Application for the 2021 Lewis-Reynolds-Smith Founders Fellowship

Abstract

“Lending on the Left and Right Banks: The Lost Generation at the American Library in Paris and Shakespeare & Company”

Sylvia Beach’s lending library, Shakespeare and Company, plays an oft-cited part in the story of Ernest Hemingway’s Paris Years: during his earliest days in Paris, Hemingway declared himself Beach’s “best customer”, and at the end of the Second World War, he returned to “liberate” the shuttered shop. Less frequently discussed is the writer’s relationship to interwar Paris’ other prominent Anglophone lending library: the American Library in Paris (ALP). Although it has escaped much attention, there is documentation of the writer’s connection to the American Library: in the 1920s Hemingway wrote of his friendship with its director, W. Dawson Johnston, in a letter to Bill Smith; contributed book reviews to the Library’s weekly Paris Tribune column; and appeared more than once on the pages of Ex Libris, the ALP’s Little Magazine, as an author and the subject of Gertrude Stein’s 1923 poem “He and They, Hemingway.”

This project compares the borrowing, acquisitions, and holding records of Shakespeare and Company and the ALP, in order to expand the conversation about how these two libraries developed and sustained the reading habits of Hemingway and other Anglophone artists in Paris in the 1920s and 1930s. In the familiar narrative of modernist literature’s interwar Parisian heyday, the ALP has been remembered as a rival to Shakespeare and Company, but my work will consider how different the libraries’ members’ tastes and borrowing practices really were. Better understanding interwar Paris’ preeminent Anglophone lending libraries’ holdings, and members’ borrowing practices, can help us better understand the cultural milieu that contributed to Hemingway and his fellow expatriates’ interwar artistic production.

Work to be Undertaken During the Grant Period

In the coming months, I will be writing an article that compares and contrasts Shakespeare and Company and the American Library in Paris’ acquisitions, holdings, and loans of Anglophone books during the 1920s and 1930s. This project will explore the roles of these two institutions in interwar Paris in order to further illuminate the extant picture of Paris’ interwar American communities’ tastes and habits. Using borrowing and buying data available from the Shakespeare and Company Project (“the Project”), based out of the Center for Digital Humanities @ Princeton, and the records of popular books and library acquisitions at the American Library in Paris (ALP), my article will explore overlaps and disparities in the titles that were popular and available at the two most prominent Anglophone libraries in Paris in the interwar period.

This project will be based on quantitative and qualitative data from the two libraries. The Shakespeare and Company Project’s records contain the lending library’s membership cards for Hemingway and many other prominent expatriate writers, and the Project has already collated the available information into databases and spreadsheets—including information on both loans to individual members and general trends and popular titles. Information on the ALP’s popular titles and new books comes not from the library’s records, but from the weekly reports the library published in the popular daily “Paris American” newspapers, the Paris editions of the New York...
Herald and the Chicago Tribune. These reports include lists of the library’s new books, the week’s popular titles, and a selection of “Recent Publications Reviewed.” Part of my project’s process involves synthesizing the relevant content from the Paris American papers’ digital archives into a database of dates and titles that I will draw on in my article.

Although the available sources paint only partial pictures of these libraries’ collections and their members’ borrowing habits—with the Shakespeare and Company Project missing membership cards for the majority of borrowers, and the Paris American papers revealing only selective elements of the ALP’s collections—even these incomplete resources can help us better understand Hemingway’s community of Americans in Paris. Paris’ interwar Americans were once regarded as a monolithic group of bohemian artists, but has gradually come to be seen as more broadly representative of America’s heterogenous society.

This article has been accepted to a research cluster that the Princeton-based Shakespeare and Company Project is publishing, which asks researchers to use documents and data from Beach’s papers made available by the Project as an object of study. As part of this cluster, my article will appear in either the Journal of Cultural Analytics or Modernism/modernity in 2022, depending on its fit with the cluster’s other contributions.

