



Biblio-Notes

Issued by the Literatures in English Section of the Association of College & Research Libraries,
a division of the American Library Association

#67 Spring 2016

ISSN 1076-8947

Notes from the Chair

Greetings and Happy Spring! I imagine I'm not alone in looking forward to the end of the Spring semester, and I'm looking forward to seeing colleagues at ALA Annual.

LES had an active and productive Midwinter. Our two Discussion Groups (Reference, Co-Chairs Nancy Foasberg and Carol Lebiger, and Collections, Co-Chairs Chris Ruotolo and Arianne Hartsell-Gundy) once again held wonderful virtual Midwinter meetings, open and free to all. Thanks to the co-chairs for all their hard work in scheduling and facilitating these meetings. While many people, myself included, value in-person meetings, our Section has acknowledged that many members have limited travel funding, so we are constantly on the lookout for ways that members can meet and participate online. That said, even though LES' official meetings for Midwinter were only held online, we also held a very successful in-person social at ALA Midwinter in Boston, co-hosted with ACRL's Digital Humanities Interest Group.

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If you are planning on attending ALA Annual in Orlando, you may be interested to know that most LES programs will be in the Hilton (the co-headquarters hotel). We'll be hosting our usual active slate with all programs open to the public, including our Discussion Groups, General Membership Forum, and All Committees meeting. If you are interested in volunteering with LES but aren't sure what the committees are entirely about, come by All-Committees to meet members from each.

Please also join us for our conference forum on Saturday 6/25 at 1pm: "Archiving the Present: Primary Sources & Unique and Distinctive Collections in European and American Studies". The panel is jointly coordinated by ACRL sections LES, WESS, and SEES and is centered on collecting and archiving current (political) ephemera in research libraries. Panelists will cover topics such as the Charlie Hebdo archive at Harvard, collecting recent ephemera from Russia, and curation and access in American grief archives. Thanks to the Conference Planning Committee (Chair Kristina DeVoe) for putting our forum together.

Our informal social, held directly after the General. Membership Forum, will be on Sat. 6/25, from 5:30-7:00 at [Café Tu Tu Tango](#). No registration is required.

Many thanks to all of the LES committee members and discussion group Co-Chairs for organizing our programs and activities at Annual. I am continually amazed at the hard work of LES volunteers! Not only are volunteers a vital part of organizing our Annual activities, but thanks to their work we have several new initiatives. I can't hope to summarize all of the great work our committees do, but since we have (happily) experienced recent growth, I'll try to give a snapshot for our newer members.

As you've seen on the LES-L email list, our Planning Committee (Chair Jaena Alabi) is drafting a new Strategic Plan for the section. Our Membership Committee (Co-Chairs Liorah Golomb and Piper Martin with Matt Knight) deserves thanks for, among many other things, organizing our social in Orlando. Our Nominating Committee (Chair Arianne Hartsell-Gundy) has put together a wonderful slate of candidates for LES office -- hopefully you were able to vote! And our Publications Committee (Chair John Glover) has continued to develop and publish this newsletter, the email list, our website, our shared Zotero library, and all of our social media accounts.

I'm excited to announce that the LES Executive Board voted, over Midwinter, to approve our Section's new *Guidelines for Deselecting Literatures in English Collections in Academic Libraries*. Many libraries are under space pressure, and these guidelines are a helpful professional document outlining the careful considerations that must go into any weeding project. Many congratulations to the Task Force that developed these guidelines, led by Robin Imhof. You can find these guidelines on [our website](#).

In addition, under Chair David Oberhelman, our Virtual Participation Committee is organizing our Section's first professional development webinar. The Committee is hard at work planning a session on tools in the Digital Humanities for late Summer/early Fall, and are considering one additional literature-related program to be held in late Fall. Please keep an eye out for more information on these programs.

Finally, I'm happy to announce a new LES Task Force, the Literatures in English Working Group, to update the LES Research Competencies. In 2004 and 2007, our Section created and updated a very helpful set of disciplinary, literature-focused information literacy standards, modeled on the previous ACRL Standards, called the [Research Competency Guidelines for Literatures in English](#). We are now looking for volunteers to begin work in the fall to update those *Research Competencies* within ACRL's new *Framework for Information Literacy*. I know that I've referred frequently to the original *Research Competencies* in my work, and the new, updated framework will be equally important to literature librarians. If you are interested in volunteering, please email both me (Amanda Rust, a.rust@neu.edu) and our Vice-Chair Laura Braunstein (lrb@dartmouth.edu).

On that note, I will end with congratulations to Laura Braunstein, who will be taking over as Chair after Annual this Summer. It's been a pleasure to work with everyone in LES, and I am so glad to have been a (very small!) part of the what this Section does. LES is a wonderful group, and I hope to continue to meet both familiar and new colleagues -- either in-person or online!

Best,

Amanda Rust

English, Theatre, and Digital Humanities Librarian

Assistant Director, Digital Scholarship Group

Northeastern University Libraries

a.rust@neu.edu



LES @ ALA Annual Conference 2016

Saturday, June 25

8:30 am - 10:00 am
Executive Committee Meeting I
Hilton Orlando
Room Florida Ballroom 3

10:30-11:30
Modern Language Association
International Bibliography
Discussion Group**
Hilton Orlando
Room Championsgate

1:00 pm – 2:30pm
LES/SEES/WESS Forum:
*Archiving the Present: Primary
Sources and Unique and
Distinctive Collections in
European and American Studies*
Hilton Orlando
Room Orange Ballroom A-B

4:00-5:30pm
General Membership Forum
Orange County Convention
Center, Room W202C

5:30-7:00
Informal Social
[Café Tu Tu Tango](#)

Sunday, June 26

10:30 AM - 11:30 AM
Reference Discussion Group
Hilton Orlando
Room Championsgate

1:00 PM - 2:00 PM
Collections Discussion Group
Hilton Orlando
Room Florida Ballroom 7

4:00-5:30
Digital Humanities Interest
Group**
Hilton Orlando
Room Orange Ballroom E-F

Monday, June 27

8:30 am - 10:00 am
All Committees Meeting
Hilton Orlando
Room Florida Ballroom 2

10:30 am - 11:30 am
Executive Committee Meeting II
Hilton Orlando
Room Clear Lake

*** Not an official LES meeting but of possible interest to LES members*

On Henry Snyder, Digital Texts, and the ESTC

Before the attendees of the 1998 International English Short-Title Catalogue (ESTC) Conference at the New York Public Library, Henry L. Snyder mused on future possibilities created by the electronic-based union catalogue: “It is impossible to predict how the searching and retrieval of digitized texts would transform scholarship” (28)—a speculation partially realized by recent innovative scholarship but still imbued with opportunity. Snyder’s recent death on February 29, 2016 at the age of 86 offers an occasion not only for honoring his accomplishments as

longtime director of the North American section of the ESTC, but also the uncanny prescience which fueled his work, of which the anecdote related is merely symptomatic.

