearborn

Leslie Madden, Team Leader for Arts & Sciences and Subject Librarian for English and World Languages & Cultures, Georgia State University

**Member News**

Amanda Rybin Koob recently joined the University of Colorado Boulder as Literature and Humanities Librarian. Prior to joining CU’s faculty, Amanda worked as Library Director at Naropa University from 2017-2019 and at the University of Chicago Visual Resources Center from 2008-2014. She holds BA and MLIS degrees from the University of Denver, and her MFA in Poetry from the University of Michigan. Amanda’s research interests include methods for assessing diversity and inclusion in library collections and approval plans, information literacy, library support creative writers, and digital humanities. She is a new member of LES and will join the LES Planning Committee in July. She’s looking forward to getting to know all of her LES colleagues! You can contact her at amanda.rybinkoob@colorado.edu.

Send your updates to biblionotes@gmail.com for the next newsletter.
Virgilio Haiku Archive Online

Julie Still

The Paul Robeson Library at Rutgers University in Camden, NJ has digitized and made available the haiku archive of noted poet Nick Virgilio. It can be found at: collections.libraries.rutgers.edu/nicholas-virgilio-papers

Nick was born and raised in Camden, NJ and is sometimes known as Camden’s other poet (as a nod to Walt Whitman, who also lived in Camden). Nick discovered haiku in the library of the College of South Jersey, which later became a part of Rutgers University. He was internationally known for his work. When he died Nick left boxes of sheets of haiku, several to a page. These sheets were given to the Paul Robeson Library. Arranging the materials was a challenge as the pages aren’t dated and most are typed on the back of scrap paper. An archives class in the History Department put them in order based on what was on the back, leading to the Coca Cola series, the Visiting Team Roster series, and so on.

The pages were commercially digitized and added to the university digital collections. Researchers can search for words to see how Nick’s versions of a specific haiku changed over time, leading up to publication, and how he used specific terms. He wrote numerous haiku about the death of his younger brother in Vietnam, and simple items he saw on a daily basis, as well as esoteric works following a more traditional focus on the physical world around him.

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Open Educational Resources (OERs) Panel

Ava Brillat

The ACRL European Studies Section (ESS) and the Literatures in English Section (LES) will be jointly sponsoring a panel to discuss Open Educational Resources (OERs) from European and North American perspectives. Speakers will address current trends in OERs across Europe and the Anglosphere, and will speak to the challenges they pose to provide high-quality materials in a wide range of subjects, respect copyright and publishing, and integrate OERs into collections and teaching. Librarians looking to raise awareness of OERs and to lead their adoption in their libraries and communities will benefit from this deep discussion on OERs from the perspective of research and teaching in literature and European studies.

In the UNESCO guidelines on open educational resources (2011), the authors state in their introduction that global enrollments in higher education are predicted to grow by 98 million before 2025. To meet the needs of students from a variety of backgrounds, educators are searching for ways to provide quality, digital resources that are available at no cost to students and enhance learning. Open educational resources, or OERs, are tools that may help fulfill this need. Open education resources are defined as “teaching, learning, and research resources that reside in the public domain or have been released under an intellectual property license that permits their free use or re-purposing by others” (4).

As teaching partners, librarians in a variety of subject areas must look for trusted and sustainable OERs while supporting their patrons in their research and learning.
In this session, the speakers will address current trends in Open educational resources across Europe and the Anglosphere, and speak to the challenges they pose to provide high-quality materials in a wide range of subjects, respect copyright and publishing, and integrate OERs into collections and teaching. This session will also host speakers focused on how subject liaison librarians can navigate the OER landscape while supporting their faculty and their research will share insights and practices for success. Speakers will discuss the current landscape of OERs in North America and Europe.

The panel speakers will be confirmed shortly, along with the time and date of the program! We will have more announcements as we get closer to ALA Annual 2020.

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ACRL Books

ACRL publishes a range of books to assist academic librarians in developing their professional careers, managing their institutions, and increasing their awareness of developments in librarianship, providing timely, thought-provoking, and practical content and research to academic and research librarians worldwide. Some recent titles:

- Library Partnerships in International Liberal Arts Education: Building Relationships Across Cultural and Institutional Lines
- The Critical Thinking About Sources Cookbook
- Learning Beyond the Classroom: Engaging Students in Information Literacy through Co-Curricular Activities
- Leading Change in Academic Libraries
- Developing the Next Generation of Library Leaders (ACRL Publications in Librarianship No. 75)
- Becoming a Library Leader: Seven Stages of Leadership Development for Academic Librarians

Interested in writing for ACRL? Contact Erin Nevius, ACRL’s Content Strategist, at enevius@ala.org for more information.

ALA 2020 Annual Conference cancelled; virtual event planned for June 24-26th

On Tuesday, March 24, 2020, The American Library Association’s Executive Board announced that the 2020 ALA Annual Conference & Exhibition scheduled for June 25-30 in Chicago was canceled due to COVID-19.

An alternative Summer 2020 online event, ALA Virtual, Community Through Connection, has officially been announced and will take place on June 24-26, 2020. See 2020.alavirtualevent.org for more information.

ACRL 2021

Especially now, today’s higher education environment calls for innovative ways to support student, faculty, and institution success. Complete details about ACRL 2021 available on the conference website (conference.acrl.org). ACRL 2021 will feature more than 500 conference programs carefully selected and presented by leaders in the profession, a variety of formal and networking opportunities, exhibits from more than 200 companies, and more.
RBMS Conference, Power, Resistance, and Leadership, Cancelled

The ACRL Rare Books and Manuscripts Section (RBMS) made the decision to cancel the RBMS 2020 Conference at Indiana University, Bloomington because of the serious health risks posed by COVID-19. We are truly grateful for all the interest and support for what would have been another terrific RBMS conference and will be working with conference registrants directly over the coming weeks.

RBMS will also be working on ways we can possibly re-arrange and refresh content in coming years and very much look forward to the days when our RBMS community can safely gather again.

Pandemic Resources for Academic Libraries

ALA and ACRL are committed to supporting our members, staff, and all librarians and library workers during these uncertain times. Now more than ever, academic and research librarians and libraries are essential to a thriving global community of learners and scholars. A LibGuide was created by ACRL to support the academic and research library community during global public health crises. The guide features resources for distance education and engagement, free professional development resources, best practices, and up-to-date information from public health officials. See https://acrl.libguides.com/pandemic.

ACRL eLearning

ACRL’s e-Learning program provides a unique opportunity to participate in professional development events that are focused on practical, tangible topics to meet the demands of your schedule and budget. Visit the ACRL e-Learning site (ala.org/acrl/onlinelearning) to stay up-to-date on current e-Learning offerings from ACRL!