In addition to being published as a stand-alone article, this research will further inform my book project. Paper Identities and Identity Papers: Documents of Interwar Life and Interwar Expatriation, draws on the life and work of Hemingway, Malcolm Lowry, Katherine Anne Porter and Claude McKay, to argue that the bureaucratic and literary documents of interwar itinerancy—including passports, travel ephemera, and newspapers—shape expatriation as a distinct mode of national belonging. This project was chosen for the 2019 Penn State First Book Institute, and has received interest from several university presses.

My Project’s Importance to Hemingway Studies

This project contributes to Hemingway studies in four distinct ways. For decades, the expatriate creative institutions and networks that Hemingway, and other writers of the Lost Generation, participated in—through salons and literary magazines—have been recognized, and their influence on the art the era produced explored. Only recently have the more prosaic institutions and networks that the Lost Generation relied on for connection during their time as expatriates begun to receive sustained scrutiny—with Nancy Green’s 2014 The Other Americans and Brooke Blower’s 2013 Becoming Americans in Paris offering the first book-length studies of everyday life for Paris’ Americans in the 1920s and 1930s. My research will expand the small-yet-growing field of scholarship that explores the role of prosaic businesses and institutions in the Lost Generation’s creative output.

Additionally, the 2019 Hemingway in the Digital Age, edited by Laura Godfrey, confirms extensive, ongoing interest in approaching Hemingway through digital humanities’ various methods. My article, which relies upon the quantitative data produced by the Shakespeare and Company Project and available from the Paris American papers will continue to expand the breadth of the data-driven scholarship on Hemingway.

Finally, Cambridge University Press’s 2020 The New Hemingway Studies takes stock of contemporary trends in Hemingway studies, including two areas on which this article will build. The first is what Verna Kale and Sandra Spanier call the “everyday Hemingway”—an area that is extended through a fuller picture of the writer’s interaction with Paris’ lending libraries. The second is the strand of criticism Jeffrey Herlihy-Mera identifies when he claims that Hemingway’s “migrant cultural activity not as superficial mimicry but as formative identity tracts”—building on readers’ understanding of the ways Hemingway’s international experiences influenced his work with new research on the interwar Parisian milieu.
Timeline

March-April 2021:
- Download relevant content from the Paris Herald archive (available digitally through my library) and Paris Tribune archive (available digitally through the BNF).
- Convert weekly Herald and Tribune columns into spreadsheet data, recording popular books and new library acquisitions for years 1919 (the year both Shakespeare and Company and the ALP opened) and 1941 (the year Beach’s bookstore closed).

April-May 2021:
- Review the existing publications of the Hemingway Letters Project to look for all references to interactions with the ALP and Shakespeare and Company.
- Trace all discussion of Hemingway’s reading habits in existing biographical and critical scholarship.
- Conduct literature review of existing scholarship on Lost Generation borrowing and reading habits, and popular novels in the years 1919-1941.

May-August 2021:
- Writing and revising the article itself.
- Continuing to read relevant scholarship.

August 31st, 2021:
- Submit article to editors at the Shakespeare and Company Project’s research cluster by cluster deadline.

Budget

This project utilizes data that is available without cost from the Shakespeare and Company Project and the Bibliotheque National de France (BNF), and by university subscription to the Gale database.

Because of limited library and ILL access in Spring 2021 due to the ongoing pandemic, some scholarly and primary texts may need to be purchased, including the American Library in Paris’ annual yearbooks from the 1920s, which sometimes make affordable appearances on eBay.

The bulk of the grant would be dedicated to that scarcest of 2021 resources: the childcare necessary to complete research. The $1,000 grant would cover 3 weeks of afternoon childcare, allowing me necessary time to complete this project.

Professional References

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Bishnupriya Ghosh
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Working Bibliography

“As a Lewis-Reynolds-Smith Founders Fellowship Scholar, I agree to submit to the chair of the Fellowship Committee an end-of-project report within six months of the termination of the award. I also agree to acknowledge this fellowship on any publication that results from the award.”

