

# LOUISIANA LIBRARIES

LOUISIANA LIBRARY ASSOCIATION



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# From the Editor



We often throw out the terms *change* and *relevance* regularly in theoretical discussion of libraries and preparations for the future. In the past few months, those terms have been proven as guiding principles of our profession and necessary signposts for our planning. COVID-19 impacted many of our communities and some of our libraries. While protecting the safety and health of our colleagues and communities, Louisiana libraries have adapted and developed new means of service.

The last year has seen significant changes for all of us as individuals and as library workers. We have been provided ample opportunity to reconfigure, reevaluate, and redefine our roles. My deepest desire is that we grow as an organization to better embrace ALL library workers, particularly those who have been disenfranchised or overlooked, that we work to make libraries more equitable and welcoming, and that we build a stronger future for Louisiana one library at a time.



# LIBRARY

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# From Your President

Wow. This has been a crazy year, right?

I will be completely honest with you—this is not what I had in mind for my year as President. I had grandiose plans of bringing LLA forward with online programs and conferences, an app, discussion groups with members and nonmembers to see what we need to do for you—with a fun, thinking-outside-of-the-box conference to be the proverbial cherry on top. Of course, life is what happens when you're busy making plans. Hindsight, after all, is 20/20. (See what I did there?)

In spite of the deep disappointment I feel about our conference not happening this year, I'm proud of all that we accomplished. We started this fiscal year in some stormy seas, but I think that's why we were able to handle so much chaos in these last six months so well.



It is only natural for some of you to ask what exactly we accomplished—so much goes on behind the scenes. We try to keep you updated, but I know my long emails can get tedious. So, here are the highlights:

- We transitioned to a new management company with a focus on saving money, but also on transparency and efficiency.
- We have started untangling the accounting issues we were having with our old company and are on our way to a more efficient and transparent way of budgeting and organizing LLA.
- We have made the transition to an online membership database/directory, saving the organization thousands of dollars a year. We have already made plans to expand the search capabilities of this database for members.
- We voted to reduce our journal Louisiana Libraries from four meager issues to two robust issues a year, also saving the organization thousands of dollars a year without sacrificing any of the content.
- At the beginning of my presidency, we started having online Board meetings to encourage participation for anyone with limited funds and/or travel time. This was quite fortuitous, as it meant we were already familiar with Zoom when the pandemic started.
- We planned an amazing conference ahead of schedule--no one can take that away from us! We were also brave and wise enough to cancel that conference before it was shut down for us by the state and/or parish.
- In the wake of these disappointments, we've started the process of creating online content to maximize the value of LLA membership and to contribute to the future of the field.
- We cultivated an amazing social media presence that we can maintain for years to come.
- We worked hard to revise our bylaws so that the membership can vote on the new changes. Included in this is the reasoning behind adding a Treasurer--to ensure a system of checks and balances will exist between the LLA Board and Amigos.
- We've started updating our manual and changing how we do interest groups.
- We were the first state library association in the south to issue a statement against racism. More importantly, we aren't stopping there! We are actively taking steps to further encourage diversity in our organization and our Board—though we need your help with this!

So we've accomplished a lot this year, even though it doesn't always feel like it. As a self-confessed sufferer of Impostor Syndrome, the obstacles we faced have felt insurmountable at times. But it was through the hard work of our Board, our management company Amigos, our committee volunteers, and members like you that we accomplished so much. Most of it isn't terribly exciting, but that is okay—because it sets the foundation for our future Presidents, Boards, and members. It means that they will have a stable structure that can support whatever we dream of building in the future. Personally, I'm proud to have served and to continue to serve LLA. I think the key to our libraries and library staff is local initiatives and the willingness to work together to build that brighter future we've all been envisioning. So thank you for all the support I've received this year, but it's really members like you who keep us going.

Sonnet Ireland  
LLA President, 2019-20

# Serving our Student Veterans in Louisiana

by Rebecca Kelley & Mitch Fontenot

There has been a surge in veterans on college campuses across the country since the Post-9/11 GI Bill went into effect in 2009 (U.S. House, 110<sup>th</sup> Congress, H.R. 2642). However, the recent passage of the Forever GI Bill in 2017, which removed the 15-year cap to use benefits, means college and universities could see even more veterans return to campus (U.S. House, 115<sup>th</sup> Congress, H.R. 3218). As a result, state veteran agencies and higher education institutions have responded with increased funding and the opening of campus veteran resource centers. Student veterans can differ from traditional students in age, maturity, life experiences, and may also face physical and mental health challenges. As a result, the transition back to civilian life and to a college campus can sometimes prove challenging (LeMire and Mulvihill, 2017, p. 21).

The first state-led program for student veterans, Vet Corps, was launched in 2009 by the Washington State Department of Veteran Affairs (2018). The State of Louisiana has recently shown its commitment to helping its veterans transition to college life and reach their educational and career attainment goals (Louisiana Department of Veteran Affairs (LDVA), 2019). The statewide initiative LaVetCorps Program pledged to open thirty veteran resource centers on campuses across Louisiana. (LDVA, 2019). These resource centers help veterans returning from service to “successfully transition” to both their college and their community by providing mentorship and assistance in accessing their federal and state benefits (LDVA, 2019). The staff at these resource centers also help increase “awareness of student veterans’ needs and veteran culture” by providing training and support to college faculty, staff, and administration (LDVA, 2019). This initiative was the result of a February 2019 memorandum

of understanding between Governor John Bel Edwards, the Louisiana Department of Veterans Affairs, and higher education leaders from all four Louisiana public college systems and Xavier University of Louisiana (LDVA, 2019). While some public universities had existing student veteran centers on their campuses when the additional LaVetCorps veteran resource centers opened in 2019, Louisiana became the second state in the United States to have student veteran resource centers on every public college campus (Sentell, 2019).

## Introduction to the Study

Since Louisiana opened veteran centers at each public college and university in the state, the authors set out to explore the range of outreach efforts to student veterans by academic libraries at colleges and universities across Louisiana. The goal of the study was to determine if libraries in Louisiana targeted their outreach efforts to student veterans on their college campuses.

A review of the literature reveals the characteristics of the typical student veteran. Several academic librarians have targeted student veterans in their outreach efforts and their research provides the foundation for best practices. The authors provide details of their early outreach to student veterans at Louisiana State University. An overview of their survey results provide a snapshot of library outreach to student veterans at Louisiana’s colleges and universities. Finally, the authors propose some best practices for academic libraries interested in serving student veterans on their campus.

## Profile of Student Veterans

Student veterans are quite different from the typical



student on college campuses. To best promote library services and resources to this underserved student population, librarians should be aware of these differences and the challenges they can bring to outreach efforts. The average student veteran is twenty-five years old at the start of their postsecondary education [American Council on Education (ACE), 2014]. As a result, student veterans are more likely to have a spouse (44%) and children (52%) and work full-time while in college (42%) (ACE, 2014). Student veterans are also more racially diverse than the civilian student population (17% black, 14% Hispanic, 6% other) (ACE, 2014) and more likely to be first generation students (LeMire and Mulvihill 2017, 98). Additionally, enlisted members of the military tend to be “disproportionately from low-income or working class backgrounds” (Phelps, 237). Student veterans often believe that their military experience makes them more mature than traditional students, even if they are the same age as those students (Mills, Paladino, and Klentzin, 270).

Most student veterans tend to feel “distinctly different and isolated from nonveteran students,” see themselves “as other,” (Mills, Paladino, and Klentzin, 270) and do not always feel comfortable on campus (LeMire and Mulvihill, 2017, 98). Due to the aforementioned issues, student veterans face more responsibilities and stresses than most traditional college students. Additionally, many student veterans perceive that most student services target traditional students and are of “no use” to them (Mills, Paladino, and Klentzin, 271). Due to these factors, libraries may find it more difficult to reach student veterans using the same outreach methods they use with nonveteran students.

Student veterans are different from their civilian peers in age, maturity, and extracurricular responsibilities. These differences and “competing demands for attention” result in the desire to

maximize their time spent on campus, studying, and conducting research (Mills, Paladino, and Klentzin, 273). Therefore, librarians may need to use different outreach methods to promote library resources and services to student veterans than those used to reach the average student. A study by Mills, Paladino, and Klentzin (2015) reflects that student veterans are “particularly apt to respond to library outreach in their classes or at a dedicated student veterans’ center” and that this outreach is “likely to be well-received.”

Additionally, the ACE’s “Toolkit for Veteran Friendly Institutions” (2018) points out that when student veterans “feel supported on campus,” they usually have higher grade point averages, retention, and graduation rates. Recent research by Mills, Paladino, and Klentzin (2015) concludes there is a “clear need for academic libraries to make a particular and specific effort to reach” student veterans.

### **Outreach to Student Veterans in the Literature**

Rutledge and LeMire (2016) make a distinction between active and passive outreach strategies when targeting outreach efforts to underserved populations on campus. Passive outreach efforts rely on the patron to initiate contact but “scale well to large student populations” and to libraries with limited staff. Examples of passive outreach include LibGuides, library displays, promotional materials and office hours. In contrast, active outreach efforts are more time-consuming but are a “crucial element toward building strong relationships with underserved groups” (Rutledge and LeMire, 119). Examples of active outreach include building personal relationships with students and partnering with veteran organizations. Libraries should consider a combination of both strategies to allow these

efforts to be both “scalable and sustainable over time” Rutledge and LeMire (2016, 118).

