

Nickels and Dimes

Dime Novel Cataloguing and Digitization at Northern Illinois University

Matthew Short

Northern Illinois University's Rare Books and Special Collections holds the Johannsen and Edward T. LeBlanc Collections, which contain more than 50,000 dime novels and story papers – among the largest and most comprehensive collections of 19th century popular fiction anywhere in the country. (See *Caxtonian*, November 2019.) NIU began cataloguing and digitizing its dime novels in 1999, with the aim to make the format more widely known and accessible, while preserving this important part of American literary culture.

Collecting

Dime novels were printed on the cheapest quality paper available and exist today only because of collectors. Serious collecting began in 1920 with the auction of Frank P. O'Brien's collection of dime novels, many of which were later donated to the New York Public Library. Shortly after, Albert Johannsen began working on his landmark bibliography, *The House of Beadle and Adams* (University of Oklahoma, 1950), and Ralph P. Smith issued the first bi-monthly newsletter for collectors that would later become the *Dime Novel Round-Up*, a quarterly that is still in print today.

In the 19th century, libraries collected relatively little fiction, much less popular fiction. Speaking on behalf of the American Library Association in 1888 before the Senate, Ainsworth Rand Spofford described dime novels as "immoral" and "unwholesome," arguing that they be reclassified as first-class mail, so that only the right sort of books – factual books about science, philosophy, and religion – could be more widely and cheaply distributed to the American reader. This attitude would not change until the 1920s, when V. Valta Parma, curator of Rare Books at the Library of Congress, rescued some 20,000 rat-nibbled dime novels from the basement of

the Copyright Office. Most other libraries did not begin acquiring dime novels until many years later. Such collections form the basis of NIU's dime novel holdings, as well as the holdings at other major university libraries, such as those at the University of Minnesota, Stanford University, and Villanova University.



Seth Jones, or, The Captives of the Frontier. *Beadle and Company*, 1860.

Digitization

Most dime novels were printed on paper that is highly acidic. Collectors took a variety of steps to slow or halt the resulting degradation through repair and binding, which often did more harm than good. Many of NIU's dime novels, for example, have a great deal of tape, glue, and staples, which have aged even worse than the paper. While binding has gone a long way to help with preservation, especially when comparing bound dime novels to those that

were not bound, most collectors would remove and discard wrappers.

Before scanning, we remove bindings and place most of our dime novels in archival envelopes and boxes. This makes digitization significantly easier, allowing us to capture entire pages without fighting against spines and gutters. The only exceptions we make are for materials that were issued bound or that are too fragile to have their bindings removed. Some effort is also usually needed to stabilize items before scanning, which often involves repairing torn pages or removing glue, tape, and staples. In order to reduce stress on the materials as much as possible, we capture images using large overhead scanners that operate without UV radiation. This work is overseen by Sata Prescott, a librarian with professional training in conservation. However, some damage is almost inevitable any time some dime novels are handled. On average, we do far less damage during digitization than is typically done by the materials being handled by hundreds of students every year.

As dime novels are digitized, they are published on the website *Nickels and Dimes* (<https://dimenovels.lib.niu.edu/>), which currently contains over 7,500 individual volumes and approximately 300,000 pages. We capture images as uncompressed TIFFs in color and at 400 dpi, with minimal post processing. During the process of ingest into our digital repository, derivative files are created for access and preservation, including JP2s and JPEGs. Text is extracted from each page by means of Optical Character Recognition, making it possible to search within the text of a book. The quality of this text varies significantly from volume to volume, depending on factors like the condition of the item and the size and typeface used; but when compared with dime novels that have been manually transcribed, accuracy is usually around 70%. We provide access to all of this raw, uncorrected text for



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NICKELS AND DIMES, from page 1

the purposes of text mining or to facilitate hand-keying for Project Gutenberg. Each novel can be previewed in a book viewer, or the entire volume can be downloaded as a PDF with no restrictions on access or use. We do request that our materials be given attribution if cited, and that users refrain from downloading the entire collection. (Judging by the many eBay listings for our PDFs, these requests are not often acknowledged.)

