This anniversary exhibition is dedicated to the memory of Helen Osterman Borowitz (1929-2012), an extraordinary person, noted scholar, and devoted friend of the Kent State University Libraries.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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FOREWORD

Thanks to the lawmakers and the industry of our criminal courts and mass printers, more or less careful records of murder and mayhem and their aftermath have been kept for ages. But true crime publications tend to be as short-lived as their subjects. Recognizing their value, Albert Borowitz, one of the great true crime historians and connoisseurs of this age, spent decades of his life amassing the largest known private library in the theme, a collection of true crime books exceeding ten thousand volumes, some going back to the 1600s. In doing so, the multilingual American lawyer managed to save generations of stories from several continents, rescuing many books and hundreds of old crime broadsides from extinction, with no other copies left in existence. Now ensconced at Kent State University, it is an awesome trove for researchers and a gift to true crime mavericks.

One must envy the energy and passion of anyone who can collect ten thousand of anything, let alone these stories. True crime certainly has its critics. Everyone has personal preferences. And there are fads and poor examples in every genre. But what elevates this particular ensemble is Borowitz’s impeccable taste. There’s not a lot on the professional criminal class (the Mafia, for example) because their motives are simple, brutish, and uninteresting. There’s not all that much on modern serial killers, either (compared to the prodigious output of such stories in the last few decades). Borowitz thinks serial sex killers are “boring.” Now that we
have them figured out, we know their motives and patterns of conduct; there is no mystery to examine, no unanswered question left, and Borowitz tells us our time is better spent elsewhere.

The Borowitz Collection is also exceptional for its depth of legal scholarship. For it is in essence a law library, part of a long tradition among attorneys and judges of collecting case studies (and handsome books). As thankful members of an organized and lawful society, attorneys in particular are compelled by principles of *stare decisis*, to know the past, which forms our common law. In that sense, studying criminal cases is for some of us a moral and legal imperative. That it can also be an enjoyable process should go without saying.

These true crime stories do more, though. They also feed a common hunger for the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. This ancient oath has been taken over this or that holy book for more than two thousand years. Today, the oath (or affirmation, for secularists) still carries a threat of imprisonment, because the truth is so valuable. Truth means reliability, certainty. And when we get to the truth, we can answer hard questions. Criminal law teems with characters who have been captured, as in amber, by sworn testimony. For the psychologists and sociologists (armchair and otherwise), true cases are rife with answers to the riddles of human conduct and questions of responding to it. Some of us purists even snub fiction and all the figments of crime novelists. Made-up characters and fancied circumstances contrived by a single mind cannot begin to rival the complexity of human conduct. Truth is indeed stranger.

It is often when an elusive truth should be knowable—when the evidence is abundant, the record extensive—that we are most driven to find an answer, and that is reflected in this collection. As true crime fans know, reading one book can draw you more deeply into the literature until you’ve read all there is to read about a particularly mesmerizing matter and you can sit back, sated, and contemplate the question at hand knowing you’ve learned all there is to learn of it. As Borowitz himself has said, “in the study of crime, as in life, the puzzle goes on forever.” We see Borowitz’s research trails in these shelves, share some of his fascinations, and recognize that he has dug deeper and found more in every instance. Included in his collection are more than 250 volumes on the eternal mystery of Jack the Ripper. Lizzie Borden takes up an entire shelf with more than forty titles to her name. Jesse James has sixty books, going back to 1880. The Praslin murder, a worldwide sensation in 1847, is here represented by twelve extremely rare and quite valuable books in both English and French. Other priceless, one-of-a-kind, historically significant treasures are too many to list.

The collection has continued to grow in a quarter century by acquisition and donation. Beyond the bookshelves are cultural artifacts worthy of the time of scholars as well as the morbidly curious. They include such items as a hangman’s hood, a poison ring, Staffordshire figurines of the murderous Mr. and Mrs. Manning, and the private papers of author Leo Damore, the reporter who broke the story of Chappaquiddick. One can take such things as the sign of a healthy culture; totalitarian states are quick to suppress true crime stories and
the paraphernalia that often accompanies them. Those of us who know better celebrate the literature of true crime, which has time and again proven its value to those of us who actually recognize and embrace it as the parent of innumerable works of art. Borowitz will continue to earn accolades from his fellow enthusiasts long into the future not only for his own remarkable achievements in the genre but for his generosity in sharing his collection with the public. To think that a single person acquired all these books, read them all, and indexed them all in Blood & Ink is to know that Albert Borowitz is the legal guardian genius of the genre, and the Borowitz Collection is in and of itself a work of art.

