



# Biblio-Notes

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## Notes from the Chair

Dear LES Members,

Spring has finally sprung! This winter has been an especially hard one for many this year, so I imagine we are all happy to see the warmer temperatures that are finally arriving. Spring also means that LES begins to look forward to the ALA Annual meeting this summer in Las Vegas.

We have a great program planned for ALA Annual. Our joint LES/SEES/WESS conference program "Embedded" Cultural Communities in Europe and the Americas: Challenges for Librarians" will take place on Saturday June 28<sup>th</sup> from 1:00-2:30 in LVCC-S232. Focusing on Basque, Romani, and Native American cultures, this panel will address the challenges librarians face as they collect materials for and about "embedded" ethnic groups.

In addition to our program, we will have our regular discussion groups. Please be on the lookout for calls for discussion topics from our discussion leaders: Judith Arnold and Hazel McClure (Collections), Ping Situ and Alex Watson (New Members), and John Glover and Kristen Hogan (Reference). Our General Membership Forum will feature a panel on career

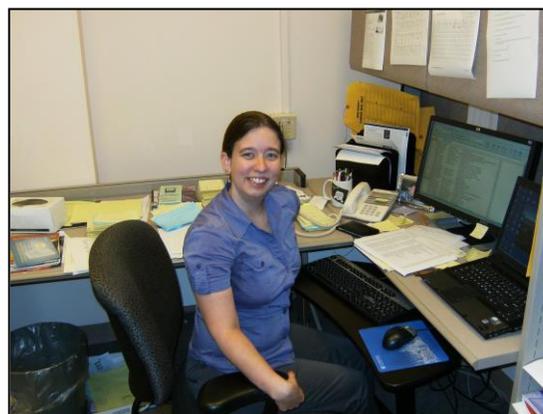


Photo provided by Arianne Hartsell-Gundy

paths to literature librarianship and will take place on Sunday June 29<sup>th</sup> 1:00-2:30 BALLY-Bronze 3. Please see below for details on our other meetings.

We don't just have a busy ALA Annual schedule. We also have some great collaborations and projects happening. We will again be co-sponsoring an Emerging Leader this year, along with the ACRL ARTS section. Applications for the Emerging Leaders program should come out in May, so think about applying if you qualify.

Our [bibliographies on Zotero](#) are up and working! Our thanks go to the Publications Committee for their work on this project, especially Ruth Boeder.

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We also are continuing our sponsorship of a liaison to the Modern Language Association. We want to continue this partnership into the future and leave the door open for liaisons to other relevant higher education organizations, so the Executive Committee has been working on adding some language to our Governance Procedures to make this commitment official. Here is the language that we are adding:

“The Section strongly supports ACRL Liaisons to Academic Societies and seeks to encourage activities of ACRL liaisons as well as to create avenues to bring what ACRL Liaisons have learned back to the larger membership. To that end, LES will provide up to 25% of its budget, subject to availability, in support of liaison activities.”

We will be voting on this addition at one of our Executive Committee meetings at ALA Annual. If you have any comments, concerns, or additions, please send them to me at [hartsea@miamioh.edu](mailto:hartsea@miamioh.edu) before the conference.

Hopefully you have heard the good news that the ACRL Digital Humanities Discussion Group has recently expanded to an ACRL Interest Group. LES has a strong connection to this group, including many shared members, so we are pleased to see this development.

You may have heard that as of September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2014, ACRL members will be able to affiliate with as many ACRL Communities of Practice (sections, interest groups, etc.) as they wish at no additional cost. This is a major change from the past when we had to pay an additional \$5 for each section/interest group over the three complementary affiliations. With this new change, now may be the time to start encouraging an interested colleague to join our ranks!

After Annual, I'll be passing on the chair duties to our Vice-Chair/Chair Elect Laura Taddeo. I've greatly enjoyed serving as your chair and would like to thank the LES Executive Committee for all their work. I look forward to seeing all the excellent things we will be continuing to accomplish.

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## LES @ ALA Annual Conference 2014

\*\* Not an official LES meeting but of broad interest to the LES membership

### Saturday, June 28

*8:30 am -10:00 am*

Executive Committee Meeting 1  
Las Vegas Convention Center,  
N216

*10:30 am – 11:30 am*

MLA International Bibliography  
in Academic Libraries  
Discussion Group\*\*  
Las Vegas Convention Center,  
N115

*1:00 pm – 2:30 pm*

“Embedded” Cultural  
Communities in Europe and the  
Americas: Challenges for  
Librarians (Co-sponsored by  
LES, SEES, and WESS)  
Las Vegas Convention Center,  
S232

