Dear LES Members,

Greetings and Happy Fall! As a New Englander I’m biased towards this time of year, so here’s wishing you all an apple cider donut or two. Or more…

I’d first like to offer congratulations and thanks to all of our new committee members and discussion group leaders. LES simply would not work without your volunteer efforts. This year, ALA and ACRL rules changed allowing librarians to join multiple sections for no extra cost, and LES did see a modest upswing in new members. (Though I’ll throw in the traditional warning that correlation does not equal causation.) Many new members expressed interest in participating online, particularly as travel budgets remain constrained or non-existent, and our committees are exploring new ways to make that possible. I encourage everyone to follow us on Twitter, like us on Facebook, and join our email list. On that email list, you will already have seen the notices for Midwinter virtual meetings, and there will be more. These virtual meetings are a wonderful way to hear from other librarians in your area, and we welcome all interested participants.

For those that were able to attend ALA Annual in San Francisco, you will have noticed a wealth of LES programming. Our two discussion groups, Reference and Collections, were well attended as usual, with participants from many types of libraries (as well as some library vendors). The General Membership Forum hosted a panel on the LES mentoring program, and mentoring in librarianship generally. Our Annual program, Libraries Behind Bars: Education and Outreach to Prisoners, had over 100 attendees—thanks and congratulations to the members of the 2015 Conference Planning Committee (Chair Laura Braunstein). LES also sponsored, in name only, a fascinating program on Beyond Tintin: Collecting European Comics in the U.S. LES members Arianne Hartsell-Gundy, Laura Braunstein, and Liorah Golomb also participated in a panel held by the Digital Humanities Discussion Group, in which they discussed the publication of their new ACRL LES title Digital Humanities in the Library: Challenges and Opportunities for Subject Specialists (in stores now!) Finally, LES members are often organizers of and participants in the MLA International Bibliography Discussion Group.

Also at ALA Annual, LES’ new Guidelines for Deselecting Literatures in English...
Collections in Academic Libraries were topic of a substantive discussion at both the Collections Discussion Group and the Executive Board Meetings. As many libraries experience greater and greater demands on their space, these guidelines are quite timely, and the Task Force working on those guidelines will send out a draft version for broad public comment this Fall or Spring. Special thanks should go to Robin Imhof for leading this Task Force.

LES also accomplishes a good deal of internal business at ALA Annual, and as a reminder you can always view detailed meeting minutes from the Executive Committee on our wiki. You will see that we have made some changes to our committee structures, and will be combining the New Members’ Discussion Group with the General Membership Forum moving forward. The Membership Committee, which plans the General Membership Forum and sends an LES representative to ACRL 101 conference events, will continue to welcome new members into LES. We have also asked our Virtual Participation Committee (Chair David Oberhelman) to propose additional ways to support LES activity and professional development online, and our Planning Committee (Chair Jaena Alabi) is hard at work making sure the LES Strategic Plan is in harmony with the new ACRL Plan for Excellence.

Looking forward, our Discussion Group Co-chairs will soon begin planning for the Midwinter virtual meetings, so please keep an eye out for calls for topics as well as the meeting times. Increasing online opportunities for LES members to connect and share knowledge is something in which the LES leadership has a strong interest; if you have ideas on how to accomplish this, please feel free to contact me or other LES members directly. You can always find a list of current committee members and Chairs, with their contact information, on our website.

Though much of our Midwinter activity is online, for those that can make it to Boston for Midwinter, I will be organizing an informal social for us to meet face-to-face. Should you brave the winter weather, there will at least be a chance to meet LES colleagues at the other end.

I wish everyone a good Fall semester and hope to see you at LES events, either online or in person!

Amanda Rust
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Call for Award Nominations

**Excellence in Academic Libraries Award**
$3,000 and a plaque
Sponsored by YBP Library Services

**Academic/Research Librarian of the Year**
$5,000 and a plaque
Sponsored by YBP Library Services

**DEADLINE: December 4, 2015**

More information about these and all other ACRL award opportunities can be found on the ACRL website: [http://www.ala.org/acrl/awards](http://www.ala.org/acrl/awards) or by contacting Chase Ollis at (312) 280-2521 or [collis@ala.org](mailto:collis@ala.org)

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**Did You Know?**

ACRL members can view full contact information for all ACRL section committee rosters ([http://www.ala.org/acrl/aboutacrl/directoryofleadership/sections](http://www.ala.org/acrl/aboutacrl/directoryofleadership/sections)) by logging into the ACRL Web site.