Academic libraries across the country have begun to target outreach to veterans on their campuses. Outreach efforts at University of Montana Mansfield Library included a librarian liaison to student veterans, a partnership with the student veteran center, presentations and workshops, space provided in the library for student veteran meetings, reference services at the student veteran center and information packets distributed at orientation sessions (Samson, 83). Librarians representing several academic libraries in Ohio detailed the diverse ways that they are making strides in implementing outreach programs to student veterans on their respective campuses (Atwood et al., 2016). In addition to the previously stated outreach efforts, Ohio academic librarians also conducted a needs assessment and survey of student veterans, collected oral histories, designed veterans online resource guides, and hosted a veteran-specific speaker series (Atwood, et al., 174-8).

LeMire (2017) conducted a survey of academic, public, and special libraries to determine how these libraries supported their veteran patrons. Those most common strategies reported by academic libraries to serve student veterans include collaboration and partnerships with veteran organizations, veteran-oriented programs/ events, such as panels, luncheons, and Veterans Day events. Additionally, outreach efforts were extended such as presentations, flyers, resource fairs, spaces for veterans, and dedicated website or LibGuide (LeMire, 158-9).

### **First Steps at Louisiana State University (LSU)**

Louisiana State University opened the William A. Brookshire Military and Veterans Student Center (VSC) in January 2018. This facility includes a meeting room, study lounge, and a computer lab.

Services and programs specifically for student veterans include free tutoring, resume writing assistance, lunch and learn workshops, career counseling, and advising services on veteran benefits. LSU’s VSC currently serves more than 2,800 students (veterans, active service members, and dependents), of which approximately 400 students are veterans and active service members (reservists), according to Program Director Sachiko Cleveland.

In September 2018, the authors were invited to discuss the services and resources available at LSU Libraries as part of the lunch and learn workshop series hosted by the VSC. At this inaugural session, the variety of services and resources that LSU Libraries makes available to students were emphasized. The services included subject librarians and research guides for every major, free e-textbooks for certain courses, group and individual study rooms, quiet vs. collaborative floors of the library for study, and the Gear2Geaux program. The Gear2Geaux program provides equipment such as laptops, video cameras, and phone chargers to current students. Research tools highlighted the depth of the library’s online catalog beyond books. This included the approximately three hundred databases, the institutional repository, and the Discovery search which allows novice researchers to search the majority of library resources via the home page. After the presentations, the authors were invited to stay for lunch and continue the conversation with student veterans. This was an opportunity to answer questions, clarify how librarians can support academic success, as well as getting to know the student veterans on a personal level. The program director received positive feedback from the participants and has continued to include the library each semester. This information is usually included in the first presentation of the semester as part of their lunch and learn series. On Veteran’s Day, the authors brought cookies



and fruit to the VSC. This served as a small token of gratitude for their military service and as a reminder that the library's resources and services are available to them as end-of-the-semester projects and finals approach.

Before the first VSC lunch and learn workshop, the authors used the Springshare LibGuides platform to create "Veterans Resources," a guide dedicated to resources for student veterans at LSU (<https://guides.lib.lsu.edu/veterans>). The guide includes information about finding subject librarians, helpful databases for research, and veteran specific information from local and national organizations, including employment resources.

### **Study of Outreach to Student Veterans in Louisiana**

The authors' experiences with student veterans, along with the statewide LaVetCorps Program, led them to investigate whether academic libraries in Louisiana targeted outreach efforts to student veterans. The authors conducted a statewide survey using the Qualtrics software program (See Appendix 1). Academic libraries at SACS (Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges)-accredited institutions were included in the study. If libraries conducted targeted outreach, the authors sought to find out what methods of outreach were used. The authors excluded their institution from the survey. In all, 40 libraries were identified for inclusion in the study. Email addresses of outreach librarians were obtained from websites and web directories of academic libraries in Louisiana. If an outreach librarian was not identified, the email address of the instruction librarian or library dean/director was collected. The survey was distributed by email in May 2019 and was active for one month. Ultimately, twenty respondents completed the

survey, resulting in a response rate of 51%.

### **Survey Results**

According to the survey respondents, all libraries (100%) provide outreach to the general student body on their campuses. When asked whether their library provided outreach to specific student populations on their campus, eight respondents (40%) said they conducted targeted outreach, while ten (50%) did not, with the remaining two respondents (10%) unsure.

The respondents who worked in libraries with targeted outreach (and those unsure whether they did) were asked if their library directed outreach efforts to student veterans. Of these ten respondents, four reported outreach efforts aimed specifically to student veterans with five respondents stating they did not provide outreach to student veterans with one respondent who was unsure if their library targeted outreach to student veterans on their campus.

The five respondents who either provided outreach to student veterans or were unsure if they did were asked to indicate the types of outreach used at their library. Respondents could select multiple answers from a list of outreach methods (See Appendix 1).

Outreach methods most used by Louisiana academic libraries to reach student veterans included participation in student veteran orientations (25%), a student veteran research guide or webpage (17%), and dedicated space in the library (17%). Other responses included speaking at a student veteran center workshop or event (8%), signage, exhibits, or displays in the library (8%). Three participants selected "other". While two of those responses were not specific to library outreach; one respondent noted their library appointed a librarian liaison to student

veterans and provided library instruction in a veteran seminar course.

## **Discussion**

As our survey results demonstrate, several academic libraries in Louisiana have already implemented some form of outreach effort specifically directed at student veterans. As previously mentioned, the state of Louisiana has invested in its veterans' educational and career attainment goals through veteran resource centers across the state. Due to this, the authors believe that academic libraries should also seek to invest in these students as well.

Considering the survey results and literature, the authors suggest the following recommendations as best practices when pursuing library outreach efforts to student veterans in higher education institutions.

## **Gather Data**

Before considering outreach efforts at your college or university, you will want to find out how many student veterans are enrolled in your institution. Getting an accurate count of student veterans on your campus can sometimes be a challenge. Many schools rely on getting this data from education benefit certification or Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) information, while some schools ask veterans to self-identify on their admission applications (ACE, 2018). These methods of data collection may be incomplete, as some women, National Guard/Reserve members, and those without combat experience may not always identify as "veterans" (ACE, 2018). The best method to collect this information is by contacting the director at your institution's student veteran center

or the school certifying official (the designated person for processing veterans' education benefits at your institution). This will assist in getting the most accurate and current information about veteran and service member enrollment at your college or university.

## **Designate Liaison to Student Veterans**

A first step in building outreach efforts to student veterans at your institution is to designate a liaison (or a team of librarians and library staff) to student veterans (Mills, Paladino, and Klentzin, 274; LeMire, 163; LeMire and Mulvihill, 2017, 113; Natal and Atwood, 345). While it can be helpful for the liaison to be a veteran or a close relative of a veteran, it is more important for this individual to appreciate military service and have a "sincere desire to support military veterans and service members" (LeMire, 163-4). The liaison should seek to develop relationships with student veterans with the intention of identifying their research needs or struggles and sharing ways that the library can help meet their challenges (LeMire and Mulvihill, 2017, 113). This assists liaisons in identifying areas where the library can help. To accomplish this relationship building, the liaison can partner with the student veteran center, speak at orientations and student organization meetings, provide instruction and consultations either through workshops or office hours, and build the library's collection of military-related materials (LeMire and Mulvihill, 2017, 117).

## **Partner with the Student Veteran Center**

Make an appointment with the director of the student veteran center at your college or university to introduce yourself and express an interest in learning more about student veterans and service members at your college or university. Building

a partnership with this individual is crucial, as they will be your main contact point for outreach efforts to student veterans on your campus. Librarians should consider the student veteran center as the “communication vehicle” (Mills, Paladino, and Klentzin, 273-4) in which to reach student veterans. Outreach efforts at the student veteran center can include giving presentations on library resources, staffing a resource table or speaking at orientations, and holding reference hours (Mills, Paladino, and Klentzin, 274; LeMire and Mulvihill, 2017, 110, 113, 120). If your library cannot do this type of outreach due to staff limitations, consider providing the student veteran center with a library information sheet or other promotional materials about the library’s services and resources. Veterans may be particularly receptive to this type of outreach, as they are “familiar with this method of information dissemination” because as service members they were often given information packets and directed to learn the content (LeMire and Mulvihill, 2017, 121). Additionally, the library’s liaison to student veterans may want to seek training opportunities for library employees so they can be prepared to effectively serve student veterans and service members (LeMire and Mulvihill, 2017, 111; Sampson, 86). Student veteran center staff can be invited to speak at library meetings where they can provide a snapshot of student veterans on campus and to explain how student veterans differ from traditional students. Library staff may need to be reminded of the importance of being respectful and unbiased towards individual student veterans or risk alienating these students (LeMire and Mulvihill, 2017, 111).

### **Emphasis Your Expertise**

Due to their military training, student veterans are “more inclined to seek out specialists” and

are not afraid to ask for help (Mills, Paladino, and Klentzin, 271). Their backgrounds, combined with their personal responsibilities (full-time jobs, families, etc.) reflect a motivation to seek out experts as a time-saving strategy. Therefore, librarians may want to emphasize their expertise as research specialists and the varying subject specialists when conducting outreach efforts to this group. This will ensure that student veterans know who to contact when they need research assistance. However, while student veterans may seek out experts or specialists when they need assistance, they may not have a full understanding of “what librarians do and how they can help” (LeMire and Mulvihill, 2017, 103). Therefore, librarians should aim to familiarize student veterans with all the resources and services offered by the library so they will take advantage of the expertise offered.