*4:30 pm – 5:30 pm*

New Members Discussion  
Group  
Las Vegas Convention Center,  
N201

### Sunday, June 29

*10:30 am – 11:30 am*

Reference Discussion Group  
Las Vegas Convention Center,  
N203

*1:00 pm – 2:30 pm*

General Membership Forum  
Bally’s Las Vegas, Bronze 3

*3:00 pm – 4:00 pm*

Collections Discussion Group  
Las Vegas Convention Center,  
N202

*4:30 pm – 5:30 pm*

Digital Humanities Interest  
Group\*\*  
Las Vegas Convention Center,  
N263

### Monday, June 30

*8:30 am – 10:00 am*

All Committees Meetings  
Las Vegas Convention Center,  
N219

*10:30 am – 11:30 am*

Executive Committee Meeting II  
Las Vegas Convention Center,  
N216



### Swan Isle Press

It is a pleasure to introduce ALA/LES to [Swan Isle Press](#) (hereafter, SIP), an “independent, not-for-profit, literary publisher dedicated to publishing works of poetry, fiction and nonfiction...” The emphasis of SIP is on producing literary works in translation that meet high editorial, design, and production standards. To meet these standards, it averages one to two books a year. It began in 1999 primarily as a publisher of Spanish and Latin

American literature in bilingual Spanish-English editions. The [titles](#) it has published to date, consisting of works translated from Spanish, Catalan, and French, include both major international authors like Jaume Cabré, the renowned Catalan author whose collection of short stories, *Winter Journey*, was previously untranslated into English; the correspondence of Salvador Dalí and Federico García Lorca, *Sebastian's Arrows*; Nobel Prize winner Juan Ramón Jiménez, *The Complete Perfectionist*; other highly respected novelists and poets; as well as the literary works of less familiar authors, giving voice to literary works of merit.

The recently published Victor Hugo book, *God and The End of Satan*, is SIP's first publication of a bilingual French-English edition. It consists of Hugo's last, posthumously published, epic poems, which have been compared in depth and brilliance to the metaphysical poems of William Blake. In addition to R.G. Skinner's fine edition, translation and scholarly introduction, this book features a forward by the preeminent Hugo translators, E.H. Blackmore and A.M. Blackmore (who declare of this book that "The most serious gap in English translations of Hugo has now been filled."), and 13 of Hugo's drawings.

Among the factors contributing to SIP's distinctiveness are a) that it focusses on providing translations of hitherto untranslated literary works<sup>1</sup> and b) that a large number of its literary authors are women. The latter include Marjorie Agosín (Chile), Alicia Borinsky (Argentina), Lucía Charún-Illescas (Peru), Olivia Maciel (Mexico), Circe Maia (Uruguay), Inés María Martiatu (Cuba), and Leda Schiavo (Argentina). This matters because women authors in general are underrepresented in translations, as was noted in the panel discussion at the recent London Book Fair on the topic, "Where are the Women in Translations?."<sup>2</sup>

Since its inception, Swan Isle Press has had a close association with the University of Chicago Press, which markets and distributes SIP's imprints. This close association has been extremely beneficial, but sales are lagging. One might expect that a major literary work like the one by Victor Hugo would capture the academic market, but it no longer is the case that even worthy literary or scholarly books are guaranteed success. During these harsh economic times, with approval plans on the decline and PDA plans on the rise, the major publishing houses have increased dominance in the academic market. How then does a small, artisanal 501(c)(3) indie publisher, embodying the highest academic and literary values, overcome these challenges in the academic market? I'm hoping that this article may help somewhat.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> According to Bowker and the [Three Percent Blog](#) from the University of Rochester, only three percent of published books in the U.S. are translations. The figure is evidently smaller for original translations.

<sup>2</sup> Harris, Susan. "The Women in Translation: Right Here." *Words Without Borders*. Accessed April 20, 2014. <http://wordswithoutborders.org/dispatches/article/the-women-in-translation-right-here>.

<sup>3</sup> As a matter of full disclosure, David Rade, director and editor of Swan Isle Press, is my cousin, and I recently became a member of the editorial advisory board.



## Notre Dame's Modern American Poetry Collection

The University of Notre Dame recently added three important collections to its holdings relating to modern American poetry, holdings which have been expanding gradually for over two decades by acquiring most of the books handled by [Small Press Distribution](#). The collections that we've added since 2010 include Robert Creeley's library, Ed Dorn's papers from the last twenty years of his life, and a large collection of little magazines and small press books from the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century. All three collections were purchased from Steve Clay's [Granary Books](#).

