



Biblio-Notes

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Notes from the Chair:

As the American Library Association Midwinter Meeting in Philadelphia is approaching, I look forward to reconnecting with LES colleagues and to welcoming new members to our group. I joined LES nearly five years ago, shortly after my graduation from library school. My experiences in LES have been rewarding both in terms of professional development and personal enrichment. LES colleagues have helped me gain confidence during the first years of my career as a literature librarian. I learned a great deal by following discussions on the LES online discussion list and by attending LES meetings at the ALA Midwinter and ALA Annual conferences. In recent years, many of my most valuable contributions to the improvement of collections and services at the University of Southern California Libraries have been inspired by formal and informal feedback from my LES friends, colleagues and mentors.

For all of this help and inspiration, I would like to thank LES from the bottom of my heart, and I can only hope that my sincere gratitude will resonate positively with new and potential members. LES is a wonderful group, and it has a great deal to offer.

If in January 2008, you are planning to attend the ALA Midwinter Meeting in Philadelphia, you are invited to all of the following meetings:

General Membership Forum (Saturday, January 12, 1:30 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.) will offer an opportunity to meet LES members in person and to gain a sense of the group's current priorities. This might be a good venue to identify a mentor. If you would like to suggest an overarching topic for this session, please drop an email to LES Membership Committee Chair, Priscilla Finley, priscilla.finley@unlv.edu.

LES New Members Discussion Forum (Saturday, January 12, 4:00 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.) will be a smaller, cozier gathering where new and aspiring LES members will be able to network and discuss issues of particular interest to new literature librarians. To suggest conversation ideas, please contact Co-Chairs of the New Members Discussion Group, Kathy Magarrell, kathy-magarrell@uiowa.edu and Frank Gravier, gravier@ucsc.edu.

LES Social Hour (Saturday, January 12, 5:30 p.m. - 7 p.m.) - time to make friends for life.

LES Reference Discussion (Sunday, January 13, 8:00 a.m. - 10a.m.) To suggest topics for the 2008 Midwinter meeting, please contact Melissa S. Van Vuuren, Chair, Reference Discussion Group, vanvuums@jmu.edu.

LES Collections Discussion Group (Sunday, January 13, 10:30 p.m. - 12:30 p.m.). To suggest topics for the 2008 Midwinter meeting, please contact Faye Christenberry, Chair, Collections Discussion Group, fayec@u.washington.edu.

LES All Committees Meetings (Monday, January 14, 8 a.m. - 10 a.m.) will offer everybody a chance to get involved in LES activities, which is both great fun and good leadership training.

Opportunities for involvement might include:

· 2008 Conference Planning Committee will be finalizing preparations for the 2008 Summer Program on graphic novels. Fascinating topic. The program committee might still accept volunteers willing to help with logistics. Join us on Monday at 8:00 a.m. or contact Juliet Kerico, Chair, 2008 Program Planning Committee, jkerico@indstate.edu.

· 2009 Summer Program on digital humanities. Equally compelling topic. Join us on Monday at 8:00 a.m. or contact Angela Courtney, ancourtn@indiana.edu.

· Publications Committee also welcomes new members. Join us on Monday at 8:00 a.m., or please contact Linda Lawrence Stein, Chair, Publications Committee, llstein@udel.edu.

· Planning Committee always needs individuals able to envision strategic priorities for LES's bright future. Join us on Monday at 8:00 a.m. or contact Sophie Lesinska, lesinska@usc.edu.

LES needs both its new and seasoned members. Come one, come all. Let's hope for rewarding and fun meetings in Philadelphia.

Sophie Lesinska
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Keep up with LES news: Join LES-L

The LES list has been fairly busy the past few months. Shortly after the ALA Annual Conference we received the good news that the LES Research Competency Guidelines for Literature in English are official. The guidelines have also been published in CR&L News.

Laura Fuderer, University of Notre Dame, began a lively discussion regarding leisure reading collections and policies in academic libraries and how libraries pay for these collections. Websites were included in several messages. Notre Dame's Read for Fun lists authors and titles in various genres <http://www.library.nd.edu/colldev/subject_home_pages/english/leisurereading/>. Leigh Anne Palmer, Johns Hopkins, shared entries from the Sheridan Libraries Blog site. <<http://blogs.library.jhu.edu/wordpress/?p=182#more-182>>. Many librarians responded with the options their libraries employ to provide some kind of leisure reading program and the way in which they pay for the books.

