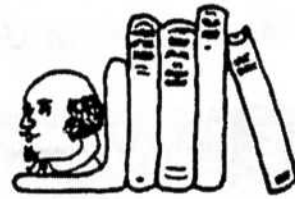


BIBLIO-NOTES

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News from the Chair

Aside from the paycheck, why do we do what we do? What principles lie behind our decisions? How can we improve our service? Back in the old days, when we were a lowly discussion group, our meetings often focussed on topics that expanded our practical knowledge and gave us new approaches to our work. The discussion portion of our Midwinter meeting centered on the question of collecting mysteries--and, by extension, all popular culture--in academic libraries. Of course no one formula will fit the needs of all institutions, but Susan Peters (Emory) and Amy Knapp (Pittsburgh) provided a stimulating look at the issues involved in collecting popular culture. Many thanks to Susan and Amy and to those who described their own ways of coping with the question.

Please remember to reserve Sunday, June 25, from 9:30-12:30, for the EALS program in Chicago. I'm quite excited to announce that J. Paul Hunter, Stephen E. Wiberley Jr., and Marcia Pankake have agreed to address the topic, "The Humanist and the Librarian: Creating a Collaborative Partnership." Hunter, the Chester D. Tripp Professor in the Humanities at the University of Chicago, will address "New Directions in Faculty Research and the Role of the Librarian." Wiberley, Bibliographer for the Social Sciences and Associate Professor at the University of Illinois at Chicago, will share the results of his research into the scholarly methods of humanists. EALS members may want to refresh their memories by glancing at three of his articles on the topic: "Patterns of Information Seeking in the Humanities," in *College & Research Libraries*, v. 50, no. 6, p. 638; "Habits of Humanists: Scholarly Behavior and New Information Technologies," in *Library Hi Tech*, v. 9, no. 1, p. 17; and "Humanists Revisited: A Longitudinal Look at the Adoption of Information Technology," *College & Research Libraries*, v. 55, no. 6, p. 499. Pankake, Bibliographer for

English and American Literature and Professor at the University of Minnesota, will speak about ways in which the librarian can effectively assist humanities scholars. Come with questions and your own ideas of how we can form partnerships with the teaching faculty. See you in Chicago.

Michaelyn Burnette
University of California, Berkeley
EALS Chair, 1994-95

SECTION LISTSERV

At the Midwinter Business Meeting, the Executive Committee decided to establish EALSL as the official list for the English and American Literature Section. To subscribe to the list, send a message to:

listserv@gwuvvm.gwu.edu

The first (and only) line of the message should read:

subscribe ealsl <your name>

Example:

subscribe ealsl martha jones

EALS held a panel discussion, "Whose Body? Whose Library?", at ALA Midwinter in Philadelphia on February 4, 1995, which was attended by 27 librarians and other interested parties. Susan Peters of Emory University and Amy Knapp of the University of Pittsburgh presented their views on the issues surrounding collecting mystery and other genre fiction in academic libraries. This was not really a debate, but the two speakers raised both positive and negative issues for consideration.

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ASSOCIATION OF
COLLEGE
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LIBRARIES
DIVISION OF THE
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Although Amy Knapp selects mysteries for her collection, she noted several obstacles to developing mystery collections in academic libraries.

- Mystery collections are sometimes hard to justify without a curriculum to support it.

- Such collections could duplicate the collections of local public libraries.

- Does one copy of a popular title satisfy readers, or will they be more frustrated at seeing it listed in the online catalog but never on the shelf? Public libraries may provide better service for these kinds of collections, since they routinely purchase multiple copies of popular titles.

- Will the Collection Development policy be specific enough to aid selectors?

- There are hidden costs of repair, rebinding and replacement associated with popular fiction. These books will have higher-than-average theft and mutilation rates.

- Popular and genre fiction is generally printed on bad paper with small margins, which is poor for rebinding.

Amy also reported that she buys mystery novels from an endowed fund, giving the fund high visibility.

Susan enumerated several reasons for academic libraries to build collections of mystery and other genre fiction.

- Part of collection development is to predict future tastes and interests. The stature and popularity of mystery fiction may grow with new audiences.