Although not a librarian, Snyder was a perspicacious bibliophile whose administrative prowess drove efforts to account for and enumerate 18th Century English imprints held worldwide. By the late 1980s, the Eighteenth-Century Short-Title Catalogue, as originally titled, would include texts from outside its C18 bounds, folding in and bolstering the bibliographical endeavors of Pollard and Redgrave, covering 1475-1640, and Wing, 1641-1700 (the basis of *Early English Books*), expanding to include letterpress items printed in England and her dependencies in any language from 1473-1800, and all works in English published elsewhere. In 1996, ESTC was officially renamed the *English*, rather than *Eighteenth-Century*, Short Title Catalogue to reflect its broadened scope.

Throughout the ESTC project's evolving process, beginning in the 1970s, Snyder ultimately foregrounded the importance of machine-readable records. Reminiscent of pre-press scriptoria, the early longhand processes of recording bibliographic fields for the Catalogue yielded estimated "tens of thousands of errors from the typing service processing the handwritten notes," requiring ongoing retrospective corrections, and producing the impetus for a computer-based input form (Slive 86). The ESTC records serve as the basis for the precursor to contemporary *Eighteenth Century Collections Online (ECCO)*, published as microform in 1982, which have since been digitized and released online in its familiar format.

As an electronic catalogue, ESTC was instrumental not only in laying the infrastructure for digital texts, but it also, arguably, transformed literary scholarship. That the ESTC was conceived of as a tool almost exclusively for bibliographers, antiquarian booksellers, and rare book librarians in locating exemplars speaks to a divide perhaps difficult to fathom in our contemporary push for transdisciplinarity. This state of previously limited exchange is underscored by a distinction made by Stephen Tabor, former catalogue of the ESTC, between "amateur bibliographers" (whose "day jobs" are teaching literature courses) and the "professional cataloguers" responsible for keying in the ESTC's metadata; the insularity of the ESTC against scholarly discovery, were to Tabor in 2007, "easy to map by leafing through any bibliographic journal" (380). The searchability of bibliographic fields, however, in the Catalogue's computer-based format became a tool for literary research in the 90s, allowing scholars to leverage, among other fields, the notoriously long albeit rich titles of C18 texts to reveal uninterrogated primary source material (Korshin). A roughly coinciding shift in the landscape of literary studies, which heretofore precluded the "extra-literary," now welcomed treatises, manuals, broadsides, ephemera, et al., as fair game.

But today, a searchable title field fails to impress, as even the Optical Character Recognition (OCR)-rendered full-text searching capabilities of newspaper archives and the like has its well-documented limitations. Even at that conference in late January 1998, divining the destiny of the still microform-based texts of the 1700s, Snyder characterized the limits of technology for accurately capturing the hand-set type and its characteristic variations "imposed by intensity of inking, fading, deterioration of paper, print-through," which made computer-readability of the texts "currently impossible." Snyder continued: "The alternative of keying the texts is simply too costly for large-scale conversion projects although a few examples exist. But I have no doubt that at some point in the next decade or two the technology will advance to the point where it will be possible" (27-28). For the support of the ESTC and similarly behemoth collaborations, Snyder believed in the necessity of "large-scale

and continuing commitment of major funding agencies” and “equally great philanthropic foundations” (29). What he perhaps didn’t envision is sourcing labor for such keying conversion projects in tandem with scholarly tenure requirements, as in recent projects like 18thConnect, which is an aggregative platform collocating scholarly digital objects with the opportunity for peer review of scholarly digital editions, hosted by TAMU’s Initiative for Digital Humanities, Media, & Culture. While the funding of the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, as in the development of ESTC, still figures in prominently (see Mandell and Grumbach), such projects offer an opportunity for reappropriating digital labor to confer value in an academic economy with problematic publishing models—models to which our tenure-seeking professoriate are still largely tethered.

An appropriate bookend to Snyder’s life and century of interest, namely, comes TypeWright—part of 18thConnect—a scholarly crowd-sourced endeavor to purify the “dirty” OCR digital texts using images from *ECCO* as startup fodder, followed in late 2015 by the addition of images from *EEBO*. TypeWright lures participation not with novelty (although correcting wonky OCR’d text *is* undeniably satisfying), but with return: digitized images are, per agreements with the proprietary databases, released from behind the pay wall for the use of the scholar responsible for the OCR corrections. TypeWright joins other crowdsourced projects of the Early Modern OCR Project (eMOP) in recycling corrected OCR texts back into respective databases, including *ECCO*. These projects offer seemingly sustainable means of fulfilling Snyder’s vision of better search and retrieval opportunities in digital texts, and muddling the hard lines between users and purveyors of those texts—roles not incongruent with the changing role of librarian liaisons, as we continue to move away from servility into active partnerships with our faculty.

The English Short-Title Catalogue: Past, Present, Future. Ed. By Henry L. Snyder and Michael S. Smith. New York: AMS P, 2003. Print.
Korshin, Paul J. “The ESTC and Eighteenth-Century Literary Scholarship.” In *The English Short-Title Catalogue*. 169-89.

Mandell, Laura, and Elizabeth Grumbach. “The Business of Digital Humanities: Capitalism and Enlightenment.” *Scholarly and Research Communication* 6.4 (2015): 1-9.

Slive, Daniel J. “Exit Interview: Henry Snyder.” *RBM: A Journal of Rare Books, Manuscripts, and Cultural Heritage* 2:1 (2001): 73-92.

Snyder, Henry L. “The Future of the ESTC: A Vision.” In *The English Short-Title Catalogue*. 21-32.

