



A Newsletter for Employees of the University of Louisville Libraries
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The Owl

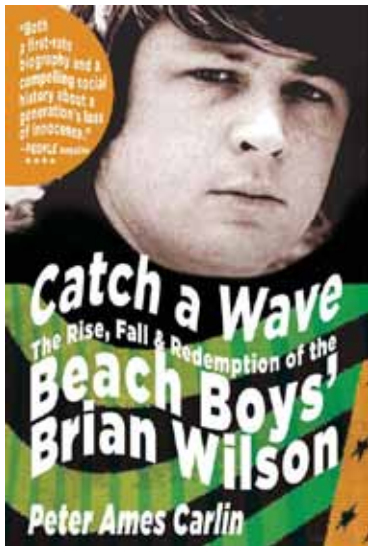
"The Owl of Minerva takes flight only as the dusk begins to fall." — Hegel

Summer Readers' Picks 2015

Written and compiled by Christopher Poché, Ekstrom Library

For the past six months I have been in the thrall of the music of the Beach Boys. Though I have been a fan for many years, the Beach Boys were never as important to me as the Beatles or Bob Dylan, who are practically omnipresent in my musical consciousness. Previously, the Beach Boys were defined for me by three things: one, the beach and surfing hits that pretty much everyone knows and loves; two, the 1966 album *Pet Sounds*, the grand departure from the fun-in-the-sun formula that remains the greatest flowering of bandleader Brian Wilson's musical and production genius; and three, *Smile*, the aborted follow-up to *Pet Sounds* that became perhaps the most famous unreleased album in the history of popular music. I had hunted down the *Smile* tracks that trickled out on later Beach Boys albums but was never terribly interested in those albums otherwise, and their history beyond the immediate aftermath of *Smile* remained largely unknown to me.

All this began to change when I rather randomly came across a reference (I already forget how or where) to their 1977 album *The Beach Boys Love You*. I had never even heard of this album before and was intrigued to learn that it is something of a cult favorite amongst Brian Wilson fans. It is a charmingly goofy album that features simple lyrics (childishly simplistic to the album's detractors) and some strange obsessions, such as "Johnny Carson," which sings the praises of *The Tonight Show* host ("who's the man that we admire / Johnny Carson is a real live wire"), and "Solar System," Brian's ode to astrology ("Solar system brings us wisdom"). It's an enjoyable oddity, especially for its lo-fi, synthesizer-heavy sounds, which is unique for the Beach Boys, but I wouldn't make a case for its greatness as some fans do. Still, this album sparked my curiosity about the band's larger history. And so, I started listening more and, of course, reading, too.



Peter Ames Carlin's *Catch a Wave: The Rise, Fall and Redemption of the Beach Boys' Brian Wilson* is an excellent biography that tells the whole story. As the title suggests, the book focuses on Brian, the main creative force in the group, but it can't help but be a history of the Beach Boys as well. After Brian decided to shelve *Smile* in 1967, he became less and less active in the group, though it soldiered on without him, struggling to find new directions while still hoping to coax hit songs out of Brian. The history of the Beach Boys in the 1970s is, at turns, triumphant and sad, though always interesting. The other members of the group continually pressured Brian for songs and

then rejected them for not sounding like the Beach Boys. Still, Brian still managed to produce some quality stuff, but nothing at the quantitative and qualitative level of his glory days in the 1960s. Nonetheless, the other Beach Boys did rise to the occasion to create some interesting and beautiful music without Brian and to become a formidable live act that was one of the top attractions of the time. But by the end of the 1970s and after a brief return to the fold by Brian, the Beach Boys largely gave up on trying to be an innovative musical force and became the nostalgia act led by Mike Love it has been ever since. Fortunately, outside of the Beach Boys, Brian has overcome his struggles with mental illness, substance abuse, and the ghosts of his past to become an active musician again. He finally finished *Smile*, first performing it live in 2004 and then releasing a studio album version later in that year, and has been touring and recording new music ever since.

I read two books in the 33 1/3 series that focus on the *Pet Sounds* and *Smile* albums. Before discussing these particular books, a few words on the 33 1/3 series. The books in the series examine significant albums in the history of pop and rock, and I have enjoyed many of them, though I must admit they feature two consistent drawbacks. On the simple side, they tend to be poorly edited and are often riddled with distracting typographical errors. More importantly and going to the whole point of the series, very few of the books are actually directly about the albums their covers and titles announce them to be about. Or, at the least, they are rarely *only* about those albums. This is a problem because these books are small and short—pocket size and usually no more than 125 pages. Ambitious agendas are difficult to pull off in such a format and tend to push aside more basic information about the album considered. Still, some interesting books result. The most successful example of this is Carl Wilson's (no, not Carl Wilson the Beach Boy) *Celine Dion's Let's Talk About Love: A Journey to the End of Taste*, which uses Dion's album as a case study for examining the broader problem of the subjectivity of taste. Wilson attempts to understand how it is even possible that an artist like Dion can produce such polarizing responses from listeners, from the millions of fans who adore her and the millions of others who consider her an aesthetic atrocity. This book has become influential in critical discussions of popular music, sociology, and philosophy, and has been recently reissued in a new edition that includes over a dozen essays by musicians, critics, and other writers responding to Wilson's ideas.

Jim Fusili's *The Beach Boys' Pet Sounds* (no holdings) is one of the few 33 1/3 books that does address the subject album head-on, and is a song-by-song analysis with some context about Brian Wilson's psychological problems thrown in. Unfortunately, this one is very much a fan-boy's analysis, filled with gleeful superlatives but not much else. A much better book, though not part of the 33 1/3 series, is Kingsley Abbott's *The Beach Boys' Pet Sounds: The Greatest Album of the Twentieth Century*. This book features a detailed history of the album's development, recording sessions, and songs.

More typical of the 33 1/3 series is Luis Sanchez's *The Beach Boys' Smile* (no holdings). This book is barely about the *Smile* album—that is, it does not spend much time actually discussing the album's songs or its production. Nonetheless, it is the best book in the series that I have read. It provides a deeply stimulating examination of Brian Wilson's personal and musical development in the early history of the Beach

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Boys in the context of early to mid-1960s pop and rock and how it leads to *Smile*. Carlin's book opened my eyes to the Beach Boys' history after *Smile*, and Sanchez's offered me a new perspective on the pre-*Smile* history that I thought I knew.

As luck would have it, my six months of interest in the Beach Boys has been treated this month with the release of the feature film *Love and Mercy*, which focuses on two very different stages in the life of Brian Wilson—the era of *Pet Sounds* and *Smile*, and later in the 1980s when he is perhaps at his lowest in terms of his personal life. The film uses two different actors to portray Brian—Paul Dano and John Cusack, playing the younger and older Brian, respectively. I especially enjoyed the dramatizations of the *Pet Sounds* sessions, which capture the excitement of the time with great period detail.