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**World War I’s Angelic Defenders**

The First World War began disastrously for the English. They and their nominal allies, the French, encountered the German forces in Mons, Belgium, on August 23 and 24, 1914. However, the leaderships of the two armies distrusted each other’s skills and had failed to communicate, coordinate, and delegate their mutual efforts and intelligences. And on the first day of the battle, the French troops had pulled back without informing their English counterparts, who were left completely exposed. The well-armed and well-led German troops thus split and handily routed the troops of both countries. The badly outclassed English had a long and terrifying retreat.
The Battle at Mons made the English newspapers, though the stories were at first vague and uplifting. Indeed, *The Times* [of London] was to claim that the retreat was the English decision, writing that “the British forces were engaged all day on Sunday and after dark with the enemy in the neighbourhood of Mons, and held their ground,” and “what seems certain, however, is that our Army, doubtless to its disgust and disappointment, must conform with the movements of the French in retreat.” Bad news remains inescapable, however, and on 30 August 1914 *The Times* published an extra, a special Sunday edition. It contained a lengthy telegram, sometimes referred to as the “Amiens Despatch,” sent by Arthur Moore, a reporter for *The Times*. Headlined “Broken British Regiments Battling Against the Odds, More Men Needed,” it described the events of the previous week in sufficiently alarming terms that the English House of Commons began to hold urgent hearings.

The hearings were still in the news when the Anglo-Welsh writer Arthur Machen (1863-1947), then writing for the *Evening News*, a London newspaper that routinely published fiction, wrote a short story, “The Bowmen: The Angels of Mons,” in which he stated that the beleaguered English troops were rescued by angelic bowmen, inadvertently summoned by a soldier’s invocation of St. George. It was published on 29 September 1914. Although intended as fiction, the story was not labeled fiction, and in 1915 the story suddenly went viral: pamphlets were written asserting the existence of the angels (as were stories and verse), trading cards depicting the angels were printed, music celebrating the angels was written and performed, dramatic recordings of angelic intervention were released, as was a motion picture (now lost). Machen’s statements, that he had written the piece as fiction and only as fiction, not as an expression of faith, were ignored or disregarded, though the small book reprinting his story did receive two printings and even received an American edition.

I became interested in the Angels of Mons story through my interest in Fantasy and Supernatural Fiction. Arthur Machen is now considered a major fin-de-siecle writer of fantasies and horror, and though his work did not sell particularly well during his lifetime, his fiction was well-received and praised by critics as diverse as Vincent Starrett and H. P. Lovecraft and continues to receive positive attention. I was surprised that although Machen’s story was readily available online, the majority of the accounts written in opposition to him – in defense of the angels – were not accessible. One may speculate why this neglect has occurred, but whatever the reason, I became determined to track down as many of these early accounts as possible. I rapidly discovered that although a partial list of them was available in such standard resources as *Subject Index of the Modern Works Added to the Library of the British Museum*, a comprehensive list did not exist, though the Angels continued to attract attention through the Second World War and even now, more than a century after the First World War began, are still considered newsworthy.

The Librarians at the University of Connecticut are not afforded faculty status, but in the course of my research I saw notice of a conference devoted to World War I and was told that if I could present a paper, I would receive permission and funding to attend. I thus submitted an abstract, which was accepted, and on 13 September 2014 presented the results of some of my researches at the World War I Conference held at the United States Military Academy at West Point.
Earlier this year the McFarland Publishing Company published The Strange Case of “The Angels of Mons”: Arthur Machen’s World War I Story, the Insistent Believers, and His Refutations. It provides a history of the Angels of Mons controversy and reprints with editorial commentary an even dozen of the earliest (1915) reactions to the story of the Angels of Mons by the men and women of the time. (The defenders of the Angels of Mons included both.) My introduction also discusses Machen’s revisions to his story, for it has not been noticed that Machen quietly revised his original text prior to its book appearance. In addition, although historian David Clarke examined the Angels of Mons phenomena in his The Angels of Mons: Phantom Soldiers and Ghostly Guardians (Wiley, 2004), and had offered a theory as to why the story became popular, he did not say how the story became so widespread. My examination of the tracts allowed me to offer a suggestion.

It may be argued that my actions have nothing whatsoever to do with the role of academic libraries and librarians, but I would strongly disagree and argue against letting us be restrained by costive and restrictive definitions. Academic librarians are increasingly called upon to show that there remains a role for their libraries and themselves, and one of the ways they can do this is by showing that they are more than their traditional jobs. Not only can academic librarians contribute to the academic discourse, but also their academic contributions are enriched by their professional skills. We must not permit others to put us into boxes of their own labeling and then say that the boxes are not relevant.