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2/19/21
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EMPLOYMENT

Stanford University, Program in Writing and Rhetoric  
Career-Track Lecturer, September 2020-present

Boston University, Kilachand Honors College  
Postdoctoral Fellow, August 2018-July 2020

EDUCATION

University of California, Santa Barbara  
Ph.D. in English, June 2018  
M.A. in English, June 2013

University of California, Los Angeles  
B.A. summa cum laude in Comparative Literature & Italian, June 2004

PUBLICATIONS

Articles & Chapters:
“Interwar Paris’s American Reading Rooms: Ex Libris and the American Library in Paris,” Special Issue: Reading Rooms, Cultural History 10.1 (forthcoming 2022)

“’An Easy Chance to Do A Good Thing’: The Paris Tribune’s Campaign to Save the American Library,” Idées d’Amériques (Idées) (April 2021)

“’No Man’s Ocean Ever Did Get the Best of Me’: Romance in Marseille’s Oceanic Journeys and Maritime Modernism,” Special Issue: Claude McKay’s Romance in Marseille, ELN 59: 1 (April 2021)


“Neither/Nor: The Productive Frustration of Classification in Jean Toomer’s Cane,” in We Speak A Different Tongue: Maverick Voices and Modernity 1890-1939, eds. Anthony Patterson & Yoonjoung Choi. Cambridge Scholars Pub, 2015: 154-167

Book Reviews & Encyclopedia Entries:
“The Lost Generation,” Bloom’s Literature, Infobase.com (2020)


**FELLOWSHIPS, GRANTS, AND AWARDS**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Fellowship/Grant Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>First Book Institute Fellow, Penn State U. Center for American Literary Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>DAAD (German Academic Exchange) Postdoctoral Research Fellowship (declined)</td>
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<td>2018</td>
<td>Hemingway Society Hinkle Grant</td>
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<td>2018</td>
<td>Visiting Doctoral Scholar Fellowship, University of Mannheim, Germany</td>
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<td>2017</td>
<td>Arnhold Graduate Research Fellowship for Undergraduate Archival Supervision</td>
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<td>2016-17</td>
<td>Albert and Elaine Borchard European Studies Fellowship</td>
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<td>2016-17</td>
<td>UCSB Interdisciplinary Humanities Center Pre-Doctoral Fellowship</td>
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<td>2016</td>
<td>Richard Helgerson Graduate Student Achievement Award (“Best First Chapter”)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>Humanities and Social Sciences Dissertation Research Grant</td>
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<tr>
<td>2012-13</td>
<td>Outstanding Teaching Assistant Award</td>
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**CONFERENCES & TALKS**

**Invited Talks:**

- **2018** “Toomer’s Black Modernism,” Guest Lecture in Modernist Studies, U. of Mannheim, May
- **2017** “Modernism in the Archives,” *The Modernist Podcast*, November
- **2017** “Expatriate Newspapers and Interwar Community,” UCSB Lunch & Learn Series, May

**Panels Organized:**

- **2019** MSA Conference, Special Session Co-Organizer: “Ephemeral Modernisms,” Toronto, Ontario, October
- **2019** SHARP Conference, Special Session Co-Organizer: “Re-envisioning America After the Fall: Literature and the Periodical Press in the Early Depression,” Amherst, MA, July
- **2016** Pacific Ancient and Modern Language Association (PAMLA), Special Session Organizer: “Permanent Ephemera: Travel Documents and Modernist Writing,” Pasadena, CA, Nov.