Tabor, Stephen. “ESTC and the Bibliographical Community.” *Library* 8.4 (2007): 367-86.

Emily Spunaugle

Humanities Librarian

Oakland University

Rochester, MI

spunaugle@oakland.edu



Personal Collection Development

This column serves as a debriefing of the events that led me to the borderline-traumatic deselection of three library collections. Within five years, my dad passed away, my son was born, and I was hired in my first professional university library position. My father’s passing forced my family to consider the fate of the stamp collection he had amassed over fifty years. A few years later, the coin flipped, and new fatherhood compelled me to question the content of my personal book and media collection. These two deeply personal auras of

thought were lent a professional perspective as the university library I was newly hired into began its first ever comprehensive weeding. What follows are the brief histories behind these three collections.

The university I now work for was founded in 1922 as a normal school (a teachers' college) in the middle of farmland. Its library began on the stage of the local high school with a dictionary and a Bible. The university remains surrounded by farmland, but now as a fully-accredited multidisciplinary college with several advanced degree programs. The library has modernized and the collection has grown well beyond a handful of monographs. However, with no systematic weeding in 90 years, the collection was, in farmer parlance, going to seed.

As luck would have it, when the library finally did embark on a weeding project, it was just as I was hired. The process walked a well-trod path likely familiar to readers of this newsletter. Subject librarians like myself made use of fancy data software to scour our, *hrm*, *mature* collection. We asked boilerplate questions like: Is this information out of date? Does this support the current curriculum? Has this *ever* been used?

But all the practical *doing* of this, to me, the newly-hired interim liaison to the College of Business, was daunting. I would have a hand in the regeneration of a nearly century-old collection, created by librarians with years of experience well beyond my own. While I had spent many hours as an undergrad here, I was a philosophy and English major who seldom charted this neighborhood of call ranges. While I was attempting to learn what resources Business students and faculty might use, I was simultaneously making educated guesses about what I prayed they wouldn't miss.

It helped that the Business departments were no longer looking as closely at this print collection. It also helped that I already had experience letting a well-considered, well-loved collection go.

My father was "struck down" (in his good-natured telling of it) with the polio virus in first grade. In the years leading up to this, *philately* had been popularized by President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, a fellow American similarly struck down. My father's Aunt Adele gifted my father his first stamp album during his year of hospital bed confinement in Warm Springs, Georgia. Where Aunt Adele and FDR gave him a lifelong hobby, my dad gave me a childhood home that resembled a special collections museum.

Although my immediate family enjoyed suggesting he was an insatiable hoarder, my dad was, in fact, quite selective. He assembled complete stamp sets from most countries with a postal system, and he had a penchant for Civil War and Depression-era Kentucky memorabilia. I distinctly recall him showing me a beautifully-penned letter from a Civil War soldier to President Lincoln, which was one in a series of choice pieces deployed in his failed bid to shepherd me into the (dusty) fold.

There is a shadow box in my mom's kitchen framing a humorously large blue ribbon from one of the occasions my dad proudly took home the "big" antiques prize at the Kentucky State Fair. At his funeral in 2010, I was given a book on Louisville's historic Brownsboro Road by its author with my father's name highlighted in the acknowledgements. I can't recall if this was before or after a very classy antiques dealer slipped me his business card. All this to say, my own appreciation withstanding, my dad was not a junk collector.

Sometime after my father's passing, my family made the difficult decision to entrust a professional dealer-- known and respected by my dad--to take nearly the entire collection to auction. Visiting home and walking past the 'stamp room' had been a comfort since his death. All those green, red, and blue buckram album spines with gold-lettered names of continents staring back at me as they had my entire life, as they had stared at my father for decades. But without my father, those albums weren't receiving their deserved attention. He conscientiously made it clear throughout his life these items should be with real collectors. He did not collect like a hoarder, and neither would we.

For my home library, my wife bought me a set of bookcases in 2011 which covered every wall of my office that was not a door or window. I filled every inch of these 27 shelves with books, movies, and records. Even more spilled into the living room, random boxes, and into my mom's garage two hundred miles away. Call this seeming excess the product of a childhood spent indoors and of working in video retail places like Suncoast Motion Picture Company. But at the end of 2014, a year after my son's birth, something in me changed. My approach toward collecting went from completist to essentialist. Here in 2016, the living room, my mom's garage, and near half the shelves in my home office are empty. I've always had dweeb-thoughts about the guiding principles of my collection, but after dumping half of it, I can honestly say this was different.

Quick digression: a professor of mine who taught Herman Melville was not surprisingly also a Cormac McCarthy guy. I once expressed my disbelief my teacher had never read Philip Roth, as I referenced a critic who grouped Roth and McCarthy into a select class of American writers. My teacher explained an alternative idea of critical readership, where one chooses just four or five writers to really delve into. With so much I had not read, this concept was baffling. Surely I would need to sample all the esteemed writers before I could pare down to only four or five. But here, after a decade, my fiction collection takes up a no more than three shelves with just a few authors standing out for their prevalence. (I'll say it: R. Bolaño, C. McCarthy, V. Nabokov.) Are you proud of me, Dr. Jeff Osborne? End digression.

Some of my non-canonical reading bolstered my position to discard and to even view deselection as creative selection. For instance, the new world of bills heralded in with the birth of my son, inspired a reluctant Google search for Dave Ramsey, the money guru who champions debt simplicity. By selling the apparently non-essential portion of my collection, I was financing new purchases relatively guilt-free. I joyfully held the Kool-Aid cup served with Marie Kondo's *The Life Changing Magic of Tidying Up*. And I was very taken with Kanye West's paraphrasing of Antoine de Saint-Exupéry in [Rolling Stone](#) (2013): "a design is the point where you can't take anything else away."

But what really inspired this farewell to armfuls of paper and plastic was a little boy. Collecting had been for myself, but now there was an impressionable mind in the house, spending time in my office, observing the interests his father cultivated. Keeping copies of every book I read was not achieving this picture. Besides, if a complete reading history is ever sought, I have a Goodreads account.