The Strange Case of “The Angels of Mons”: Arthur Machen’s World War I Story, the Insistent Believers, and His Refutations (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2015) is available in print and e-book through McFarland and Amazon.

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Creating a Self-Assessment Quiz Using LibSurveys

My library recently purchased SpringShare’s LibSurveys, and I wanted to try it out to make self-assessment quizzes to put on my subject-specific LibGuides. I made the prototype for my Film and Media Studies (FMS) LibGuide. After much experimentation, a good deal of frustration, some e-mail exchanges with SpringShare tech support, many hours of work, and more frustration, I came up with a quiz that I hope is reasonably fun and informative. You can try it out at guides.ou.edu/fms.

I should begin by saying that in the course of writing up the process of creating the survey/quiz I realized that there was a much better way to accomplish what I wanted. I completely re-made the quiz and tossed out what I had already written about it, so I thank the Biblio-Notes editors for their patience.

While the quiz appears on my FMS LibGuide and is open to all, my primary intention in creating it was to have students take the quiz at the beginning of the instruction session I do each semester for a class in writing about film. I am hoping that it will help the students realize that paying attention to what I am saying will actually benefit them. It should also lead to more use of the LibGuide. I will not have an opportunity to test its
effectiveness until late in October, but if it seems to be useful I will create self-assessment quizzes for other subjects I handle.

Quizzes are created and edited in LibSurveys and then can be placed in a LibGuide box as a widget, or a link to the quiz can be used to direct people to it without going through LibGuides. As with other survey builders such as SurveyMonkey, options exist for different kinds of questions: Radio Field for when only one answer is possible; Checkbox Field for allowing multiple selections; Numeric Field where the response must be a number; Rating Field for single-line, single-option evaluative responses; Grid Field for rating multiple qualities; Text Field for one-line open comments; and Textbox Field for longer open comments. There is also a lovely date picker (Date Field) that supports multiple date formats and a field for rating the survey itself. While there is no field for a scale, the columns and rows of the Grid can be tagged as if it were a Likert scale.

Building a survey or quiz is a simple matter of dragging fields into place on the Workpad and populating the fields as appropriate. The “Welcome” and “Thank You” screens cannot be deleted, and the white space in the Welcome screen cannot be made smaller. However, these screens can contain any message, including an image such as the marquis I placed on my Welcome screen. There is no rich text editor for the other fields, however. SpringShare tech support told me that a rich text editor would be a feature in a future update. Meanwhile, font styles and hyperlinks can only be done using HTML tagging. I found no way to change the text of the “Begin survey” button. I would prefer it read, “Begin quiz.”

![Self-Assessment Quiz]

The “Welcome” screen.

Conditional logic (if x, then y) is set all in one window using the Add/Edit field rules function. One small annoyance is that the field rules cannot be accessed unless changes to the survey have been saved. A prompt to that effect would have been helpful.
The Survey Options tab is where you can title and describe your survey and add a password, if desired. You can also limit visibility to a range of dates, add a header and/or URL for a logo to appear on each page, determine the size of the form in inches or pixels, and customize some labels. Finally, you can determine what happens when the survey is submitted: the user can be redirected to a URL, email can be sent to one or more addresses, results can be posted to a website, and results can be formatted in Key-Value pairs, CSV, or JSONObject.

The Survey Builder Workpad and Field options.

Context-sensitive help in the form of pop-ups took care of most questions that I had. But when I needed the online manual, it unfortunately still had screenshots and information from a previous version.

The FMS Self-Assessment Quiz

For this exercise, I wanted users to select only one answer at a time to each of four multiple-choice questions. Each question is designed to present a particular type of research problem: finding books in the library catalog, finding scholarly articles, finding contemporary reviews of films, and finding interviews with filmmakers. The problems reflect some of those that the students, many of whom are non-majors in their first year, will face in doing their papers for the sophomore-level class Writing about Film. There are between four and eight possible answers to each question, and each selection reveals an answer that tells the user whether or not that selection is appropriate, and why. Each answer also contains a link to the tab in the FMS LibGuide that offers resources and more information to help with the posed question. Users can click around to try other options and see those answers. The quiz is unscored and anonymous, and, at this time, I am not collecting the results.

I initially used the Radio Field to create the questions and the Text Field to provide the answers. This worked fairly well but had one big drawback: an empty text box appeared below each answer. If text or even the cursor was placed in the box and then entered, the quiz jumped to the Thank You screen.
The sad, early attempt using radio buttons and text fields.