The Creeley collection includes more than 6,600 trade books, pamphlets, and serial issues from the personal library of Robert Creeley; eleven enormous artists' books on which he collaborated with individuals such as Robert Indiana; a small collection of correspondence between Creeley and his daughter; and a number of audio tapes. Especially remarkable about this collection is that Creeley used his library as a filing system, so that hundreds of books contained letters, postcards, clippings, brochures, and other ephemera that might reflect what the book signified to him. For example, Creeley's book titled *Presences: A Text for Marisol* contained a postcard from the artist, Marisol, and a page-long letter from literary critic, Sherman Paul, among other inserts. In another book, opposite a poem by Creeley about his elderly grandmother's trip to the West Coast, he had inserted an article clipped from a local newspaper reporting on her trip! All the inserts have been placed in acid-free folders that identify the book and exact pages in which they were found.

In February, 2014, Professor Steve Fredman of the English Department (the major impetus behind the acquisition of all three of these collections) organized a Symposium on Robert Creeley's Library. The Symposium, which can be viewed on YouTube, featured a rare book exhibit which he curated and panel discussions by the poet's widow, Penelope Creeley, and Steve Clay of Granary Books, among others. Processing of the collection was remarkably swift, with Creeley's own works being located in the Rare Book Collection and the rest of his library going to our Medium Rare Collection.

The Papers of Edward Dorn contains correspondence from some 300 individuals, Dorn's notebooks and other manuscripts, and audio tapes from the latter part of his life in the 1990s and also the archives of the little magazine, *Rolling Stock*, which he and his wife, Jennifer Dorn, edited. His earlier papers reside with the University of Connecticut. The archival description of this material is still in progress, but we hope to finish and place the guide on the web by the end of this summer.

"Small Press/Mimeograph Revolution, 1940s–1970s" is a collection of little magazines and small press books based on an exhibit at the New York Public Library and its catalog titled, *A Secret Location on the Lower East Side: Adventures in Writing, 1960-1980*, by Steve Clay and Rodney Phillips with a preface by Jerome Rothenberg. According to Steve, the book and exhibit "documents the confluence of the New American Poetry with the mimeo revolution. The various strains identified in Donald Allen's watershed anthology *The New American Poetry, 1945-1960* (Grove, 1960)--Beat, Black Mountain, New York School, San Francisco Renaissance, and others--extended into and evolved throughout the '60s and '70s, finding expression in "underground" magazines and presses. Focusing on the small press publishing scene on the West Coast and in downtown New York City,

this book offers a glimpse into that mimeo revolution, through descriptions and checklists for over 80 magazines and presses. The collection is a private collector's reconstruction of the exhibit and includes about 150 little mag titles and about 575 items in total. Just acquired in 2013, the collection is already cataloged and available for use.

These acquisitions were made possible by John J. and Terrie Bollman, The President's Circle of Notre Dame, The Howard and Evangeline Phalin Collection in English and American Literature, The Mary B. Mathaus Endowed Library Collection on the Book and English Literature, and The McCann Library Collection in English Literature.

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## **Biblio-Throwback!**

*[First in an ongoing series of revivifications of old LES content, here is a call for articles from Issue # 18, in the summer of 1991. Even in the dim, dead past, the editor of Biblio-Notes was hounding you for content...]*

### **THE USUAL CALL FOR ARTICLES ...**

Are you on tenure track and looking for publications? Let us help! Once again, your friendly newsletter editor is on the lookout for articles, ideas, helpful citations, etc. to inform and enlighten the faithful readers of **Biblio Notes**.

Areas of primary interest to our readers include collection development, database searching, user education, reference work, and acquisitions and cataloging issues, as they relate to the field of English and American Literature.

No reasonable material is refused, and articles are accepted in all formats, although the editor prefers material on diskette, as this saves her from having to retype it. Direct inquiries and articles to:

Candace R. Benefiel,  
Editor, **Biblio-Notes**



## Modern Language Association Convention 2014, Chicago, IL

The job market was ever present at the Convention, both overtly, through social media, and as a subtext of the Presidential theme: "[Vulnerable Times](#)." In English, the typical pool of applicants for a position was around 600, with 800 applying for post-doc appointments. Adjuncts also [expressed themselves very forcefully](#).

Considerable dissent and worry on many fronts was caused prior to the Convention by the proposed reorganization of the MLA Divisions and Discussion Groups. Among those concerned by the proposed changes were the librarians (many of us!) who had only four years ago established the new Discussion Group for Libraries & Research in Languages & Literatures. Suffice it to say that the committee working on the reorganization took into account the comments it received and undid or modified many of the proposed changes, including the dissolution of our DG. Every group will be rebaptised as a "forum" and each forum will be reviewed every five years to determine if it continues to meet the MLA's goals. In the end, it remains to be seen if this reorganization will benefit the MLA.