The new parent in me could not justify keeping around *The Walking Dead* series or Alan Moore's *From Hell*. Chris Ware's *Building Stories* and Mark Z. Danielewski's *House of Leaves* were excellent arguments for books in the printed format, but that wasn't the same as an argument for why I needed to keep them. As hip as Clarice

Lispector's *Near to the Wild Heart* looked next to works by Franza Kafka and Danilo Kiš, I didn't actually like *Wild Heart*. Instead, someone may find it at the local used bookstore and just love it.

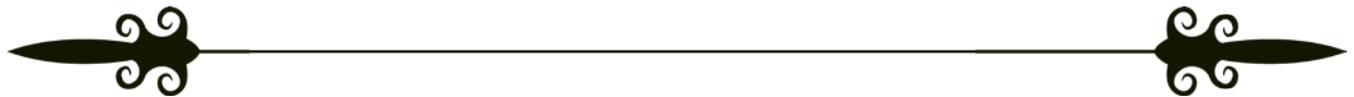
Cutting away the fat, so to speak, reveals a more robust set of priorities, not only of taste, but of practical living. What one chooses to devote time, space, and money toward is a meaningful showing. A university library transforming untouched manuscripts into student space ably demonstrates a shift of values. As much as my son appreciates his toys, he easily parts with them as he outgrows them. The bulk of what I have is not rare, not like my father's archive. There should be little remorse when I shed a box of DVDs and reclaim that space with a set of Curious George books and a sippy cup. What I've learned from my dad, my son, and my work is that part of growing is letting things go.

Arthur (AJ) Boston

Scholarly Communications Librarian

Murray State University

aboston@murraystate.edu



Liaising Beyond English or: Fake It 'Til Ya Make It

I am Miami University's newest humanities librarian. I started last July, and I work with three departments, their various degrees and major, minor, and certificate programs. I arrived to my on-campus interview knowing English would be mine should I be hired. Likely, too, was my assignment to the Department of Theatre (THE). Once here, I learned the Department of Media, Journalism, and Film (MJF) was mine as well. Liaising with all of these departments creates a cohesive narrative for my daily work--they all handle ideas and words and their subsequent creation, performance, and reception, after all--but lately, my work with students in Media, Journalism, and Film has shown me how varied and interdisciplinary a world we inhabit even in "traditional" humanities scholarship.

Approximately five weeks after I started at Miami, so did the fall semester and all the public services work the term entails: one-shot sessions, in-office research consultations, email and desk reference. Week 1, day 4 of Fall 2015 brought me into the research methods class for the newly-created film studies major, FST 401: Seminar in Film Studies. Fall '15 students and I all met individually as the semester progressed and they began their capstone projects. One student and I discussed geographic and spiritual movement in the films of Chilean director Alejandro Jodorowsky. Another day, it was silent film and feminism, then the role of the long shot in Emmanuel Lubezki's *Birdman*. We chatted over the scholarly sources we found discussing horror and its unrepentant love of doomed romance (and duh, sex). Sometimes we simply laughed at subject headings as we went down the rabbit hole of academic research; many end in "etc..." as if they are as flummoxed by complex, intersecting ideas as the undergraduate researchers.

And this new librarian.

Sure, I can discuss narrative movement and audience, for example, but I am trained in literary scholarship, not film theory or technical production. Much of our easy and productive early conversation belied my inner monologue, the incessant “Oh, crap. Cinematography? What’s a good peer reviewed journal for that? How’s their formalism different than my formalism?”

But still.

By finals week in December, I was celebrating with them at their DIY end-of-term research symposium, listening to the work I had been honored to hear in its nascent stages, the same topics of which I had theretofore been relatively ignorant. I was learning as I went, teaching myself in the downtime between students, and helping others learn along the way. That quick-study hustle graduate school fosters in us all? It’s autodidactism (or self-directed learning), and it is a librarian’s daily bread. I suspected as much, but I needed eager future directors to remind me.

Now it is near the end of my first full academic year still serving not only Film Studies and English, but Theatre and all manner of Communications scholars. I am preparing for this week’s wave Spring 2016 FST 401 research projects. While I know even more acutely and specifically I cannot know it all, I feel so much better suited to serve these populations, the departments outside of my formal academic training, assured that even unfamiliarity can provoke intellectual engagement (and still interested in cinematography? Try starting with something like *Illuminace* or maybe *Film History*, depending how technical and international an overview you wish).

In a librarian’s world, sometimes our ignorance is the only thing we know for sure.

Erin Vonnahee

Humanities Librarian

Miami University Libraries

vonnahee@miamioh.edu



Modern Language Association 2016 Convention: Austin TX

In general, the consensus was that the MLA Convention felt smaller and quieter this year, whether that was because everything is bigger in Texas and we were dwarfed or for another reason is unknown.

What was exciting to me and interesting was the relative lack of brow-beating about the role and definition of digital humanities and much more critical examination as to how digital practices change scholarship. In addition, programs were less focused on grouping projects that involved digital practices into one session and more interested in returning to subject or theory focuses. On the whole, I can only see that as a good sign for all concerned. The lack of diversity in archives (print, realia, and digital) and metadata of all sorts continues to be an issue.

One example of that issue is the session on “Reexamining New World Encounters: Archives across Cultures,” which featured speakers on the Early French Caribbean, and on Californios and Anglos in Nineteenth-Century California. The second speaker in particular, Covadonga Lamar Prieto, went into detail about her difficulty in using archival sources organized by English-speaking and Anglo-centric archivists. It brought home to me how much the way in which our archives are arranged affects the story that is told.

In a sense, this was the topic of the precisely titled “Archival Practices” session. Of especial relevance was Charlotte Nunes’ discussion of the necessity of recognizing the intellectual labor of the archivist, which is informed by critical theory including the contingent constructed nature of historical narrative. Her work is best seen on [The Latina History Project](#). One of the most important things I learned was how little I know about current archive theory. Two key concepts were “post-custodial” archives and the “reverse digital divide.” The former is the growing practice in which archives will not necessarily be kept in a physical location with the creators but electronic collections will be available to all. The latter is that in the archival world, analog is now associated with privilege: digital simulacra are only good enough if you cannot afford access to the physical item(s).