Ultimately I realized that using the Dropdown Field for the questions and the Text Block field for the answers not only solved the unwelcome text box problem, it took up less space and was more visually appealing. No matter how many options each question had, the pull-down message is only one line long. The length of each “Make a selection” box does vary to accommodate the lengthiest selection in any given group.

The much nicer and more cooperative dropdown field questions.

One challenge was that the same option appeared in multiple answers, but the text differed. For example, each question had Google as a possible answer. Sometimes Google was a good answer, and sometimes it was not. It was no problem to customize each text block, but I had to distinguish between them so that my field rules would bring the user to the appropriate answer.
Google bad, Google good.

In order to make the field rules work properly, I altered the name of each answer by adding (Q1), (Q2), etc. The parenthetical additions do not show up in the list of possible selections, but they made it possible for the if/then rules to connect to the right answer.

Field rules.

I had a total of 20 possible responses, and, therefore, 20 field rules. When something went wrong – for instance, one bit of response text showed up in every selection of the second question – the issue was always one of a field rule gone wrong. Between the repeated response selection names and the necessity to scroll through the field rules window, it was difficult to keep track of the rules I’d set. Paper and pencil helped with that.

Another advantage of using Text Blocks for the quiz answers was forced terseness. The default height of the block is 100 pixels, and that accommodated a maximum of four lines of text. Initially most of my answers were longer than that – probably longer than most people would read.
Since the self-assessment quiz is just for fun, I did not make any selections regarding results in the survey options. Instead, after clicking the Submit button, the user gets a message that allows them to contact me, if desired, via the link to my email.

How did you do on the quiz? If you didn't always pick the best answers, don't worry! This guide should help set you in the right direction, and you are always welcome to contact the librarian for Film and Media Studies, Liorah Golomb. I'm here to help!

The biggest problem I had was making the quiz display properly in the LibGuide box. All looked well when I previewed the survey, but not when I placed the widget in my guide. SpringShare tech support came through for me, recommending that I change the Look and Feel survey option from the default width of 100% to 600 pixels. I did so, and changed the height to 800 pixels. I placed the survey in one column of a two column, 50/50 page and it looks and works just fine.

Worth the Effort?

At this point, I cannot say how well the self-assessment quiz will go over or whether it will improve student learning. My first opportunity to try it will be in late October. I plan to have students take it during the first five minutes or so of the class period, ask if anyone made all the best selections on the first try, and then do my conventional demonstration of relevant databases.

Now that I know which fields to use, that I have to keep my quiz answers short, and how to display the quiz in a LibGuide box, any further self-assessment quizzes I make will go much faster. The Help page for LibSurveys shows an option under Look and Feel to use a template, but that has changed in the current version. Now you have the option of copying an existing survey when you select Add New Survey.

I may also choose to collect data from the quizzes at some point. I would love to hear from anyone who has used self-assessment quizzes and evaluated their effectiveness. My email address is lgolomb@ou.edu.

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English and the Library: A Beautiful Match

My love for reading and libraries propelled me to toward graduate degrees in English (MA, California Polytechnic State University San Luis Obispo, 2013) and Library Science (MLIS, San Jose State University, 2014). In the fall of 2014, I was hired as a full-time tenure-track librarian at Allan Hancock College in Santa Maria, California. Prior to that, I taught college English at Hancock for nearly two years. Teaching in an academic setting prior to becoming a librarian gave me insight into the information-seeking behaviors and information needs of typical students at my college.

In my English graduate courses, we would spend time discussing what research means and what good research looks like. What are research skills? How does one know if we are rising to the level of college-level, and more specifically, graduate-level research? The majority of students, I found, had not come across questions like these, and had not yet anticipated having to answer them.

We live in an incredible age, an age in which an answer to many questions is just a short Google search away. In graduate school, I worked to train myself to step back from the quick and easy answer supplied through Google and Wikipedia to more closely consider exactly what information I was seeking. Today, I use some of the same methods in my bibliographic instruction sessions. I point to the need to identify the hallmarks of a credible online/electronic source, such as identifying authors, a list of works cited or references, original scholarship, and an abstract. I bring together the knowledge I gained through both my MA and MLIS. From my MA program, I teach students to look at articles with a skeptic’s eye, questioning the purpose of each article (to record history, to persuade an audience, or rewrite history?). From my MLIS, I teach students how to better pose their research questions by stepping back and asking, “What is it that I am really trying to learn?” I also teach students that there is almost always an alternate way to get a needed resource. We focus on the need for critical analysis to determine source accuracy and reliability.