My thanks to all who contributed to this column. Welcome to Carolyn Dowd, who contributes for the first time. And shout-outs to James Adler, Scott Campbell, and Ben King for their very interesting thematic entries. There is a lot to read here, but be sure to make it to the end. Since the entries are organized alphabetically by name, Ben happens to come last, but he's definitely not least.

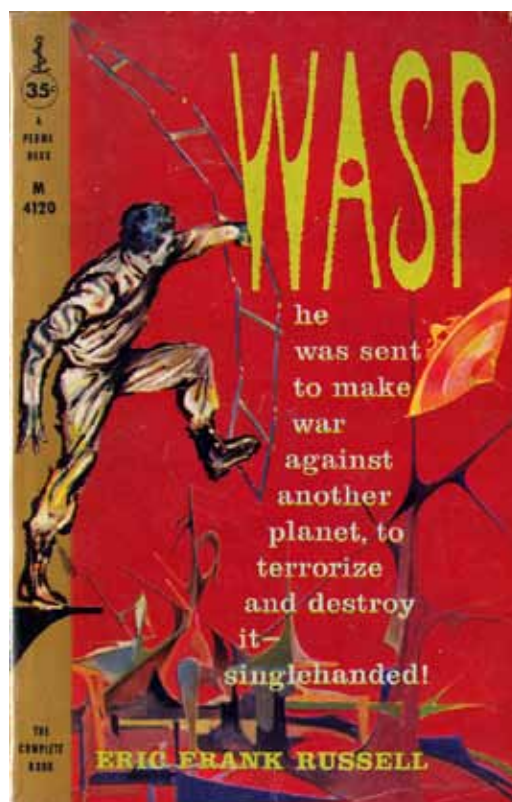
James Adler, Kornhauser Library

Summer is here, and I was hoping to take a lengthy vacation from my troubles and travel to Lake Winnepesaukee. But since that isn't going to work out, I'll have to take a vacation of the imagination, and there're few better vehicles for that than good old science fiction. So, grab a few krenoj to munch on, strap yourself into an acceleration couch, and prepare for take-off.

Our itinerary:

Zarathustra 3 via *Little Fuzzy*, by H. Beam Piper. Zarathustra 3 is a very lucrative mining planet under the control of the Zarathustra Corporation. Lucrative largely because there is no sentient life there, and business can proceed unimpeded. It's all business as usual, until freelance prospector Jack Holloway discovers a small fur-covered biped in his cabin. Charmed by the little fellow, and eventually, others of its kind, Holloway christens them Fuzzies. These creatures demonstrate a considerable intelligence, which is of importance because the presence of sentient life will change the charter under which Zarathustra Corporation operates, greatly reducing the amount of filthy lucre it can rake in. Once news gets out about the Fuzzies, Zarathustra Corporation makes plans to liquidate them; it's all in the business plan. Holloway is determined to stop them. Are the Fuzzies indeed sentient, and can they be saved? This could make an enjoyable film, but since I'm not directing it, it won't be. All the ingredients are there, though.

The Sirian Planetary Complex via *The Wasp*, by Eric Frank Russell. Earth is at war with the Sirian complex. While Earth has technological superiority, the Sirians have greater numbers and more equipment, and a slow, costly war of mutual attrition seems to be in the offing. Enter James Mowry. Physically altered and specially trained, Mowry is sent to one of the planets in the Sirian empire to wage a one-man war of sabotage, deception, and general mayhem; in short, to be like an angry wasp in a car causing the driver to crash. In today's world this mission would



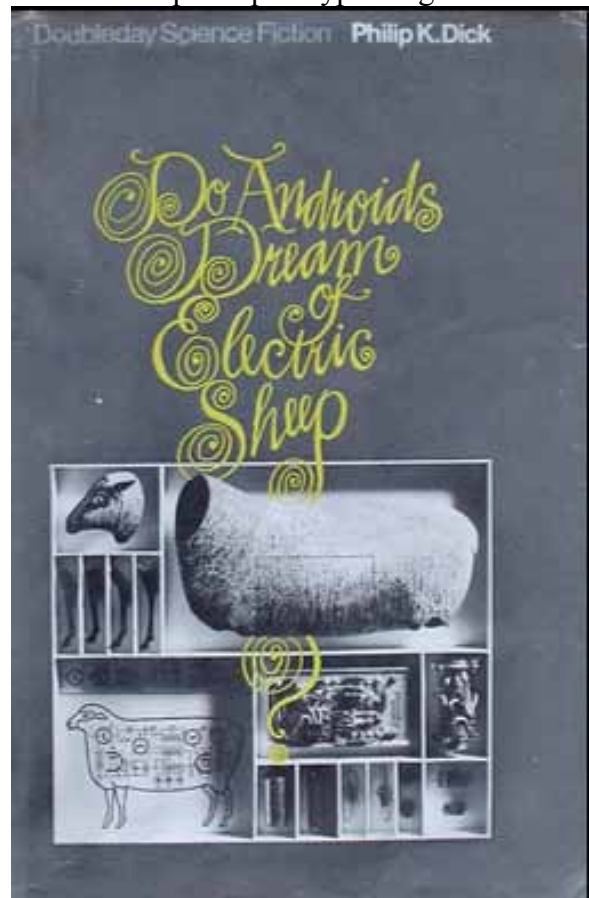
be called—gasp!—terrorism. Call it what you will, it's a successful strategy, and this is a very fast-paced, entertaining read.

An unnamed generation starship and Planet Tintera via *Rite of Passage*, by Alexei Panshin. Earth is no more, and the remnants of the human race have taken to the stars. Some survive in enormous starcraft, while others have been dropped on various planets to re-seed the human race—if they can. Those upon the starships must, upon their fourteenth birthdays, undergo “trial.” They are dropped on one of the colony worlds and if they can survive thirty days on one of the brutal colony planets, they return to the ship as full adults. Mia Haverro is nearly fourteen, and her trial is about to begin! Fans of Robert Heinlein's “juvenile” novels (of which I count myself one) may find this novel of particular interest. It follows the same coming of age/finding one's identity theme that Heinlein frequently uses but with a female protagonist, and unlike Heinlein, there is a brief mention of sex. It wasn't as good as the best of Heinlein, but still quite good, and a nice find for me. I thought it much better than Heinlein's *Podkayne of Mars*, his only juvenile novel with a female lead.

Planet Pyrrus, an unnamed planet, and Planet Felicity via the *Deathworld Trilogy*, by Harry Harrison. Jason dinAlt is a gambler and a scoundrel moving throughout the outer galaxies from one deadly world to the next. Starting with Pyrrus, where all life and even the elements are deadly, to a second planet where all must fight or be enslaved, to the planet Felicity whose society is based around perpetual tribal warfare, dinAlt and his Pyrran colleagues must use their wits and their superior technology to survive. Three books in one volume (*Deathworld 1, 2, and 3*) this is pure space opera, fast-paced and humorous. I enjoyed these way more than I should have.