### **Nuts & Bolts**

In terms of sessions attended, one that librarians may need to pay attention to was "What Is Data in Literary Studies?" The debate was not as interesting as the discussion afterward that led to points that I have not heard literary scholars make before: "The Archive" must be defined; scholars need to state their methodologies; results must be reproducible. This acceptance of the data set in lieu of "the archive" has implications for libraries in at least a few ways. One is that as scholars need to define their data set, they will need to know what is in (or not in) the full-text databases to which we subscribe, or the [HathiTrust](#), or [Project Gutenberg](#). Another is a need to store and retrieve data sets formed from different sources, which will have an effect on institutional repositories. A third will be that librarians responsible for teaching students literary research will need to learn the skills required to evaluate these projects.

One idea that came up more than once, that may have traction in writing programs as well as departments that are moving to teach academic writing as part of the curriculum, is the concept of what a good editor, not copy-editor, but *editor* does and how students can learn not only to write but also to think, organize and argue from being edited well. The topic particularly arose in the panel on the public intellectual, where speakers talked about the advantages of writing for non-academic journals, as well as the discussion of alternatives to seminar papers.

Better to focus on the skills to be learned and how are they to be demonstrated. Is[n't] the process more important than the product? Is the future that of more collective work? Ideas that were presented as successful alternatives were teaching project design (i.e., using writing to think through a set of ideas), asking students what they want to do (sometimes they know & sometimes they don't, which is interesting, too), and focusing on collaboration and away from the singularity of intellectual work.

Other creative ways of teaching involve collaboration with librarians, the topic of our session "[Meeting Where Students Are: Faculty-Library Collaborations and Undergraduate Research](#)," over which Dawn Childress ably presided. Speakers were Susanna Boylston, Davidson Coll.; Anne Geller, Saint John's Univ., NY; Laura E. McGrane, Haverford Coll.; Susette Newberry, Cornell Univ.; Jennifer Rajchel, Haverford Coll. and Blythe E.

Roveland-Brenton, Saint John's Univ., NY. We as well were gratified to have attracted a large audience, but slightly disappointed to find that all save one of the speakers were librarians.

### ***Postcolonial Studies***

Two of the most interesting sessions I attended I sincerely wish had been in dialogue with each other, as each was fascinating, pushed the field in a new way, and yet lacked a piece held in the other. Interacting with each other would have been even exceedingly fruitful. The first, chronologically, was a round table entitled "Postcolonial Studies: Studies of the Global or Cultural Critique?" arranged by the Division on Postcolonial Studies in Literature and Culture. At the heart of the round table was a critique of Postcolonial Studies as it has been done, with a single-minded focus on Western powers imposing colonial rule on the subaltern through the use of words and images, i.e., literary studies.

The second was a special round table on "[Decolonizing DH: Theories and Practices of Postcolonial Digital Humanities](#)." All of the speakers were part of the [Postcolonial Digital Humanities](#) movement, which has had sessions at the MLA for several years and will have another in 2015 (usually with the same speakers). The goals of the group are to "decolonize the digital" and to "disrupt narratives of globalization and technical progress."

### ***Electronic Literature***

On the rise were sessions at the MLA dealing with electronic literature and games. In addition to the more standard video games and electronic literature that we've become familiar with, media explored include [Twine](#), Twitter, Facebook and YouTube. There are two primary differences that speakers see in these more social media platforms. One is the ease of creation and the second is the performative aspect. Anastasia Salter insisted in her paper "Bonfires, Lesbians, Depression, and Rape: Twine, Feminist Voices, and Agency in Game Narratives," that, medium aside, "creators see themselves in the lineage of games that make stories, expressing a perspective that is not well-represented."

To conclude, the MLA continues to feel increasingly vulnerable as a profession and even as an organization as the Humanities come under pressure in- and outside of academe. Nonetheless, the work being done by its members is novel, interdisciplinary and increasingly reliant on technology either as a tool or as the medium for the object of study. Whether its members realize it or not, librarians continue to play an important role in supporting students and scholarship and, hopefully, will find ways to collect and preserve the objects and subjects of new modes of study.

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## Ad Hoc Committee on Updating the LES Statement on Primary Materials

### **Committee Formation**

In 1997, an article titled "[Task Force Formed for the Preservation of Primary Records](#)" appeared in issue #29 of *Biblio-Notes*. At ALA Annual in 2013, the Ad Hoc Committee on Updating the LES Statement on Primary Materials came into being. Arianne Hartsell-Gundy reported in the Fall 2013 issue of *Biblio-Notes* that "We also have two new projects that came out of last year's Collections Discussion Group. The first project centers around updating the LES Statement on Primary Materials. This statement hasn't been updated since 1997. Now seems like a good time to investigate this to examine this statement and make changes to bring it in line with the digital environment." Kathy Johnson, U of Nebraska-Lincoln, volunteered to chair the ad hoc committee. The ad hoc committee was given an open-ended timetable to complete its work.