Speaking of rights and privilege, the panel on “Disrupting the Digital Humanities: New Radical Publics” was a fascinating look at ways that digital practices could – or are not but should be – disrupting not only scholarly practices but also the practice of scholarship (position papers at <http://www.disruptingdh.com/>). Some of the same topics that I’ve already mentioned were raised, with the addition of the statement that just knowing that the algorithms [or metadata?] are biased isn’t sufficient. Spencer Keralis made an argument that I have made about scholarship in general but that seems to be more prevalent when using digital practices: the unpaid use of students is wrong; student labor in the classroom is never non-coerced (a grade is not compensation). As you might imagine, much discussion emerged from the session. We librarians might want to have similar discussions and explore our own desires or responsibilities to disrupt.

One of the best programs, and one that it would be interesting to repeat (although I might do it just a little differently), was “What We Talk about When We Talk about DH: Interdisciplinary Vocabularies,” organized by the Association for Computers and the Humanities. Five terms were chosen: archive, code, edition, curate, data, writing. Five individuals with different perspectives, including a librarian and an archivist, each defined a term as it is used in their field. Subsequently the floor was opened up for discussion and deliberation. At the end of the time period, the consensus appeared to be that there need not be an attempt to reconcile the different meanings but rather to use them as creative friction and to be precise in your writing so that everyone understands the definition that you are using.

A slightly similar technique was chosen to create what was carefully defined as a “repository” and not a “book” on Digital Pedagogy. Twenty-two concepts were chosen, each written about by an individual, and after sections were drafted, participants in the session and after the session – as well as anyone else – were invited to add commentary. (The repository is at <https://digitalpedagogy.commons.mla.org>. For abstracts and relevant materials, including pedagogical artifacts, visit <https://github.com/curateteaching/digitalpedagogy>”)

Fascinating for librarians interested in bibliography as well as for anyone who thinks about link-rot and how future scholars will locate documents cited today was “Bibliography in the Digital Age: Tools, Technologies,

Theories.” Ryan Cordell gave a most persuasive paper arguing that the bibliography of today lies in understanding how the OCR was created, by which program, by whom, when. As well as how the image was created, on what type of scanner, when and by whom. And, finally, how was the corpus constructed and why. These are the elements of “digital bibliography” that we will need to retain and be able to offer to scholars upon request. It raises serious questions for librarians and libraries. Should we be including this metadata in our catalog records? Where and how do we keep it? And, not least, how much can we ask of our vendors?

Thanks are due to Patricia Hswe for the very successful program organized by the Advisory Committee on the MLA International Bibliography on “[The Evolving Scholarly Record](#)”. I would like to see this program repeated at ALA or ACRL as the topic and speakers’ provocative and stimulating commentaries on the present and future of the scholarly record in the humanities made me think differently about collecting and also about how our patrons will be adding to scholarship – and thus how they will need to locate a diverse scholarly record in the future. Kathleen Fitzpatrick’s views on versioning excite me as a scholar and terrify me as a reference librarian.

As Comparative Literature goes through its own period of self-examination, this MLA Convention saw an interesting program discussing “The Problem of ‘World Poetry’: Comparative Poetics and Comparative Publics.” Posed as questions were the concept of “World” as contrasted with “Comparative,” “poetry” as a genre unto itself and whether or not it was a genre that translated among cultures, and whether or not poetry as a genre could be translated. I would refer you to abstracts or papers from this session; however, none were made available. I leave you then, with the above questions and the knowledge that our friends and colleagues in comparative literature are putting some very difficult theoretical problems to themselves.

Everything in “Editing at the Crossroads: Language Contact and Editions in Languages Other Than English” session could have applied to English as well; however, the works being discussed were mediaeval Italian, French, and Spanish. Points raised included the similarities between mediaeval and digital scholarship in the sense that the idea of the “text” is not always fixed. Also, page numbers are not necessarily the best way of understanding texts, given variant editions. Somewhat along the lines of the Roman de la Rose project at JHU, which controversially organizes by “scene,” the digital edition of Huon d’Auvergne (<http://huon-staging.herokuapp.com>) is considering organizing by *laisse*. One of the more provocative statements was the observation that we don’t know how to read the digital yet and prefer print, but are scholarly editions meant to be read? Would we still argue that there is an Ur text? Perhaps the scholarly edition in all its variety should move online, whatever becomes of the reading edition.

All in all, there were lively discussions and provocative statements throughout the Convention. Clearly, scholars care deeply about their research and the methods that they use to obtain their results, whether that is the organization of a traditional archive or the type of scanner used to create a newspaper image. Just as obviously, librarians and our institutions have roles in facilitating new directions and methods of research, as well as not only admitting our biases but also in trying to compensate for them. There were a fair number of sessions at which faculty warned the audience not to assume that all of the students had laptops, “even at expensive universities,” pointing to a digital divide. And, thanks to the session on archives, I now know also about the analog divide. Collectively, perhaps we can collaborate to overcome some of these difficulties.

If you have any questions about the Convention, I do hope you’ll ask.

Sarah Wenzel

Bibliographer for Literatures of Europe & the Americas

University of Chicago

sgwenzel@uchicago.edu



ACRL Membership Survey Results for LES

In April and May of 2015, ACRL and Avenue M Group, a research and consulting firm, conducted a large-scale survey of ACRL membership. The results were analyzed by Avenue M Group and released in the fall. ACRL leadership encouraged each section's membership committee chairs to create a document highlighting the results that would give us insight into our membership—who our members are and what is important to them—as well as to help us plan events or discussions and point us to where we can best promote the section.

I am pleased to report that LES members are motivated, engaged leaders! 78% of the members surveyed are very satisfied or satisfied with the value of ACRL membership. The most important benefits of membership include networking with other professionals, gaining leadership experience by serving on committees, learning new skills for our jobs, and taking advantage of professional development offerings. These results bode well for the continuing success for LES, since our membership is eager to be actively involved in section activities.

Most of us work at research universities, and the vast majority of our primary job functions are in research/reference/liaison work. 22% of us have been members from 1-5 years, 27% for 6-10 years, and 14% for 11-15 years. While the survey showed that 0% are library school students, we know from our monthly membership reports that we have 96 library school students (the results only reflect who took the survey). While we are glad to have those 96 students, we believe that this is a good group on which to focus our recruitment efforts. Additionally, the drop off after 10 years (after people get tenure or promotion?) shows that we should explore ways to retain members after this time period, perhaps by encouraging participation as a mentor. It would be nice also to see more members from 2- and 4-year colleges (only 24% of LES members are from these groups). During our Midwinter meeting, executive committee members suggested reaching out to the College and Community College Sections' leadership to connect with this latter group, while establishing regular communication with the New Members Round Table, alt-ac and DH+Lib groups, and the new digital scholarship interest group for greater recruitment and collaboration opportunities across the board.