We do not forget about print books, either! For almost every instruction session I lead in the library, we begin by learning about the organizational system of our library’s print collection: the Library of Congress classification system. By looking at our large blue LC posters with the classification system on them, the students are simultaneously awed by their large size as well as the impression that they include every book ever. We then pick a topic, and walk over to the corresponding section in the stacks. I point out how the online library catalog is a great way to start a book search. But another important skill is simply being able to embrace the power of browsing. I will mention a time in graduate school when I could find no results when I searched for the use of burlesque humor in Victorian literature. However, when I browsed the Victorian Lit section of the stacks, I was able to come away with a half dozen relevant books. I also mention that sometimes we simply do not know exactly what it is that we want. (This is another idea gleaned from my library science studies.) Sometimes the best way to combat that lack of clarity is by selectively browsing a print collection. One of the most fascinating results of these sessions is the affinity most students still have for print books. As I assisted one class working on a Shakespeare research paper, students would pull out and read or check out books far older than themselves.

Transitioning into academic librarianship with this knowledge is a gift. Working at a smaller academic library, I am a subject liaison to nearly half of the programs at the college, including my specialties, English and History. (Other programs I cover include Culinary Arts, Kinesiology, Biology, Physics, Social Sciences, Graphic Arts, Speech, Business, Accounting, Information Systems, Office Tech, Entrepreneurship, Paralegal Studies, Real Estate, ESL, Parenting, Music, Medical Assisting, Automotive Technology, Welding Technology, Athletic Training, Economics, Astronomy, and Global Studies, among others.) English instructors are often the ones who sign their classes up early in the semester for my instruction. This allows me to stay up to date on English and literature resources in both print and electronic formats, including the anthology Shakespeare for Students, which I highlight multiple times each semester. Instructors mention this particular anthology as a welcome and familiar
source in their students’ papers, as it is both informative and full of complicated Shakespearean themes that are presented in simplified terms. This semester I am working on a special project to weed and refresh the library’s holdings of Shakespearean criticism, and quite a few students have already expressed excitement to see more print books on this topic.

Other common resources I teach English students about during instruction sessions are databases with peer-reviewed articles such as Academic Search Premier and Literary Reference Center. Particularly with upper division classes that have been assigned research paper projects, I see the students using these databases and printing out articles from them. When they look for other materials on the web, however, I also see students using their fresh skeptic’s eye to ask the important questions. Who made this website? What is the purpose of it? Who benefits? Where did this author obtain his or her sources? As an added bonus, when students come to the Reference Desk with questions about in-text citations and proper formatting for MLA, APA, and Chicago (and other formats!), my English training greets me like an old friend. A background in English instruction has enriched my experience and reminds me each day of the noble mission of the library and its impact on so many.

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BAM! POW! SPLAT!: Donating a Comic Book Collection to an Academic Library

In January of this year, I donated my comic book collection—including over 1,900 books ranging from the 1950s to the 1990s—to my current institution, James Madison University (located in Harrisonburg, Virginia), where I am employed as a Humanities Librarian. After donating 400 comic books to my undergraduate alma mater (the University of California, Riverside) in the Spring of 2014, I was anxious to find a deserving home for the remainder of this collection, which had been taking up precious space in the garage of my mother’s Southern California house for the last fifteen years.

In the two decades since my vinyl record-collecting affliction supplanted my interest in comic books, attention to these animated magazines has grown exponentially. Several of the most popular motion pictures and television shows from the last ten years were adapted from comic book properties, including Guardians of the Galaxy, 300, Iron Man, The Walking Dead, The Avengers, and Christopher Nolan’s series of Batman films. Movies with cult followings, such as V for Vendetta and Sin City, also began life in comic books. As a result, comic books have become ripe for literary, cultural, and scholarly examination, attracting both the interests of students and faculty.

Photos provided by Kate Morris
JMU Library’s Special Collections is a modest one, focusing primarily on institution-related materials as well as those related to the history of the Shenandoah Valley. Recent moves to support the research interests of faculty have expanded the Special Collections holdings in pulp magazines and artists books. Because of Special Collections’ interest in these two areas, I began to seriously consider donating my comic book collection to JMU in the spring of 2014, as comic books provide a potential intersection between these two collecting areas. After pitching the idea to our Head of Collections and our Head of Special Collections, it was on! Now I needed to fly back to California and find a way to ship thirteen forty-pound boxes of comic books—books that contained a possible silverfish outbreak—across the country without getting lost, stolen, or damaged.