Through LES-L, a call for members went out and multiple people volunteered to serve. Current members include Frank Gravier, University of California Santa, Santa Cruz; Dr. Millie Jackson, University of Alabama; Kathy Johnson, University of Nebraska-Lincoln; Dr. Elizabeth Lorang, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Center for Digital Research in the Humanities; and Piper Martin, Wright State University. Millie also serves on the MLA Committee on Information Technology and was designated as the representative from that committee on the MLA task force on the future of the print record, as well as serving as the liaison to the LES Ad Hoc Committee.

### **Activities at MLA**

On Wednesday, January 29, Millie Jackson participated in the first meeting of a new MLA task force to address updating the 1995 "Statement on the Significance of Primary Records" that appeared in *Profession* in 1995. This is freely available on the MLA web site, as well as in JSTOR for JSTOR subscribers.

The task force spent the day reviewing and discussing a group of documents including the series of 1995 articles on pages 27-50 from *Profession*. You can also access these [via MLA's web site](#). "Statement on the Significance of Primary Records." Modern Language Association of America. *Profession* (1995): 27-28; "Introduction." G. Thomas Tanselle. *Profession* (1995): 29-32; and "What Is the Future of the Print Record?" J. Hillis Miller. *Profession* (1995): 33-35.

They also went over the 1999 document "Preserving Research Collections: A Collaboration between Librarians and Scholars," by Jutta Reed-Scott, which is available at the ARL web site, the 2001 Council on Library and Information Resources document, "[The Evidence in Hand: Report of the Task Force on the Artifact in Library Collections](#)," and the 2008 CLIR document, "[No Brief Candle: Reconceiving Research Libraries for the 21st Century](#)," especially focusing on Paul Courant's article on "The Future of the Library in the Research University," one of the essays in this publication.

The MLA-convened task force asked "Where do we go now?" Things have changed since these reports were produced. They also asked "What is the focus?" It could be anything from 19th century publications to born-digital works. They decided to focus on 19th century and 20th century monographs, as 19th century journals are already being well covered.

It appears that the MLA-convened task force plans to draft a document for all of the boards of the participating organizations. They also asked "Who else should be involved?" ACRL/LES, SHARP (Society for the History of Authorship, Reading and Publishing), etc.

As the MLA task force is just beginning to work through numerous issues, this will be a process requiring at least a couple of years. The next meetings of the MLA and the American Historical Association will be held in January 2015.

Millie Jackson volunteered to be the bridge between the MLA and LES.

### ***Activity by the Ad Hoc Committee on Updating the LES Statement on Primary Materials***

On Friday, January 31, 2014, ten minutes of the LES Virtual Collections Discussion Meeting was devoted to introducing the Ad Hoc Committee and its work to participants. In addition, the Ad Hoc Committee decided to continue discussions of issues and priorities, rather than passively waiting to respond to the expected report from MLA's task force in a couple of years. Many LES librarians have been and are currently facing the need to make decisions on what to retain and what to preserve at their individual institutions and can bring first hand experiences to the discussion.

### ***Next Steps***

Because the Ad Hoc Committee is both working independently and waiting on MLA's work, the members are moving forward cautiously. Questions that have arisen since formation of the LES Ad Hoc Committee include:

1. In what ways are the 1995 MLA Statement and the 1997 LES Statement still timely?
2. Are there parts of either document that need to be updated or expanded to reflect developments over the past two decades? If so, what are they?
3. The MLA and LES statements are general in nature. What do librarians need to support their decisions on the ground? Laura Braunstein's [January 2013 blog posting](#) is relevant.

The session "How Many Copies Is Enough? Libraries and Shared Monograph Archives," arranged by the MLA's Discussion Group on Libraries and Research in Language and Literature, asked "As libraries rely increasingly on digitized texts and on partnerships for archiving print volumes, how do libraries and scholars cooperate to ensure preservation of copies with artifactual value for scholarly purposes?" Some questions from the discussion: How do consortial agreements about legacy collections affect bibliographers' decision-making about current acquisitions? How can we add value to catalog records to identify print copies with artifactual value? How do we adapt the serendipity of browsing in the stacks to browsing in the digital environment? What criteria do we use to define "unique" in terms of a print copy? (A sidebar: We learned at this session that the MLA is revisiting the 1995 Statement on the Significance of Primary Records and the subsequent 1999 report Preserving Research Collections: A Collaboration Between Librarians and Scholars .)"

4. Millie Jackson serves as the liaison between the Ad Hoc LES committee and the MLA task force. What can LES do that will be useful to the work of the MLA task force on the future of the print record?

5. What does LES bring to this conversation? What is the value of proceeding somewhat independently from the MLA task force, while maintaining a close working relationship?