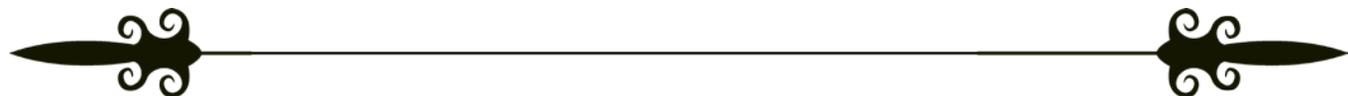
The survey results show what librarianship issues LES members identified as important and what gives us cause for concern. Keeping in mind that these were choices to be ranked, as opposed to free text fields, we consider student learning and information literacy, demonstrating the relevance and value of academic libraries, keeping up with and managing change, declining financial support and increasing workload, and human resource issues (lack of diversity, succession planning, etc.) most crucial in our careers and places of work. The LES Membership Committee will use this information to help us plan future discussion forums at ALA Annual and other events.

If you would like to see the highlights document that we compiled, it is in the LES Membership Committee's area on ALA Connect. We welcome questions and comments on any aspect of the survey results, and we hope that

you might find them useful as well. Please send your inquiries to Membership Committee Co-Chairs Piper Martin (pmarti17@uwyo.edu) or Liorah Golomb (lgolomb@ou.edu).

Piper Martin

Membership Committee Co-Chair
Humanities & Communication Liaison Librarian
University of Wyoming
pmarti17@uwyo.edu



***Guidelines for Deselecting Literatures in English Collections in Academic Libraries
Approved & Available***

On behalf of the task force charged with creating weeding guidelines specific to academic literature collections, I am pleased to announce that the guidelines were approved by the LES Executive Committee at the January 2016 meeting. In addition to feedback solicited from the LES-list, the document went through several rounds of vetting from LES members during the Collections Discussion Group meetings. [Guidelines for Deselecting Literatures in English Collections in Academic Libraries](#) is freely available at the LES website under “Publications and Projects.” We are confident the guidelines will provide solid criteria and special considerations for those of us embarking on large-scale deselection projects in our subject areas. Many thanks to Melissa Van Vuuren, Vicky Ludwig, Niamh McGuigan, Aline Soules, and Elizabeth Pepper for their good work in this worthwhile effort!

Robin Imhof

Humanities Librarian
University of the Pacific
rimhof@pacific.edu



Host ACRL Standards, Scholarly Communication Workshops in 2016

Today’s academic and research librarians increasingly act as change agents in the higher education community while being called on to demonstrate their value on campus. ACRL’s one-day scholarly communication and Standards for Libraries in Higher Education workshops help you achieve those goals through learning more about these important topics at your campus, chapter, or consortia. Facilitated by our team of expert presenters, both workshops provide a framework for libraries to grow, innovate, lead, and succeed.

ACRL Workshop

Scholarly Communication: From Understanding to Engagement

Scholarly Communication: From Understanding to Engagement

To help empower our community in accelerating the transformation of the scholarly communication system, ACRL is pleased to offer the day-long workshop, “Scholarly Communication: From Understanding to Engagement.” The workshop helps participants in very practical ways, such as preparing for library staff or faculty outreach, contextualizing collection development decisions to internal and external stakeholders, and initiating or supporting new models for scholarly communication. Details are available on the ACRL website at www.ala.org/acrl/issues/scholcomm/roadshow.

“The workshop helped me connect complex issues like the relationship between the open movement, copyright, and economics in a coherent way. It is good to have this conceptual framework moving forward.” – Scholarly Communication Workshop Participant

Standards for Libraries in Higher Education Training Workshops

The ACRL Standards for Libraries in Higher Education provide a framework for planning and assessment that can be adapted for a variety of circumstances including strategic planning, program review, and accreditation self-study. ACRL’s “Planning, Assessing, and Communicating Library Impact: Putting the Standards for Libraries in Higher Education into Action” workshop provides information on using the standards and other foundational documents as a framework to develop benchmarks, evaluate quality and performance, and demonstrate value. Details are available on the ACRL website at www.ala.org/acrl/standardsworkshop.

“In this workshop, the assessment process was presented in a clear, understandable way. Great job on difficult material!” – Standards Workshop Participant

Hosts are responsible for the full cost of both workshops and may choose to recover costs through registration fees. Stay tuned for more information on two new workshops currently under development that you can also bring to your campus, chapter or consortia on research data management and the intersections of scholarly communication and information literacy.



ACRL Preconferences @ 2016 ALA Annual Conference



ACRL is offering three preconferences in conjunction with the 2016 ALA Annual Conference in Orlando on Friday, June 24, 2016. Complete details, including descriptions, learning outcomes, and registration materials, are [online](#).

[Building a Curriculum on the Intersections of Scholarly Communications and Information Literacy](#)

This half-day, hands-on preconference will build librarians' capacity as leaders on issues and projects of campus-wide interest that involve elements of scholarly communication, information literacy, and their connections (i.e., data literacy, intellectual property, open access, etc.).

[Crossing the Threshold with Threshold Concepts: Redesigning a Library Instruction Lesson Plan](#)

The Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education offers a more conceptual approach to information literacy instruction by providing a set of "interconnected core concepts" rather than standards. In this full-day preconference, participants will learn and put into practice strategies to incorporate these threshold concepts into lesson design.

[Teaching Data Information Literacy: A Hands-on Introduction](#)

This interactive preconference, presented by the ACRL Instruction Section, consists of two parts. First, presenters will share their experiences in developing instruction around data information literacy. Part two will be conducted through hands-on exercises, in which participants will have the opportunity to formulate what they see as the most important skills for their target audience to acquire.

Contact Margot Conahan at mconahan@ala.org or call 312-280-2522 with questions.