Laura James
Attorney in private practice, true crime author and reviewer

Introduction

The Borowitz Collection, officially gifted to Kent State University in 1989 by Albert and Helen Borowitz of Cleveland, Ohio, includes both primary and secondary sources on crime as well as works of literature based on true crime incidents. The collection documents the history of crime, with primary emphasis on the United States, England, France, and Germany from ancient times to the present day. It includes groups of materials on specific criminal cases which have had notable impacts on art, literature, and social attitudes. This provides the researcher with a wealth of material on those cases and their cultural effects. The collection is comprised of a variety of formats including books, manuscripts, ephemeral materials, artifacts, and audiovisual media. Although true crime is the primary focus of the Borowitz Collection, it also contains notable holdings in several other topics and genres, including a vast collection of sheet music which spans more than two centuries of musical achievement and taste and distinguished literary collections, international in scope. At this time, the collection includes nearly 15,000 volumes of books and periodicals, complemented by manuscripts, archival collections, and ephemeral materials.

Almost as fascinating as the collection itself, is the wide array of researchers who utilize its contents in a variety of scholarly endeavors. The collection provides rich sources to users as diverse as crime historians, film documentarians, museum curators, television and radio producers, antiquarian book dealers, novelists, and faculty and students of history, American studies, women’s studies, and criminal justice, to name just a few. An international...
A community of users has accessed the collection over the years, including some who have discovered a surprising genealogical connection to either the perpetrators or the victims of criminal cases represented in the collection. I have found these discoveries of a personal connection to the collection to be very poignant. On more than one occasion, a researcher has noted that his or her family never talked about the relative in question; the collection was offering an avenue for discovering hidden stories of the past. Materials from the Borowitz Collection have also been routinely loaned for exhibit by other cultural heritage institutions including the National Library of Medicine and the Cleveland Museum of Art.

Each and every use of the collection by a scholar or the simply curious is important and reminds us of the true purpose of collecting, preserving, and making accessible rare and unique collections. Albert and Helen Borowitz, both scholars themselves, built a scholarly collection—one that affords more than sufficient breadth and depth to support any number of research inquiries. That the Borowitzes elected to donate their collection to a public institution when they easily could have sold it or placed it in private hands, further expresses their vision for the collection—that its greatest value is in the contributions it makes to scholarship. The Department of Special Collections and Archives has taken particular care to document the complex and often subtle relationships among items in the collection. Highly detailed catalog records and finding aids, lovingly prepared, are available online through the library catalog and Borowitz Collection website. Albert and Helen Borowitz were always stalwart partners in this enterprise as fully engaged donors, ready to help us better describe items in the collection, providing our staff with detailed contextual information on various pieces or groupings of works within the collection.

The scale of the collection, and its richness have also provided ample opportunities for the Kent State University Libraries to showcase and celebrate the collection in numerous ways over the past twenty-five years. Including this 25th anniversary exhibition, the Department of Special Collections and Archives has featured materials from the Borowitz Collection in twenty-one exhibitions, large and small in size (listed in Appendix 1). Several of these exhibitions included accompanying catalogues and hand-list publications. When placing the collection at Kent State, the Borowitzes also established a gallery exhibition space on the Library’s twelfth floor, referred to as the Borowitz Gallery, and two special exhibit cases in the Special Collections and Archives reading room, donated by the Borowitzes, are used continuously for displaying materials related to true crime and the other themes of the collection. The University Libraries’ Occasional Papers series has included two publications by Albert Borowitz: Eternal Suspect: The Tragedy of Alexander Sukhovo-Kobylin (1990) and Which the Justice Which the Thief? The Life and Influence of Eugène-François Vidocq (1997). For twenty years, University Libraries has also held a regular lecture event in connection to the Borowitz Collection, and a number of distinguished authors and speakers have presented on a fascinating range of topics (see Appendix 2).
The collection and its history at Kent State University are utterly worthy of celebration. During this anniversary year, University Libraries is marking this milestone through a number of events and programs. The 25th anniversary exhibition, *From Crime to Culture*, showcases popular fact-based crime publications dating from the seventeenth through the twentieth century. Included in this chronological exploration of the literature are cautionary pamphlets, sensationalistic “penny dreadfuls,” popular true crime series such as England’s Newgate Calendar and France’s Pitaval literature, and classics of twentieth century and contemporary true crime works. The exhibit also highlights examples of specific true crime literature sub-genres: crime-related broadsides, part of the nineteenth-century street literature scene; prison postcards, a fascinating sub-grouping within the once wildly popular picture postcard tradition; and selections from the Wild West collection exemplifying America’s (and the world’s) seemingly endless fascination with tales of crime from the Western frontier. Finally, the exhibition pays homage the collection’s founders, Albert and Helen Borowitz, both of whom made their own contributions to true crime literature, among other scholarly pursuits.