Cataloguing and dimenovels.org

Historically, libraries have not catalogued dime novels in the same way as books, instead using a single record to describe an entire series – that is, if they bothered to catalogue their dime novels at all. To identify individual dime novels of interest, patrons needed to consult several print bibliographies, only a few of which are widely available. Historically, this has served to keep most dime novel collections hidden from all except the most dedicated researchers. Long before digitization began, NIU had been cataloguing its dime novels individually, which significantly increased use of its collections. Catalogue records include comprehensive subject analysis; identifying genres, recurring characters, geographic locations, and topics; and extensive name authority work to unpack the hundreds of pseudonyms that are used. When there are references in print bibliographies, these are also included, with plot synopses and descriptive notes. Detailed cataloguing has made a profound impact on the use of the collections, perhaps even greater than digitization. After cataloguing, items that have not been requested in decades will often be requested many times before they can even be routed back to Rare Books and Special Collections.

Villanova University began working on a dime novel digitization project at roughly the same time as NIU, launching the Edward T. LeBlanc Memorial Bibliography at dimenovels.org, better to describe the complex relationships that exist between dime novels in their collections. Hosted by Demian Katz, Director of Technology at Villanova, dimenovels.org is based on the unpublished bibliographic listings that Edward LeBlanc spent 50 years of his life compiling. (LeBlanc was the editor of the *Dime Novel Round-Up* for more than 40 years.) The database at dimenovels.org unpacks relationships between editions and identities, including entries for every series, publisher, author, work, and edition. It goes further than any previous bibliography by indexing the contents of



Scanning dime novels at NIU.

each dime novel and story paper, with entries for every serialized story, short story, poem, and article. In doing so, patrons are able to see every version of a novel, no matter how much it might have changed between editions and formats, and for the first time ever, thousands of previously unknown minor works are discoverable. The site dimenovels.org also provides links to full-text dime novels from various digital libraries, bringing disparate online collections together in one place.

By using the data from dimenovels.org, *Nickels and Dimes* enables users to browse related editions of any story directly in the digital collection itself. This is intended to make it easier for patrons to compare editions so they can draw conclusions about how a story evolved over time, and to find all of the parts of a continuing story. Doing so effectively eliminates one of the major barriers to scholarship by making these relationships explicit and not obscured by the need to consult the many different print bibliographies. In the future, we hope to also add a feature that will allow for side-by-side comparison of editions in a viewer.

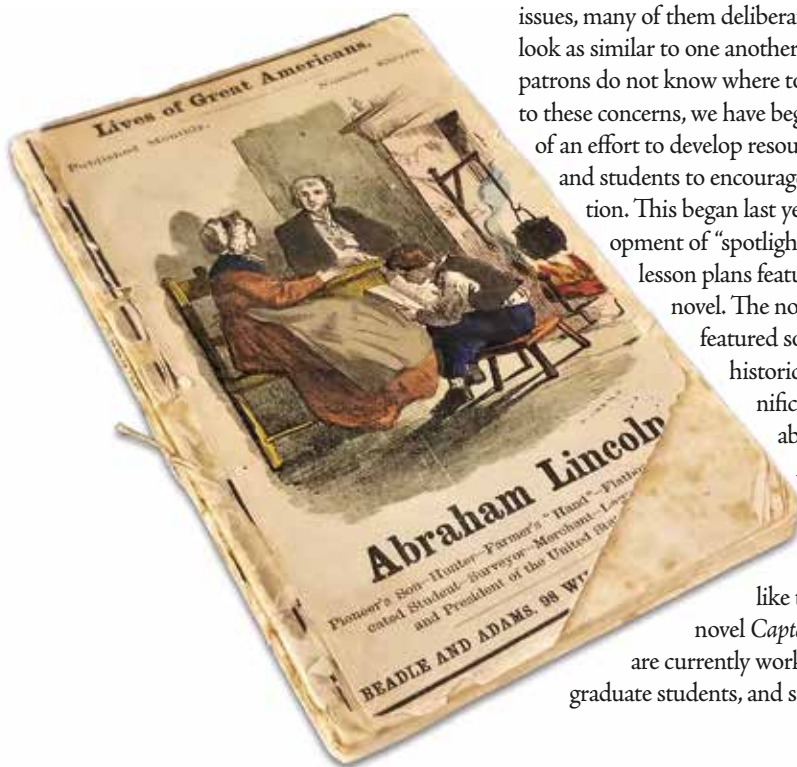
The Albert Johannsen Project

In 2016, Northern Illinois University and Villanova University were awarded a Digitizing Hidden Collections grant by the Council on Library and Information Resources for the "Albert Johannsen Project." The project seeks to digitize the entirety of the Johannsen Collection at NIU, containing around 6,000 volumes, and to publish Johannsen's bibliography through dimenovels.org. The project and the collection are named for Albert Johannsen, who was born in 1871 in Des Plaines, Iowa, and spent more than 30 years teaching Petrology at the University of Chicago. Johannsen retired from teaching in 1937 and went on to pursue a second career in literary studies, writing a book about the Dickens illustrator, Phiz, and his landmark

dime novel bibliography, *The House of Beadle and Adams and Its Dime and Nickel Novels*. His bibliography contains a comprehensive history of the first firm to publish dime novels, with an extensive biographical dictionary containing every Beadle author, and detailed listings for each series that carefully traces editions and their variations. While writing the “Beadle book,” Johannsen amassed one of the largest dime novel collections in the country, which NIU acquired in 1967 after his death.