Back to Earth again via *The Chrysalids*, by John Wyndham. Earth is a post-apocalyptic nightmare. The remnants of humanity live in small religiously oriented clusters, where any untoward behavior—or worse—visible signs of mutation are punished, severely. Thou shalt not suffer a mutant to live. Outside these small communities are the wild forested fringes where mutants go to escape. Life goes on as normal for our protagonist David Storm until he discovers, along with several others, that they have mutant powers not readily visible. The authorities, naturally, discover this, and David must flee for the fringes, where a new surprise awaits everyone, and with it, the dawning of a new social order. I've never had a bad reading experience with Wyndham, and this one is hard to beat! Unfortunately, Ekstrom's copy is marked as lost. Bring it back, you!

Once more, on Earth via *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?*, by Philip K. Dick. Global nuclear conflagration does it every time. Earth is virtually destroyed, and most of the survivors have migrated to Mars. Only the sterile and mentally diminished—“chicken heads”—remain on Earth. Corporations rule all, and popular entertainment anesthetizes the populace. Androids are common, both people and animals. The most realistic human androids pose some danger to human beings, and bounty hunters like Rick Deckard are

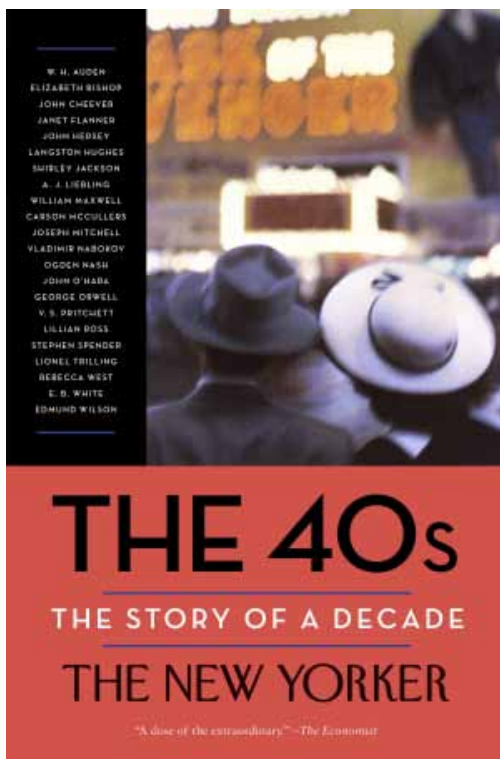


hired to destroy them, at considerable risk, not only to his life, but to his identity. What is real? What does it mean to be human? What is the value of life?

Readers may know this novel better as the basis of the movie *Blade Runner*, but it has considerable differences from the movie. Each is excellent in its own way, but I'll let anyone interested make his or her own comparisons. This is the first of Dick's works that I've read, and I'll certainly be exploring others. His style takes a bit of getting used to, but he's known less as a stylist than as a novelist of ideas, and this novel has them in spades. See for yourself.

Scott Campbell, Law Library

For decades I've had a love/hate relationship with *The New Yorker*. Well, mostly hate. During my senior year in high school I lived with a friend who had a subscription to the magazine. The living room was littered with back issues. Sometimes when bored (which, since there was no Internet back then and only six television channels, was pretty often), I would occasionally leaf through an issue. What I saw didn't impress me. I was there mostly for the cartoons, and they all seemed to be about cocktail parties, psychiatrists, and aging hippies. The covers all looked like drawings of somebody's back yard, and the articles all looked boring beyond belief. New York City at the time was the scene of the punk rock movement and a vibrant underground art movement, but you wouldn't have known that from reading the magazine. Instead of being about the most exciting city on Earth, the magazine seemed like it would have been more accurately titled *The Suburban*.



This antipathy lasted until about the 1990s when Tina Brown took over the magazine—one of the best things to ever happen to it. Suddenly, the covers were vibrant and edgy, a host of new and young cartoonists started getting published, and they started publishing articles that people under the age of sixty could enjoy. I've been an on-and-off reader of the magazine ever since.

Over the years I would hear references to the writers of the glory years. I would be slightly intrigued, but my prejudice against the issues I had read would keep me from investigating them. But then last year I saw David Remnick, the current editor, on *The Daily Show* plugging *The 40's: The Story of a Decade*, a collection of *New Yorker* articles from that decade. His description of the book intrigued me, and I went ahead and bought a copy.

World War II was a transformative event for *The New Yorker*. During the 1920s and 1930s, the magazine was primarily a humor magazine with a focus on New York. A number of its writers were drafted but still managed to send back stories about the war, while other writers became embedded with the troops. These articles

brought a new seriousness to the magazine that it never lost.

The 40's collects a number of articles and stories from this transformative period. It starts out with a number of articles about the war and the period after. Then there are a number of character profiles, reviews, poems, and stories. All except for the reviews make for great reading. Among the stand-outs are an article by Rebecca West about the trial of some men accused of lynching an African-American in South Carolina,

Janet Flanner's profiles of Thomas Mann and Marshall Petain, and Niccolo Tucci's profile of Albert Einstein. The towering piece, however, is John Hershey's "Hiroshima," which is the only article ever to take up an entire issue of the magazine. I can see why it is assigned reading at so many schools. Its tale of six people surviving the most horrifying event in history is not an easy book to take, but it is an ultimately uplifting tale of the resilience of the human spirit.

Inspired by *The 40's*, I decided to read other books written by *New Yorker* authors. The first book I tackled was ***The Essays of E.B. White***. E.B. White is a writer I didn't know much about but had a faintly unfavorable impression of. I was unable to finish the two books of his that I tried reading earlier: *Charlotte's Web* and *The Elements of Style*. (Both spiders and grammarians give me the creeps.) So I was a little leery of starting this book, but it ended up being a joy to read. The essays touch on a number of topics: life on his farm in Maine; New York City; Florida; writers; and various incidents from his past. There is a whiff of an old man railing against new-fangled ways and things, but his writing is leavened with such humor and self-deprecation that it never gets annoying. I doubt if my eighteen-year-old self would have approved, but as I begin my descent through middle-age, I'm beginning to find his point of view more sympathetic.