Other topics covered over the past few months have included a discussion of LC's decisions to drop subject headings from cataloging records, guides to author websites, postings for jobs at several institutions and news about what LES will work on in the coming year.

The LES list is a wonderful way not only to keep up on news from the section, but also to

participate in discussions with colleagues across the country. If you are not a member, it is easy to sign up for the list.

Directions for signing onto the list and for retrieving the archives have changed slightly since the last newsletter. To subscribe to the list, go to: <http://lists.ala.org>. Type in your email address at the bottom of the screen. Then select "Send me a password." Once you have logged in, you can "View all lists" or "Search list." To go directly to LES-L, key in les-l in the "Search list" box. Click on "Subscribe" to start receiving LES-L messages. To unsubscribe to LES-L, go into LES-L, select the "Unsubscribe" option, and follow the instructions. To post messages to LES-L, select the "Post" option in LES-L or send a message to les-l@ala.org <<mailto:les-l@ala.org>> .

To read archived messages, select the "Archive" option in LES-L. You will be able to access archived messages dating from when you subscribed to LES-L.

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Special Collections

Gumshoes, Sleuths & Snoopers

Aliens, cowboys, gumshoes, and swamp creatures ... characters such as these populate the pages of the University at Buffalo (UB) Libraries' George Kelley Paperback and Pulp Fiction Collection. Many literature librarians are familiar with the UB Libraries' Special Collections department, which is home to an internationally-acclaimed Poetry Collection devoted to twentieth-century poets and poetry, but UB Special Collections also houses an amazing literary treasure trove comprising some 30,000 vintage paperbacks and pulp magazines. This fascinating collection, which began as a boyhood hobby nearly fifty years ago, is now one of the largest and most well-preserved library collections of its kind.

George Kelley, an avid collector of paperback fiction who holds a Ph.D. in literature from UB, donated his personal collection of paperbacks and pulp magazines to the UB Libraries in 1994. This collection includes detective & mystery fiction, adventure stories, westerns, science fiction, fantasy, horror tales, legal stories, and erotic fiction, along with science fiction and fantasy magazines and fanzines from the 1940s to the 1970s.

Many novels in the Kelley Collection are paperback originals that were published on cheap paper, sold for 25 or 35 cents at newsstands, and were rarely added to library collections. Sample titles reflect popular American reading interests of a half century ago: *Bullets for the Bridegroom*, *Sweet Wild Wench*, and *So Dead, My Lovely*. Intriguing cover blurbs beckon readers: "She played for fun -- I played for keeps," "A brutal story of mayhem and murder, liquor and lust," "He's hip-deep in harlots, heroin and homicide." Many of these titles, once ignored or long-forgotten, are now viewed by literary scholars as defining American popular culture of the mid twentieth century.

Bibliographic records for the Kelley Collection are searchable in BISON, the UB Libraries' online catalog, and in WorldCat. Subject access, however, is limited in most cases to genre designation and the name of the cover artist when known. Although plot summaries are available for some of the novels in the Kelley Collection, these are scattered among many print and online sources. In an attempt to improve subject access to titles in the Kelley Collection, the UB Libraries created *Gumshoes, Sleuths, and Snoopers* <<http://libweb.lib.buffalo.edu/kelley/KelleyAdvanced.asp>>, a database which provides additional thematic details about selected Kelley Collection titles.

Crime fiction was chosen for the database because it forms a large part of the Kelley Collection, and this genre is frequently the subject of scholarly and critical study. Additionally, crime fiction has had a strong influence on other aspects of popular culture in areas such as film, radio and television. Many colleges and universities offer courses in popular literature, or they incorporate popular literature within other interdisciplinary

courses, such as women's studies, history, media studies and ethnic studies.

With these considerations in mind, the *Gumshoes* database serves as a resource for those interested in examining historical events, social issues and trends in popular culture. Each database record includes front and back cover images along with content information for such elements as plot, characters, setting, ethnicity, sexuality, and drug/alcohol use. Of the 285 novels currently in the database, most were written by American authors and originally published during the 1930s, 40s & 50s.