### **Online Resource Guides**

Academic libraries with limited staffing should consider creating a LibGuide or webpage specifically for student veterans. This is one way to indicate that your library is “student veterans friendly” (Mills, Paladino, and Klentzin, 274). When creating an online resource guide or webpage for this group, consider the varied needs of this population. As with other resource guides, library databases and search tips should be included. In addition to traditional library research tools, resource guides or webpages dedicated to student veterans could also include community, employment, and crisis resources. Veterans may be facing financial, health, or relationship difficulties so they may find it helpful to have links to organizations (campus, local, state or national) that provide this type of assistance. Some veterans may suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder, traumatic brain injury, or military

sexual trauma (Phelps, 237), therefore crisis organizations that emphasize confidentiality could also be included in the resource guide. Finally, future employment may also be a consideration, so databases such as PrepSTEP, O\*Net, and the Occupational Outlook Handbook could also be considered for inclusion in your online resource guide.

### **Library Space for Student Veterans**

If your campus does not have a student veteran center or has limited study space, consider whether your library could set aside space specifically for student veterans. Spaces that are particularly useful are “military student friendly.” Areas such as these would have low traffic to allow student veterans to “easily monitor their surroundings” and to “position themselves so people can’t walk up behind them and inadvertently surprise them” (LeMire and Mulvihill, 2017, 114-15). Another benefit of a dedicated library space for student veterans is providing a place for them to meet with and connect with their peers (LeMire and Mulvihill, 2017, 115). If you are contemplating a dedicated area in the library for student veterans, consider several factors such as layout, noise level, etc. Also, consider getting feedback from student veterans in the planning process, so that the space meets their actual needs (Natal and Atwood, 345).

If dedicated library space is not feasible, another option is for the library to offer group study rooms or meeting space for the student veteran center or student veterans organizations (such as Student Veterans of America) to reserve for their meetings and events (Mills, Paladino, and Klentzin, 274; LeMire & Mulvihill, 2017, 115, Samson, 84-5). Providing this library space to student veterans helps demonstrate that student veterans are welcome in the library.

### **Library Displays, Exhibits, & Programs**

Another way that academic librarians can help student veterans feel welcome in the library is to incorporate military-related topics in library displays, exhibits, or programs. One recommendation is to find ways to connect the “library’s collections to veteran-related holidays and events” such as military-themed book displays or through military related archival material, such as photographs and letters in exhibits (LeMire and Mulvihill, 2017, 121). These exhibits or programs could also be used to highlight student veterans on your campus, in a way that “accurately and sensitively” (Rutledge and LeMire, 118) represents student veterans’ experiences and sacrifices (LeMire and Mulvihill, 2017, 121). Seek input from student veterans or the student veteran center in the early stages of planning this type of program in order to make sure it would be of interest to them and to allow them to participate (Helton, 14). This type of exhibit or program serves two purposes. First, it is an opportunity for student veterans to share their military service with the rest of campus. Secondly, faculty, staff, and other students may learn more about the military experiences of these students and appreciate the value and diversity they add to the campus (LeMire and Mulvihill, 2017, 121; Rutledge and LeMire, 118-9).

### **Conclusion**

Student veterans and service members on our college campuses are a diverse group and have varied research and information needs. As this study has demonstrated, some academic libraries in Louisiana have responded by offering specific services to student veterans. One limitation of this study is that respondents were not asked to

provide library staff size nor were they asked for reasons why they did not target their outreach efforts to student veterans. Nonetheless, academic librarians in Louisiana should seek to engage with student veterans through targeted outreach efforts. Some of these efforts could include designating a student veteran liaison, partnering with the student veteran center, emphasizing our expertise as research specialists, and making the library a welcoming place for veterans by highlighting the library's services and resources. While not all suggested practices are advisable or feasible for every institution, libraries should seek to implement at least one of these outreach methods so that student veterans know the library is there to help them succeed in their academic and career goals.

### **Appendix 1: Outreach to Student Veterans Survey Instrument**

Q. What is your institution?

1. select institution from list of Louisiana universities and colleges (both public and private)

Q. Does your library provide outreach to students on your campus?

1. Yes
2. No (ended survey)
3. Unsure

Q. Does your library provide outreach to specific types of students on your campus?

1. Yes
2. No (ended survey)
3. Unsure

Q. Does your library provide outreach to student veterans on your campus?

1. Yes
2. No (ended survey)
3. Unsure

Q. What forms of outreach does your library use to reach student veterans on your campus? Select all that apply.

1. Research guide or webpage dedicated to student veterans
2. Participate at orientations for student veterans
3. Guest speaker at student veteran center workshop or event
4. Guest speaker at Student Veterans of American chapter meeting
5. Signage, exhibits, or displays in library for student veterans
6. Dedicated space in library for student veterans
7. Other

Q. Please provide any additional information regarding outreach to student veterans on your campus.

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# Bayou State Periodical Index:

by Heather C. Plaisance

## *Thirty-three Years of Preserving Louisiana's Culture*

### Introduction

Louisiana's local, regional, and statewide periodicals provide a wealth of information to library users. These publications feature articles that discuss the different aspects of Louisiana's unique culture and highlight the state's social, political, and economic concerns. They serve as newsletters for civic and professional organizations, feature genealogical histories of families, and provide the historical background for a city, town or region. Unfortunately, because national sources often ignore them, much of the rich information contained in these periodicals are inaccessible to library users.

Many factors can contribute to the limited accessibility to Louisiana's periodicals. Due to budget constraints, publishers may only print a limited number of copies. Publications intended for readers in a specific geographical location may not be widely publicized, leaving a substantial number of users unaware of their existence. "Perhaps the most salient factor contributing to the lack of access to these periodicals is the fact that they are not indexed by the widely available "national" indexing and abstracting services."<sup>1</sup>

Due to the vast amount of information available on the Internet today, this problem has been somewhat mitigated. Many publishers provide access to a limited amount of content from the publications most current issue on their websites. Others provide links to digital versions that allow users to view the entire contents of a single issue or the publication's complete archive. While there is more information readily available today compared to before, not all Louisiana publications have a strong online presence leaving the content in the majority of them largely inaccessible to researchers.

Addressing the limited accessibility to Louisiana's periodicals is not new for libraries and solutions to this problem have long been sought. Like many libraries in the 1980s, Dupré Library at the University of Southwestern Louisiana (USL), now

the University of Louisiana at Lafayette, addressed this issue by maintaining a vertical file of pamphlets and newspaper clippings that focused on the rich culture of the Acadiana region. While it helped to fill this information need, the file's contents were only accessible to users at Dupré Library. However, the "need for information on local topics and the difficulty of locating articles in Louisiana publications" was seen as a statewide issue."<sup>2</sup>

Louisiana's unique culture provides readily available topics for student research assignments. Unfortunately, articles found in commercial sources like *Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature* are "written to introduce Louisiana topics to outside readers" and lack the depth that articles in Louisiana periodicals provide.<sup>3</sup> While regional publications contain more useful information, due to lack of indexing, they are vastly underutilized by library users. In the spring of 1986, Anna S. Brown, Jean M. Schmidt (who later married and became Jean Kiesel), and John S. Wilson, librarians at Dupré Library, met to discuss this issue and find a solution for not only their institution but for libraries throughout Louisiana. They determined that the ideal solution was to develop an index of Louisiana's regional periodicals that would be made available to libraries statewide. Thus the *Bayou State Periodical Index* (BSPI) was born.

### Selected Periodicals

A key decision in the planning process was identifying the periodicals the *BSPI* would include, and the index's founders considered several factors. Of most importance, the periodicals needed to be published in Louisiana and have widespread availability to libraries throughout the state. While the majority of the periodicals had to feature Louisiana-focused articles, regional magazines such as *Southern Living* would be indexed only for articles about Louisiana related topics. Continued access to the selected publications was crucial for *BSPI* editors

and indexers. As a result, Dupré Library made efforts to acquire as many of the periodicals as possible. Most were obtained by paid subscription and added to the Library's collection. Missing issues were supplied by the Lafayette Public Library or requested through interlibrary loan. Complimentary copies were requested from publishers of titles not available locally.

The first edition of the index featured twenty-one titles that covered a variety of topics including "history, business, agriculture, the humanities, and the social life of Louisiana."<sup>4</sup> As the *BSPI* grew, periodicals were added to expand the subject areas covered while others were dropped from the index due to minimal interest or ceased publication. Since its inception, more than ninety titles have been indexed in the *BSPI*. Twenty-seven continue to be indexed today. A list of current and previously indexed periodicals follows below. Titles marked with a \* represent the original publications included in the index's 1985 edition.

### Currently Indexed Periodicals

64 Parishes  
*Acadiana Profile\**  
*The Angolite\**  
*Forests and People\**  
*La Louisiane*  
*Le Raconteur*  
*Louisiana Agriculture*  
*Louisiana Cookin'*  
*Louisiana CPA Lagniappe*  
*Louisiana Folklife Journal*  
*Louisiana Gardener*  
*Louisiana Genealogical Register*  
*Louisiana History\**  
*Louisiana Horse\**  
*Louisiana Libraries*  
*Louisiana Life\**  
*Louisiana Literature\**  
*Louisiana Sportsman*  
*McNeese Review*  
*New Orleans Genesis*  
*New Orleans Magazine\**  
*NOMA: Arts Quarterly*

*North Louisiana History\**  
*OffBeat*  
*Preservation in Print*  
*SB Magazine*  
*Watermarks*