ACRL's Rare Books & Manuscripts Section 2016 Conference Information



RBMS 2016 Conference – Early Bird deadline May 20!

Opening Doors to Collaboration, Outreach, and Diversity

Biltmore Hotel, Coral Gables, FL

Tuesday, June 21, 2016 – Friday, June 24, 2016

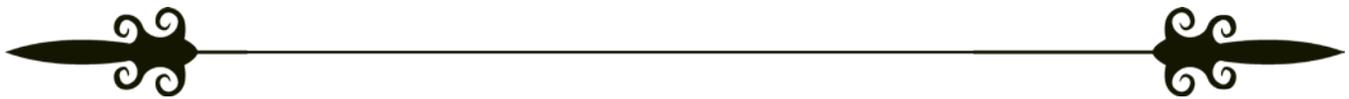
<http://conference16.rbms.info/>

Conference housing, tours and workshops are filling fast for what is sure to be a diverse and exciting program at the historic Biltmore Hotel in Coral Gables, FL. If you have yet to register, join us for all of the engaging plenary speakers, fantastic seminars and short paper sessions, as well as interactive discussion and poster sessions.

We look forward to seeing you in sunny Coral Gables!

Aislinn Sotelo and Lori Dekydtpotter

2016 RBMS Conference Program Planning Co-Chairs



Research Tools Outside of English Studies

MLA-IB, *Granger's*, and the OED: tried and tested stalwarts for patrons engaged in literary scholarship, these are tools that we promote and ourselves use on a regular basis. Earlier this semester, when I was talking with some graduate students about finding information on little-studied authors, the conversation turned to resources outside “standard” channels, and that got me thinking about the full range of tools used by students and faculty in English. We all teach general humanities resources like JSTOR, of course, or the Arts & Humanities Citation Index, but what disciplinary tools do we use that are somewhat outside the realm of literary studies? Below are three sets of resources that I have used repeatedly in consultations with students or faculty in English that arguably fit that description.

Historical newspapers can be helpful when documenting literary figures’ activities, popular reception of their works, and aspects of the social milieu where they operated. This is particularly true in situations where there is an absence of letters, journal entries, or other primary sources. For pre-1923 searching, I often direct patrons to [Chronicling America](#), the Library of Congress project that covers digitized newspapers from 1836 to 1922. For more recent searching, I will variously direct patrons to LexisNexis, Newspaper Source Complete, or similar tools. Across the board they respond most favorably to electronic resources that feature a print facsimile, as with the ProQuest Historical Newspapers versions of the *New York Times*, *Chicago Defender*, etc.

Image databases are not new, and undoubtedly you have worked with faculty to find visual resources in Artstor, flickr, or ECCO. Another category, however, that I find many patrons intrigued by when it comes up, whether they’ve used anything like it previously or not, are advertising images. Sometimes this is particularly useful for those engaged in cultural studies, but it crosses over into many areas. Duke University’s [Ad*Access](#) covers a range of U.S. and Canadian advertisements from 1911 to 1955, and the blend of product categories has been helpful in working with patrons studying gender-related topics. Other resources in this category include Coloribus Advertising Archive, and any number of [online collections](#), housed in academia and otherwise.

Library science databases rarely appear in my English consultations or classes, but the basic tools that articulate many of our organizational systems and concepts have regularly elicited interest from patrons. I have never once shown students the [Library of Congress Classification Outline](#) without at least a couple becoming visibly intrigued and requesting the URL. Occasionally in our Introduction to Scholarship in English Studies course, I have shown graduate students the Online Dictionary for Library and Information Science ([ODLIS](#)), which has proven a fine tool for elucidating library-speak, from bibliographic retrieval to manifestations, expressions, and works.

Presumably some readers have been thinking about how these are resources that scholars already know to use, and *how* to use, but both presuppose that your patrons are already aware that the resources exist. How often have you been in conversation with a faculty member and talked about something that they were unaware the library had acquired? Students, too, are often aware of resources heavily used in their discipline, but not always,

and certainly not for resources that may fall outside of their usual range of activities. You might send out two newsletters, seven emails, and a hand-written note about a new database, but if your contact is on sabbatical, under a heavy teaching load this quarter, or simply too busy, they may never even have heard about your library's best new resource.

Which tools did I miss that you know that your patrons could or do use for English Studies? Please mail les-l@lists.ala.org with ideas about other hidden gems that might work for our students and faculty.

John Glover

Humanities Research Librarian
Virginia Commonwealth University
jglover2@vcu.edu



The End of the Ink: *Added Responsibilities*

Over the last two issues of *Biblio-Notes* that Ashley Ireland and I have co-edited, one overriding theme has been that of *transition*. This should not be surprising as librarianship is a profession that is seemingly always-already in transition. Whether it is adapting to new technologies or user needs, librarians have to be ready and willing to accept change in order to be effective. Over the past year, my position at James Madison University (JMU) has evolved from liaising to a single department to multiple departments. The transition has required patience, a steep learning curve, and a deepening of my skills as a librarian.

I was hired by James Madison University in August, 2013 to be the liaison librarian to the English Department. This was my first position as a Librarian (with a capital “L”). This was a natural fit because in my previous professional life, I obtained a PhD in English and taught for four years as a Visiting Assistant Professor of English at Oklahoma State University (home of our very own David Oberhelman). For the first two years at JMU, I devoted all of my attention as a liaison to the English Department.

The last year and a half at the JMU Libraries has been one of change. Our previous Dean and Associate Deans both retired. Two other librarians retired, and three left to take new positions. This left us very understaffed. In the wake of so much turn over, I became the liaison to Theatre and Dance in addition to my duties as the English liaison in the Fall of 2015. If that wasn't enough, because our History liaison retired, I was also appointed interim liaison to the History Department that same Fall. This required more time, clearly. It also required immersing myself into two new and different departments, departments with different cultures from English, and having less time to do it (given the responsibilities already in place with the English department).

One way I immersed myself into the culture of Theatre and Dance more quickly was to establish embedded office hours. Their department has a “library” where I can easily hold office hours, making me fairly accessible to both students and faculty. I have continued this practice into the Spring semester and it has worked out beautifully. Because my liaison responsibilities with History were temporary, my main functions were to teach

one-shot instruction sessions and to focus on collection development. This meant becoming a quick study in databases and subject areas most useful to the History students and faculty. Meetings with several History faculty members, who all knew of our staffing crunch in the library in the Fall, were informative, and they were sympathetic to our plight. As a result, they did not push me too hard.