White's first published book was a 1929 collaboration with James Thurber titled ***Is Sex Necessary?*** (Spoiler alert: the answer is yes.) The book was such a success that not only did it launch the careers of the two men, but it has been in print continually ever since. I was a little nervous about starting this book. Humor has a tendency not to date very well, and a book about the relations between men and women seemed especially prone to this danger. I guess some people might find the book sexist, but White and Thurber portray both sexes as bumbling idiots in such a way that I did not find it offensive. In fact, I found the book to be pretty funny. Not in a knee-slapping, hilarious way, but in a very wry, smile-inducing way. I think most fans of witty writing would enjoy it. My only qualm about the book is Thurber's drawings. Harold Ross, the founding editor of *The New Yorker*, hated Thurber's drawings and refused to print them until this book became a best seller. (And even that was a near thing. White had to strong-arm the publisher to get them to agree to include the drawings.) I'm with Ross on this one. While I like the ideas behind many of Thurber's cartoons, the drawings themselves look like they were done by a drunken sixth grader. But given that the man has so many fans, I must clearly be in the wrong.



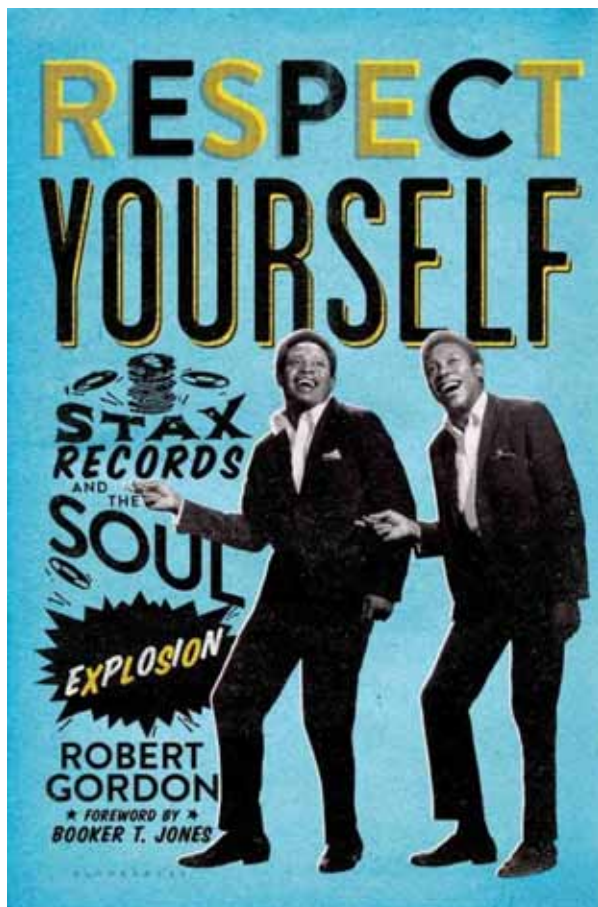
One of the more famous *New Yorker* writers of this period is Joseph Mitchell, although he is remembered mostly for the wrong reasons. A movie based on a couple of his writings called *Joe Gould's Secret*, directed by and starring Stanley Tucci as Mitchell, came out in 2000. He is notorious for one of the worst cases of writer's block in recorded history. He published his last piece in 1962. After that he came into his office at *The New Yorker* every day for 31 years without publishing another word.

Illustration from the Rare Books Humor collection
first edition of *Is Sex Necessary?*

Despite that, I'm sure he would rather have been remembered for his writing—and he should be. Every piece

he wrote for *The New Yorker* has been collected into a single volume titled *Up in the Old Hotel and Other Stories*. Rather than write about topics one would normally associate with the magazine (such as intellectuals or the arts) Mitchell's subjects can be classified into two categories: eccentrics and blue collar workers. He wrote about such people as a street preacher, Romany fortune tellers, a child prodigy, a Coney Island bearded lady, calypso singers, and Mohawk construction workers. His interest in out-of-the-way places led to pieces about fishing communities in Long Island and New Jersey, and Rossville, a community founded in the years before the Civil War by freed African-Americans at the southern end of Staten Island. While the attraction of these can be nostalgia towards the New York of the 1940s and 1950s, the people Mitchell interviews are themselves often looking back into the past. The result is an informal history that stretches all the way back to the city's founding.

Almost completely forgotten now, Wolcott Gibbs was so famous in his time that his obituary made the front page of the *New York Times*. His current obscurity is probably due to the fact that he only published a handful of books while alive and they have all been out of print for decades. Four years ago, journalist and Gibbs fan Thomas Vinciguerra published a collection of his work titled *Backward Ran Sentences: The Best of Wolcott Gibbs from the New Yorker*. Of all the books I read for this project, this one was the flat-out funniest. Most of the pieces in this book fit Thomas Hobbes' description of life: nasty, brutish, and short. It is a collection of satires, parodies, and essays that skewer everything in their path with an acerbic wit that is just as funny today as it was over half a century ago. There are also some short stories and reviews of Broadway shows that, while not as compelling as the rest of the book, are, at the least, very amusing. Overall, the book is a must-read for all fans of humor.



Rob Detmering, Ekstrom Library

Respect Yourself: Stax Records and the Soul Explosion, by Robert Gordon. This is a great book on the history of the Memphis record label that was home to Otis Redding, Carla Thomas, Isaac Hayes, and many others. Gordon focuses on Stax within the context of the Civil Rights Movement and also provides a lot of insight into the inner workings of the record business in the 1960s and 1970s.

Mark Dickson, Music Library

A Dance with Dragons (A Song of Ice and Fire #5), by George R.R. Martin. It took a while, but I finished this book before the new season began. I realize that the TV show is doing things that have not been confirmed in the books, but that doesn't bother me. Just don't kill off Tyrion, Jon, Arya, Sansa, or Daenerys, and I'll be fine. Otherwise, there will be trouble.

Novels & Stories 1963-1973 (Library of America collection, edited by Sidney Offit and containing the novels *Cat's Cradle*; *God Bless You, Mr. Rosewater*; *Slaughterhouse-Five*; and *Breakfast of Champions*; and three short stories), by Kurt Vonnegut. Vonnegut was my third favorite author, chronologically, behind Dr. Seuss and Ray Bradbury. I never

read *Cat's Cradle* when I was reading him in the 1970s. I started with *Slaughterhouse-Five* and took off from there. One of my most important formative authors. He was my generation's Mark Twain.

The Walking Dead, Vol. 18: What Comes After* and *The Walking Dead, Vol. 19: March to War, by Robert Kirkman, Charlie Adlard, and Cliff Rathburn. I did not much care for the “All Out War” storyline of these two trade paperbacks, which collect issues #103-108 and #109-114, respectively, of *The Walking Dead* graphic novel series. I haven't quit this series yet, but the story took a turn that hasn't encouraged me to stay with it. I will try the next two collections and see.

Meditations: A New Translation, written by Marcus Aurelius and translated for the Modern Library by Gregory Hays. Not finished yet. About half-way through, but lots of great insights into dealing with other human beings and staying true to yourself.