The exhibition catalogue includes captions and bibliographical citations for all of the materials included in the exhibition. The catalogue is organized into the major exhibit groupings, then in order of display of the items featured in each case. Some entries include additional annotations to provide more in-depth information. All items listed are from the Borowitz Collection, unless marked with an asterisk (*). We have included selected items from other collections that are interconnected with the themes and genres explored in the exhibition.

I am fond of saying that even if you think you aren’t interested in true crime, the Borowitz Collection will make you a convert. There’s truly something for everyone in this collection, and I know it will offer countless researchers material to discover and explore for generations to come.

*Cara Gilgenbach*
Head, Special Collections and Archives
I. HISTORICAL SURVEY OF POPULAR TRUE CRIME LITERATURE

CASE 1. THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY
Many of the qualities of later popular crime literature can be seen in these interesting early works: dramatic narratives, close attention to the details of the criminal acts and the punishments received, and at least a veneer of a cautionary tale, warning readers not to follow in the footsteps of the miscreants.


   This is an early example of a purported true-crime work. Reynolds (who was active from approximately 1621 to 1650) claimed to have drawn his stories from authentic crime records he collected while traveling in Europe on business. There is, however, no evidence for this, and it is likely the stories are actually works of imaginative fiction. They are sensational and each story also shows how crime is inexorably uncovered and punished by divine retribution. This formula was effective and, however fraudulent it may have been, Reynolds’ work found a wide readership. By 1670, it was being printed in this fifth edition, the first to be illustrated with woodcuts, and new editions were still appearing a century later.


6. Prance, Miles. *A True Narrative and Discovery of Several Very Remarkable Passages Relating to the Horrid Popish Plot: As They Fell within the Knowledge of Mr. Miles Prance of Covent-Garden, Goldsmith.* London: Printed for Dorman Newman at the Kings Arms in the Poultrey, 1679.

The intersection of crime and cultural production has a long history, particularly in the print format, and the examples of popular crime literature highlighted in this exhibit demonstrate the depth of the Borowitz Collection. The Borowitzes collected both nonfictional historical accounts of crimes and criminal trials as well as works of imaginative literature (novels, stories, stage works) that were based on or inspired by actual crimes or criminals. This combination provides a unique primary resource for investigating the complex cultural currents flowing through crime history, pop culture, and literature. Spanning four centuries, the popular literature in this section of the exhibit provides a glimpse of these currents across time.
CASE 2. EARLY NONFICTIONAL CRIME LITERATURE

In England, fact-based crime literature had significant origins in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries with the appearance of crime and underworld chapbooks or pamphlets and single-sheet broadsides. Written in prose or in doggerel verse, they relay colorful accounts of murders, trials, confessions, and executions. From the beginning, there was a large measure of fiction and sensationalism in what passed for crime reporting. American true crime narratives followed a similar history and the criminal chapbook was an important strand in the development of American popular literature.