The books arrived unharmed in the second week of January this year. They were sent to an off-campus freezing facility to vanquish any possible critters that might be living in my old comic books. When the books arrived back at JMU, much to our collective belief, there was no silverfish infestation.

Next came the longest step: processing. The Special Collections staff, in collaboration with Preservation, began removing my comic books from the bags and boards that had housed them for, in some cases, over twenty-five years, as both were acidic. Especially acidic were the backing boards, in part because I wrote the yearly values of each comic on the back of each board. I began collecting in 1987, then eleven years old: the stepson of a wannabe Yuppie. For a spell during those years, I thought of comic books as the stock market for kids. The Special Collections staff found this to be interesting evidence related to my collection. As such, they have preserved a handful of these backing boards for posterity. Once the collection was put into acid-free boxes, the lengthy process of developing a finding aid for the collection—consisting of hundreds of different titles—was begun.

The collection was initially promoted through the Special Collections’ social media and through a couple of posts on their blog. As of this time, the finding aid has been completed, but is not actively published on the library’s webpage. Despite this, the collection has been accessed twice so far. The first patron wanted to explore portrayals of war in comic books. Another patron was a community member who was homeschooling their children and wanted to show them some older comic books. The early blast of social media has clearly sent around word of the collection’s existence, which is promising considering the finding aid is not yet active.
As a teenager and eventual teenager, I mainly collected superhero books, especially DC and Marvel titles. I was also obsessed with several comic book artists, such as Jack Kirby, Howard Chaykin, Dave Stevens, Chris Warner, Dave McKean, Whilce Portacio, Rob Liefeld (despite his inability to properly render human legs), Frank Miller, Arthur Adams, Gene Ha, and Jae Lee. I was especially interested in the art of Todd McFarlane. As a result, the collection includes many, many issues of *Spider-Man*, *Infinity Inc.*, *The Incredible Hulk*, and *Spawn*, drawn by McFarlane.

The collection also includes all kinds of strange, non-superhero titles, such as *Rock ‘N Roll Comics*, issues of *Classics Illustrated*, the *Prince comic book* recently featured on the *Dangerous Minds* website, several Walt Disney books, and even a one-shot from the late 1980s called *Yuppies from Hell*.
Because of my donation—now christened The Brian Flota Comic Book Collection—other community patrons have initiated talks with JMU’s Special Collections about possibly donating their collections. Comic books can get people into a Special Collections reading room that would not otherwise go. This serves to increase the visibility of the Special Collections here at JMU. Furthermore, comic books invite the same kind of critical and theoretical approaches as literary texts, except that the inclusion of illustrations and advertisements potentially enhances their scholarly value. Since comic books have been scrutinized in the academy less than literature, film, television, and pulp magazines, they possess vast scholarly potential, as scholarship pertaining to more canonical figures and works become more exhausted over time. My collection has begun its second, more public life, and I look forward to the scholarship—and enjoyment—it will produce.

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Finding a Home in Rush Rhees: Tales from a New Humanities Outreach Librarian

I recently completed my second month as the Outreach Librarian (Humanities) at the University of Rochester. My primary liaison department is English. This is my first position as a Librarian, straight out of my MLIS program. Here in the Rush Rhees Library, I find my role very enriching because I am learning new things everyday. I am building relationships with faculty, guiding students with their research questions, taking incoming students on library tours, ordering books through Gobi (while keeping faculty members' research and teaching interests in mind), using LibCal and LibGuides, and working on different committees for enhancement of our services. The range is exciting and very satisfying.

Based on my experience creating LibGuides in small student-projects while in the MLIS program, I was quite excited about the prospect of building new ones for faculty members here at U of R. My academic background, which includes a PhD in English (with specializations in African American Literature, Postcolonial Theory, and South Asian Literature and Film), prepares me to understand the context within which faculty members select specific texts and the topics she assigns for research assignments. I choose examples of journal articles and book titles accordingly and showcase them in the LibGuides.

As I reached out to my liaison department, I realized that while some of the professors were familiar with LibGuides and readily shared their syllabi with me to build them, there were others who were not familiar with the tool. I got an opportunity to introduce to them the library resources that can be culled together through the LibGuides and made available to students (and faculty) as starting points for their research. When I met someone who was unfamiliar with LibGuides, I demonstrated a LibGuide I had already created for someone else. The word has started spreading about the possibility of having some course-specific library resources readily available for students.