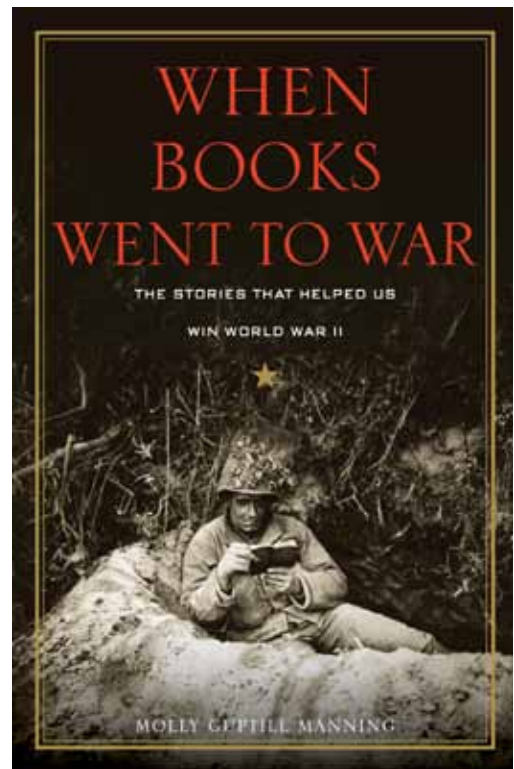
Carolyn Dowd, Ekstrom Library

I recently read David Talbot's *The Season of the Witch*, a narrative journey through the turbulent and iconic 1960s and 1970s in San Francisco where love, drugs, violent crime, misogyny, and odd politics stamp an indelible personality onto the City. As a former San Francisco resident, I was familiar with the Summer of Love, the Jonestown murders, the Harvey Milk and George Moscone assassinations, the Black Panthers' rise and fall, gentrification, homelessness, etc. But Talbot's clear, engaging language illuminated facts lost to memory and reawakened the horror and tension of those experiencing these incidents as they unfolded. Almost akin to a genre pulp novel, this nonfiction work is hard to put down.

Robin Harris, Law Library

When Books Went to War: The Stories That Helped Us Win World War II, by Molly Guptill Manning.

This is a fascinating story about how books helped the Allies win World War II. The author is also a lawyer, and perhaps due to that, the research and writing are solid. While most people may understand that World War II was a war of ideas as much as an actual war, my guess is that most people don't know about the efforts of the American public and the United States government to provide books to service members fighting overseas. Manning's book builds on the premise that the country was fighting a foe that had burned thousands of books in the 1930s, corrupting the minds of its own people with propaganda built on paranoia. So, when America entered the war in the early 1940s, the government made plans to distribute books to the American troops. Donations flooded in from around the United States, and librarians played a vital role. As the war dragged on, the Council on Books in Wartime pioneered a new innovation: the pocket-sized Armed Services Editions (popularly known as the ASE Program). The bottom line: more books were distributed to American soldiers by the United States government than were destroyed by Hitler. I strongly recommend this book to students of World War II history and to those who love books and believe that books have great power to make a positive difference in people's lives—no matter what.



Because so many soldiers read the ASE paperbacks, several of these books became “classics” during World War II. Perhaps the best example is F. Scott Fitzgerald's 1925 masterpiece, *The Great Gatsby*,

often called The Great American Novel. Shortly after reading *When Books Went to War*, I discovered the book below.

So We Read On: How The Great Gatsby Came to Be and Why It Endures, by Maureen Corrigan (no holdings). In her terrific book, Corrigan, a lecturer in the English department at Georgetown University and a book critic often heard on NPR, tries to explain the enduring popularity and relevance of F. Scott Fitzgerald's most famous novel. Although literary figures from the 1920s (including Gertrude Stein) loved the book, *The Great Gatsby* got bad reviews from critics and did not sell well at all. By the time of Fitzgerald's death in 1940, the remaining copies of *Gatsby* were stored in the Scribner warehouse. But soon, the novel's selection as an Armed Services Edition meant that by 1945 over 123,000 copies of the book were distributed to service members, even though it was impossible to find copies in American bookstores. After the war, *Gatsby* was recognized as a masterpiece, and it started to appear in American literature anthologies. Its take on the American Dream remains relevant today, and it is one of the most widely read American classics, here and abroad.

Corrigan argues that most students read *The Great Gatsby* in high school or early in college, before they are ready—or even able—to grasp it. She's now read it more than fifty times and has even toured the country, lecturing on it for the [National Education Association's Big Read project](#)—now she regards it as the Great American Novel. Her beautiful writing captures her love and respect for the novel—time with this book is time well spent.

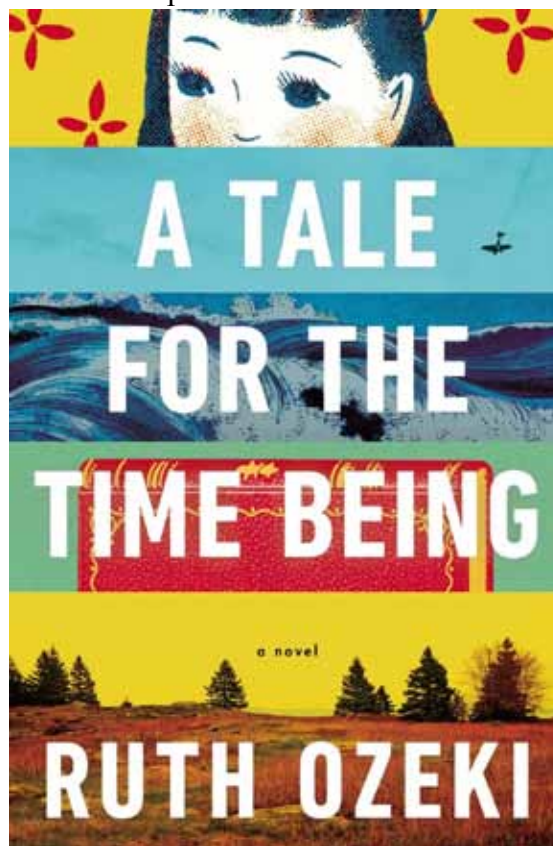
Anna Marie Johnson, Ekstrom Library

A Tale of Time Being, by Ruth Ozeki. A mash-up of Zen Buddhist philosophy and quantum physics is the best way to describe it. The diary of a sixteen-year-old Japanese girl washes up on a west coast beach and Ruth, a half-Japanese writer who is suffering from a severe case of writer's block, becomes obsessed with finding the girl. Ruth believes the diary might have been from the 2011 tsunami, and she attempts to research the clues the diary provides. The diary itself is really the story of the girl's 104-year-old Buddhist nun great grandmother, who was by far my favorite character. Part mystery, part Zen treatise, part postmodern graduate school novel, this one took me a while to get through but was well worth it.

It's Complicated: The Social Lives of Networked Teens, by danah boyd. Discusses issues of identity, privacy, addiction, danger, bullying, inequality, and literacy from boyd's own ethnographic research with teens across the United States, and includes other research as well that addresses the commonly asked questions about the use of social media by teenagers.