### Previously Indexed Periodicals

*Alumni Columns*  
*Attakapas Gazette*  
*Artspectrum\**  
*Artworks*  
*Baton Rouge Magazine*  
*Best of Lafayette*  
*Classical*  
*Coast & Sea*  
*Delta Business Review*  
*Delta Tradeways*  
*EQ: Louisiana Economic Outlook*  
*Fins and Feathers: Louisiana*  
*Gambit*  
*Gulf Coast Cattleman\**  
*Impact*  
*Journal of the Louisiana State Medical Society*  
*LAES Bulletin*  
*LMSA Journal*  
*Louisiana Archaeology*  
*Louisiana Bar Journal\**  
*Louisiana Business Perspectives*  
*Louisiana Business Survey*  
*Louisiana Cattleman*  
*Louisiana Coastal Review*  
*Louisiana Conservationist\**  
*Louisiana Contractor*  
*Louisiana Country*  
*Louisiana Educational Research Journal*  
*Louisiana English Journal*  
*Louisiana Environmentalist*  
*Louisiana Folklife*  
*Louisiana Folklore Miscellany*  
*Louisiana Game and Fish*  
*Louisiana Morbidity Report*  
*Louisiana Municipal Review*  
*Louisiana Musician\**  
*Louisiana Parish Government*  
*Louisiana Political Review*  
*Louisiana Rural Economist*  
*Louisiana Tech Alumni News*

*Louisiana Wildlife Federation*  
*New Delta Review*  
*New Orleans Homes & Lifestyles*  
*PAR Analysis\**  
*PAR Legislative Bulletin*  
*Port Record\**  
*Regional Dimensions*  
*Res Scholars*  
*Rouge Magazine*  
*River Cities: The Magazine of Shreveport and Bossier\**  
*Southeast Louisiana Historical Papers*  
*Southeastern Annual Report*  
*Southern Accents\**  
*Southern Exposure*  
*Southern Living\**  
*Southern Magazine*  
*Southern Outdoors*  
*Southern Outdoors' Saltwater Magazine*  
*Southern Studies: An Interdisciplinary Journal of the South\**  
*Southpoint*  
*Southwestern Review*  
*Spectra*  
*State Business Louisiana*  
*The Times of Acadiana\**  
*Tulanian*  
*University of New Orleans Magazine*

## Building the Index

The *BSPI* was not the first of its kind. Other regional periodical indexes such as the *Index to Texas Magazines and Documents* and the *North Carolina Periodical Index* existed during the 1980s. The *Ozark Periodical Index (OPI)*, published by the Southwestern Missouri Library Network from 1979 to 1999, served as the index for periodicals published in Missouri and surrounding states of the Ozarks region. *BSPI* co-founder Anna Brown was familiar with the project and used the *OPI* as the model for the newly created Louisiana periodical index. In the early years of the *OPI*, article citations and subject headings were recorded on index cards. To set itself apart, *BSPI* founders decided to use a “computer program to manipulate and organize the data rather than a manual system to manipulate and organize data.”<sup>5</sup>

Developed by Ontario-based Reference Press in 1984, AUTHEX was chosen to serve as the *BSPI*'s periodical indexing program. AUTHEX is a “menu-driven, easy to use indexing system, for use with certain types of bibliographic material, in particular periodicals,” and held up to 32,000 records and utilized two separate files.<sup>6</sup> The main database contained article titles, author names, and the periodical's citation information including volume and page numbers. The second file was the authority file that stored the index's subject headings. Reference Press had an authority file already developed, but *BSPI* editors chose to create one specific to the index. To build the new authority file, index founders consulted the thesaurus of the *Ozark Periodical Index, Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature* and the *Library of Congress Subject Headings*.

Each newly added subject heading was assigned a five-digit numerical code that represented the heading in the authority file. This code was used for entry of the subject heading into the main database. The purpose was to link records in the database “to the authority file so that when an index is generated, it automatically creates the appropriate *See* and *See also* references.”<sup>7</sup> After all subject headings were coded and citations were entered into the main database, the index was ready to be printed.

## Print Editions, 1985-1998

The editors wanted to publish the *BSPI* semi-annually. The intent was for the index to be self-supporting using funds generated from the sale of copies to academic, school and public libraries throughout Louisiana after the publication of the first edition. However, securing funding to print the premier edition proved difficult. In 1986, Brown submitted a mini-grant proposal to the Louisiana Committee for the Humanities requesting funding for printing costs, supplies and other incidental expenses for the index's first issue but funding was denied. The Publications Committee of the Louisiana Library Association was contacted and though enthusiastic, they were unable to provide funds for the project. In the end, Dupré Library provided the necessary



technology and money needed to print the index. With dedicated funds lacking beyond the first issue, the editors decided to print the *BSPI* annually in order to keep production costs low.

The 1985 edition of the *BSPI* was published in January 1987. The index included citations from twenty-one periodicals and featured a subject index, an author index and a list of book reviews published within those periodicals in 1985. Six months later, the 1986 edition was released. By this time, the index was expanded to thirty-four periodicals.

Reception to the index was positive. By the end of August, 185 copies of the index had been sold. Public libraries accounted for the majority of sales at 75 percent.<sup>8</sup> Academic and school libraries also purchased copies of the *BSPI* but sales fell short compared to those by public libraries. While subscribers to the index were mainly libraries in Louisiana, several historical societies in Utah, Missouri, and Wisconsin also purchased copies. Copies of the index were modestly priced at \$14.00 for the current edition and from \$2.00 to \$12.00 for prior editions. As hoped, sales of the index each year generated enough funding to cover printing costs for another year.

Print editions of the *BSPI* were available from 1986 until the final edition was published in 1998. During its run in print, more than 2,000 copies of the index were sold. By 1998, the index had grown from twenty-one titles to more than fifty and contained over 15,000 article and book review citations. However, the discontinuation of print editions did not signal the end of the *BSPI*. As technology began to advance, libraries provided users with more electronic resources available on the World Wide Web. The time had come for the *BSPI* to evolve and transition to an online format.

### **Moving the *BSPI* Online**

In 1997, Bob Heriard at the University of New Orleans and chair of the Louisiana Online University Information System (LOUIS) Databases Committee suggested moving the *Bayou State Periodical Index* online. He wrote, “Wouldn’t it be neat to create an

index on the net which could be accessed through the net? Wouldn’t it be neat if we could make an index to Louisiana periodicals available as a menu choice on LOUIS?”<sup>9</sup> Heriard thought a key advantage to the online index was its accessibility anywhere internet access was available. He also felt that an electronic index would “get indexing/indexers from several areas of the state to contribute - share the work to create a resource for all.”<sup>10</sup> With Heriard’s interest as motivation, the committee began exploring the idea of putting the index online.

To gauge interest in an online index of Louisiana periodicals, the committee began by surveying libraries who subscribed to the print version of the *BSPI* in late 1997. One hundred fifty-two surveys were mailed, and the committee received ninety-four responses.<sup>11</sup> When asked if they were in favor of the index being available online, an overwhelming 93% of respondents said yes. Libraries were also asked if they preferred the number of periodicals indexed be expanded. The response was positive with 81% wanting new periodicals added to the index. Results were mixed on whether or not respondents would pay to access to the online index.

Based on survey results and discussion among its members, the committee recommended the *BSPI* be “put on the World Wide Web, free of charge and available to all.”<sup>12</sup> The committee recommended the new database be searchable and include both new indexing and citations from the previously published volumes of the index. They added that the list of titles indexed be expanded to include more regional and local publications. With the staff at Dupré Library already indexing at capacity, the committee also recommended that librarians from around the state be recruited to contribute indexing. However, Dupré Library would continue to provide editorial support for the index.

Different groups investigated ways to put the *BSPI* database online and make it searchable. In the fall semester of 1997, a group of computer science students at USL worked on creating a search engine for the index as part of a class assignment. Unfortunately, once the semester finished the students lost interest in the project. LOUIS was asked to examine the main database and authority



files from the 1996 edition of the index for use in producing the online database and later determined they did not have adequate staff or programming to work on the project. It would be several years before the dream of a fully searchable index of Louisiana periodicals available online would become a reality.

## Louisiana Library Association Sponsorship

Getting the *Bayou State Periodical Index* online was considered a “statewide project, and it will need a statewide organization to accomplish it.”<sup>13</sup> In its 1998 publication, *LOUIS and LLN: An Integrated Academic, Public, and School Library Network*, LOUIS’ plans included the development of “an online index to Louisiana periodicals.”<sup>14</sup> However, LOUIS’ primary function was to provide libraries with access to resources, not create them. The Louisiana Library Association (LLA) was the obvious entity to lead the effort mainly because of its connection to libraries and librarians around the state. In addition, the association had shown early support for the *BSPI* by assisting with the publicity of the index and sharing booth space at the 1987 annual conference where the first edition was displayed.

LLA had shown interest in an index of Louisiana periodicals decades earlier. In 1948, the association formed the Special Committee on Indexing of Louisiana Magazines to “study whether or not the association should sponsor a project to index Louisiana magazines.”<sup>15</sup> From 1949 to 1952, this committee worked to gauge interest in Louisiana periodical indexes; however, their focus was on “comprehensive retrospective indexes to individual titles, rather than a current index to many titles.”<sup>16</sup> In 1957, the committee found that while librarians considered indexing Louisiana periodicals to be important, little work was being done on indexing projects due to the demands being placed upon library staff. Progress toward creating a Louisiana periodical index was made under the leadership of Dr. Eugene P. Watson who served as chair of the committee from 1959 until his death in 1964. During his tenure, indexes to *Louisiana Conservationist*, *Louisiana Schools*, and *Louisiana Municipal Review*

were compiled despite funding challenges. In order for work on the indexes to continue each year, the committee recommended that along with strong support from LLA, “a budgetary provision be made for subsidizing this project.”<sup>17</sup> After Watson’s death the committee was less active and issued its final publication in 1969, an index to the *L.L.A. Bulletin*.

The LLA Advisory Committee on Publications, formed in 1965, absorbed most of the functions of the Special Committee on Indexing of Louisiana Magazines. In 1998, under the direction of LLA President Idella Washington, the committee was charged to evaluate the structure of the association’s publications and work to establish “policies and procedures for all publications, including electronic publications, as well as evaluating current publications and recommending future publications.”<sup>18</sup> The issue of “LLA becoming involved in the production and publication of the *Bayou State Periodical Index*” was presented to the Publications committee who recommended that a special committee be formed to investigate the idea.<sup>19</sup> Upon approval by the LLA Executive Board, the Bayou State Periodical Index Study Committee was created in December 1998.