- The criteria used to determine what either "Literature" or "literature" is, are changing, as cultural studies are increasingly incorporated into literary studies.

- Popular fiction reflects the society in which it was written, representing popular views and popular values. Many mystery writers are concerned with contemporary social issues.

- Public libraries are generally faced with decreasing budgets and acute space constraints, and cannot be counted on to either acquire or preserve collections.

- It is appropriate to select materials for staff use--Emory has over 7,000 employees, and staff members are a large user group for the literature collections.

Susan stated that she focuses on several areas of mystery and detective fiction--Southern mystery writers, gay and lesbian mystery, "Golden

Age" mystery writers--while excluding "police procedurals."

During the question and answer period, one person mentioned that the purchase of remainder copies, either as first or second copies, would be a means of saving money. In response to a question about review sources, Susan felt that the *New York Times Book Review*, while reviewing only a few books a month, is biased toward the "hard-boiled" school of mystery and detective fiction. "Sisters-in-Crime" was formed to counter that bias, and they routinely have a booth at ALA conventions. The discussion changed to science fiction, and it was mentioned that, again, the *New York Times Book Review* is not a good source for reviews, but that two better sources are *Locus* and the *New York Review of Science Fiction*.

The EALS Executive Committee meeting followed the panel discussion. A formal discussion concerning whether to accept Novelist as the official listserv for EALS will occur at the ALA Annual Convention in Chicago this summer. [Editor's note: a decision to establish a new listserv was made at the Business Meeting].

2) A draft of the Bylaws was presented to the Executive Committee. The Bylaws Committee consists of Michaelyn Burnette, Tim Shipe, Rob Melton and Madeline Copp. Several questions raised by the draft were resolved in votes of the attending members (final results in parentheses). The Newsletter Editor will be a non-voting member of the Executive Committee, appointed by the Executive Committee (16-2) with a term limit of three years, and may be reappointed to an indefinite number of terms (12-5). Several wording changes were proposed, and the draft was unanimously approved as amended. Many thanks to the Bylaws Committee for all their work!

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**MID-CAREER REFLECTIONS OF
AN ENGLISH AND AMERICAN
LITERATURE LIBRARIAN
by Kathleen A. Johnson**

Three features remain constant in the professional landscape I have passed through, although the vista changes as

the journey progresses. They are working with people--colleagues, co-workers, students, and faculty; working with collection development; and making technology work for us.

PEOPLE

First, a look a long way backwards, to library school in 1972-73. Having just finished my bachelor's degree at a small private college, surrounded by 22-year old English majors, I was amazed at the variety of ages, backgrounds, and life experiences of my companions, the library school students. Although the value of "diversity" was not articulated then as it is now, I quickly learned to respect their strengths and different interests. I also found I had to rethink my approach to work; as an English major, I researched and wrote in solitude, sharing the results of my labors in seminars and classrooms. That approach was based on friendly competition, with an egocentric emphasis on individual creativity, originality, and insight. Reference courses changed the focus from self to others: although still responsible for knowing the reference works myself, suddenly cooperation rather than competition was emphasized. Finding the correct answer quickly for a patron sometimes demanded teamwork and I started to recognize that two heads can be better than one.

In the mid-1990s, in a library which practices participatory management, I work with colleagues and with paraprofessional staff on a daily basis. In addition to calling on others for help with reference questions, I have learned how to work with people to solve problems (canceling serials, writing grants, handling large gift collections, creating handouts, editing a newsletter, interpreting library resources, reclassifying older materials, developing the online catalog). Individual creativity, insight, and originality are still valuable assets, but they are harnessed to the twin institutional goals of developing and organizing the best collection within our limits and of teaching people to use these resources effectively.

One reason I became a librarian was that I did not want to teach in a classroom. Yet I find myself teaching every day, either through library instruction or reference, and enjoying it. Showing edgy new students how to use this large library for their benefit continues to challenge me. At the start of a class, I often tell students that coming to this library is rather like arriving in New York City. At first, it

seems too huge and confusing to cope with, but after a while you find the corner deli with the great pastrami sandwiches and cheesecake and you figure out how to get to the museum you want. You learn that you don't have to cope with the entire city at once, and suddenly it seems like a friendlier place. I add that I'll show them how to locate the library's great pastrami sandwiches.

COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT

In 1973, librarians kept huge desiderata files, which made somewhat more sense than it does now, as books went out of print very slowly. I had nothing to buy desiderata with, however, as I was assigned the princely sum of \$200.00 per year. With it I was to buy replacements or new books for my seven subject areas. The rest of the discretionary money was allocated to departmental book chairmen and all meaningful purchase decisions took place outside of the building; the year prior to my arrival, the English Department had over \$10,000 in discretionary funding.

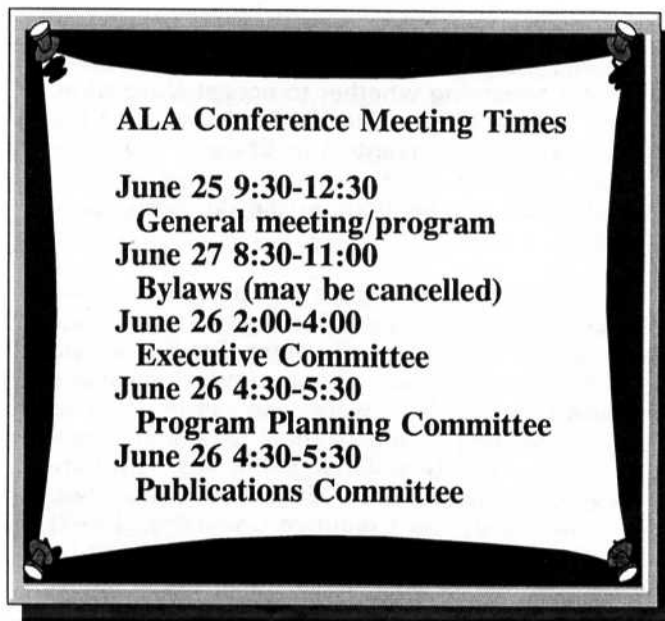
I did have a pittance for new serials for the English Department that year. Early in 1974, the Libraries subscribed to several new titles, among which were *Index of American Periodical Verse* (\$12.50; \$59.50); *International Fiction Review* (\$6.00; \$15.38); *Browning Institute Studies* (\$15.00; now *Victorian Literature and Culture*, \$47.50); *Critical Inquiry* (\$10.50; \$84.00); and *International Index to Film Periodicals* (\$17.95; \$122.06). The first figure is the 1974 price; the second, that for 1993-94.

In fiscal year 1972-73, at the University of Nebraska, library books received 51% of the funding; library periodicals received 49%. That same fiscal year, humanities serials received 6.3% of the total serials funding. The 1969/70 to 1973/74 five year average was 6.6%. (Humanities serials made up 7.2% of the serials budget in 1993/94--close to the 6.6% average of twenty years earlier.)

American and English imprints formed the bulk of materials purchased for English. Some materials from elsewhere in Europe were also purchased, largely in English and German. But the Anglo-American bias was evident in the collection. Most of the materials came through the Richard Abel Plan; although it was an "approval plan," the library administration strongly discouraged us from returning any titles.

Much has changed since then. Over the past two decades, the library administration has significantly increased librarians' discretionary funds, while even the departmental funds, though nominally in the hands of the book chairs, are often controlled by the librarians as well. With inflation stripping away buying power, desiderata files are a thing of the past, although I keep a file of expensive titles and a list of incomplete serials and sets.

Between 1973 and the present, the libraries have not quite doubled the number of state dollars allocated to monographs, but have increased the number of dollars for serials nearly six-fold. Despite this increase, the library has rarely had money to purchase new serial titles. Since the mid-1980s, purchasing titles has usually been possible by canceling another serial title of equal or greater value.



The current ratio of serials to monographic purchases from state funds is about 70/30. This balance has been maintained by means of serials cancellations. We have gone through four rounds since 1986; at first, I "protected" serials in English by cutting big microform sets, such as *The Eighteenth Century*. The easy targets are gone now and the current cut is painful. Electronic article suppliers, such as UnCover, coupled with a full subsidy for faxing articles to faculty and graduate students, assuage some of the misery. However, many users complain that they cannot scan the journals themselves as they would like to. Serendipitous discovery is reduced. Getting

people to accept the concept of access rather than ownership of many materials is tough. And they are right to protest the lesser good, inevitable though it is.