The Johannsen Collection contains approximately 75% of everything published by Beadle & Adams and is the most comprehensive public collection of that publisher known to exist. Holdings include the seminal *Beadle’s Dime Novels*, which contains two of the bestselling novels of the mid-19th century: *Malaeska, the Indian Wife of the White Hunter* and *Seth Jones; or, The Captives of the Frontier*, each of which are believed to have sold millions of copies. The collection also contains nearly complete runs of two of the longest dime novel series ever published, *Beadle’s Dime Library* and *Beadle’s Half-Dime Library*, with a combined total of more than 2,000 issues. Although Beadle also published several successful story papers, such as the *Saturday Journal* and *Beadle’s Weekly*, their most important contribution to periodical literature is probably the short-lived *Belles and Beaux*, which marks the first effort at mass-market romance in American publishing. In addition to fiction, the firm issued biographies, schoolbooks, and

Abraham Lincoln (Lives of Great Americans).
Beadle & Adams, 1864.



songbooks, as well as the first baseball manuals and national tax codes. All of these holdings are in the process of being digitized, catalogued, and uploaded to *Nickels and Dimes*.

After a novel has been added to NIU’s website, Villanova downloads each catalogue record and loads that data into their database. This process involves automated matching of stories on the basis of similarity, which is human-mediated by comparing all results against existing print bibliographies. Unique Resource Identifiers are associated with all names in NIU’s records, which enables *dimenovels.org* to assign the correct identity to each dime novel at two different levels: the edition, or the credit that appears on the title page, and the work, or the real-world person known to be the author. Because more than half of the identities used are missing from the Library of Congress Name Authority File, *dimenovels.org* is also used by NIU as a local authority file, where information about authors and their identities is maintained. There is a similar exchange of data in the other direction after entries have been added to *dimenovels.org*. NIU harvests data about relationships between editions, which is used to collocate editions, parts, and identities. For story papers, which are periodicals and not indexed during cataloguing, the contents of each issue are also harvested.

While the project has received a warm response from the community of dime novel scholars and collectors, the uninitiated are sometimes daunted by the sheer volume of materials available. New researchers and students are faced with series that contain thousands of issues, many of them deliberately branded to look as similar to one another as possible. Often patrons do not know where to start. In response to these concerns, we have begun to make more of an effort to develop resources for teachers and students to encourage use of the collection. This began last year with the development of “spotlights,” which are brief lesson plans featuring a particular novel. The novels that we have featured so far are either of historical or scholarly significance, such as the abolition romance *Maum Guinea*, or novels we feel have not received enough attention, like the lesbian pirate novel *Captain Volcano*. We are currently working with faculty, graduate students, and scholars to develop

more of these “spotlights” in the hopes of combining two or more into larger units on race, class, sexuality, or politics for undergraduate and high school classes.

The Street & Smith Project

In July, NIU and Villanova submitted a proposal to the National Endowment for the Humanities to digitize the dime novels and story papers of Street & Smith. As with the Johannsen Project, this will also involve adding entries for the Street & Smith series to *dimenovels.org* in addition to digitization. Unlike that project, which involves digitizing a very comprehensive collection located in one place, the Street & Smith project will involve a much larger partnership with many more institutions. The first phase includes digitizing dime novels at NIU, Villanova, Stanford University, Bowling Green State University, and Oberlin College.

Street & Smith was one of the most successful publishers of the dime novel format, and the only major one to transition into publishing pulp magazines. The cornerstone of their empire was *Street and Smith’s New York Weekly*, which had circulation numbers greater than almost any other periodical in the country. They entered the dime novel field in 1889 with *Log Cabin Library* and *Nugget Library* and would go on to dominate the newsstands with series like *Brave and Bold Weekly*, *Nick Carter Weekly*, *Tip Top Weekly*, and *Buffalo Bill Stories*. By 1926, Street & Smith had acquired the reprint rights to the stories of all the other major publishers, incorporating the competition into their existing lines. One key to their success and longevity, and the reason they outlasted other dime novel publishers, was a willingness to diversify their publications. Street & Smith are probably best known today for their pulp magazines, especially *The Shadow*, *Doc Savage*, and *Astounding Stories*.