The *BSPI* committee met in early 1999 with *BSPI* Editor Jean Kiesel serving as chair. Members of the committee represented not only academic libraries but public and school libraries and the State Library of Louisiana as well. In its report to the Board at the March meeting, the committee recommended an editorial board for the *BSPI* be appointed. The editorial board would “be responsible for selecting titles to be indexed and for recruiting indexers.”<sup>20</sup> The committee also recommended that board members represent all types of libraries and serve rotating terms. Additionally, the committee suggested that *BSPI* indexers “be asked to commit to indexing one or more specific titles for a designated period of time, at least one year.” At the March 1999 meeting of the LLA Executive Board a motion to appoint an editorial board for the *BSPI* was passed.<sup>21</sup>

The *BSPI* committee also investigated hosting options for the online index. In 1998, Reference Press, who published the indexing software used to produce the index’s print version, began developing a

search engine that would make the index searchable online. The database could be mounted on Reference Press servers for a fee of \$250 each year for up to 200,000 records that “would include all processing, one load of the database, and 24-hour access.”<sup>22</sup> LEERIC, who maintained the LLA website, was approached about hosting the index, but concluded that it would be better to use Reference Press since they had “an interface software with the existing information as well as a familiarity with the program.”<sup>23</sup> In the end, the committee recommended the database be hosted by Reference Press but was faced with securing funding for the annual fee. At the June 2001 meeting of the LLA Executive Board a motion requesting that the association pay the annual hosting fees for the index passed. From then on, LLA has continued to dedicate funding in its annual budget for the *BSPI*.

## Going Live on the Web

After a delay in development, Reference Press’ server and searching software were completed in early 2001. *BSPI* files for the 1998 edition were used to test the system. The new database was searchable by author, title, subject or keyword. Boolean searches and truncation were allowed in keyword searches. Subject searches listed “thesaurus terms, with cross-references, and the number of articles indexed under each term.”<sup>24</sup> Clicking on a specific record displayed the complete bibliographic citation and all assigned subject headings. Articles written by the same person were linked, and “topics (subject headings) link back to the list of subject terms, where you can find subject subdivisions and cross-references.”<sup>25</sup> The online version of the *BSPI* included both new indexing and citations from the print editions.

By September 2001, all *BSPI* records from 1996 to 1999 had been loaded into the new database. Updates to the index were uploaded to the Reference Press servers two to three times a year using “Dreamweaver’s FTP function to submit the files and then switched to the WinSCP FTP application” in 2015.<sup>26</sup> The process was not without its challenges. Uploads would sometimes fail due to increasing

security on UL Lafayette’s firewall, changes in network ports, or problems with the open-source FTP server used by Reference Press. In August 2003, the database had expanded to include over 27,000 article citations from eighty periodicals covering 1992 to 2003.<sup>27</sup> The index’s back files were added as time permitted. Today the *BSPI* database contains more than 60,000 records.

User response to the online index has been positive since the beginning. Statistics from 2006 to early 2007 show the database was accessed over 23,000 times and more than 42,000 searches were performed.<sup>28</sup> From 2012 to mid-2019, the online database was accessed over 60,000 times and more than 15,000 searches were conducted.<sup>29</sup> While not as heavily used today, yearly statistics indicate the continued value of the *BSPI* to libraries and library users.

## Editors

Throughout its history, six librarians at Dupré Library have served in editorial roles for the *BSPI*. The three founders all served as editors for the 1985 and 1986 editions of the index. Anna Brown was lead editor due to her experience with subject cataloging and authority file maintenance. Jean Schmidt and John Wilson served as co-editors with Schmidt responsible for publicity and marketing and Wilson for computer applications. All three had proofreading responsibilities.

After Brown’s retirement in 1990, Schmidt, now Jean Kiesel, took over as editor. From 1990 to 2005, Kiesel and co-editors Susan M. Richard (1990-1994) and Ashley E. Bonnette (1995-2005) shared editorial responsibilities. Kiesel became the sole editor of the index in 2005 and served in that capacity until her retirement in 2017. In addition to her editorial role, Kiesel personally indexed issues of more than ten periodicals each year. It was because of her hard work and dedication that the index grew into what it is today. Heather C. Plaisance became editor in 2017.

## **Indexers**

A tremendous amount of time and work goes into compiling the *BSPI*. To assist with the workload, indexers are recruited each year. These volunteers accept indexing responsibilities in addition to their normal job duties and receive no compensation while serving as an indexer. Assigned one or more periodicals to review, each indexer is responsible for assigning article subject headings based on the index's controlled vocabulary.

Over the years, different methods have been used by indexers to enter information into the index. Prior to 2017, "indexers filled out worksheets for their assigned periodicals, recording the bibliographic data for each article and assigning subject headings."<sup>30</sup> Completed worksheets were forwarded to the editor who checked for accuracy of subject headings and made the necessary corrections. The editor was also responsible for entering both the citation and subject heading information into the index's main database using the DOS-based AUTHEX software. While some indexers had the program installed on their office computers, the majority of indexers continued to use paper worksheets. In 2001, Reference Press began development of a Windows-based version of AUTHEX that would allow for easier updates to the index. Unfortunately, due to "little modern demand for periodical indexing software," that project stalled for many years.<sup>31</sup>

In 2016, AUTHEX developers were approached about the availability of the long-awaited, web-based version of the program. It was hoped that the new interface would be used by indexers to enter both bibliographic data and subject heading information, relieving the editor of those duties. The editor would review the information and publish the latest version of the index without having to follow the cumbersome uploading process. In 2017, work on the online program was completed and it continues to be utilized by *BSPI* indexers today. Use of the web-based program allows for quicker availability of index updates as new information is live on the *BSPI* website within 24 hours.

Since its inception in 1986, fifty-one librarians have served as indexers for the index during their tenure

at various institutions across the state. The index has flourished because of their hard work and continues to serve as a valuable tool in the preservation of Louisiana's culture. Because the *BSPI* originated at UL Lafayette, the majority of indexers have been faculty members at Dupré Library. Current and past indexers are listed below.

## **Current Indexers**

Mary Bloomquist  
Charlene Bonnette  
Tiffany Ellis  
Andrea Flockton  
Elaine Harris  
Jean S. Kiesel  
Heather C. Plaisance  
Ian Richardson  
Blair Stapleton  
Janelle Zetty

## **Past Contributors**

Kelly D. Blessinger  
Anna S. Brown  
Charles Brown  
Ashley E. Bonnette  
Monique Breaux  
Sherry T. Broussard  
Carol Casey  
Cara Chance  
Lance Chance  
Kerri Christopher  
Sheryl Moore Curry  
Erika Day  
Emily Deal  
Megan S. Farrell  
Sherrill Fauchaux  
Barbara Flynn  
Anne Frohlich  
Lillian Woon Gassie  
Denise Goetting  
Stuart Grinell  
Jennifer Hamilton  
Chuck Hamsa  
Judith Haydel  
Sandra M. Himel

Casae Hobbs  
Beth Holley  
Frank G. Hulse, Jr.  
Beate N. Kukainis  
Sheila A. Leahy  
Betsy B. Miguez  
Jeremiah Paschke-Wood  
Ramona Pellerin  
Marina Pereira  
Jo Ann Proctor  
Jan O. Rice  
Susan M. Richard  
Steven C. Ring  
Virginia R. Smith  
David M. Stokes  
Bruce Tribble  
Charles W. Triche III  
John S. Wilson

## Conclusion

The *BSPI* is freely accessible at <https://www.libris.ca/bayou>. Currently, the index features articles from ninety-three periodicals published between 1958 and today. Approximately 1,200 new citations are added to the index each year. Numerous academic, public, and school libraries highlight the *BSPI* on their websites. It is also featured on library subject guides and various genealogy websites.

For more than 30 years, the *Bayou State Periodical Index* has supported a critical research need in the state of Louisiana. It has connected researchers to the rich information found in many of the state's periodicals. The *BSPI* has evolved through the years, adapting to changes in the technological landscape making the index available to not just researchers in Louisiana but worldwide. As it continues to grow, the *BSPI* will serve as a valuable tool in the preservation of Louisiana's culture and heritage for many years to come.

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<sup>1</sup> Hallman, Clark N. and Jean McGruer, "Local Periodical Indexes Provide Access to Regional Publications." *Reference Services Review* 13, no. 2 (1985): 37.

<sup>2</sup> "Louisiana's Periodical Index: The Key to Using Our Regional Periodicals," n.d. Box 1, Folder 2, Bayou State Periodical Index, 1985-, Acadiana Manuscripts Collection, Edith Garland Dupré Library, University of Louisiana at Lafayette.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Anna S. Brown, ed., *Bayou State Periodical Index* 1985 (Lafayette, LA: University of Southwestern Louisiana Libraries, 1986), n.p.

<sup>5</sup> Schmidt, Jean M. and John S. Wilson. "Out of the Shoebox: Publishing a Regional Periodical Index Using a Microcomputer." *Reference Services Review* 16, no. 4 (1988): 13.

<sup>6</sup> Dewey, Patrick. "Software for Libraries: Periodical Indexing Systems, AUTHEX," *Wilson Library Bulletin* 60, no 4 (1985): 58.