6. What other documents or statements or publications are relevant to this matter?

The LES Ad Hoc Committee does most of its work by email, Google Drive/Docs, and conference calls. Members of the Ad Hoc Committee on Updating the LES Statement on Primary Materials attending ALA Annual in 2014 will meet informally and will also request time on the Collections Discussion agenda.

**The Ad Hoc Committee welcomes ideas and recommendations from all members of LES.**

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### **New Faculty Workshop Idea: Who's Reading My Book?**

At the end of each fall and winter term, our library hosts a morning of workshops for faculty members and graduate students. The sessions are typically taught by librarians and feature a variety of content, from maps and geospatial data to international students in the academic library. One popular workshop topic has been journal citation tracking and altmetrics, which is often of great interest to faculty members in the sciences.

This past December, a colleague (liaison for Education) and I felt we wanted to offer something new for disciplines that tend to be more "book-centric". Our session, "Who's Reading my Book: Assessing the Impact of your Work", focused on collecting book reviews (popular & scholarly) and tracking citations and acknowledgements for a monograph publication. We also wanted to include instructions on setting up alerts so that they might be notified when a review appears or when their book is cited in a subsequent publication. The idea for a session on books emerged, in part, from a conversation with an English faculty member who wished to collect all available reviews for her book on Jane Austen. Gratefully, the faculty member agreed that we could use her publication as a real-life example in our session!

In the session, we highlighted the following tools:

- **SuperSearch**, our discovery layer: We found that the "reviewed book" option provided access to a large number of reviews. We did some comparison searches with *Book Review Index Online* (a Gale product) and were happy to see that SuperSearch covered the same titles. We also demonstrated how to set up an alert using the title of the work in the full-text field to catch mentions of the book in full-text journal articles available in SuperSearch.

- **CBCA Complete and Canadian Newsstand:** These Canadian-content databases capture publications that may not be found in our discovery layer.
- **JSTOR:** We showed the review option in JSTOR and also explained how to mine the full-text for mentions of either the faculty member's name or the title of their publication. We were able to discover footnotes and in-text mentions of the publication, and set up an alert for new content that is added to the database (with the caveat that JSTOR is more of an archive rather than a current database).
- **Google Scholar:** This option does allow for some tracking of monograph publications and alerts may be set up. Similarly, Google Books allows for some text-mining to see how and where an author's name or publication shows up in footnotes, acknowledgements. There are some great examples of how to do this kind of work: Jacque Hettel has some [helpful instructions](#) and Aaron Tay offers [further experiments](#).

While we did not have a large audience for the session, the topic seemed to generate interest among faculty members and librarians. Book publications are intensive projects and it makes sense that faculty members are keenly interested in how their work is being received and used by other scholars. Hopefully this is a topic that would interest other literature librarians – I'm eager to hear about the tools and techniques that you may be using at your institution!

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## Pre-Assessment for the Literature Librarian

It's a question that has bedeviled librarians that do any sort of instruction at all: how can one pack as much as possible into the extremely limited framework of a one-shot library instruction session? We as a profession may moan and wail and gnash our teeth at the necessity for such sessions in the first place, instead of a more comprehensive course of instruction, but the fact remains that it's not going away. And while contact with the instructor who expects us to instruct their class in the ways of the library may do what they can, they often have little idea of their class's actual progress, capabilities, or knowledge in libraries as a whole.

The University of Mississippi libraries have struggled with the same problem for some time, especially given that we are in the middle stages of a massive growth in lower-level English literature and composition classes to accommodate bumper crops of incoming freshmen and fulfill an enhancement plan for accreditation. But whether your school is private or public, large or small, the problem of how to optimize your use of time in the one chance you may ever get to speak with a class—any class—remains.

Recently, the librarians at the University of Mississippi have been experimenting with a new technique for maximizing the effective use of our time in these one-shots: pre-assessment surveys delivered to the class before the session. The idea was actually mooted to us by a job candidate who was later hired, and it's a compelling one: by seeing which tools a class is familiar with, what questions they have, and what topics they plan to research, librarians can tinker with their presentation.

If, for instance, students are looking for the initial reviews of a text published in the 1960s, the session can include JSTOR and print indexes while focusing less on contemporary critical databases like Project Muse. On the other hand, if the students have had several general library sessions already in other classes, the one-shot could be entirely given over to one-on-one instruction.

In our experiments, we've found that Google Forms offers an ideal platform for this kind of pre-assessment. A quick survey can be whipped up at a moment's notice and sent to the instructor for distribution, and the data is easily viewed online or downloaded to an Excel-compatible spreadsheet. We've tried it out with both upper-division and lower-division courses with some success, and the surveys are easy to modify and repurpose once created. The idea has even proven fruitful as a way to provide instant surveys on current and future library resources; put on a roaming reference iPad, we're able to perform assessment on the spot to students in areas like the coffee shop line.

