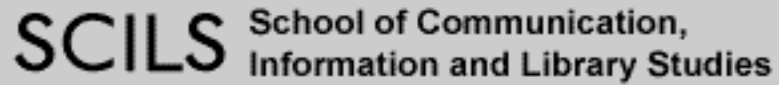


SCILS at NJLA 2003



## Reading, Readers, and Reading Genres

How Reading Research May Inform Reader's Advisory

### Program

<http://scils.rutgers.edu/~dalbello/NJLA2003.html>

**Tuesday, April 1, 2003**

**9:00 - 9:50**

**8:30 - 10:00 (posters)**

**Hilton East Brunswick**

Brunswick Room

School of Communication, Information  
and Library Studies  
4 Huntington St., New Brunswick  
(732) 932-7500

## SCILS at NJLA 2003

### Program

Panel Convener and Moderator: Marija Dalbello (dalbello@scils.rutgers.edu), SCILS, Rutgers University

#### 9:00 - 9:50: Presentations

**Evan Cestari:** *Representing the Primitive: Themes, Varieties, and Issues in Prehistoric Fiction*

This presentation will employ an historical approach to the examination of the themes and varieties of prehistoric fiction; a sub-genre of science fiction in which the primary setting is the prehistoric era, or in which the main characters are members of prehistoric societies. Beginning in the 19th century, with the rise of Darwinian Theory, prehistoric fiction writers have shaped the popular imagination of what early human individuals and societies looked like. While early 20th century authors tended to depict strong, heroic, male characters, such as Tarzan, and frequently championed human conquest over other hominids, more recent authors, such as Jean Auel in *Clan of the Cave Bear*, have stressed feminist concerns and integrated relationships with other hominids. Changes in the genres reading audience, the application and misapplication of archaeological theory, and critical issues of collection development and reference services in regards to the genre will be addressed.

Evan Cestari joined the MLIS program at Rutgers University in the Fall of 2002 after graduating summa cum laude from Syracuse University with a BA in Philosophy and Policy Studies. He has over two years of customer service experience working in both online and 'real world' bookstores. Evan currently works on the OPAC maintenance team in the Collection Services Department at Alexander Library. He is interested in reference librarianship and collection development for public and academic libraries. Contact Evan at: [eccestar@eden.rutgers.edu](mailto:eccestar@eden.rutgers.edu).

**Susan Conlon:** *Comic Strips - Analysis of Genre Assignment*

I started reading comic strips for fun in the daily newspapers as a child and it turned into a life-long addiction. One of the impacts is that it made me a life-long reader serious reader of newspapers. How serious are comic strips? Whether we call them comic strips or sequential art, the popularity and commercial aspect of this medium makes it seem less worthy of serious consideration and appreciation. Actually as our culture adapts to new ways of learning and viewing information away from print and increases use of graphical interfaces I think that it is valid to study comics to see how pictures and words together work as effective content. I agree with what Scott McCloud writes in *Understanding Comics*; the reader gets an enhanced understanding of the text achieved by the "amplification through simplification by stripping down the image to its essential "meaning" as artist can amplify that meaning in a way that realistic art can't." So whether it's high-brow vs. low-brow or serious study of a strip's history or laughing out loud at a single day's offering, comics strips have meaning because they matter to the people who read and enjoy them.

Susan Conlon is Teen Service Librarian, Princeton Public Library. She graduated with MLIS degree from Rutgers University (SCILS) in 2001. Contact Susan at: [sconlon@princeton.lib.nj.us](mailto:sconlon@princeton.lib.nj.us).

**Terry Edwards:** *The Romance "Novel"*

The romance genre of fiction presents challenges to librarians working in the areas of readers advisory, collection development, and cataloging. In 1984 Janice Radway performed a landmark

study of the reading habits and preferences of a group of avid romance readers. Based on her research, we can understand what romance readers look for in a good romance novel, the knowledge of which can help librarians to provide a better readers advisory service for these patrons. Other researchers, such as Linda Christian-Smith, who studied adolescent romance readers, have added to Radway's pool of information. From the insights provided by authors Jayne Ann Krentz, Robyn Donald, Suzanne Juhasz, and Elizabeth Lowell, we can see why romances have their addictive power and why women feel good from reading them. Kristin Ramsdell makes suggestions on steps librarians can take in order to better serve their romance-loving patrons.

Terry Edwards is a recent graduate from Rutgers University's School of Communication, Information, and Library Science graduate program. The presentation she makes today is taken from a research paper she wrote for Marija Dalbello's "Reading Interests of Adults" class. Terry is a reference librarian at the Hunterdon County Library. Contact Terry at: [teredwards@yahoo.com](mailto:teredwards@yahoo.com).