The decrease in the number of monographs has been less obvious than cuts in serials, but we have had to reduce our automatic receipt of British imprints from all qualifying university and trade press titles to only those from Oxford, Clarendon, and Cambridge presses. We also purchase fewer American imprints, both through the approval plan and through discretionary purchases. The collection of current scholarship is sliding from a modest research level to study level. It is no longer even a fairly good current Anglo-American collection, but rather a fair current American collection.

TECHNOLOGY

In library school, after two AACR I cataloging courses, I swore off cataloging as a career. I hated making decisions, based on what seemed to me to be arcane rules; worse, correctly typing a catalog card on a manual typewriter seemed the depth of tedium. I don't recall learning anything about shared cataloging, outside of the National Union Catalog.

Today I zip effortlessly around in OCLC and RLIN, as I help people with reference questions. I am also working a few hours a week in cataloging, helping to reclassify Dewey Decimal books from the 800s into the PRs and PSs. Working in Cataloging has reinforced my awe at the work catalogers and highly skilled paraprofessionals do. It has also helped me understand more about how the collection is organized.

In library school, "computer search" was something a very few initiates performed in a carefully locked room. Few databases were available. There was also talk about "wet carrels" in libraries, by which was meant a desk space where students could access various forms of media. But, I never saw a "wet carrel" or touched a computer.

By the late 1970s, we were trained as "computer searchers." Fee-based searching was a nerve-wracking process, as we tried to avoid costly errors. The tiny portable machine I searched on had a telephone coupler at the back--you put the receiver into the rubber cups and then manually keyed in to Dialog. The results were printed on flimsy heat sensitive pa-

per that yellowed and dried up after a while. When we got new IBM PCs it was like a revelation--you actually got to see the text flash across the screen at 1200 baud, with results printing out on decent paper. Searching still caused tension, but the results looked better.

In the 1970s and 1980s, the English Department faculty and students were never large consumers of computer searching, probably due in part to the expense (even with a subsidy available) and in part to the nature of their research. The best change brought by new technology was bringing up the online catalog in 1990. I first realized the powerful charm of electronic catalogs the day I watched the technicians install the new terminals. As they finished wiring each terminal, a student started using it. No instructions needed. Just a walk across the room from the card catalogs, a walk from the past into the future. Even faculty with Luddite tendencies have been won over.

For collection development, having access to the online catalog in my office has been nothing short of miraculous. It has profoundly affected both the quality and quantity of my materials selection, for I can speedily see how any title will complement or enhance the existing collection.

The ease of using the online catalog was not completely paralleled by some of the other new technology. With the coming of compact disk technology and user friendly services such as FirstSearch, nearly all the tension about wasting money has gone out of computer searching. But, however easy using these electronic resources seems to me now, making that transition proved stressful.

A few years ago, librarians here felt caught up in a riptide of new electronic resources--within a very short time, we had to learn to use not only the online catalog, three electronic mail programs, the networked databases system, individual databases on the network, the Internet, the local gopher, Expanded Academic Index, UnCover, FirstSearch, and RLIN, but also a number of stand-alone cd-roms such as the Oxford English Dictionary on CD-ROM or the Philosopher's Index. This year, I finally feel as if I've begun to pull free of the riptide and am beginning to swim with the new resources. But the recollection of being overwhelmed by too many new electronic resources, all of which required different search skills, is still strong. I often think of this as I teach our

users how to navigate the numerous resources they can find at our library.

In the 1990s, more English Department faculty and students use various electronic resources, and my role has shifted from intermediary to teacher. Though, even now the number of faculty and students using their electronic mail to gain access to online resources is small. I still have a lot of outreach to do.

So--I will continue on my journey. People will continue to need each other to accomplish goals together within the library. Students and faculty will continue to need our help and we need them to give meaning to our work. Collection development will continue to require making choices, but sometimes new ways of finding information make the tough choices more bearable. I've learned that technological changes shape the way I work, but that I can use this technology to meet human needs. I look forward to the next two decades with a bit of trepidation and a lot of curiosity.