Not ground-breaking but provides a helpful, non-hysterical, non-media-hyped perspective.

I'm currently reading Ann Patchett's *This Is the Story of a Happy Marriage*. As much as I've enjoyed her fiction, I'm finding that I'm enjoying her essays more. This book contains reprints of her best magazine essays, which are often really funny and always thought-provoking. So far, she's covered the topics of writing, dogs, divorce, and recreational vehicles. I'm about a third of the way in, but I've been so pleased I'm recommending it before I'm done.



My husband recommends *Culture Jam: How to Reverse America's Suicidal Consumer Binge—and Why We Must*, by Kalle Lasn (no holdings). Lasn is the publisher of *Adbusters* magazine. Even though the book is somewhat dated (1999), Bret says that this was a good articulation of the problem, but was unfortunately somewhat short on concrete and practical solutions. The other big reader in my house—my son Henry—recommends Michelle Paver's three-book *Gods and Warriors* series, a Rick Riordan-type series set in the Bronze Age and starring a young goatherd hunted by powerful warriors whose sidekicks are the daughter of a priestess and a dolphin.

Ben King, Ekstrom Library

Recently I have been finding out a lot of information about my father's side of my ancestry. This has led me to an interest in the writings of Jesse Stuart, who was a family friend. Stuart's writing was so prolific and varied, it would be difficult to even describe it. He wrote novels, true stories, fiction, children's books, and countless articles in magazines. A lot of his writing is based in Eastern Kentucky where he lived for many years at a place called W-Hollow in Greenup County. (The W indicates that the land was shaped somewhat like a W.)

Many of his stories are based on real people. Some of his books are non-fiction, such as *The Year of My Rebirth*, about his near fatal heart attack in 1955 and his recovery, and *God's Oddling: The Story of Mick Stuart, My Father*. Stuart was also a school teacher and principal. His most famous book, *The Thread That Runs So True*, is about his experiences as a teacher.

My interest in him was furthered when I discovered that he lived with two of my ancestors on my Dad's side, Forrest King and his wife Lillian, for about five years in the mid-1930s while Stuart was principal of nearby McKell High School in Greenup County. He had gone to live with the Kings, seeking a quiet place to write. It became like a game to me to sleuth out clues and statements about his time living with the Kings. Stuart explains in the preface to *The Thread That Runs So True* that the book is a true story about characters during the period in his life when he was teaching. He slightly changes the names of the characters from their real names and refers to Forrest and Lillian King as Forrest and Lydia Kingston.

According to H. Edward Richardson's biography, *Jesse: The Biography of an American Writer, Jesse Hilton Stuart*, he was snowbound for a two-day period in the winter of 1933/34 and could not leave the Kings' house to get to McKell High School where he was the principal. During that period he typed three short stories that were accepted for publication ("Battle Keaton Dies," "300 Acres of Elbow Room," and "Head O' W-Hollow"). He spread the money he got from each out in three piles on the living room floor. When Forrest asked Jesse what he was going to do with the money, he said he was going to put it in his pocket. Forrest said, "You don't put that money in your pocket, you put it in a bank." Stuart said that up until that time he had always thought of banks as places where you got money, not where you put it. In a *Courier-Journal Magazine* article from October 27, 1963, Stuart says "if I ever had parents other than my own they were Mr. and Mrs. Forrest King." Stuart says he wrote dozens of stories, and scores of



Forrest King, *Courier-Journal Magazine*
(October 27, 1963)

poems in his five-year stay in their home. He talks about them seeing to it that he was not disturbed when he wanted to write, going to bat for him in his school battles of earlier years, and hiding him from his enemies. He says that they had no children, but with his love for them and their love for him, that he was as near a son as the Kings ever had. Stuart says, "One time I wanted to smoke, but Forrest had only one cigar. He cut the cigar in half with scissors, and gave me half."

Stuart was living there during the 1937 flood. In *Jesse Stuart: The Heritage, A Biography* by David Dick, Stuart talks about "crossing the slough in front of King's house on Tuesday, crossing it in high boots on Wednesday, and crossing it by boat on Thursday." Then he says by Sunday the water was in the house, and they had to barge the cattle and the horses out, the hogs, ten big brood sows, about thirty chickens drowned, and how they rowed boats through the maple tops, some sixty and seventy feet high to the McKell High School building where they lived for about nine days.

In Stuart's autobiography, *Beyond Dark Hills: A Personal Story*, he talks about when his brother James was about to be arrested after a fight, James wired Jesse for money to keep him out of jail. Stuart says he borrowed the money from Forrest King, and wired the money to his brother as bail to keep him out of jail. Richardson's biography talks about him writing a story at the King house, taking time out to eat a delicious evening meal prepared by Lillie King, and finishing the story about four o'clock in the morning.

The Kings' home, Stuart wrote, "was as fine a place as I have ever lived in my life. It was a house people drove by Sundays just to see," especially for Lillie's flowerbeds, season in and season out for she had not only a green thumb but a landscapist's eye. He talks about the Kings loaning him money many times, for he was badly in debt when he came there, and they had signed his note at the bank when he came to their home. Also, he says that the character Anse Bushman in the novel *The Trees of Heaven* is based on his father and his second father, Forrest King, two individuals who worked hard and demanded that everyone around them work hard.



Jesse Stuart at the Forrest King Home, South Shore in the spring of 1937.

The Seasons of Jesse Stuart (PS 3537 .T92516 A6 1976) p.50, Jesse Stuart collection, Rare Books.

The following statement from a 1975 Jesse Stuart interview describes how he would frequently use real people as characters in his stories. "It's the character of the people that makes Appalachia different. Appalachian people have character and they are characters. They're originals. It was easy for me to find characters for my stories. If I couldn't find characters within a mile of my house, I could find them *in* my house. My parents were characters. All my relatives were characters." He recalls some of their names and chuckles: Henry Wheeler, Sweeter Barney, Uglybird Sinnet, Forrest King, Op Alexander. "They were the older men of that day and time. They were the greatest characters I've known. Most of them couldn't read. Most of them were dead before 1950." Forrest King died in 1969. On May 30, 2015, I visited the graves of Forrest and Lillian King and of Jesse Stuart. It has just been interesting to me to ferret out statements and information about this.

Note: All books are available from University of Louisville Libraries unless otherwise indicated. If one of the unavailable ones strikes your fancy, check back in about a month. As it is the end of the financial year, new book orders could not be made in time for the publication of this column.

Library and Department News

Archives and Special Collections

Protecting the Collections. . .