We are near the end of digitizing the dime novels of Beadle & Adams, the first major publisher of the format. Digitizing the dime novels of Street & Smith, the last major publisher, will effectively bookend the dime novel era. This will position NIU and its partners to follow up by digitizing the other major publishers, including George and Norman Munroe and Frank Tousey. As this work progresses, we hope to add additional collaborators to help fill in the many gaps that exist in our holdings. The long-term goal is to make every dime novel available online with complete cataloguing information, facilitating new scholarship, and preserving a significant and long-neglected part of America’s cultural heritage.

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Biodiversity Heritage Library:

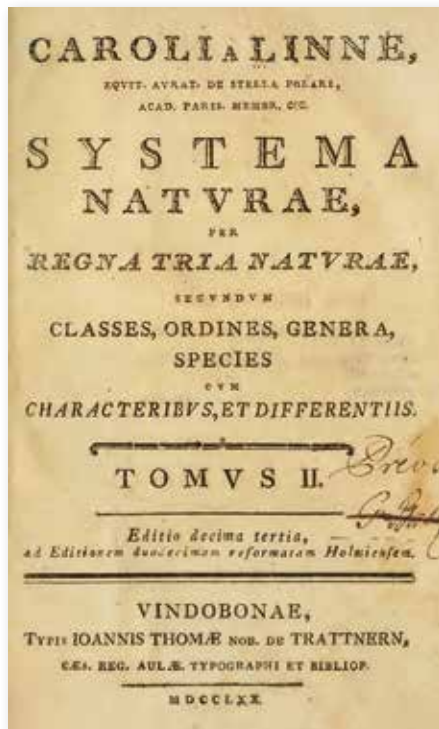
Inspiring Discovery Through Free Access to Biodiversity Knowledge.

Leora Siegel

The Lenhardt Library, of which I am the Senior Director, is one of the treasures of the Chicago Botanic Garden. Open to the public, its 150,000-volume collection encompasses resources on gardening, botany, plant conservation, and landscape design, in formats from rare books to e-books. The library's initiatives focus on public engagement, collections, and collaborations. The Lenhardt

on Earth, population extinctions, or climate change, it is a mobile library on their phones when conducting fieldwork, and obviates the need to travel to libraries holding the materials. Artists are inspired by the natural history illustrations offered by the rare books. To librarians, the BHL is a tool for primary source research with numerous access points including full-text searching and transcriptions of 19th century field notes. The BHL's new association with Unpaywall (a free, open-source non-

engaged audience. Thousands of images from BHL books can be explored in Flickr. A recent social media campaign focused on women in natural history reached over 7 million people, garnering over 50 million impressions (the number of times content is displayed). So far, scientists have named two new species in honor of BHL, the most recent *Kishenehoasilus bhl* Dikow, a fly fossil species, was announced in August 2019. For Dr. Alejandro Bortolus, a Coastal Ecologist "BHL is a dream come true ...



Linné, Carl von. Systema Natvrae... Vienna, Typis Ioannis Thomæ Nob. De Trattnern, 1770



Lear, Edward. Illustrations of the family of Psittacidae, or parrots... London, E. Lear, 1832



Bleeker, P. Atlas ichthyologique des Indes Orientales Néerlandaises... Amsterdam, 1862

Library is an active contributor to, and user of, the Biodiversity Heritage Library (BHL)

The BHL (<https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/>) is a virtual (online) library of digitized materials with free and open access across the globe. Its subject – biodiversity – has a broad scope that includes plants, fungi, insects, mammals, birds, fossils, and more, under the umbrella of natural history. The BHL's 57 million pages of primary source literature date from the 15th through the 21st centuries and constitute the largest digital repository of biodiversity in the world.

BHL is highly valued by its diverse community of users. To scientists studying life

profit project dedicated to making scholarly research more open and accessible) makes the content even more freely available. BHL's many tools for downloading content, taxonomic scientific name accuracy, reference management of citations, DOIs and Stable URLs, and data exporting, all help to make it a rich resource for its many users. For small research libraries such as the Lenhardt Library, digitizing our collections and making our resources available to an ever-widening community of users is vital.

BHL engages its user libraries and individual users through sophisticated social media channels. Posts on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and on a BHL blog share its contents with an

all of the material is available for anyone to check ... from any personal computer in what I consider a portable magic library."

