

Biblio-Notes

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

#44 Fall 2004

ISSN 1076-8947

Notes from the Chair:

Much Ado About Reading?

I recently moved across the country from
Washington state to the D.C. Metro area, some

Life as a Literature Librarian

Several years ago when I was appointed librarian liaison to the English department it was both good news and bad news. The good news was that English literature is both my field and my passion. The English department was the assignment I coveted.

The bad news was that, because the librarian liaison program was new at Villanova University, our understanding of our roles and responsibilities was vague. While some guidance was offered, much of what we accomplished was the result of personal intuition and initiative.

Yet, that turned out to be good news as well. We were able to define and construct our responsibilities ourselves and allowed to grow into the job, responding to opportunities as they arose.

Since I'd done my English graduate work at Villanova, I knew many of the faculty in that department well. Many were comfortable discussing their expectations of the library with me, although occasionally their sense of camaraderie and good manners precluded their complaining openly.

I've tried to build on those professional and personal relationships by getting to know their research interests and their individual strengths and weaknesses regarding the library. Are they comfortable searching databases or should I perform the search for them? One professor still prefers not to use e-mail so I correspond with him via campus mail.

One of my goals as librarian liaison is to be seen more often in the corridors of the English department, although I often feel like I'm glued to my desk here in the library. I try to attend faculty lectures and readings, and I make it a point to get in touch with new faculty to introduce myself as a link to the library and to encourage their suggestions. As a colleague mentioned at a recent LES group discussion, it's also important to get to know

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Rootblog, and Blo.gs. Any of them will let you set up a "blogroll" that provides regular updates on content in your favorite blogs and websites, usually truncated so you can easily skim headlines and only read what you want.

I've set up my Kinja account with a variety of different information feeds, some for professional purposes and some just for interest. Here's a sampling of the sites and blogs I follow, and the ways I find them useful in my work:

Open Access News

(<http://www.earlham.edu/~peters/fos/fosblog.html>) keeps me up to date on what's going on in the scholarly publishing wars. I regularly pull items from this blog to pass along to faculty.

Blog of a Bookslut

(<http://www.bookslut.com/blog/>) provides good literary gossip and reviews, often of books that are a little below the national media's radar.

Confessions of a Science Librarian

(<http://jdupuis.blogspot.com/>) is a good all-purpose academic librarianship blog, and it also gives me a peek over the fence into the sciences.

Moorish Girl (<http://www.moorishgirl.com/>)

gives good reviews and literary news, particularly on Middle Eastern, Arab, and Islamic topics.

The Complete Review (<http://www.complete-review.com/main/main.html>) gives, well, reviews.

Crooked Timber (<http://crookedtimber.org/>) is an interdisciplinary academic journal that keeps me plugged into what faculty are talking about.

Maud Newton: Blog

(<http://maudnewton.com/blog/>) is a popular, hip literary blog that gives lots of good news, reviews, and general dish.

Chocolate Runner's Blog

(<http://www.completerunning.com/chocolate-runners-blog/>) is a crucial source of timely information concerning the impact of both

chocolate and running on the profession of literature librarianship. No, really. I swear.

To see what a Kinja account looks like, check out mine:

http://kinja.com/user/karen_librarian

offered to help you keep pace with the latest library research and techniques. Poster sessions and round tables provide additional opportunities to exchange ideas and discuss hot topics.

Register by February 7, 2005, and save more than 20% on your conference registration. Group discounts are also available for institutions that register ten or more employees. For a complete program details, registration and hotel reservations or to customize a conference

schedule and sign up for a tour, visit www.acrl.org/minneapolis

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be more confusing than helpful, as Barbara's examples will show. The use of jargon, inconsistencies in format, and the questionable need for users to know the name of the product's vendor (which can and does vary between libraries) were some of the points of concern.