Working with students has become another exciting aspect of my new job. Before I came to the world of librarianship, I was not unfamiliar with teaching. However, the notion of demonstrating resources and walking students through the research process in just 45-50 minutes seemed very daunting. Moreover, the fact that I
may not see most of the students again during the semester was quite foreign to me because, in my previous career, I was accustomed to having a steady interaction with students for 15-16 weeks in a row. Nevertheless, I stepped into my first class as a librarian with nervous anticipation. The rest, as they say, is history. I found my love for teaching and engaging with young and curious minds has not diminished one bit. I was also very lucky because two of my colleagues graciously partnered with me and ironed out any creases that may have occurred while managing a large class.

I have already had individual meetings with undergraduate and graduate students about their writing. Talking about developing a research topic and guiding an undergraduate’s thinking through the research process has been another wonderful teaching experience. Similarly, discussing a graduate student’s dissertation prospectus and listing her ideas as research keywords has been a very enriching experience as an instructor.

I have learned to use LibCal to schedule meetings with students. It is a very useful tool that streamlines the requests we receive. I have also signed up for chat services and look forward to engaging with students wherever they are.

Ordering books through Gobi and learning the different strategies to keep in mind while selecting a title has been a great learning experience. Under the skillful guidance of our Head of Collections Development, I, in my 10th week as a librarian, can choose titles quite confidently that will meet and enhance my liaison department’s research and teaching needs.

I have been collaborating with colleagues in the Digital Humanities and Rare Books and Special Collections to figure out ways to develop services and programs, which can reach a wide range of research interests among students and faculty. I participate in different library learning communities through which I learn and contribute to discussions about instruction, developing services for international students and scholars, scholarly communication, managing web presence, metadata issues, and coordinating research conversations across campus, among others.

Through my conversations with my colleagues, I have learned new strategies regarding outreach and the institution that allow me to tailor my plans of engagement. For example, For example, I was advised that I should begin interacting with faculty during the third week of the semester because the first few weeks tend to be up in the air as students and faculty members are caught up in the rush of a new semester.

Working on different aspects of my role gives me the intellectual satisfaction that I could not have lived without and I know I have found an excellent home at U of R. As English and Humanities scholarship moves toward a digital environment, I attend workshops on data management, DMP, metadata, and research repositories, among others, in order for my faculty and students to recognize in me a valuable resource for their scholarly advancement.

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Biblio-Throwback!

[Hardly a day passes by without another hand-wringing editorial about the so-called Millenial Generation. In the Fall 2005 issue of Biblio-Notes, the insightful Georgie Donovan had this to offer about the generation, from a librarian’s perspective:]

“They entered junior high when coverage of the Columbine High School shooting was inescapable. Whether life has become more dangerous than it was for older generations is debatable, but what is not debatable is the perception that these students have grown up in a period of personal violence and terrorism. They’ve never known a day without the AIDS virus, and the U.S. has been at war since most of them started high school. They’ve also never known a day without computers, much less VCRs, CD players, or television without The Simpsons. Taking into account how much technology has played a role in their lives – how fascinated they are with new technologies, and how supple they are at learning them – will be essential for librarians posing the question of how to create services, collections, and spaces that meet the learning styles and attitudes of this generation.”

Member News

Michael Adams, editor of Biblio-Notes in 2000-2001, retired in August after twenty years as a reference librarian at the City University of New York Graduate Center.

Richard Bleiler published The Strange Case of “The Angels of Mons”: Arthur Machen’s World War I Story, the Insistent Believers, and His Refutations.

Ashley Ireland is now the Dean of University Libraries at Murray State University.

Lydia Willoughby began an appointment as Research and Education Librarian at the Sojourner Truth Library of the State University of New York at New Paltz in July 2015, where she will be assuming liaison responsibilities with English.

ACRL Fall e-Learning

ACRL is offering two webcasts in November to meet the demands of your schedule and budget. These interactive webcasts last 60-90 minutes and take place in an interactive online classroom; group discounts are available. Full details and registration information are available on the ACRL website.
The Neoliberal in Your Library: Resisting Corporate Solutions to Collection Development  
(November 4, 2015)  
What is the 21st century library? Will it be a makerspace, a learning commons, or a sustainer of collections? Through an examination of collection development trends, explore the political currents converging in libraries and higher education that are obfuscating our community-oriented values in favor of privatization. This webcast will provide a frame to support librarians as they articulate the value of collection development, and sustainable collection management, that affirms our core values.

