



# Biblio-Notes

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## **LES Mentoring Program Call for Volunteers**

Are you seeking guidance and direction in  
your professional career?

Would you like to help colleagues navigate  
their way through librarianship?

The ALA/ACRL Literatures in English Section  
is actively working to match mentors and  
mentees according to their needs, areas of  
interest, and work experience, among other  
criteria.

Mentors can provide invaluable information  
and advice on how to make the most of  
professional library careers. Successful  
mentoring involves a unique process whereby  
each participant learns to respect and trust the  
partner's commitment, experience, and  
distinctiveness. A firm commitment to the  
mentoring process and a willingness to invest  
time and energy are most important.

This program will give new and evolving  
librarians a unique opportunity to "learn the  
ropes" from those with broad and vast  
experience in their fields and areas of interest.

Online form found at:

<http://www.ala.org/ala/acrl/aboutacrl/acrlsections/literaturesineng/lesmentoringform.htm>

Questions? Please contact Angela Courtney at  
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## **Life as a Literature Librarian**

One of the greatest challenges I faced upon becoming the bibliographer for English and American Literature at Indiana University was not simply continuing to build and maintain a collection that is nationally and internationally recognized as one of high quality and thoroughness, but rather how to augment its historical strengths by incorporating emerging trends in literary criticism and scholarship to make a good collection stronger and more relevant to current and anticipated movements in literary scholarship. Recent trends include Anglophone literature from Australia, New Zealand, the West Indies, India, and more. Historically, IU's library has not actively collected literature (fiction, poetry, drama) from Anglophone countries at the research level. Yet the terminology used in this context refers to literature written outside of Great Britain and America. However, many of the Anglophone writers are not particularly concerned with the impact of colonialism on their cultures, which is one reason that current literary criticism does not always bear the more common "Postcolonial," "Postimperial," or "Commonwealth" literatures labels. Further, these writers have not, historically, been actively included in English literature library collections.

In my first semester at Indiana University, I realized that Anglophone literature was already



The Lesbian Pulp Fiction collection consists of 120 paperback books shelved in a locked cabinet adjacent to the Library's reference book collection. Each title is recorded in the library's online catalog, and may be borrowed for a three-hour period.

The earliest title in the collection is The Strange Path by Gale Wilhelm, a 1950 paperback reprint of a book published in 1938 under the title Torchlight to Valhalla. The most recent title is A World Without Men by Valerie Taylor, the 1982 reprint by Naiad Press of the 1963 original. The majority date from the golden age of lesbian pulp - the period from 1952 to 1967.

The collection is rich in the exemplars of the genre. The commercial success of Women's Barracks by Tereska Torres (our copy is a 1960 reprint of the 1950 paperback edition), with its lesbian subtext, alerted the publishing industry to the appeal of lesbian themes. [1.] Marijane Meaker (using the pseudonym Vin Packer) was commissioned to write Spring Fire in 1952 as a Fawcett Gold Medal paperback original. While its sympathetic portrayal of a love affair between two sorority sisters ensured its popularity with a lesbian readership, Spring Fire acknowledges the prejudices of the era by consigning the bisexual Leda to an insane asylum.

Linnea A. Stenson contrasts the "typical" lesbian pulp fiction in which a young, innocent girl is victimized by "the lesbian on the prowl" with the rarer pro-lesbian novel with its theme of struggle, acceptance and hope. Stenson wryly observes that " given the prevalence of suicides and deaths, just being alive at the close could be considered an uplifting ending." [2.]

The sense of shame and impending tragedy is evoked in several of the collection's titles : The Damned One by Guy Des Cars, In the Shadows by Joan Ellis, Twilight Lovers by Miriam Gardner, Veil of Torment by March Hastings, Twilight Girl by Della Martin, The Twisted Year by Rea Michaels, The Evil Friendship by Vin Packer, The Corruption of Innocence by Marianne Sinclair. The widespread use of pseudonyms by the writers reinforces the sense that the writing of pulp fiction, especially lesbian pulp fiction, was a somewhat disreputable activity. Marijane Meaker is represented in our collections under the names Vin Packer and Ann Aldrich. Elaine Williams, an editor at Midwood, wrote The Delicate Vice and

Unnatural using the name Sloan Britton. Male writers also adopted female pseudonyms : Robert Silverberg wrote Strange Delights as Loren Beauchamp and Paul Little wrote From Torment to Rapture as Sylvia Sharon.

Some writers do suggest in their novels that conjugal happiness isn't exclusively the preserve of heterosexuals, but might be a possibility for same sex couples: witness Toni and Morgen in The Strange Path by Gale Wilhelm, Therese and Carol in The Price of Salt by Patricia Highsmith ( writing as Claire Morgan), Jo and Betsy in Unlike Others and Kate and Erika in A World Without Men, both by Katg o87(d An7s

1. In 2003 I received an e-mail from Tereska Torres' agent in Tel Aviv asking us to remove her name from our webpage <http://www.msvu.ca/library/collpollespulp.asp>. He advised me that she did not want her name associated with the genre.
2. Stenson, Linnea A. "Pulp Paperbacks." In Lesbian Histories and Cultures: An Encyclopedia. Ed. Bonnie Zimmerman. New York : Garland, 2000, pp.623-625.

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## **Graphic Novels**

Graphic Novels. They seem to be everywhere these days or perhaps they arr

## Graphic Novels Bibliography

### Selected Bibliography of Articles:

Barron, Daniel D. "Zap! Pow! Wham!: Comics, Graphic Novels and Education." School Library Media Activities Monthly 8 (Nov. 1991): 48-50.

"Comics & Graphic Novel Publishing 2004." Publishers Weekly 251.42 (Oct. 18 2004): 24-35.

Gorman, Michele. "What Teens Want: Thirty Graphic Novels You Can't Live Without" School Library Journal (August 2002): 42-47.

## **Personal and Institutional News**

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