Operationally, BHL is a consortium of 80 committed worldwide partners on six continents; including natural history, botanical, research, and national libraries. It was founded in 2006 by 10 members in the U.S. and U.K. and has since grown tremendously in the last dozen years. The Smithsonian Libraries provide leadership of the project and supply it with permanent staff. Nancy Gwinn, Director of the Smithsonian Libraries (and a Caxtonian) has been influential in BHL's evolution. Illinois features prominently in BHL with three par-

ticipating institutions – the Field Museum, the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and the Chicago Botanic Garden.

Most of the work is managed online across numerous time zones, with an annual meeting for partners to gather, conduct business, and network in person. A vast internal website covers all aspects of the organization. BHL is funded primarily by dues and by grants to partners. Some libraries have dedicated staff who digitize images, assign indexing data, and upload to the website. Others send materials off-site to be scanned, then complete the rest of the work in the home library.

A network of partner committees manages the content. A decision to ban “Frankenbooks” (imperfect copies digitally sewn together to make a more complete copy) was recommended by the Collections Committee to the organization at large and accepted. Therefore, all volumes in the BHL are true representations of authentic physical copies. A print retention taskforce assembled recommended best practices for retaining print copies of digitized content in the large digital repository.

Natural history books were written in the collaborative spirit of science to share scientific knowledge and species discoveries, and thus to spark new theories and ideas. Researchers explored the world for scientific societies and reported back with their new content in lectures and papers. For BHL’s European colleagues, what is now a 200-year-old “rare” book may have been received by the institutional library when it was newly published. Scientific illustrators and engravers, long before the age of photography, captured the essence of newly discovered species and brought them to life, often in full color. Scientific processes require referring to first mention of a theory, tracing it through the ages, and adding one’s own new hypotheses. The volumes in the Biodiversity Heritage

Library are primary sources for the natural world that is known today. Knowledge may have been lost through the centuries. With BHL’s full-text searching and taxonomic name finders, species can be rediscovered in the literature. Some developing countries that were “discovered” by Western Europeans in past centuries do not have the kind of libraries found in developed countries. BHL provides access to scientists across the globe (including those in developing countries) to study their regional flora and fauna. Artistically, the hand-colored and copper engravings found in natural history books are museum-quality pieces. Prized natural history illustrations are often removed from their accompanying texts and mounted on walls in private homes. Digitized copies keep the knowledge contained in those illustrations intact for future generations. BHL’s collections include 4,715 volumes published between 1450 and 1799, each of which is viewable in full text, page by page. The oldest book, by Pliny, was published in 1469.

Would our name-sake William Caxton approve of this new format – a digital library? I say “Yes!” In the

same way that he and other early printers revolutionized human communication, the Biodiversity Heritage Library is transforming access to the primary source literature of the Earth’s ecosystems and species.

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Pliny. Plinius Secundus Nouocomensis equestribus militiis industrie functus... Venice, Johannes de Spira, 1469

Caxton Club Revels

Wednesday, December 18, 2019

Bob & Margaret McCamant

Mark your calendars for the Caxton Revels on December 18. Our annual holiday party will be held at the Newberry Library. Dinner will be in Ruggles Hall with the silent auction in Rettinger Hall. Members will be encouraged to sip libations and exchange stories as they bid on bibliophilic

bargains and treasures. Continuing last year’s return to a prized Caxton tradition, we’ll be entertained by Club member and professional magician John Railing.

To make it easy to donate items for the silent auction, members of the auction committee will accept donations at the **December Friday luncheon meeting (12/13)**. Please include with each item the donor’s name and contact

information as well as anything you might know about it, including where you obtained it and an idea of its value (for tax-deduction purposes, the donor’s estimate of value is the one that counts). Alternatively, simply fill out the auction forms that will be available at the meeting.

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The Robert S. Connors Collection: A Legacy for Book History

Elizabeth Frengel

I met Bob Connors at the University of Chicago Library on a cold, bright day in early December 2018. He paid the library a visit to tell me about his collection and started by describing his most prized book – a 1475 edition of St. Augustine’s *Confessiones*, printed by Johannes Bonus in Milan. *Confessiones* was printed a mere twenty years after Johannes Gutenberg finished his Bible, the first use of movable type in the west and a watershed moment in printing history. It is easy to see why the book is Bob’s favorite. The typeface emulates a beautiful humanist book-hand, which is round, airy, and easy to read. The low acidity of the rag paper on which the pages were printed has left them clean, white and crisp, even after almost five and a half centuries. Between the covers, you can see the convergence of manuscript and print technologies in startling and beautiful relief. Precise, legible type sits on the page with pen flourishes and decorated initials added by the hand of an illuminator after the printed sheets had been dried, but before they were assembled into gatherings and bound as the book we see today.