<sup>7</sup> Kiesel, Jean S. "Reviews of Other Dedicated Software." In *Software for Indexing*, edited by Sandi Schroeder, 69. Medford, NJ: American Society of Indexers, 2003.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Bob Heriard, email message to Charles Triche, n. d.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> "Survey Results: Potential for an Online Index to Louisiana Periodicals," February 27, 1998. Box 1, Folder 2, Bayou State Periodical Index, 1985-, Acadiana Manuscripts Collection, Edith Garland Dupré Library, University of Louisiana at Lafayette.

<sup>12</sup> "Bayou State Periodical Index Online," December 4, 1998. Box 1, Folder 1, Bayou State Periodical Index, 1985-, Acadiana Manuscripts Collection, Edith Garland Dupré Library, University of Louisiana at Lafayette.

- <sup>13</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>14</sup> *LOUIS and LLN: An Integrated Academic, Public, and School Library Network*. Box 1, Folder 1, Bayou State Periodical Index, 1985-, Acadiana Manuscripts Collection, Edith Garland Dupré Library, University of Louisiana at Lafayette.
- <sup>15</sup> Jean Schmidt, "L.L.A. Special Committee on Indexing of Louisiana Magazines: Summary of Activities," September 24, 1987. Box 1, Folder 2, Bayou State Periodical Index, 1985-, Acadiana Manuscripts Collection, Edith Garland Dupré Library, University of Louisiana at Lafayette.
- <sup>16</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>17</sup> "L.L.A. Special Committee on Indexing of Louisiana Magazines," n.d., p. 4. Box 1, Folder 2, Bayou State Periodical Index, 1985-, Acadiana Manuscripts Collection, Edith Garland Dupré Library, University of Louisiana at Lafayette.
- <sup>18</sup> Rollins, Debra C. "Association News," *LLA Bulletin* 61 no. 4 (Spring 1999): 266.
- <sup>19</sup> Washington, Idella. "Reflections on LLA Committee Work and Conference '99," *LLA Bulletin* 61 no. 3 (Winter 1999): 195.
- <sup>20</sup> Rollins, Debra. "Association News: March 16, 1999," *Louisiana Libraries* 62 no. 1 (Summer 1999): 29.
- <sup>21</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>22</sup> Gord Ripley, email message to Jean Kiesel, April 4, 2001.
- <sup>23</sup> Terry Thibodeaux, email message to Jean Kiesel, March 3, 1999.
- <sup>24</sup> Kiesel, Jean, "Report of the Bayou State Periodical index Editorial Board," June 29, 2001. Box 1, Folder 1, Bayou State Periodical Index, 1985-, Acadiana Manuscripts Collection, Edith Garland Dupré Library, University of Louisiana at Lafayette.
- <sup>25</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>26</sup> Sheryl Curry, email message to Heather C. Plaisance, June 19, 2019.
- <sup>27</sup> Jean Kiesel, email message to LLA Listserv, August 8, 2003. Box 1, Folder 7, Bayou State Periodical Index, 1985-, Acadiana Manuscripts Collection, Edith Garland Dupré Library, University of Louisiana at Lafayette.
- <sup>28</sup> Bayou State Periodical Index Access Statistics, March 5, 2007. Box 1, Folder 3, Bayou State Periodical Index, 1985-, Acadiana Manuscripts Collection, Edith Garland Dupré Library, University of Louisiana at Lafayette.
- <sup>29</sup> Gord Ripley, email message to Heather C. Plaisance, June 6, 2019.
- <sup>30</sup> "Louisiana's Periodical Index: The Key to Using Our Regional Periodicals," n.d. Box 1, Folder 2, Bayou State Periodical Index, 1985-, Acadiana Manuscripts Collection, Edith Garland Dupré Library, University of Louisiana at Lafayette.
- <sup>31</sup> Gord Ripley, email message to Arthur Almazan, September 15, 2016.



## *and Critical Library Studies*

Change is something desirable, yet it becomes a source of anxiety when it causes harm to the world and to the quality of life of much of humanity.

(Francis, §18)

Before the coronavirus pandemic changed our lives in the spring of 2020, critical library studies (CLS) was arguably the most useful analytical concept for professional self-reflection. But when the disease spread so rapidly that buildings were closed and the public strongly urged to stay home, only computers and their distributed communication networks allowed our work to continue. Almost no one had time to consider any possible adverse effects of going totally online and remote.

Service, the number-one value in the ALA Code of Ethics, seems to have emphatically reasserted itself during the spring of rapidly spreading disease, when libraries of all types kept their buildings open as long as it was safe to do so. When physical proximity was no longer seen as safe, they converted physical holding to electronic files when possible. They waived fines and extended due dates. They held virtual watercooler conversations and Webex classes; they created new Facebook groups, expanded office networking programs, relied even more on their “smart” phones. They received even more vendor solicitations for temporarily free resources. Despite anxiety, rumors, and increasingly bad news about the spread of the disease, almost all librarians wanted to continue their work and serve their patrons. Few, if any, were heard to critique the invasion of privacy and the disruption of home life it caused.

After the crisis of disease, contagion, uncertainty, and incomplete information, we have time to think about our response. What was most important for libraries? How can librarians continue to assert, advocate, and champion those functions? One way is by actively reflecting on their shared values of individual and community participation in knowledge and culture. In order to do so, this paper suggests the use of critical library studies (CLS). Herein is a brief description, with some examples of

how it works and why we should use it.

### **I. Social Change since 1962**

In the turbulence of the 1960s, a different pandemic loomed: a combination of racial injustice, foreign war, and governmental neglect of young citizens led to a strong, sometimes violent reaction. Across the decade and across the world, restless protesters changed enough minds to affect not only university governance but U.S. governmental policies on civil rights and Vietnam. Those protesters, like many of us today, were “people of this generation, bred in at least modest comfort, housed now in universities, looking uncomfortably to the world we inherit” (*Port Huron Statement* 3), and they used the system at hand to effect change. One tool for this was the teach-in, created by economics professor and pacifist Kenneth Boulding. He argued that mass demonstrations, whether peaceful or violent, were less successful at changing “hearts and minds” than the smaller teach-in, which used background information as well as different viewpoints to explain current events. Unlike chanting crowds of protesters, “educational movements [are designed] to push the society toward a change for which it is not yet ready,” so they “have to be lowkeyed, respectful of existing legitimacies—tying into them wherever possible” (168). Partly as a result of those 1960s events, teaching was reimagined, universities were challenged, and the system began to listen to its students.

Following this emancipatory movement, in 1969 a few librarians formed a Social Responsibilities Round Table (SSRT) within the American Library Association to address how social issues affected librarianship and how librarians should respond. For more than half a century, librarians have continued the combination of working within existing institutions and engaging the public outside them. SSRT is still active in 2020, and three new ALA group have since been created, to focus on multiculturalism, sustainability, and diverse sexualities (“Round Tables”). LLA’s annual Legislative Day at the State Capitol can

be considered a mobile teach-in, as librarians and paraprofessionals emerge from their library towers to advocate for professional values in the public spaces of government. When they return to their own buildings, they incorporate what they learned into their practice, and they think about how to improve library services and resources. This combination of focused thinking and practice is called praxis, and it forms the basis for critical librarianship and CLS. In this usage, “critical” is not a negative or destructive term; it is thoughtful and analytical, even of the basic assumptions upon which we construct our profession.

## II. What is CLS?

Critical library studies is an important and useful conceptual tool for professional reflection and development. Karen Nicholson and Maura Seale, who co-edited a recent anthology of work in the field, define it as

a growing body of Library and Information Science (LIS) scholarship that draws on critical theory, progressive movements within librarianship, an online ‘community’ that occasionally organizes in-person meetings, and an informal Twitter discussion space... to bridge the gap between theory and practice in LIS. It uses a reflective lens... (1-2).

The purpose of all this theoretical activity (as suggested above with the teach-ins and the ALA Round Tables) is to redirect librarianship and library practice toward increased recognition of the people we serve, away from acquiescence in socially unjust attitudes (5-9).

In this basic sense, a theory is a likely explanation for how things work (in this case, library resources and services). Yet today, people often prefer their own opinions and “just the facts.” Pioneering critical theorist Max Horkheimer analyzed the reluctance of European society to accept theory in 1937:

the hostility to theory as such which prevails in contemporary public life is really directed against the transformative activity associated with critical thinking. ... Those who profit from the status quo entertain a general suspicion of any intellectual independence.

The tendency to conceive theory as the opposite of a positive outlook is so strong that even the inoffensive traditional type of theory suffers from it at times [and] theory in general falls into disrepute. Every other kind of scientific statement which does not offer a deposit of facts in the most familiar categories and, if possible, in the most neutral form, the mathematical, is already accused of being theoretical (Horkheimer 232).

Traditional thinking, in other words, does not challenge the existing order, but critical thinking does.

Paulo Freire, the mid-twentieth-century Brazilian educator, is still the most influential thinker in critical pedagogy and CLS. In his 1970 book *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, on which contemporary critical theories of education and librarianship are built, Freire asserts that all people should be recognized as free individual persons and not to be oppressed by a hierarchy of dominance:

dehumanization, although a concrete historical fact, is not a given destiny but the result of an unjust order that engenders violence in the oppressors, which in turn dehumanized the oppressed. (28)

Built on Freire’s theoretical and educational work, practitioners of critical library studies attempt to change the conceptualizing of patrons as ignorant, passive, and powerless, in order to offer better service to all. bell hooks, the African-American educator and author who studied with Freire, borrowed his declaration that “education is the practice of freedom” (Freire 6; hooks 12-13) to “insist that everyone’s presence is acknowledged” (hooks 8). Other CLS writers also emphasize human caring and diversity amid their technical language:

Toni Samek (Canadian librarian and human-rights scholar):

an international movement of library and information workers that considers the human condition and human rights above other professional concerns (qtd. in Nicholson and Seale, 195).