All in all, the experience has made me a better librarian because it broadened the base of my expertise. For librarians, especially early career librarians, who have a liaison program, situations like this are bound to occur. When they do, accept them as challenges rather than feel overwhelmed by them. This will only help you as you gain more experience in the field.

Dr. Brian Flota

Humanities Librarian

James Madison University

flotabc@jmu.edu



The End of the Ink: *Sticking with the Humanities Majors*

I am an English major. Oh, I've been out of college for some time, but I am, and always will be, an English major. About the time that I started thinking about preparing this Spring issue of *Biblio-Notes*, a couple of articles came across the daily higher ed newsletters that got my attention ("[Selling the English Major](#)" – in *Inside Higher Ed*, and "[Feeding English majors in the 21st Century](#)" – in *Chronicle of Higher Education*), as they discussed the employability of English majors. Shortly after that, the new governor of my state presented his proposal for the next biennial budget in a State of the Commonwealth address in which [he was quoted as saying](#), "All the people in the world that want to study French literature can do so, they are just not going to be subsidized by the taxpayer like engineers." Despite the intense backlash he received from this comment, the Lieutenant Governor [has has been quoted](#), within the last few weeks, as saying that history is not an employable major. While they didn't target English directly, I am personally affronted by this mindset that so disregards languages and learning, and the idea that learning for learning's sake, or for the sake of critical thinking and analysis, is a complete waste.

Sigh. Language majors turn out just fine. I mean, humanities majors can become a dean of libraries, or even a governor. (Yeah. The Governor of Kentucky was an [East Asian Studies major](#) at a liberal arts college before his career as a hedge fund manager, and then Governor).

I reject the idea that college students need to be able to articulate their career trajectory as a new high-school graduate, or even as a non-traditional student returning to college. Unfortunately, the truth is that the current social expectation of college is a job and employability, and so we need to help our humanities colleagues articulate to our students, their parents, and to our communities the practical value of these degrees. The thing that critics of the intensive study of humanities seem to be suggesting (although rather inarticulately) is missing is the practical acquisition of transferrable skills.

Rather than merely becoming incensed by these comments and policy decisions, I have decided to act. One of my priorities as Dean of Libraries at Murray State is to expand the internships we offer for students, which will help make the case for studying the humanities. I've started conversations with individual faculty members and administrators about serving as the third-party entity for students seeking hands-on learning. In our main library, we are offering a PR/Marketing internship to students who are looking for experience in managing the social media presence and our outreach efforts. In our special collections, archives, and museums, though, we offer a wealth of opportunities for hands-on learning that offers students the experience to work in-depth with a collection or materials that will, hopefully, translate to a marketable skill they can transfer. Students would become aware of the tension that exists between technology and text, and other themes that have been discussed in other articles of this very newsletter. Building and creating these relationships help the Libraries, because it gets students in front of collections that certainly need and deserve attention. It reminds faculty of the gems that exist in our collections that may strengthen their curriculum. It supports the University's Strategic Plan, emphasizing the importance of experiential learning opportunities. But ultimately, I believe that it, either subtly or otherwise, strengthens the idea of librarianship as a profession of the humanities.

Don't get me wrong. We do, and should continue to, recruit from those who are educated in STEM and the social sciences to the profession. I work with many at my institution, and I celebrate the differences in our education, as our organization is certainly strengthened because of them. But even if one's education is in the sciences, a profession in librarianship is a profession in the humanities. Questions aren't merely framed by the scientific method, but they become about the scholarly conversation. What has been done in the past? Why? What was the impact? What should be done now? What questions remain? These are inherently questions that have a historical, philosophical, and social perspective, and are thus of the humanities.

My library also offers a workshop series that is not directly tied to any course, and is marketed on social media and through flyers throughout our facilities. They've tended to focus on subjects that are broadly of interest to students completing research courses; for example, we routinely offer sessions on citation basics, Google and Google Scholar, and the basics of copyright and other scholarly communications topics. Now, though, I believe we'll add one titled, "What are you going to do with *that* major?: How to Become a Librarian."

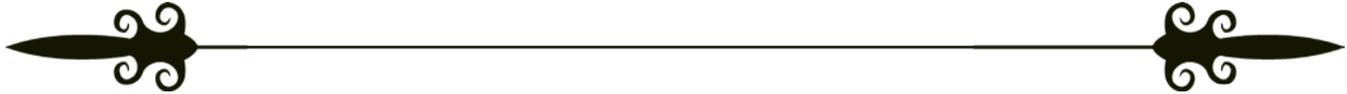
The truth is that librarianship isn't going to be on the career path that most of our humanities majors choose to take, but I believe that we'll all benefit from strengthening our relationship. I believe that we'll have fewer questions about the value of libraries if we loosen our grip on some of our more rare, exciting items, and turn them over to the students who will make policy decisions about our value in the next generation. We can work with faculty to make tailored, highly-impactful learning experiences based on the interests of the students, and we should.

Ashley Ireland

Dean of University Libraries

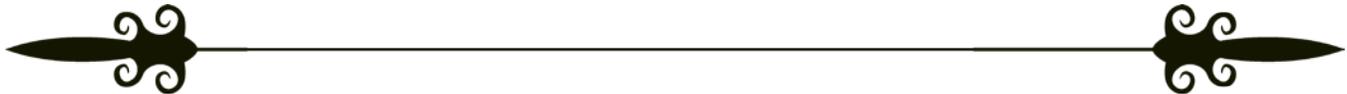
Murray State University

aireland@murraystate.edu



Call for Membership Updates

Have you accepted a new position? Been promoted? Done something else awesome? Let us know! Email aireland@murraystate.edu or flotabc@jmu.edu to be included in the membership updates section for the Fall 2016 issue of *Biblio-Notes*.



Editorial information

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 newsletter editors, Brian Flota, at flotabc@jmu.edu, or Ashley Ireland, at aireland@murraystate.edu.

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ACRL
50 East Huron Street
Chicago, IL 60611
(800) 545-2433, ext. 2523
www.acrl.org