The one drawback we've come across is in delivering the Google Forms pre-assessment links to students. Course management systems like Blackboard often do not play nice with Google Forms links, or even TinyURLs (which are recommended, given the massive length of the raw Google URL formats). It's possible to give the assessment during class time, but that defeats the purpose of using the data to streamline instruction. We are still working the kinks out, but it seems that the best response so far has been with upper-division courses, as those instructors usually communicate through emails to their class rather than course management software, at least at our institution.

Google Forms is a versatile platform, and with the company's track record of dropping products like a toddler entranced with a new toy, we can't rely on it being around forever. On the other hand, used for pre-assessment now, it can be a powerful tool for helping to get the most out of library instruction one-shots, regrettable though those one-shots may be.

The image shows a screenshot of a Google Form titled "WRIT 102 Pre-Assessment Form". The form contains the following sections:

- What is your research question, or possible topic that you are interested in?** (Text input field)
- Are you familiar with any of the following library resources? Check any that apply.**
  - OneSearch
  - Library Catalog
  - Subject Guides
  - Course Guides
  - Ask A Librarian
- If you have already done some research, where did you start?** (Text input field)
- Is there anything in particular you would like discussed during the library presentation?** (Text input field)
- How many library instruction sessions have you had so far (not counting this one)?**
  - 0 1 2 3 4 5
  - No library sessions       5 or more library sessions

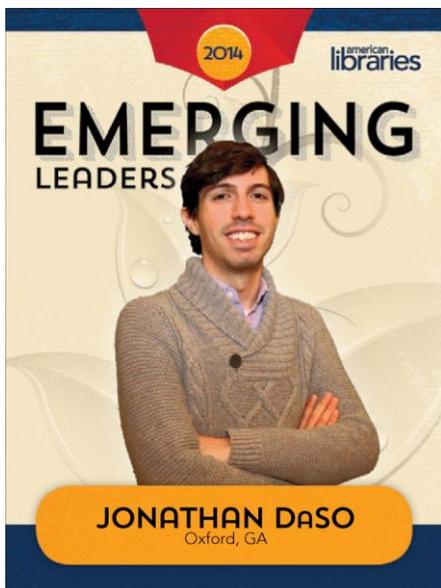
WRIT 102 Pre-Assessment Form (Responses) ☆						
File Edit View Insert Format Data Tools Form Help Last edit was on April 4						
fx   Timestamp						
A	B	C	D	E	F	
Timestamp	What is your research question, or possible topic that you are interested in?	Are you familiar with any of the following library resources? Check any that apply.	If you have already done some research, where did you start?	Is there anything in particular you would like discussed during the library presentation?	How many library instruction sessions have you had so far (not counting this one)?	
1	Timestamp					
2	4/3/2014 13:39:45	Does Amanda's constant need to be in control slowly deteriorate her family?		I just went on the internet and looked up articles. However, I do not think they are academic sources.	Not really, just need some help finding academic sources, but I think I can find that.	1
3	4/3/2014 13:40:23	Difficulty of accepting reality	OneSearch		Help finding sources	1
4	4/3/2014 13:40:27	What are the psychological problems that keep the family trapped in their version of reality?	OneSearch, Library Catalog, Subject Guides, Course Guides, Ask A Librarian	I went to oneseach and found a book with several different authors all writing about my subject	no	3
5	4/3/2014 13:40:26	animal imagery that is presented in The Glass Menagerie by Tennessee Williams	OneSearch, Library Catalog	Ole Miss General library	how to create a better search through catalogs and subject guides. Why does the library not have as many online resources?	3
6	4/3/2014 13:40:38	How the Wingfield family is unable to face the real world and how this leads to their destruction as a family	OneSearch, Library Catalog, Subject Guides, Course Guides, Ask A Librarian	one search	where to find more sources for my paper on the internet	1
7	4/3/2014 13:42:59	how each character escapes from reality on the play "The Glass Menagerie" i am researching the theme that the characters try to hide behind the true harsh reality that they live in by creating other situations and hiding behind them. and that the abandonment of their father created it.	Library Catalog	the library page	no	3
8	4/3/2014 13:43:16		OneSearch, Library Catalog	on the library search page. I started on oneseach and got a few sources for	how to find good reliable sources	1

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### Jonathan DaSo: WESS/LES/SEES Emerging Leader

This year, WESS, LES, and SEES have been fortunate to co-sponsor an ALA Emerging Leader. Jonathan DaSo, WESS member and Library Specialist at Oxford College Library from Emory University was selected to participate in this year's Emerging Leader program. He has a BA in Spanish and Chinese Language and Literature from Emory University and will graduate this August with his MLIS from Florida State University. He is also a 2012 recipient of the ALA Spectrum Scholarship. Encouraged by a couple of friends he met in the Spectrum Scholarship cohort, he decided to apply to be an Emerging Leader.