As curator of rare books in the University of Chicago’s Special Collections Research Center, I spend my working days in the company of books such as this, though few are so lovely. Bob came to the library that day in December with a particular purpose – to find out whether we might be interested in his collection, and to see if the library were a place that would be a suitable home for his precious possessions. In October 2018, Bob learned that he had pancreatic cancer – making a plan for the safekeeping of his books a priority.

Bob Connors is a retired corporate tax attorney and long-time student of the University of Chicago’s Basic Program of Liberal Education for Adults. Bob came from a family of readers who were not book collectors. Collecting never occurred to him until his first antiquarian purchase, a first edition of Jonathan Swift’s *Travels ... by Lemuel Gulliver*. That acquisition changed everything. Bob began collecting in earnest, buying the earliest editions he could find of classic novels and classical texts he read as part of his study in the Basic Program. Over the course of 10 years or more – a relatively short time in the life

of a collector – he assembled an impressive collection. St. Augustine’s *Confessiones*, for example, is owned by only nine libraries in the United States. Bob’s gift to the University of Chicago – if we were to accept it – would put us in their rarefied company.

We gratefully accepted.



An Aldine edition of Juvenal, c. 1515,
with a fictitious imprint

Among the things that Bob and I discovered we had in common in that first meeting was a deep interest in book history, and an appreciation for the fact that every book can tell a story that transcends its textual narrative. Bob’s collection proved remarkable in both scope and depth, illustrating in tangible ways the transmission and translation of classical texts through time and across cultures.

Included in the gift of approximately 400 volumes spanning more than four centuries are 11 incunabula and dozens of Aldine and Elsevier editions, books that are crucial to the study of how scholars and students interacted with classical texts from the early modern period to the present day.

As Caxtonians will know, incunabula, such as the St. Augustine described above, is the term applied to books produced during the infancy of mechanized printing, or the use of movable type – generally understood as the period from 1455 (when Johannes Gutenberg produced a set of printed Bibles in Mainz, Germany) to 1501, a time when manuscript culture and print culture intersected with results that would last for the next 300 years. Aldus Manutius founded the eponymous Aldine Press in Venice, Italy, in the late 1490s, and based his beautiful Greek typeface on a humanist hand that was current at the time. He produced pocket-sized editions of classical works that were designed for scholars and are sometimes thought of as the forerunner to the modern Penguin paperback classics. The Aldine device is the dolphin and the anchor with the Latin motto *Festina Lente* (hasten slowly) – an apt metaphor for the steadily evolving progress of the technology of the book. The Elseviers (sometimes spelled Elzivir or Elzevier), a family of Dutch printers and booksellers active in the 17th and 18th centuries, produced duodecimo or ultra-small-sized editions that are equally important to understanding how classical texts have circulated.

As we process and catalogue the books from the collection – now findable in the University of Chicago’s catalogue as “The

See CONNORS COLLECTION, page 7



Robert S. Connors Collection

Book- and manuscript-related exhibitions: a selective list

Compiled by Andrea Villasenor

(Note: sometimes an exhibit may be delayed or extended; it is always wise to call before visiting)

American Writers Museum, 180 N. Michigan Avenue, second floor, Chicago, 312-374-8790: **“My America: Immigrant and Refugee Writers Today.”** This exhibit and related program series will explore the influence of modern immigrant and refugee writing in America on our culture, history, and daily lives; opens November 21.

Art Institute of Chicago, 111 S. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, 312-443-3600: **“Andy Warhol – From A to B and Back Again.”** This major retrospective includes more than 400 works illuminating the breadth, depth and interconnectedness of Warhol’s production throughout his career, as well as the ways in which he anticipated the issues, effects, and pace of our current digital age; through January 26, 2020.

The Block Museum of Art at Northwestern University, 40 Arts Circle Drive, Evanston, 847-491-4000: **“Modernisms: Iranian, Turkish, and Indian Highlights from NYU’s Abby Grey Collection.”** This exhibition surveys art from three nations in which unique and vibrant forms of modernism sprang forth in the 1960s and 1970s, challenging histories of artistic modernism that too often begin and end in the West; January 21 through April 5, 2020.