Introduction to Critical Library Pedagogy  
(November 10, 2015)  
Investigate critical pedagogical approaches for library instruction with the greater goal of improving our teaching, how students feel about using the library, and the image of the librarian. As we strive to make our teaching, our libraries, and our campuses as inclusive as we can, there is still a lot of work to be done.

Complete details and registration information for e-Learning webcasts are available on the ACRL website. Contact Margot Conahan at mconahan@ala.org for more information.

ACRL Annual Survey Now Open

Since 1999 the ACRL Academic Library Trends and Statistics Survey has gathered statistics at the national level from all types of academic libraries in the United States and Canada. The survey is developed and overseen by the ACRL Academic Library Trends and Statistics Editorial Board. Earlier this year, the ACRL Board of Directors approved a recommendation from the editorial board that ACRL create and administer its own survey instrument to make it more relevant and responsive to the needs of academic libraries. Formerly, ACRL had been using the Association of Research Libraries survey instrument with permission. Following a ten-month development process involving scores of librarians and opportunities for review and feedback, the ACRL Annual Survey has been overhauled and will open on September 18, 2015, to collect data for the 2015 fiscal year. Fiscal year 2015 is defined as the most recent 12-month period that ends before October 1, 2015. Complete details on the new survey are available on the ACRL Insider blog. Surveys will close on April 30, 2016.
ACRL 2017

At the Helm: Leading Transformation
March 22-25, 2017
Baltimore, Maryland

The ACRL 2017 Call for Participation will be available December 2016. Watch www.acrl.org for details!

The End of the Ink: Transition and Inspiration

At the start of the new term in July, *Biblio-Notes* saw a transition in its editorship. Dr. Brian Flota, Assistant Professor and Humanities Librarian at James Madison University, and myself, Ashley Ireland, Dean of Libraries at Murray State University, are your new co-editors of *Biblio-Notes*. We hope to seek out thought-provoking content that supports the mission of the Literatures in English Section of ACRL. We thank you for the opportunity and welcome your feedback. We would also like to thank John Glover, Humanities Librarian at Virginia Commonwealth University, and former editor of *Biblio-Notes*, for passing the reins to us.

July was a significant transition for me, personally. I transitioned from my position as Director of User & Instruction Services (essentially over all public services units at my regional comprehensive university) and liaison to the Department of English & Philosophy into the position of Dean of Libraries. While I acquired a number of responsibilities, the new title meant that I had to give up my liaising responsibilities with my last remaining discipline area. It is true that this type of administrative position, in many institutions, necessarily takes you away from working with students and faculty. I do not regret my decision, but even three months in I do miss that type of work.

In all of my positions, I have tried to seek inspiration, motivation, and perspective both from inside and outside the library and information discipline. I take a broad definition of information and inform my knowledge about information-seeking behavior and the information landscape from less traditional resources. When I was applying for the dean position, one of my presentations included a brief overview of six resources that I used to inform my vision for academic libraries, half of which were not directly about libraries. If you are interested in that list, I would be glad to share it with you. However, I would like to use my remaining space here to
recommend two additional resources that I have come across since becoming dean that have helped that vision evolve.

The first was just published a few weeks ago by my friends and colleagues Joshua Adair and Paul Walker. Their article titled “Turned On: On the Impossibility of Queer (and) Composition” was published in the journal Hybrid Pedagogy: A Digital Journal of Learning, Teaching, and Technology, and is an exploration of the application of queer theory in composition courses. The article is well written and pushes the boundaries of what it means to teach. Although it is not necessarily meant for librarians, their work could help us become much more comfortable with the ambiguity that exists within the Framework for Information Literacy. It also serves as a fantastic entry into queer theory for those of you who are assisting students and faculty as they apply this critical lens to literature.

The second is a presentation given at the Mobius conference over the summer of 2015. This talk, titled “Bleeding Edges of Tech”, helps provide specific perspectives to libraries that are currently, soon-to-be, or recently undergoing a transition to a new ILS, or any library anywhere attempting to plan for the future with technology. A new ILS, and new technology in general, forces new conversations about commitments to the print format, something to which those of us who liaise with literature departments tend to cling. Speaker Jason Griffey quickly runs through a history of technology and provides a glimpse into future technologies that are coming our way, whether we like it or not. If you would like to be truly infuriated, make sure to pay attention to the issues he brings up around minute 41. It is certainly relevant to you and your work, if you are reading this.

Take a look at these, and recommend creative pieces back to me. I welcome articles, videos, infographics, and other formats that are interesting. You can reach me at aireland@murraystate.edu.

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


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