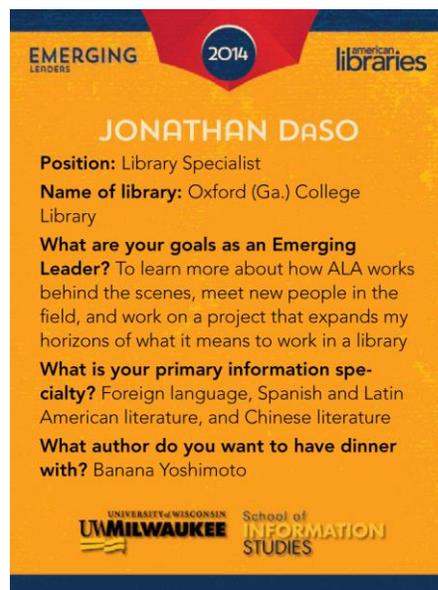
The ALA’s Emerging Leaders Program is “a leadership development program which enables newer library workers from across the country to participate in problem-solving work groups, network with peers, gain an inside look into ALA structure, and have an opportunity to serve the profession in a leadership capacity.” Jonathan is excited by the opportunity to meet and work with colleagues from the Emerging Leaders Program and work on a group project.

Along with a team of other Emerging Leaders, Jonathan is working to design a [virtual collaboratory](#) for ACRL’s Science and Technology Section (STS). The virtual collaboratory will serve as a place for STS members to have profiles, connect with other science librarians, see what kind of research others are doing, get new ideas from their colleagues

and create collaborative opportunities for working together. When asking why he chose this project, he wrote that one of the most important roles in academic librarianship is to “...inspire scholarship, both among the students and faculty we serve, as well as among our peers.” In helping to create this virtual collaboratory, he would be able to encourage scholarship among colleagues, while making connections with others interested in this as well.

The results of this project and other Emerging Leaders’ team projects will be showcased and presented this summer at the ALA Annual Conference’s Emerging Leaders Poster Session and Reception on Friday, June 27. Congratulations, Jonathan!

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## Member News

**William Gargan** was chosen as one of *Library Journal's* “Book Reviewers of the Year” for 2013.

**Alex Watson** was granted tenure and will be promoted to Associate Professor at the University of Mississippi, effective July 1, 2014.



## **The 55th Annual RBMS Preconference Retrofit: Exploring Space, Place and the Artifact in Special Collections**

Las Vegas, June 24 - 27, 2014

The annual RBMS Preconference will consider the broad metaphorical themes of space, place, and the artifact in the special collections milieu inspired by the RBMS preconferences and meetings of the early 1960s. Register by May 23, 2014, to learn, discuss, share, and contemplate. <http://www.preconference14.rbms.info/>.



## **ACRL 2015: Creating Sustainable Community**

Portland, Oregon – March 25-28, 2015

ACRL 2015 will feature than 300 carefully curated programs to help you stay at the forefront of the profession. Access cutting-edge information, discover new ideas, and engage in conversations with academic and research librarians from around the world. Registration and housing materials will be available soon. Register by the early-bird deadline to take advantage of discounted fees; group discounts up to 20% and scholarships are also available. Complete details are online at [www.acrl.org/acrlconference](http://www.acrl.org/acrlconference).





## The End of the Ink: Only Connect

[Welcome to "The End of the Ink," the first installment of a regular column from the editor of Biblio-Notes.]

"Whither *Biblio-Notes*?" That's a question I've heard and asked more than once since I took over the editorship. After all, this is 2014, right? Why would anyone need a newsletter when we're constantly surrounded by news? The results from last year's LES Communication Survey included varying responses, mostly positive with some negative, including "*Biblio-Notes* is a lot more work than it's worth."

For some of us, newsletters serve a purpose beyond simply aggregating useful information. Twitter wars, e-mail spam, and text ads: all of these are things that don't appear in *Biblio-Notes*. Instead, you will find news and brief articles written for you by your colleagues, without pretention or fanfare.

*Biblio-Notes* is a connection with the things that matter to you as a literature librarian. Perhaps you read something in here that you'll try at your own library. Or maybe you'll say "hi" to one of the article authors at Annual you've never talked to before, leading to a productive conversation you might not otherwise have had.

That our issues have grown in length says something, too. Maybe we're just longer-winded than we used to be, but I'd like to think it means that we are more eager to talk to each other now than ever, and to make contact with others of our own bibliographic sub-species.

Happy Spring, and see you in Vegas.

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## 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 editor, John Glover, at [jglover2@vcu.edu](mailto:jglover2@vcu.edu).

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