One of the other issues discussed was that of who is teaching citation style to students, and how. Librarians may touch on citation style during library instruction sessions, but more typically we see the students individually at the reference desk, as they are (often frantically) finishing their research. Many faculty we work with admit that they also do not teach citation style. If the *MLA Handbook* is meant to be a stand-alone guide for students, it appears that many of the students we see are unable to use it without further consultation and instruction. A surprising point that many of us discovered we have in common is that we end up showing students how to cite the online source (for example, a journal article), as if they had looked at the print version, in order to avoid the cumbersome process of creating a citation for the electronic version. This is admittedly a stopgap measure, and as students become less familiar with print sources due to the plethora of online materials, even this "translation" exercise will become unfeasible. One suggestion that arose was the creation of guides, perhaps as web pages, which could be used by specific audiences: faculty could use as teaching (and self-training) aids, librarians could use as examples, and students could incorporate the information into their citation-creation process.

Barbara mentioned that you would be interested in setting up focus groups of librarians, and we would be pleased to assist in that endeavor; we can provide a list of interested discussion group members, and we can also provide names of faculty and students should you want to set up sessions with those groups.

We do appreciate all the effort that goes into each edition of the *MLA Handbook*, and we look forward to working with you to make this resource even more effective. Please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Helene C. Williams
Chair, Literary Reference Discussion Group

Literatures in English Section
Association of College and Research Libraries
American Library Association

Cc: Steven Harris, Chair, Literatures in English Section

ACRL Board of Directors to Vote on Dues Increase

At the June 2004 Annual Meeting, the ACRL Board of Directors passed a resolution, at the recommendation of Budget and Finance Committee, to consider a dues increase for certain categories of ACRL membership.

A variety of factors contributed to the development of the resolution, including the following:

- Although the "cost of doing business" has risen steadily over the past 15 years, ACRL has not raised member dues since 1991. Therefore, the dues revenue collected from each member has failed to keep pace with natural increases in operating expenses due to inflation.
- Advertising revenue from ACRL publications has decreased over the past few years and is not projected to rebound in the foreseeable future. Advertising revenue helps subsidize many member services including programs at the ALA Annual Conference, section newsletters, and committee activities such as standards development, awards, as well as recent major initiatives in the areas of scholarly communication and information literacy. The dues increase will help offset the reduction in advertising revenue and ensure that important ACRL programs and services receive the funding they need.
- Development of new programs and services that add value to membership will require funding. As outlined in our recently adopted strategic plan, in the coming years ACRL will be developing additional programs and services that assist members in the areas of technology, delivery of services,

standards development and
implementation, issues papers, and local

enter the volatile weather (both atmospheric and political) of Washington, D.C., specifically George Mason University.

On her drive east she may have passed former LES chair **Steven Harris** on the road. He is now Collection Development Librarian for Utah State University in Logan, Utah. You can send him a note at Steve.Harris@usu.edu.

Editor **Julie Still** sends a note of warning to all parents who attend ALA and leave their children home with a spouse. When she left for ALA Annual in Orlando the family did not own a dog, when she returned a 3 year old beagle had taken up residence. Whether this was a measure of retaliation for not taking the kids to Disney is unknown. She trembles at the thought of what might happen during Midwinter.

If you have news of note or just want the world to know you painted your house this spring, please send your information to still@camden.rutgers.edu.

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Biblio-Notes (ISSN 1076-8947) is published twice a year by the Literatures in English Section of the Association of College & Research Libraries, a division of the American Library Association (50 E. Huron St., Chicago IL, 60611; 800/545-2433 ext. 2519. Copies are free to members.

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

Editor: Julie Still
Paul Robeson Library
Rutgers University
300 N. 4th St. / P. O. Box 93990
Camden, NJ 08101-3990
856 225-6033 ext. 22
still@camden.rutgers.edu

Assistant Editor: Katharine Dean
Ohio State University Libraries
Information Services Department

Main Library, Room 126
1858 Neil Ave.
Columbus, OH 43210
614 688-5861
dean.202@osu.edu

Chair, 2004-2005: Jen Stevens
Fenwick Library
4400 University Drive
George Mason University ext.

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ACRL-American Library Association
50 East Huron Street
Chicago, IL 60611-2795

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