**Charlotte Priddle:** *Writing Nationality for Readers: National Identity and the Detective Novel in Great Britain and America*

This paper is a historical study of classic American & British detective fiction of the pre- and post-Second World War period, concentrating on its role in both creating and critiquing myths around national identity. The paper examines the relevance of this formula within the genre for contemporary readers and the influence of this factor in the continued popularity and wide readership of these novels.

Charlotte Priddle is originally from London, England. She has a BA (First Class Hons) in English Lit. from the University of Sussex, during which time took part in a 'semester abroad' exchange trip to Rutgers University. She also has an MA in American Literature & Theory since 1945, dissertation topic "Language & Masculinity in the literature of the Vietnam War." After moving to the US permanently in January 1999, she worked as Manager then Director of Human Resources for NY-based technology company, then decided to return to grad school to get MLIS degree at Rutgers U, beginning in Fall 2002. She lives in the east village, NYC. Contact Charlotte at: [cvp@eden.rutgers.edu](mailto:cvp@eden.rutgers.edu).

**Kim Strenger:** *The Search for Improvement-Growth and Development of the Self-Help Genre*

Books belonging to the self help genre have been consistently among the best sellers for the past fifty years. Self- help began in the traditions and values of Protestant New England and evolved to the current day by the power of American individualism and free will. Its intended reader is the lay audience, and the genre is written in a lively, interesting style so as to offer information for immediate practical use. These texts give the reader pointers for success in many areas of living including spirituality, diet, exercise, and sexual/mental health. The potential for personal improvement carries vast emotional appeal for the reader leading to the ongoing success of this category.

Kimberly Strenger is a 1978 graduate of Boston University with a B.A. in Art History and was student curator for the George Sherman Union Art Gallery. With 22 years experience in the field of domestic engineering, she is currently completing her master's degree in Library Science at Rutgers. Given her background with a husband and three children, the genre of self help is a natural for her to discuss. Contact Kim at: [KStrenger@aol.com](mailto:KStrenger@aol.com).

## Posters 8:30 - 10:00

**Ellen M. Pozzi:** *An Analysis of Research Literature on American Public Library History, 1989-2002*

Despite the importance of library history to practicing librarians, and LHRT's recommendation that history be a strong component in all courses, only one school of the top five library programs in the United States offers a library history course annually. This paper identifies a knowledge base of recent literature (1989-2002) of the history of the public library in America. The published literature is broken into five categories: Case Studies, the Physical Library, Library Users and Services, Purpose of the Public Library and Women and Libraries. The trends within these categories are analyzed. Annual compilation of list in journals accessible to practitioners is suggested.

Ellen M. Pozzi is currently finishing her MLIS degree at the School of Communication, Information and Library Studies, Rutgers University. She is the Head of Children's Services at Washington Township Public Library in Long Valley, NJ. She is a member of the Garden State Book Awards Committee and Co-Chair of the MAYS (Morris Area Youth Services) Committee and Co-Chair Elect of Highlands Region Book Evaluation Program. Contact Ellen at: nelle13@att.net

**Patty Rosati:** *Murder Monsters and Mayhem: The Historic Development of the True-Crime Genre in America from 1965 to 1996*

My poster will illustrate the historical development of the true crime genre in America from 1965 through the present. Based on critical analyses of eight popular texts, reports from trade journals, and interviews with publishing professionals, the poster will describe the genre's evolution in terms of form and content and show the rise and fall of this genre's popularity with readers, publishers, and the library community.

Patty Rosati is a ten-year trade publishing veteran. She was the Advertising and Promotion Director of the award-winning *Lingua Franca Magazine*. Prior to that, she held a variety of sales and editorial positions at St. Martin's Press and Harper Collins Publishers. She is currently a Master's candidate in the Library and Information Science program at Rutgers University where she focuses on public librarianship and business reference. Contact Patty at: patrosati@hotmail.com

**Esther Young, Theresa Wordelmann:** *Mysterious Minds: Uncovering the Motives of Detective Fiction Readers*

Eleven self-reported readers of detective fiction were surveyed in an effort to determine what motivated their interests in that genre. An overview of the genre as well as findings pertaining to the participants, reading habits (including favorite authors, other preferred genres, important ingredients of the genre and methods of finding new titles) are discussed.

Theresa Wordelmann is an October 2002 graduate of the MLIS program at Rutgers University. She is currently employed by the Old Bridge Public Library as a Reference & Young Adult Librarian. In her spare time, Ms. Wordelmann devours Detective Fiction and Young Adult novels. Contact Theresa at: theword@lmxac.org.

Esther Young holds a B.A. in Mathematics from the State University of New York at Cortland and received an M.L.I.S. degree from Rutgers University this year. She currently works in Reference at the Middlesex County College Library. Contact Esther at: eyoung@scils.rutgers.edu.