ASC is working with Associate Dean Bruce Keisling and contractors to protect collections as holes are drilled into our areas to accommodate new wiring and re-route plumbing overhead during Ekstrom's first floor renovation. ASC staff has become adept at anticipating researchers' needs, mapping and moving collections from one area to another, scrambling up and down ladders, and wrapping, draping and taping giant sheets of plastic over and around stacks' ranges. We are grateful to the Libraries' Andy, Karen and Rick for providing supplies – and lots of them -- and also to Paul Eitel and Physical Plant for turning our fire suppression systems on and off to prevent dust from causing inadvertent discharges of costly chemicals.



Archival materials encased in plastic in LL29. Photo by Chad Owen



Carrie wearing the sash given to her by ASC staff. Photo by Tom Fougrousse.

Congratulations, Carrie!

Archives and Special Collections closed for lunch on Wednesday June 24 so that all could attend the luncheon honoring our own Carrie Daniels as the University of Louisville Supervisor of the Year. Carrie is the second recipient of this award, which was established by the Great Places to Work Committee in 2014.

In a nomination jointly drafted and signed by all members of ASC, we noted that “Carrie continues to lead the unit with an inclusive, consensus-based management style, resulting in a cohesive unit of professionals who share values of service, excellence, and commitment to our users and each other. She promotes a work environment which demonstrates and supports work/life balance, professional development and performance management.”

Congratulations, Carrie – and thank you for all that you do!

A New Owen

Tom and Phyllis Owen have welcomed a seventh grandchild, Thomas Beckett Owen, into their family. In early April, their son, Andrew, and his wife, Nancy, returned from China with 18-month-old Thomas.

Ekstrom Library

Access & User Services

AUS Summer Update

Two new staff members, Ashley Triplett and Tyler Upton, assumed full-time positions with AUS in late May and early June. Since the two of them had previously worked in the former Media department, the transition for all has been seamless. Welcome to both of you!

Rick Jones, as of April 21, 2015 moved from AUS and is temporarily re-assigned to work with Andy Clark. Rick is covering the Loading Dock desk while Raymond Slaughter is on medical leave.

There are lots of activities happening in the department this summer, a few of which include: the continuing merger of the former Circulation and Media departments into the AUS department; WMS circulation implementation; WMS/RRS interface software; and lots of training. Matt Goldberg, Michelle Rodriguez, Nick Sweat, and Ashley continue merging Circulation and Media procedures like bursar blocking, staff notification of schedule changes, student attendance policies, and so on.

The WMS circulation “go-live” date on 6/8/15 has resulted in a project that requires manual update of 7,000 item records in the system. Michelle, Andy Huff, Nick, and Matt are nearly finished with that work.

Ashley conducted three student assistant training sessions, between June 11 and June 13 on “Professionalism in the Workplace” so that students project a business- like presence and eagerness to assist patrons.



Alice has continued her work with Weiling, Randy, Calvin, and OCLC/WMS contacts to move forward the WMS/RRS interface. The most recent effort involved Alice and Calvin testing the RRS server. The interface operation is planned to be tested during July.

Everyone in the department is training someone, and/or being trained. Angie Kennedy, ILL borrowing; Bethany Poston, course reserves; Nick Sweat, searching, are all learning their new jobs. Not only did they learn basic concepts in Voyager, but now are learning WMS details of that work. Andy Huff has trained Bethany on ILL mail, as well as filling in on Rick Jones’ document delivery activities. Jason Friedman has been learning WMS functions while maintaining his work with Distance/Online learning activities. He, Steve Whiteside, and Michelle have been trained for opening/closing the Chao Auditorium.

Office of Libraries Technology

Data Encryption Plan

The University has rolled out the data encryption plan, with a deadline for completion of the project on October 31, 2015.

OLT has started the preparation and testing for the Libraries’ implementation. (OLT is responsible for those PCs, laptops or mobile devices that are managed by OLT.) More details about the Libraries’ implementation will be available after we finish the testing. Should you have any questions, please let us know.

Office of the Dean

New Hires!

Effective May 11, 2015, **Lance Upton**, Media Resources student assistant, began working as a Library Assistant with Ekstrom Access and User Services. Lance reports to Matthew Goldberg.

Effective June 1, 2015, **Ashley Triplett**, Media Resources student assistant, began working as a Library Assistant with Ekstrom Access and User Services. Ashley reports to Matthew Goldberg.

Effective July 6, 2015 **Dylan Glenn** will begin working as a Library Assistant in Ekstrom Libraries Technical Services. Dylan will report to Tyler Goldberg, Head of Technical Services. Dylan’s responsibilities will include ordering materials for Ekstrom Library and the Art Library, processing gift donations, and Interlibrary Loan purchase requests.

Farewell to Rosie. . .

Rosie Linares’ last day in the UofL Libraries was Friday, June 19. She accepted a position at the Oberlin College Libraries, effective July 1. We congratulate Rosie on her new position. During her two years in the Diversity Residency position, Rosie made many contributions to the libraries and campus community. She will be missed by all who have worked with her.

Law Library

Welcome, Anna!

The Law Library proudly announces the arrival of our newest library assistant, **Anna Powell**. Anna's most recent position was as assistant archivist for the Sisters of Charity of Nazareth. Anna also has four years of academic library experience from Southeast Missouri State University, and is a welcome addition to our staff. We look forward to working with Anna!

Digital Collections News

The Law Library is pleased to announce the addition of Law School retrospective materials to its digital collections.

The Law Student Publication Collection contains the three periodicals produced by the students of the School of Law – the *Louisville Lawyer*, the *Louisville Law Examiner*, and the *Brandeis Brief* – and covers over four decades of school, student, and alumni history.

The Senior Bulletin Collection consists of the graduating class yearbooks/catalogs produced from 1974 to 1999, along with a predecessor publication from 1962. (You will find similar compilations in *Louisville Lawyer* issues dating from 1963 to 1974.)

The Law Library Digital Collections are located at <http://digital.library.louisville.edu/cdm/landingpage/collection/law/>, easily reachable from the Law Library or University Libraries Digital Collections pages.



Miriam Schusler Williams (37-year Law Library employee, who retired in the summer of 2013) from the November 12, 1978 (v. 4, no. 1) issue of the *Louisville Law Examiner*.

Library Exhibits



**Gene's Friend
Cranston Ritchie**
An exhibition curated by James Rhem and Bill Carner

Archives & Special Collections

Photographic Archives Gallery

Lower Level, East Wing, Ekstrom Library

July 9 - September 25, 2015

Opening Reception July 9, 5:00 - 7:00 PM

Music Library

First Floor
Music Library Special
Collections
Through July

Selections include a
manuscript Italian opera
score from 1692 (right)



NEW EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT



Name: **Tyler Upton**

UofL position and department: Evening Supervisor, Access & User Services

Hometown: Elizabethtown, KY

Hobbies/Activities: Racquetball, rockclimbing, hunting, fishing, cooking, acoustic guitar, statistical programming, and really loud heavy metal music

Favorite Books: *The Hobbit* (The only fiction book I've read since high school...)