Cornel West (African-American social philosopher and public intellectual):

a critical demystifying moment in which structures of domination are laid bare and political engagement is imperative (qtd. in Leonard and McLaren's preface).

Peter Leonard and Peter McLaren (editors of Paulo Freire: A Critical Encounter):

how to struggle for the social transformation of our postmodern and postcolonial world in the interests of the liberation of subordinate populations and cultures from the structures and ideologies which dominate them" (editors' introduction).

Eamon C. Tewell, New York information literacy scholar and librarian:

an approach to education in library settings that strives to recognize education's potential for social change and empower learners to identify and act upon oppressive power structures. For this ambitious goal of fostering critical consciousness to take place, librarians must be equipped with an understanding of how to enact this change (11).

CLS, then, is an ethical as well as a rational position, encouraging the affirmation in our practice of the value of human lives.

Many librarians already do some sort of critical thinking or praxis in improving their regular practices and outcomes. In *Critical Journeys: How 14 Librarians Came to Embrace Critical Practice*, Robert Schroeder compiled interviews with different librarians about their own efforts to think critically as they work in management, technology, special collections, and pedagogy and information literacy. Critical library studies is "critical" in the sense of analyzing existing practices and structures in order to improve their humanity, and it is "praxical" in its thoughtful reflection on those practices.

How can CLS improve our professional practice and our outcomes in the world we live and work in today?

1. It can help describe and analyze the power dynamics of technologies, economics, and humans individually and together.

2. CLS can remind us that library values are not identical to those of the corporation, the state, or any individual ego or id. The American Library Association formulated its core values as

- access
- confidentiality/privacy
- democracy
- diversity
- education and lifelong learning
- intellectual freedom
- preservation
- the public good
- professionalism
- service
- social responsibility

(American Library Association, "Core Values of Librarianship").

Instead of speed, profitability, big data metrics, and competition, CLS would argue that libraries ought to value collections and access along with space for slow thought, education, and personal interaction.

3. It can help refocus our desired outcomes. Libraries have used technology for the past five thousand years, and without computers, most libraries would have been totally shut down during the coronavirus closures of 2020. The lens of CLS reveals how well or poorly those computers, and those values, serve our patrons.

### III. CLS and Computerization

It is impossible to imagine modern libraries without computers or electronic resources. Computer information technology usually works well enough, though not always as well as it claims. An example is SirsiDynix's amalgamated OPAC/ discovery package Enterprise, which was adopted by most of Louisiana's academic libraries in 2018. According to LOUIS/the Louisiana Library Network, this new software

provides users with a more modern interface than the traditional library catalog, as well as a more Google-like search experience

for the discovery of both physical and electronic scholarly content. (LOUIS)

This view is in line with mainstream consumer-oriented library thinking:

The widespread adoption of web scale discovery services by academic research libraries has been accompanied by a general consensus that these tools are poised to meet user expectations for a streamlined research experience. (Pearce)

Amanda Mull argues that “the internet’s ability to make things functionally more efficient but existentially far worse” would indicate that efficiency does not correlate with long-term positive effects. Is a “streamlined research experience” better for users than a messy but interesting one? A CLS analysis would show that adopting the Google-like Enterprise, which provides less information than a traditional catalog, does not quite meet the first standard in the ALA Code of Ethics: “provide the highest level of service to all library users through appropriate and usefully organized resources...” (This standard is also the first item in the LLA ethical statement). As Thomas Mann, formerly at the Library of Congress, points out:

the library field, unfortunately, has a habit of simply following Google rather than focusing on alternatives to it that work much better in the niche areas libraries must fill (115).

The fact that Google is so economically successful and socially popular does not indicate that library discovery or research would similarly benefit. In his 2015 revision of *Our Enduring Values*, former ALA president Michael Gorman describes his major value as “the greater good,” and defines it as

a communitarian principle that is the antithesis of the individualism, materialism, and selfishness that dominate early twenty-first-century Western societies. As such, it is a radical principle (in fact, if not always rhetorically). (212)

Gorman and Walt Crawford updated S.R. Ranganathan’s “save the time of the reader” to “use technology intelligently to enhance service” yet “respect all forms in which knowledge is

communicated” (Crawford and Gorman).

To sum up the argument of this section, libraries which use computers should not operate “as if they are real and [we are] not” (Dworkin).

## IV. Conclusion

Just as American racial relations and foreign policy did sixty years ago, computerization may benefit from a new praxis. Librarians in contemporary practice, especially in the season of the coronavirus epidemic, know that computerized digital information technology has made library research more remotely accessible and has lowered some barriers between libraries and the unedited open internet, and also between librarians, other information workers, and non-professional library users. But often, computer information technology (CIT) virtually replaces the professional experience and judgment of librarians and other administrators. Lawyer and records scholar Darra Hofman explains that “while librarians and archivists have always required an array of technical skills, our work lies at the intersection of information and people” (qtd. in Smith). CIT could become a critical practice which challenges not only the assumed intellectual superiority of traditional ways of knowing but also their replacement by commercial online resources (see Barron and Preater, for example.)

The main problem in 21st-century librarianship is the relationship of technologies, economics, and humanity. This paper has explained critical library studies as a reflective tool to examine this relationship in libraries and to urge that we think about our practice in light of our values.

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## *Interview with Celise Reech-Harper: A Louisiana Public Library Director*

### **Interview**

**Louisiana Libraries:** You went to college in Natchitoches and started working at the Beauregard Parish Library while working on your first master's degree. How did you get interested in libraries?

**Celise Reech-Harper:** Well, I was working on my M.A. in English in 2008 and helping students at the Writing Center at NSU when I found out that the Beauregard Parish Library was hiring a youth programming coordinator for the summer. My husband was preparing to deploy with the U.S. Army, and the Writing Center was going to be closing for the summer, so I needed to work for both my emotional and financial well-being. I applied for the job. I adored the Avoyelles Parish Library and the school library at Sacred Heart when I was a child, so I had a solid foundation of positive memories that made libraries especially appealing. The job was only supposed to be for the summer, but when August rolled around, I had shared some ideas for expanding program offerings and reaching more populations. Ms. Lily Smith who was Director at the time thought the ideas were solid enough to offer me a permanent position. I finished my M.A., but I knew I wanted to be a degreed librarian. So, in 2010, I began pursuing my MSIS through the University of Tennessee's distance program. It was challenging because I was working full time and growing the BPL's programming department while attending school, but I had a lot of support from Ms. Smith, current director Ms. Erin Chesnutt, and all of my coworkers.

**Louisiana Libraries:** Did you like school in Tennessee? Tell us about it?

**Celise Reech-Harper:** I enjoyed the program. It was pretty intense, but the professors were very engaged and flexible about working professionals' schedules. The synchronous program made it feel like we were together in the classroom, and I built lasting relationships with several members of my cohort.

**Louisiana Libraries:** How was the before and after a change in your perspective?

**Celise Reech-Harper:** I never saw a huge chasm or shift in my knowledge and experience since I was working while going to school. There were many slow, subtle changes. Being in a library while attending school benefited me and BPL because I was supported and could test new knowledge and ideas I gleaned through research. I first learned about online summer reading programs via an article for class. I was given the greenlight to try it out at BPL, and it went very well—streamlined the registration process and made the programs more popular. Thinking about that...it seems so long ago, but it was only about a decade or so.

**Louisiana Libraries:** As someone very much involved in the Louisiana Library Association and then became editor of this journal, how has the association contributed to your success as a librarian?

**Celise Reech-Harper:** LLA has provided connections with leaders I want to emulate (and a few I don't). Kidding aside, it's given

me an avenue for connection, for learning, and for development of my professional interests. Meeting so many new librarians and library staff members in the last few years has renewed my interest in the organization and promoting positive, impactful change. The organization is not the same as when I joined a decade ago. I am grateful for that because change and growth are key to staying relevant. I'm certain it's not going to be the same as it is now in another decade. Just like our profession as a whole, we have to be resourceful and adaptable.

**Louisiana Libraries:** Recently, you became the director of the Rapides Parish Library. What are some of the initiatives you are looking forward to in the new position?

**Celise Reech-Harper:** I became the Director of the Rapides Parish Library in January 2. I am getting to know the communities and staff members I did not already know through LLA. I grew up in Avoyelles Parish, so it's nice to be closer to family and working "in town"—when I was a child, it was a special treat to get to go to Alexandria for shopping or a meal or a library or zoo visit.

We have hit the ground running in 2020, implementing a new social media policy that allows more staff members to post for the library (and gives our very dedicated PR Coordinator a little reprieve), preparing to offer Wi-Fi hotspots for checkout, and conducting a large scale weeding project to help refresh our collections.

And then came COVID-19. How has the library changed to serve users? 78 days! I was seventy-eight days into being a director when I made the decision for closure. This entire situation is surreal. Our communities are fearful and hurting. We are dazed by this situation. Everyone is looking for stability and hope. We are responding

by opening service options as we are able: offering virtual cards, conducting events via Facebook Live, and increasing our social media interactions. The Rapides Parish Library has also provided its 3D printers for use creating PPE for our local healthcare workers in Cenla (and I have a date with a set of screen making supplies that need to be pieced this weekend). We are also exploring the possibility of hiring a social worker to offer patrons additional support and resources. So, we are seeking ways to reach out and serve.

**Louisiana Libraries:** Do you think the crisis will be a turning point for libraries and librarianship?

**Celise Reech-Harper:** Yes and No (maybe I have a future in politics!) Librarians and libraries have always been motivated by community needs. We are just trying to stay flexible and agile so we can meet the new needs swiftly and effectively.

I do see some new avenues of service like virtual storytimes, data management assistance, and social support guidance/ organization potentially growing. Information professionals are needed, and the number of ways we are needed just continues to grow.