Volunteer readers provided content analysis, and prepared database entries using guidelines developed by a professor in the UB English department. As a complement to the *Gumshoes* database, several hundred Kelley Collection cover images are part of the university's *UBdigit* platform, providing an additional resource for students and scholars researching popular culture topics <http://ubdigit.buffalo.edu/collections/lib/lib001_pulp.php>. The pulp fiction cover art featured in *UBdigit* is searchable by author, title, artist, publisher, content, dominant color, and more. Metadata facilitates searching on character types, clothing, objects, weapons, scenery, etc. appearing on the covers.

Comments and suggestions related to the Kelley Collection and the *Gumshoes, Sleuths, and Snoopers* database are welcome.

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Max Crawford Collection

Max Crawford, a writer whose works channel rugged landscapes and hardened people, has won admiration and praise from some of the best authors of our time, including Larry McMurtry. Unconventional, adventurous, and extremely talented, Max Crawford's literary voice stands with the best in modern literature. The cover copy to his first novel, *Waltz Across*

Texas, original printing by Farrar, Straus and Giroux, compares the book to "a Dostoevskian nightmare with a twist, a story of crime and reward." Now, the Southwest Collection/Special Collections Library at Texas Tech University is pleased to announce the Max Crawford papers as part of the Sowell Collection. The Sowell Collection brings together some of the most important writers on the natural world, writers who have raised questions about the urgent relationship between humans and physical place.

Crawford's work often utilizes harsh land as a metaphor for all of humanity's struggle. For example, in his historical novel, *Lords of the Plains*, where the U.S. 2nd Cavalry must ride through Texas with a command to move the fierce Comanches onto a reservation, the main character Philip Chapman notes "The plain's monotony and desolation and unboundedness are those of eternity, and, as philosophers have warned us, a thing without end can be either heaven or hell in the mind of man." By the end of the novel, Chapman's journey moves from the personal to the universal, becoming a journey that embraces all of humanity.

Max Crawford was born and raised around the stark terrain along the Blanco Canyon near Mount Blanco, Texas. He studied at the University of Texas, and he also held a writing fellowship at Stanford. He spent many years writing in France, Montana, Mexico and California. Currently he resides in Montana. He has edited and written for such publications as *The Redneck Review* and *100 Flowers*. A list of his publications includes *Waltz Across Texas* (1975), *The Backslider* (1976), *Lords of the Plain* (1985), and *Wamba* (2002).

The Max Crawford Collection, which is now available for research, contains a wide range of materials documenting Crawford's life from France, to Montana, to Mexico. Literary records include correspondence from writers Wallace Stegner, Larry McMurtry, David Quammen, and many others. Several boxes include complete early manuscripts of both published and unpublished poems, short stories, and novels. Also included for many of the novels are Crawford's research materials. The collection gives students an insight both into Crawford's personal life, through pictures and correspondence to and from family and

friends, as well as the writing life, through Crawford's expansive notes and records. This collection would be of great interest to any scholars studying writing about place, history, and nature, as well as the creative writing process.

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A Good Read ...

1001 Books You Must Read Before You Die.
Edited by Peter Boxall. New York: Universe Publishing, 2006.

13 Ways of Looking at the Novel. Jane Smiley. New York: Knopf, 2005.

The woods are lovely dark and deep.
But I have promises to keep,
And miles to go before I sleep,
And miles to go before I sleep.

Robert Frost didn't know how easily he had it. His famous poem, "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening" is generally regarded as a metaphor for death; the narrator has certain things to accomplish before he can die. I hope no readers are planning on dying anytime soon, but you might consider taking early retirement to accomplish all of the thousand and one things you **must** do before death. The lists of musts seemingly all began with the bestselling book, *1,000 Places to See Before You Die* by Patricia Schultz (New York: Workman, 2003). The success of this work has spawned a plethora of imitations about books, foods, wines, gardens, natural wonders, movies, paintings, and albums which must be read, tasted, drunk, seen, and listened to before the restful sleep.

1001 Books You Must Read Before You Die, with a preface by Peter Ackroyd, is edited by Peter

Boxall and written by over one hundred international critics. Brief information on each of the contributors indicates that most are professors/lecturers in literature departments, primarily in English universities. There is some representation from Ireland, Canada, and the United States, and a few book review editors and authors are sprinkled into the mix.

The book is organized by century from the pre-1700s to the 2000s, with the individual listings within each century arranged by publication date. There is a title index in the front, with an author and a general index in the back. The hefty 957-page book is well-illustrated with assorted portraits of authors, covers of the books, illustrations from specific works, and even posters from movies derived from the books discussed.