7. A Full and Genuine History of the Inhuman and Unparalleled Murders of Mr. William Galley, a Custom-House Officer, and Mr. Daniel Chater, a Shoemaker, by Fourteen Notorious Smugglers: With the Trials and Execution of Seven of the Bloody Criminals, at Chichester. Also the Trials of John Mills, and Henry Sheerman; with an Account of the Wicked Lives of the Said Henry Sheerman, Lawrence and Thomas Kemp, Robert Fuller, and Jockey Brown, Condemned at East Grinstead; with the Trials at Large of Thomas Kingsmill and Other Smugglers for Breaking Open the Custom House at Poole. 5th ed. Title on spine: History of the Murders. London: Printed by W. Clowes for J. Seagrave, Chichester, and Longman & Rees, [1780?].

8. The Genuine Account of the Life and Trial of Eugene Aram for the Murder of Daniel Clark... to Which Are Added...the Apology, Which He Left in His Cell, for the Attempt He Made on His Own Life, and His Plan for a Lexicon, Some Pieces of Poetry, &c... London: Published and sold by W. Bristow, [1759?].


12. The Trial of Jane Leigh Perrot: Wife of James Leigh Perrot, Esq; Charged with Stealing a Card of Lace, in the Shop of Elizabeth Gregory, Haberdasher and Milliner, at Bath, before Sir Soulden Lawrence, Knight...at Taunton Assizes, on Saturday the 29th day of March, 1800. Taunton: Printed by and for Thomas Norris, 1800.

13. The History of George Barnwell: Shewing How He Was Undone by a Strumpet, Who Caused Him to Rob His Master and Murder His Uncle. London: Printed by Howard and Evans, [1700?].

The murder case of George Barnwell had been the subject of street ballads as early as the late sixteenth century. Barnwell was seduced and exploited for money by a London prostitute named Sarah Millwood. She coerced him to embezzle funds from the master he was apprenticed to and then to murder his wealthy uncle. This early seventeenth-century pamphlet relaying the whole story serves as a warning to apprentices. A century later, playwright George Lillo’s popular drama based on this case, The London Merchant, also conveyed a strong cautionary theme.

14. A Letter from a Clergyman to Miss Mary Blandy: Now a Prisoner in Oxford Castle; with Her Answer Thereto. As Also Miss Blandy’s Own Narrative of the Crime for Which She Is Condemn’d to Die... London: Printed for M. Cooper, 1752.

15. The Gentleman’s Magazine, August 1751.

The debate over whether Mary Blandy was morally culpable for the poisoning death of her father continued for many years after her execution in 1752. She testified that she had followed the instructions of the man she wished to marry when she gave her father what she thought was a love potion that would cause him to change his opinion and approve of her marriage. Her case was the subject of numerous pamphlets and items in the press, as can be seen in these two examples (nos. 14 and 15); many included her side of the story in the form of purportedly genuine letters written, as the pamphlet claims, “in Miss Blandy’s own hand-writing.” Contents such as this, with a close connection to the criminal, had broad popular appeal.
16. [Defoe, Daniel]. The Life of Mr. Richard Savage: Who Was Condemned with Mr. James Gregory, the Last Sessions at Old Baily, for the Murder of Mr. James Sinclair, at Robinson’s Coffee-House at Charing-Cross. 2nd ed. London: Printed for and sold by J. Roberts, 1728.

This pamphlet does not name its author but has been attributed to Daniel Defoe. Most famous today for his novel Robinson Crusoe, Defoe was a prolific and versatile writer who authored more than 500 books, pamphlets, and journals on various topics, including crime. He published many works anonymously and is thought to have used at least 198 different pen names.


18. Muschet, Nic. A True and Genuine Copy of the Last Speech, Confession, and Dying Words of Nicol Muschet of Boghall, Esq.: Who was Execute [sic] at Edinburgh, 1721, for the Horrid and Bloody Murder of His Own Wife on the Foot of the Duke’s Walk, within the King’s-Park, Near the Abby of Holy-Rood-House; Being One of the Greatest, and Most Penitent Speeches Ever Was Published. [Edinburgh, 1725?].

CASE 3. COLLECTIONS OF FAMOUS TRIALS AND CRIMINAL CASES

The French were among the first to publish collected narratives of criminal trials, which they called “causes célèbres” (famous cases). The work of Gayot de Pitaval (1673-1743), a member of the bar of the Parlement de Paris, was instrumental in launching this literary genre. Interest in Pitaval’s work was widespread and several German-language translations were published; this had a major influence on the development of a similar literary genre in Germany.