**Louisiana Libraries:** What good books have you been reading lately?

**Celise Reech-Harper:** I am currently rereading *Managing to Change the World*. I think that divulges a little insight about how I feel regarding the future of libraries.

Brosman, Catharine S. and Pass, Olivia M. *Louisiana Poets: A Literary Guide*. University Press of Mississippi. 2019. LCCN2018054083. \$18.84 paperback/Amazon. \$28.00 cloth.

I met Olivia Pass in St. Francisville, LA through her involvement with A Celebration of Literature and Art. At some point I became aware that she and a friend were co-authoring a book. The finished product has been well worth the wait. This collection of poets that Olivia and Catharine Brosman compiled has given me an insight to poets' working thoughts, creativity, where inspiration comes from and why the inspiration unfolded as it did.

Thanks to A Celebration of Literature and Art I have been able to take part in workshops led by Rodger Vamenetz and his wife Moira Crone; Ava Levell Haymon led a poetry workshop through this venue. Julie Kane has been a guest speaker for this celebration. John Gery and wife Biljana Obradovic have been guest speakers at the Louisiana State Poetry Society (LSPS) meetings. And how many of us can say we have been to Angola (Louisiana State Prison) with Peter Cooley? I can. And found him to be a delightful individual as a carload of us attended the Angola Poetry Club's meeting that February evening. Peter spoke to the Angola poets on his works, then we had the privilege to hear some of these men read their poems.

The above mentioned poets are those whom I can base an assessment of *Louisiana Poets* on. They, as well as other poets, are included in this collection. Forty-two poets have several pages dedicated to their background and works while eighteen poets have a brief paragraph in the appendix. Poets are listed alphabetically; a most fair way to handle the variety of writers covered in this book.

Brosman and Pass have done an excellent job of combining biography, education, and literary accomplishments into a readable format, a book that can be picked up and put down as time and interest allow. Regionally to nationally known names stand side to side. Allison Pelegrin lives in St. Tammany, is active in her church, married with two children. Reading her background, I became aware of her "groundedness,"

writing stories poetically, emphasizing her day to day life. No, I had not heard of Allison before reading *Louisiana Poets*. Robert Penn Warren and Tennessee Williams are at the other end of the spectrum. Even non-poets should at least be familiar with these names whose Louisiana connections place them within a regional context.

Olivia and Catharine have both taught on the university level. Both are poets. Olivia is also an artist; her works have been displayed at A Celebration of Literature and Art. They have combined their backgrounds to offer sincere poets an in depth but not too scholarly read. A detailed bibliography for readers who may want to do more reading/research is included.

I would categorize *Louisiana Poets* under regional literature. I could see the book being used in high school or college level English classes as outside reading or for use in a bibliography for a report. And I did enjoy for enjoyment's sake, just reading about the poets as individuals. (I do like biographies!).

Carolyn Files, Morehouse Parish Library

Fontenot, Viola. *A Cajun Girl's Sharecropping Years*. University Press of Mississippi, 2018. ISBN: 978-1-4968-1707-5. \$25.00 (hard cover).

"Although the way we lived was hard, that's the way it was." That statement seems to be the underlying theme of *A Cajun Girl's Sharecropping Years* by author Viola Fontenot. The book tells the story of Fontenot's experiences growing up in a sharecropping family in rural Louisiana. Spanning from 1937 to 1955, the book chronicles the struggles she and her family experienced and the realities of life during that time. Her first-hand account provides a rare female perspective to sharecropping, a predominantly male-centered topic. She discusses not only the tiresome fieldwork associated with sharecropping but other aspects of domestic life including kitchen and household work, courtship, and marriage.

Born in January 1937, Fontenot lived with her family near the community of Richard in Acadia Parish. Her father had little formal education and took up sharecropping to provide for his family. The work



was hard and at times would cause him to be away from home, leaving his wife alone with their five young children. As the eldest, Fontenot would often be responsible for taking care of her siblings and helping with chores around the house. She describes in detail the household chores made harder without the benefit of electricity and running water in the home. At eight years old, Fontenot was responsible for emptying and cleaning the *pot de chambre*, or chamber pot, each morning. By age ten, she was doing the family's laundry, an all-day process of filling tubs with water, scrubbing clothes on washboards and hanging them out to dry.

Earlier at age six, Fontenot started school and despite her young age walked alone to school each day. She was ridiculed and punished by her teachers for speaking French, which was strictly forbidden on school grounds. Even though she had few friends, Fontenot fell in love with reading and used books to escape the realities of her life. Unfortunately, as was typical of a sharecropping family, she moved every year and changed school multiple times. She and her siblings would often miss the start of the school year during harvest season, a common occurrence among farming families.

In addition to working inside the house, Fontenot also spent time in the fields picking cotton and planting and harvesting sweet potatoes. She describes the physically demanding process that went on for hours each day in the intense Louisiana heat. As she got older, and better at picking cotton, her father hired her out to work for another farmer to earn extra money. Despite picking close to one hundred pounds of cotton a day, Fontenot received no direct compensation as her father kept the money. While she did the work because it was expected and ensured her family's survival, she longed for a better life.

*A Cajun Girl's Sharecropping Years* describes a lifestyle that those who grew up long ago in the Acadiana area will recognize. At a little over one hundred pages, it is a quick read filled with stories of Cajun traditions such as a boucherie, canning fruits and pocking eggs at Easter. For some, the book may bring back fond memories of parents or grandparents who likely shared many of Fontenot's experiences. Recipient of the 2019 Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities Book of the Year Award, this book would make a great addition to public and academic libraries

throughout Louisiana, especially in the Acadiana region.

Viola Fontenot married in 1955, leaving the sharecropping life behind her. She is a retired assistant vice president of Tri-State Parish Bank and is currently working on a children's book.

*Heather Plaisance*, Edith Garland Dupré Library, UL Lafayette

Pena, Christopher G. *Death over a Diamond Stud: The Assassination of the Orleans Parish District Attorney*. Gretna: Pelican Publishing Company, 2018. ISBN: 978-1-4556-2416-4. \$26.95 (hard cover).

This carefully-researched book reveals a thought-provoking true story about Orleans Parish district attorney, J. Ward Gurley, who was fatally shot four times by former client Lewis Lyons in the early twentieth century. This is a heartbreaking saga that shocked the citizens of New Orleans, beginning with a tragic miscarriage of justice concerning a stolen diamond stud. Excellent maps include one of the Macheca Building, 828 Canal Street, where the murder of J. Ward Gurley occurred. Another useful map shows where Lyons spent most of his time in New Orleans in 1903, showing streets such as Canal, Gravier, St. Charles, Camp, Carondelet, and Royal. The intriguing masterpiece supplies a map of the Orleans Parish Prison, Engine House, City Morgue, Orleans Parish Criminal Courthouse, and New Orleans Police Department First Precinct in a square surrounded by Tulane Avenue, Franklin Street, Gravier Street, and Saratoga Street. Photographs of the Macheca Building in the early twentieth century and in 2017 complement the discussion of the crime. A very good black and white picture from 1895 reveals the Orleans Parish Courthouse and the nearby New Orleans Police Department, while a more detailed black and white picture from 1902 shows the location of the Orleans Parish Prison, the Orleans Parish Courthouse and the nearby New Orleans Police Department, as if looking on from Saratoga Street. Early photographs of the New Orleans Charity Hospital are included. High quality portraits of the main individuals interspersed in the narrative and black and white drawings of courtroom scenes also enrich the storyline. An excellent bibliography and index are included.

I highly recommend this remarkable book to anyone



seeking true New Orleans crime narrations. As the story of the first judicial murder of the 20th century, the narrative contains stirring, affective character interpretations of crime and death. This impressive study of a murder and subsequent hanging in New Orleans is excellent for academic and public libraries. The author Christopher G. Pena was born in Lake

Charles, Louisiana and has a degree from Nicholls State University. Another book by Pena of interest is *The Strange Case of Dr. Etienne Deschamps: Murder in the New Orleans French Quarter*.

*Melinda F. Matthews*, University Library, University of Louisiana at Monroe



## 2020

**Association for Library Service to Children (ALSC) National Institute**  
Minneapolis, MA  
October 3, 2020

**LOUIS Users Conference (LUC)**  
Baton Rouge, LA  
October 6-8, 2020

**Georgia Libraries/SELA Joint Annual Conference**  
Macon, GA  
October 7-9, 2020

**Teen Read Week**  
October 11-17, 2020

**Arkansas Library Association Conference**  
Fort Smith, AR  
October 16-18, 2020

**Louisiana Book Festival**  
Baton Rouge, LA  
October 31, 2020

**Charleston Conference**  
Charleston, SC  
November 2-6, 2020

**Young Adult Services Symposium**  
Reno, Nevada  
November 6-8, 2020

**Texas Book Festival**  
Austin, TX  
November 7-8, 2020

## 2021

**American Library Association Midwinter**  
Indianapolis, IN  
January 22-26, 2021

**Music Library Association Annual Meeting**  
Cincinnati, Ohio  
March 3-7, 2021

**National Library Week**  
April 4-10, 2021

**ACRL Annual Conference**  
Seattle, WA  
April 14-17, 2021

**Texas Library Association Conference**  
San Antonio, TX  
April 20-23, 2021

**Preservation Week**  
April 25- May 1, 2021

**American Library Association Annual Conference**  
Chicago, IL  
June 24-29, 2021

**American Association of Law Libraries Annual Meeting**  
Cleveland, OH  
July 17-20, 2021

**American Association of School Librarians National Conference**  
Salt Lake City, UT  
October 21-23, 2021

**Charleston Conference**  
Charleston, SC  
November 1-5, 2021

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