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SENDING BOOKS OFF TO STORAGE by Raymond Soto

By the late 1970s the multitude of books was filling our shelves at UCLA and the shelves of all the other UC campuses as well. In 1987 the Southern Regional Library Facility (hereafter called SRLF) was built on the western edge of the UCLA campus building to be built in three phases; its purpose is to store little used materials from the five southern campuses of the University of California. The materials can be requested online, and are delivered to each campus within 24 hours, via a system of vans. The first phase holds 3,000,000 volumes and is now almost full (2.6 million volumes in June 1994). The second part of the building is under construction and will open in December 1995 to hold an additional 3.5 million volumes. The third phase is projected to be built by 2010. When it is full, the building will have 10 million volumes. Will the fever for writing have passed by then? Will books no longer be printed by then, but distributed instead on perpetual thought packets (PTPs)

which, I hope, won't take up much space?

Of that first 2.6 million volumes, almost two million of them were deposited by all the UCLA libraries over the past eight years. But the shelves in this building, the University Research Library, are filling up again and the new books are still coming into our receiving room--56,923 of them in the humanities and the social sciences during the last fiscal year. Therefore, for all of the new books I bring to the shelves, I have to send some of the older books away--almost all to the SRLF, though I do withdraw a small number because they are superseded editions, or because one of the other campuses has already deposited their copy in the SRLF and I can't duplicate it, or because someone has already stolen it and I can't easily replace it.

To select these older books, I use an ongoing review process which causes me and a student assistant to go up into the stacks and look at the books on the shelves in a three quarter cycle. Here's how it works:

FIRST QUARTER. I select an area of my literature stacks to review. The student, with some simple criteria (title published prior to 1980 which has not circulated in the last ten years, or is an additional copy, or has brittle pages), puts a slip of paper in the volumes meeting those parameters. I follow along in a few days and look at the books she has slipped. I apply some more criteria which I'll list below, and if a volume fits my new criteria or if I can't bear to let it go to the SRLF for good and sound reasons (of course I'm the judge of that), I remove the slip, and the book is relieved.

SECOND QUARTER. A letter is sent to each faculty member whose department is served by the University Research Library, advising them that our ongoing program of transfers to SRLF is in progress and that books in such-and-such call number ranges are ready for **them** to review. And the books, with white slips sticking out of them, wait for the faculty to look at them. The white slip is a half sheet (4 1/2" x 11") which explains the need to transfer materials and tells how they can be retrieved on one side. The other side says: "If you feel that the decision should be reconsidered, please fill out this form completely and deposit it in one of the 'SRLF Transfer Decision' boxes located at the circulation desk or at the exits." The form to fill out calls for the call number of the book, author, title, name and

affiliation of the person pulling out the slip, and the reason why we should retain the book in the stacks. The truth is if a person pulls out a slip, does not fill it out, and throws it in the nearest trash can, that will stop the transfer process for that book. But a few faculty and few more graduate students dutifully fill out the slips and let me know they were in the stacks. Their reason is always sound: They are using those books; how dastardly of me to try to send them away. And I agree. Of several hundred books I leave slipped, I get back, maybe, ten slips a quarter.

THIRD QUARTER. The circulation stack crew is notified which sections the faculty could have had their ways with the previous quarter, and the crew removes those books with the white slips still in them. Off they go on trucks to be transferred by the Processing Section. At last they get to spend the rest of their days in the SRLF, where the climate is controlled (60 degrees Fahrenheit, 50% humidity), where they can be used on site, or from where they can be paged back to any library for use within 24 hours. Are these books little used? 67,000 of them were paged back to a UCLA library, and another 15,000 of them were used at the SRLF last fiscal year. If we've made a mistake, if the relevant faculty member didn't review the shelves the appropriate quarter, if too many people keep asking for the same book, we can transfer the book back to the owning library, but that doesn't happen very often.

I have been the bibliographer for English and American literature for only the last year. My penultimate predecessor reviewed all of the books in the Library of Congress PR classification. My immediate predecessor had reviewed the PSs to the early 19th century, which is where I took up the assignment. Therefore the criteria I have used to select for storage have been developed for American literary authors. When I begin to review the PEs (English Language) and the PNs (theory, criticism, and genre studies) I am sure I will need to develop different criteria. Here, then, are some of the questions I ask when I look at the books the student has slipped:

✓ Is this the only book on this shelf by or about this author? If there are others, have any of them been used, or is this person unknown and shunned? (I drag along a copy of the *Oxford Companion to American Literature*. Does this person have an entry? What's said?