**Select Conference Presentations:**

- **2021** “Reporting in Black and White: Race in the Paris American Papers,” The Space Between Conference, Charlottesville, VA, June
- **2021** “A Divided Waterfront: Encounters at the Interwar Port in American Lit.,” ACLA, April
- **2020** “American on Sundays: The *Paris Tribune’s* Sunday Magazine Section,”
“‘Today in Society’: May Birkhead’s Paris-American Journalism,”
MLA Annual Convention, Seattle, WA, January 2019
“Paper Identities: Material Form and the Modern(ist’s) Passport,”
Modernist Studies Association (MSA) Conference, Toronto, Ontario, October 2019
“Laughing at the Left Bank: The Interwar Expatriate as a Figure of Ridicule,”
SHARP Conference, Amherst, MA, July 2019
American Literature Association (ALA) Conference, Boston, MA, May 2018
“An American’s Paris: Ernest Hemingway, Gertrude Stein, and Ex Libris,”
Hemingway Society Conference, Paris, France, July 2018
“‘Room. Books. Staff.’: Paris’ American Reading Rooms and Expatriate Community,”
European Society for Periodical Research International Conference, Paris, France, June 2018
“‘The American Colonies’: The Paris Tribune’s Audiences,”
MLA Annual Convention, New York, NY, January 2018
“‘A Sea-change’: Shipboard Space, Shipboard Documents, and Interstitial Possibility,”
MLA Annual Convention, New York, NY, January 2017
“‘Everything about him shouted Dixie’: Claude McKay’s Banjo and American Identity,”
MLA Annual Convention, Philadelphia, PA, January 2016
“Going Home?: Arrivals, Departures, and Paris American Newspapers,”
Modernist Studies Association (MSA) Conference, Pasadena, CA, November 2016
“An Expatriate by Any Other Name: Complicating Mobility in The Sun Also Rises,”
American Literature Association (ALA) Conference, San Francisco, CA, May 2016
“‘That Emblem of Freedom’: Lowry, McKay, and the Modern Passport,”
ACLA Annual Meeting, Massachusetts, March 2015
“Marked Pages: Claude McKay’s Banjo and the Modernist Passport,”
Symbiosis Transatlantic Conference, University of Essex, UK, July 2015
“Walking the Line: Tensions of Modernism and the Harlem Renaissance in Toomer’s Cane,”
MLA Annual Convention, Vancouver, Canada, January 2014
“Rethinking the Racial Divide: Productive Refusals of the Binary in Toomer’s ‘Bona and Paul’,”
Modernist Studies Association (MSA) Conference, Pennsylvania, November 2013
“Deconstructing the Dream: Nathanael West’s The Day of the Locust Unmasks the Façade,”
Western Literature Association (WLA), Berkeley, CA, October

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Stanford University, Program in Writing and Rhetoric
The Passport, The Profile, The Portrait: Rhetorics of Identification
Fall 2020, Winter & Spring 2021

Boston University, Kilachand Honors College
Junior Keystone Proposal Writing Seminar Fall 2019, Spring 2020
Freshman Writing Studio: Citizenship & Belonging Fall 2019
Freshman Writing Studio: Research Methods Spring 2019, Spring 2020
Freshman Writing Studio: Frankenstein’s Afterlives Fall 2018
University of California, Santa Barbara, Department of English

Introduction to Literary Studies: “Over the Border” Summer 2017
American Literature 1789-1900 (Upper Division) Summer 2016
Intro. to Literary Studies: “Americans Abroad” Summer 2015
Introduction to US Minority Literature Summer 2013

University of California, Santa Barbara, Writing Program

Academic Writing Fall 2013, Winter 2014, Spring 2014

ACADEMIC SERVICE

2020-2021 PWR Newsletter and Communication Committee (Stanford)
2019-2020 Interdisciplinary Postdoctoral Teaching Colloquium Convener (BU)
2018-2020 Honors Writing Studio Curriculum Development Committee (BU)
2019 Faculty Search Committee (Opening for Honors College Postdoctoral Fellow) (BU)
2013-17 Initiator and Organizer, Graduate Professionalization Series (UCSB)
2013 & 2014 Graduate Student Recruitment RA (UCSB)
2013 Center on Modernism, Materialism & Aesthetics Conference Co-Organizer (UCSB)
2013 Graduate Student Faculty Search Committee Rep. (Opening in Modern Literature)
2013 Co-Chair, Council of Graduate Students in English (UCSB)

PEDAGOGIC & ACADEMIC TRAINING

2019-2020 Wikipedia Education Training/WikiEdu Mentorship Program, BU
2016-2017 Interdisciplinary Humanities Center Fellows Workshop, UCSB
2015 Fundamentals of Grant Writing, UCSB
2013-2014 Theory and Practice of Academic Writing Instruction, UCSB
2013 Summer Teaching Institute for Associates Certificate Program, UCSB

SELECT PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

2010-2011 International Marketing and Communications Manager
Digital Media Services, London, UK

2005-2009 Vice-President, Production and Development
Silverwood Films, Los Angeles, CA