Favorite Movies: *Forrest Gump*, *The Grey*, *The Hobbit: The Battle of the Five Armies*

Favorite Food: Coffee and anything I've cooked myself

Favorite Quote: "So comes snow after fire, and even dragons have their ending."

Anything else you would like to tell us about yourself: I'm just learning to take over the world, one step at a time.

Name: **Ashley Triplett**

UofL position and department: Student and Social Media Supervisor, Access & User Services

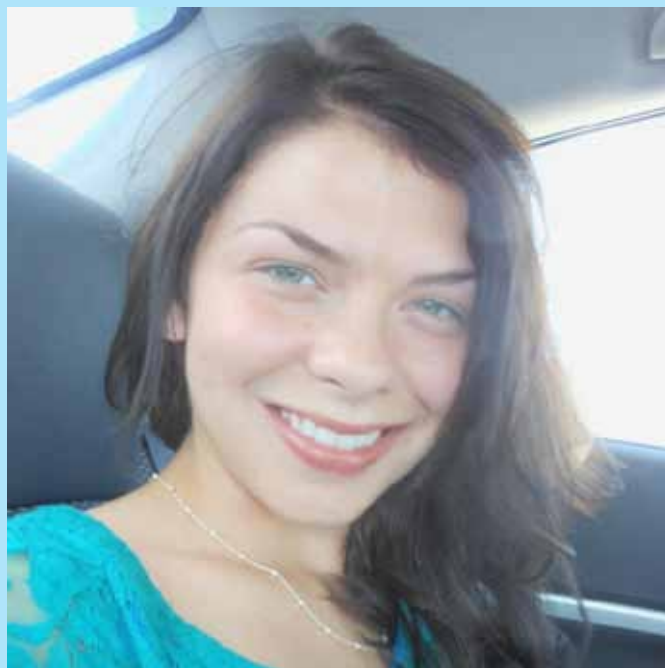
Zodiac sign: Aries

Favorite Books: *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, *Anna Karenina*, *War and Peace*, *Memoirs of a Geisha*, and *To Kill a Mockingbird*

Favorite Food: Masala Dosa, Chocolate Croissant, Tom Yum Goong, Sushi, ALL vegetables and fruits and herbs/spices

Favorite Vacation Spot: The French Rivera

Favorite Quote: "The grass is greener where you water it."





UofL Day of Service **and the Libraries**

On April 17, 2015, Ben King, Karen Nalley, Jim Poppell, and Tracey Washington participated in the inaugural UofL Day of Service. Along with 16 other UofL staff members, they spent the day at Victory Park on 1051 South 23rd Street. Their project for the day including refreshing the landscaping and some repairs to the Club House. For more information about the Day of Service, UofL's Community Service Leave program, and photos of this year's

volunteers see: <http://louisville.edu/communityengagement/community-service-opportunities/uofl-day-of-service>

On the bus ride to the volunteer site, Ben shared with his fellow libraries' employees that his maternal grandmother, Mary Jane Withers Cooper, once owned a house across from Victory Park on the corner of 22nd and Greenwood. Based on family stories, Ben knew that his grandmother purchased the house in late 1928 following the untimely death of her husband in a workplace accident. She moved to the house with at least 7 of her 13 children, including Ben's mother Fay Cooper. The future Mrs. King was around 12 at the time she moved to the house on Greenwood and lived there until she married Ben's father on December 2, 1944. Ben's grandmother lived in the 4-bedroom, 2 bathroom house until 1951.



Many details of family life in the Cooper household on Greenwood were carefully recorded by hand in a diary kept by Mrs. Cooper. Ben discovered the diary many years ago and with guidance from Mary Walter, a former staff member in Special Collections, preserved the pages in protective sleeves and created an audio recording of the contents. In addition to raising 13 children, Mrs. Cooper recorded her personal observations about world events and family life on a frequent basis. One entry in December 1941 notes the US entry into WWII and in later entries she expresses concerns for the safety of her children and their family members serving in the military. In another entry, she writes that she is glad Fay and Mr. Ben King are back together after a falling out since she felt they were made for each other. The Kings were married for 60 years so she evidently knew a good match when she saw one!

Following a morning of hard work and lunch as part of the Day of Service Program, Karen and Tracey took the lead on helping Ben find the house and achieve his goal of getting a picture of himself near it. Due to Ben's good family sleuthing, the three of them were able to locate the house fairly easily and noticed a gentleman outside working on his car. They asked him about the house and who lived there. Amazingly, Jerry was the grandson of the current owner who had lived in the home for a long time, although he did not have an exact date. After sharing Ben's story, Jerry helped Ben get the pictures he had hoped for and a special photo of the two grandsons together showing their support for UofL.



All of the libraries' participants feel that the UofL Day of Service was a very worthwhile venture and hope there will be greater participation in the future. Working together on a community service project was fun and fulfilling. Karen adds that seeing Ben's excitement regarding his mother's childhood home was exciting and made the day that much more special.



Thank you to Kathie Johnson for her service on *The Owl* Board. We wish you a happy retirement!!
— *The Owl* Board



As a member of the 2015 Joint Spring Conference Planning Committee, I'd like to thank the following colleagues for their presentations at Jenny Wiley State Park this past April : Rob Detmering, Sue Finley, Anna Marie Johnson, Samantha McClellan, Toccara Porter, Elizabeth Smigielski, Maurini Strub, Vida Vaughn.

Thank you to Terri Holtze for instructing me on how to set up LibGuides for the law library. —Virginia Mattingly



I would like to thank all of the Kornhauser Library Students Assistants, Deepika Joshi, Riley Cantrell, Niki Denney, Michael Mayfield, Tomas Garza, Annalisa Garza, Nathan Wessel, Brigid Connelly and Andy Nett for doing a great job for us this last semester and hope they have a great summer. —Joan Nailon



I'd like to thank, Terri Holtze, Maurini Strub, Melissa Laning, Bruce Keisling, Karen Nalley, Jessie Roth, Sarah Carter, James Procell, Carrie Daniels, Ashley Triplett, Dean Fox and all the people who have been so wonderful in helping out with communications planning. I am grateful for your input. —Carolyn Dowd



Thank you to Terri Holtze for setting up the new Social Media group. I look forward to working together with her and other group members to move forward with the Libraries' marketing agenda.

Thank you to Sheila, Troy and Sahab for relocating all of the art library's computers so that we can install our brand new service desk. —Sarah Carter

Thank You

Alice Abbott-Moore
Delinda Buie
Tom Fougousse
Rachel Howard
Ben King

Melissa Laning
Karen Nalley
Chad Owen
Christopher Poche
Jessie Roth

Margot Smith
Marcus Walker
Marcy Werner



... for contributing to this issue of *The Owl*