No entry almost certainly dictates leaving the slip on the book.)

✓ Is it in a language other than English? If this is a translation of a literary work, I will probably leave the slip in the volume. I sent a Russian translation of *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* to storage without a third thought. If it is a critical or biographical work, I will keep it if it is in a major modern European language. I don't know a single student in the English Department that could read a study of Poe in Finnish or Icelandic, but several could read the French or German studies.

✓ What edition am I looking at? First? Only? A scholarly critical edition or trade reprint? Does it have some critical apparatus (an introduction or bibliography) that would be of use to a new reader?

✓ Is this author already part of the canon--not the big 26 writers marked by Harold Bloom, but the canon of those studied and written about? If NOT, I want to try to leave at least one title by this author, an a critical/biographical/bibliographical work if I have one. This is so the author can at least be sampled and, if citations exist, be recalled from storage through our online catalog.

This last question brings me to address the effect of the canon on selection. I've decided the canon causes a vicious cycle and a selffulfilling procedure. I'm aware of it, but I'm not sure how much I can or want to do about it.

If I was not acquainted with the history of English and American literature, I could tell you very easily and quickly by looking at my shelves which authors flourishing before 1950 are considered to be the most important. All of their books, and all of the books about them, have circulated frequently and steadily, even unto today.

Funny how that works. The faculty teach about these canonized authors in their courses. The students study them. Faculty and students develop a common historical frame and language. The students repeat it when they become the faculty. People are using these books in my library. There is absolutely no chance I will send these books to the SRLF, though a case can be made that since these books are well cataloged, and well cited in everyone's published works about these au-

thors, these are precisely the books that can be found in the catalog and requested from the SRLF.

The reverse case can be made that perhaps the books I should keep on the shelves are those that are unused and undiscovered, so they could still be browsed. If I send them to the SRLF, it is very unlikely that someone will find them and use them.

To reinforce these arguments, here is a cautionary story. Professor Barbara Packer is a scholar of 19th century American literature at UCLA. Emerson is her guy. She was asked to write the entry on "Transcendentalism" for the forthcoming *Harvard History of American Literature*. Roaming the stacks near Emerson's books, looking for other writers from his period and place, she found a woman poet, though not an acquaintance or parishioner of Emerson's, who had read the same translation of Kant's ideas by Madame de Staël. Even better, this woman was a wonderful poet, though overlooked, and shed a different light on Transcendentalism. So Professor Packer published an article about this poet. Colleagues around the country asked where she had found this poet? "On our shelves at UCLA."

Well, not anymore. Not knowing her interest, and since Professor Packer didn't review the shelves when those white slips were showing on the shelves, I seem to have hidden this poet in SRLF. Professor Packer, understanding about my space problem, but certainly not happy with it, says, "Of course I teach the canon, and so my students use those books, but that is not where I do my research."

What do I do about literature that is too recent to be canonized? I haven't got the guts to review it. I just won't look at the authors after 1950--except the unrepentant genre writers like Sue Grafton, or Rex Stout (I know their readers will track them down and page them back. Not a chance they'll slip away into the crowd.) Dissertations are already being written about Raymond Carver and Don DeLillo, but I haven't seen any about David Plante. Will Carver last? Will Plante be found to be as wonderful as Sarah Orne Jewett? Maybe--if he's left on the shelf to be found.

Of course the shelves I refuse to review are filling the fastest and are the most crowded. Each year we are publishing wonderful new poets, novelists, essayists, short story writers, whom I have to add to the collection for the future. But faculty research looks at earlier times, and students look at the canon. This is more irony than I like.

What do I want to help me in this selection process as I send new books off to storage? Certainly more complete cataloging, so there is some chance for more successful browsing online. More indexing in more sources would be helpful to lead new readers to these lesser used but no less useful books. Most important, I want more faculty and graduate student vigilance. Maybe I'll stuff their mailboxes with a copy of this article.

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