Chicago Botanic Garden, Lenhardt Library, 1000 Lake Cook Road, Glencoe, 847-835-8202: **“Bartram’s Garden in Words and Wood.”** Exhibition features handcrafted artist boxes and objects made from the wood of fallen trees at Bartram’s Garden in combination with original poetry; through January 12, 2020.

Chicago History Museum, 1601 N. Clark Street, Chicago, 312-266-2077: **“Remembering Dr. King: 1929-1968.”** This exhibition invites visitors to walk through a winding gallery that features over 25 photographs depicting key moments in Dr. King’s work and the Civil Rights movement, with a special focus on his time in Chicago; through March 1, 2020.

Intuit Museum of Outsider Art, 756 N. Milwaukee Avenue, Chicago, 312-243-9088: **“Justin Duerr: Surrender to Survival.”** Detailed pen and marker scrolls connected to create an elaborate story. These drawings incorporate poetry written by the artist and explore themes related to spirituality, the linear and cyclical nature of time, and include symbolic representatives of states of mind or non-mind with figures who evolve and appear throughout the works; through January 12, 2020.

Museum of Contemporary Photography, 600 S. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, 312-663-5554: **“Third Realm.”** Capturing nearly a decade of crucial artistic production in Asia (2007-2013), this exhibition

presents works by artists who use photography, film, installation, and performance to investigate liminal spaces. These works transcend the binaries of global and local, present and historical, spiritual and secular; through December 22, 2019.

Newberry Library, 60 W. Walton Street, Chicago, 312-943-9090: **“What is the Midwest?”** Often called “the Heartland” or “flyover country,” the Midwest tends to be characterized as a homogeneous, empty space between the American coasts. This exhibition challenges those assumptions and persistent narratives about the Midwest, exploring the confluence of peoples and environmental conditions that has defined the region and made it unique; through December 31, 2019.

Poetry Foundation, 61 W. Superior Street, Chicago, 312-787-7070: **“The Life of Poetry in Morden Tower.”** Morden Tower, once a near-derelect medieval turret and now one of Britain’s literary landmarks, is an international poetry center with strong connections to the Objectivist, Beat, and Black Mountain poets and their United Kingdom allies. A showcase of posters from the 1960s and 1970s advertising the readings, photos, letters, and ephemera telling a story of the graphic anarchy emblematic of the times; through January 2, 2020.

Smart Museum of Art, 5550 S. Greenwood Avenue, Chicago, 312-374-9333: **“Silver Moon or Golden Star, Which Will You Buy of Me?”** Samson Young premieres a trilogy of animated music videos that explore the varying concepts of social progress and utopia. Loosely taking the idealism displayed at the 1933 Chicago World’s Fair as a point of departure, this multimedia exhibition asks how people adapt to societal changes that they have little control over; through December 29, 2019.

Send your listings to Andrea Villasenor (villasenora@newberry.org).



Intuit Museum of Outsider Art / Justin Duerr: Surrender to Survival



Smart Museum of Art / “Silver Moon or Golden Star, Which Will You Buy of Me?”

CONNORS COLLECTION, from page 6

Robert S. Connors Basic Program Collection” – we’ve encountered many intriguing surprises, such as an Aldine edition of Juvenal with a fictitious imprint of 1501, when it was likely printed after 1515. Perhaps this was an early-modern mode for re-issuing a bestseller. An incunable edition of Cicero – *Marci Tullii Tusculanarum Quaestionum* – turned out

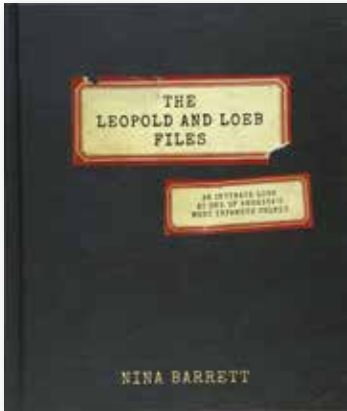
to be three works bound as one, all of them printed in Venice (but by different printers) between 1480 and 1495. The *Quaestionum* is scarce, with only two other copies recorded in North America. Likewise, an early edition of Sallust printed in Venice by Melchiorrem Sessam and Petrum de Rauanis on March 3, 1523 is, as of this writing, the only copy held in a North American institution. Our rare

book cataloguer created an original record and contributed it to OCLC. We also found an 18th-century Foulis edition of Dryden’s translation of Virgil, inscribed in all three volumes by one Jane Stevenson – an important piece of much sought-after evidence of women’s book ownership and readership.

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Bookmarks...