For library or English-major types, it is always amusing to review lists of recommended books, classic books, important books, or life-changing books to see how many you have already read. The list begins with *Aesop's Fables* and ends with *Never Let Me Go* by Kazuo Ishiguro. Only fiction is included, and in fact, the work would be better titled *1001 Novels You Must Read* As Peter Ackroyd writes in the preface, the range includes both well-known and relatively unknown novels, novels representing enduring human value, others acting as the symbol of an age or period. He describes mainstream and experimental novels and those "that represent some kind of supreme achievement." Is *Don Quixote* here? Check. *War and Peace*? Check. *Huck Finn*, *Crime and Punishment*, *Ulysses*, *Candide*, *Steppenwolf*, *The Sun Also Rises*, *Vanity Fair* - all here. What may be of greater interest to those well-read people who have already put in years reading the canon of classics would be the lesser-known choices or the wide variety of twentieth-century selections: Kurt Vonnegut, Jr., Margaret Atwood, Italo Calvino, Jo Jung-rae, John Irving, Peter Carey, Will Self, Haruki Murakami, and Clarice Lispector. Throughout the book, U.K. and U.S. authors are most heavily represented with a good selection from France, Italy, Germany, and Russia. It is considerably more difficult to find listings from the non-Western world and almost all appear in the twentieth-century offerings. I would have liked to find some "classics" from Asia or Latin America, but

this is not the right reference source for that task.

So, do you start at the beginning of this reference work and read all of the suggested books or do you randomly flip through finding ones to match your interests? Do you race through the reading of all of these novels to get them read as quickly as possible, suggest them to your book club so you never have to endure those acrimonious debates about what to read next, or do you proceed with each book you select in a thoughtful manner. If the latter is your choice, you might first begin the reading adventure by starting with Jane Smiley's *13 Ways of Looking at the Novel*.

Smiley is the best-selling, Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *A Thousand Acres*, as well as the author of short story collections, novellas, several other novels, and nonfiction. Her range is immense from the mystery *Duplicate Keys*, to the historical novel *The Greenlanders*, to tales of family relationships in *The Age of Grief*, to her comic take on academia in *Moo*. In turning 52 in 2001 in the midst of writing *Good Faith*, Smiley developed a psychological crisis of sorts concerning how and what she wrote. To get through this time, she decided to read a hundred novels of her own choosing in roughly chronological order. In the opening page of the chapter, "What Is a Novel," Smiley decides that a novel is simple and that the following small facts apply to every novel. It is "(1) lengthy, (2) written, (3) prose, (4) narrative with a (5) protagonist." ... "Every novel has all of these elements. If any of them is missing, the literary form in question is not a novel. All additional characteristics - characters, plot, themes, setting, style, point of view, tone, historical accuracy, philosophical profundity, revolutionary or relevatory effect, pleasure, enlightenment, transcendence, and truth - grow out of the ironclad relationships among these five elements."

Subsequent chapters investigate the origins, form, psychology, art, and morality of the novel, with a substantial section devoted to writing your own novel. More than half the book, however, is dedicated to Smiley's thoughts on each of the hundred novels she read. Smiley's comments on each book are substantially longer than most of the reviews in *1001 Novels*. It was gratifying to find that

Smiley liked many of the same contemporary authors I do, though she often chose an author's less famous work for inclusion in her list.

And how does her list compare to *1001 Novels*? It was not a promising start when Smiley's first four choices Shikibu's *The Tale of the Genji*, Sturluson's *Egilssaga*, *The Saga of the People of Laxardal* (anonymous), and Boccaccio's *The Decameron* are not included in the lengthier list. More contemporary authors such as Nicholson Baker, David Lodge, Garrison Keillor, Yukio Mishima, and Kate Atkinson also are not included in *1001 Books*. Still, the majority of authors from the canon can be found in both works, as can such contemporary authors as J.M. Coetzee, Zadie Smith, and Ian McEwan. One does not have to read 1001 plus one hundred novels before one dies!

So, let's see. If you download the 1001 albums to your iPod, take along a stack of books for those long plane flights to those places, gardens, architectural highlights, and natural wonders you must visit, you might be able to accomplish a few thousand of the musts. You can only hope that the food and drink you must try are available at all of the places you're visiting as you certainly won't be served them on the airplanes. Following this plan, you might even have enough time to write your own novel.