Luncheon: Friday, December 13, Union League Club
Nina Barrett on *The Leopold & Loeb Files*



The Chicago press labeled it the crime of the century and breathlessly reported about the eyeglasses, the typewriter, and the interrogations that solved it. Editorialists used it to decry Jazz Age excesses. A playwright drew on it and Hitchcock's *Rope* brought it to the screen. Ira Levin's *Compulsion* was inspired by it. We are going to hear about a different detective story, one that began in Northwestern's Special Collections, with a trove

of documents that in the normal course of events might have been lost to fire, flood, mildew, or bureaucratic carelessness. Instead, out of the linear feet of letters, court pleadings, transcripts, psychological evaluations, and more, the real tale emerges. Join Nina Barrett, whose book *The Leopold & Loeb Files* is on the shelf at her bookstore down the alley in Evanston, and whose work at the Deering Library brings Darrow for the defense and more to life so vividly.

Of course, you will be able to purchase books and have them signed!

December 13 Luncheon: Union League Club, 65 W. Jackson Boulevard. Buffet opens at 11:30am; program 12:30-1:30pm. Luncheon is \$35. The program is free, but please let us know you're coming. Reservations or cancellations for lunch by noon on Wednesday, December 11. Reserve and pay at caxtonclub.org, call 312-255-3710, or e-mail caxtonclub@newberry.org.

Beyond December...

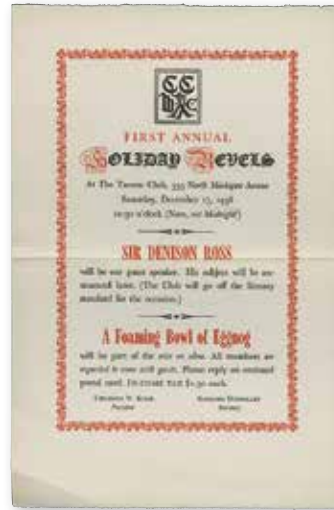
JANUARY LUNCHEON

January 10, Union League Club: Caxtonian Jim Hagy on *Magicians at the Columbian Exposition*. Welcome doubters and be astonished! Learn first-hand of the magical wonders that baffled and delighted fairgoers, as magicians from around the world performed at the 1893 fair. You may go home with a special, limited edition book.

JANUARY DINNER

Make No Small Plans Audrey Niffenegger (Caxtonian, book artist, printer, author, professor, collector, and indefatigable founder of book arts centers) will present her plans for a new book arts center, Artists Book House, which she intends to fill the void left by the recent demise of the Columbia College Center for Book and Paper Arts. She will regale you with her efforts to beguile a city into letting her transform an empty mansion into a lively home for writers, artists, readers, and book lovers.

Dinner: Wednesday, December 18, Newberry Library:
Revels! Eat, Drink, Be Merry! Bid on books!
Meet Other Members!



Mark your calendars for the Caxton Revels on December 18. Our annual holiday party will be held at the Newberry Library. Dinner will be in Ruggles Hall with the silent auction in Rettinger Hall. Members will be encouraged to sip libations and exchange stories as they bid on bibliophilic bargains and treasures. Continuing last year's return to a prized Caxton tradition, we'll be entertained by Club member and professional magician John Railing. To make it easy to donate items for the silent auction, members

of the auction committee will accept donations at the **December Friday luncheon meeting (12/13)**. Please include with each item the donor's name and contact information as well as anything you might know about it, including where you obtained it and an idea of its value (for tax-deduction purposes, the donor's estimate of value is the one that counts). Alternatively, simply fill out the auction forms that will be available at the meeting.

Revels: Newberry Library, 60 W. Walton Street. Doors open at 5pm for social hour and to browse the treasures; dinner and the magic begin at 6pm. Buffet dinner \$60 (a slight reduction in standard charges to allow extra money for bidding). Drink tickets \$5 each. Reservations must be made by no later than noon Monday, December 16. Cancellations and no-shows after this deadline will require payment. Reserve and pay at caxtonclub.org, call 312-255-3710, or e-mail caxtonclub@newberry.org.

FEBRUARY LUNCHEON

February 14, Union League Club: Cara Bertram on "The American Library Association Goes to War." Out of a (precisely chilly) room that houses the ALA archives comes the inspiring story of how the nation's librarians rallied to support the WWI doughboys as they headed Over There.

FEBRUARY DINNER

February 19, Union League Club: The Newberry Library's Lea Markey will speak on Johannes Stradanus's *Nova Reperta* (c. 1588), a renowned print series of 20 engravings, in the context of the Renaissance's representation of invention and globalization.