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Teaching Bibliography, Textual Criticism and Book History. Edited by Ann R. Hawkins. London: Pickering and Chatto, 2006.

Some of us have long bemoaned the disappearance of Research and Methods classes from many English curricula. The present collection of pedagogical essays, however, reassures us that the subject is still alive and thriving. The editor has broadened the topic to include other venues where the methods of Bibliography and Textual Criticism as well as insights gleaned from Book History may be useful, including library schools, programs in book history and print culture, and even in a variety of undergraduate liberal arts courses. Taking an optimistic view, she sees the perceived disappearance of such courses of

study as partly due to a confusion of terms: "whether one teaches 'bibliography' or 'book history' depends on disciplinary preferences. For example, history, library science and art departments prefer 'history of the book'; library science programs use 'bibliography' as a descriptor for descriptive or analytical bibliography, but English departments use the term to also cover research methods. Historians favor 'documentary editing,' while English departments use 'textual criticism' or 'scholarly editing.'" (5). She also detects traces of the subject matter in courses called "Introduction to English Studies" or "Introduction to Professional Studies."

Although this book is really directed at an audience of full-time teachers rather than librarians, good insights can be gleaned from it for our profession, and not only on the information literacy front. One of my favorite articles is "Jane Eyre on E-Bay: Building a Teaching Collection" by John A. Buchtel. This article is found in a section directed to professors in smaller institutions without fancy resources like rare book collections. Buchtel suggests a low-cost collecting method based on the University of Virginia's non-traditional strategies bypassing first and private press editions to answer the question: "What happens when a book becomes a classic?" (51) He points out that a great deal can be learned about evolving theoretical concerns by examining a collection of *Cliffs Notes* over a time-span of 50 years. Equally informative are cover designs, ad copy and blurbs on various paperback editions, even from the same publisher. Internet trawling may also uncover numerous sequels, retellings and other derivatives of any given classic, leading to many a fascinating study and a plethora of potential dissertation topics.

To return to the topic with which I opened this review, however - Graduate Research and Methods courses offered in English Departments -- two articles in this collection bear directly on them. In "The Bibliography and Research Course" John T. Shawcross, Professor Emeritus at the University of Kentucky, offers his seasoned opinions about what is important to offer in a such a course, how it should be divided up, and how long each segment should take. Thus "Unit One: Finding Information, Considering Past Information, Updating

Information" is designed to familiarize students with primary resources by completing a series of exercises asking the student to identify persons, pseudonyms, titles, literary terms, events, influences and dates. Many of us recall this type of exercise, if not from an English Research and Methods class, from Library School. Unit 2 is devoted to finding relevant sources, whether in bibliographies or in Works Cited sections of articles. The Units which follow deal with the actual editing of texts and both oral and written presentation. Thus elements of the old-fashioned course that some of us remember fondly, remain in Shawcross's recommended class.

Maura Ives, in "Integrating 'Bibliography' with 'Literary Research': A Comprehensive Approach" actually uses the "LES Research Competency Guidelines" to help structure her class at Texas A & M and asks her students to complete a brief survey based on them at the beginning of the semester: "Although the LES guidelines are geared towards undergraduates," she says, "most outcomes are also part of our semester's work. Even better, while the guidelines include headings relevant to enumerative bibliography . . . , the very first heading, 'Understand the structure of information within the field of literary research includes . . . book-related goals.'" (118) This is especially important, she continues, because her survey reveals a serious gap in students' knowledge of anything having to do with editions. Unlike Shawcross, she finds "treasure hunts" an ineffective way of teaching students about sources, because "Only actual research develops research skills." (118) Instead she structures her class around a pair of related assignments: a research guide and an edition proposal.

I have only had time to discuss three of the 23 articles in this book, but they all have something the LES librarian might find thought-provoking or pedagogically helpful. The publisher has also provided some extra essays not found in the book free on its website at <http://www.pickeringchatto.com> as well as links to some of the resources listed in the book, including one to the LES guidelines.

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Contributions welcome. The editor especially encourages those who may not be able to travel to ALA meetings to contribute descriptions of new books of interest, essays on "My Life as a Humanities Librarian," "My Favorite Reference Tool" and "Personal and Institutional News." Deadlines for copy are roughly the end of September and the end of February of each year. Please contact the editor for the exact deadlines of specific issues.

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