Regarded as one of the principal inventors of the genre of crime history, Gayot de Pitaval first published his groundbreaking collection of famous criminal cases in 1734. This slightly later edition was published in the Netherlands beginning in 1738. Among the many cases Pitaval included are those of the impersonator Martin Guerre, the seventeenth-century serial poisoner Marquise de Brinvilliers, and the murder of the Marquise de Ganges by her brothers-in-law. Popularized by Pitaval’s series, these and other cases became the subjects of numerous works including novels, poems, plays, opera and musical theater productions, and films.


CASE 4. COLLECTIONS OF FAMOUS TRIALS AND CRIMINAL CASES

In Great Britain, The Tyburn Chronicle and “Newgate Calendars” were first published as chronological listings of executions of Newgate Prison inmates (the executions were held at Tyburn). Later expanded to include summaries of the lives and misdeeds of the criminals, they quickly became classics read by nearly every literate person in England from about 1750 through 1850. These works were given to young people to read for instruction on correct living through the morals often added at the end of each entry and, possibly more effectively, through fear instilled by the severe punishments, which were described in vivid detail.
CASE 5. THE BRITISH NEWGATE NOVELS

Most nineteenth-century British authors would have read the Newgate Calendars as children, and they wrote numerous novels based directly on stories from them; Charles Dickens, Henry Fielding, and Edward Bulwer-Lytton are among these authors. The Newgate stories also made their way into popular stage versions that were enjoyed by everyone, whether literate or not.


Charles Dickens (here using his pen name, “Boz”) based many of his characters on historical criminals. No other English novelist has left a richer or more complex body of work on crime and punishment, in numerous novels as well as in his insightful newspaper and magazine articles. The famous character Fagin in Oliver Twist is widely thought to have been modeled after the real life English fence and pawn broker Isaac “Ikey” Solomons (1785-1850).


32. Life of Jack Sheppard, the Housebreaker. London: Glover, 1840 (John B. Bateman, Printer).


Jack Sheppard (1702-1724) was a London thief whose numerous and dramatic escapes from prison made him a wildly popular public figure. He was caught in the end, convicted, and hanged at Tyburn, ending his criminal career after less than two years. An autobiographical narrative was sold at his execution (thought to have been ghostwritten by Daniel Defoe) and this was quickly followed by popular plays about him. He was still in the public consciousness when, over a century later, William Harrison Ainsworth wrote this novel about Sheppard. Illustrated with George Cruikshank’s evocative engravings, it is seen here alongside a derivative publication of selections from Ainsworth’s novel (no. 32). Its illustrations, while less masterful, also convey the mystique that Sheppard still held in the popular imagination.


This is the first edition of the first British detective novel. Collins’ plot is an ingenious invention, but it is also deeply rooted in crime history. The moonstone is a diamond stolen from a Hindu temple and Collins, in preparation for his novel, copied out passages about crimes committed for Indian diamonds from G. C. King’s Natural History of Precious Stones (London, 1865). Other important elements in the novel derive from Victorian crime cases, including the infamous 1860 murder of Francis Kent by his older half-sister Constance.


Edgar Allan Poe is credited with creating the first American work of detective fiction with his famous story, “The Murders in the Rue Morgue.” He followed that with this second detective story featuring his French sleuth character, Auguste Dupin, “The Mystery of Marie Roget.” Poe based the narrative of this story on the unsolved American murder case of Mary Cecelia Rogers, whose body was found floating in the Hudson River in 1842. Although he moved the setting of the story to Paris, Poe stuck closely to the main facts of the Rogers case.

First published in 1830, Edward Bulwer-Lytton’s novel *Paul Clifford* (seen here in an 1893 edition), marks the threshold of a new literary period. It influenced the crime-based fiction of the next decade, was a stimulus to the Newgate novels of Ainsworth, Dickens, and Thackeray, and has been called the first example of a new type, the “social novel.” Bulwer-Lytton made a study of the Newgate Calendar and drew from several of its figures to compile the career of his highwayman. Although it is not widely read today, *Paul Clifford* contains one of the most well-known opening lines in English literature: “It was a dark and stormy night…” Its atmospheric and neo-Gothic qualities have been frequently invoked in subsequent mystery and detective fiction, horror, and thrillers.


Toy theater is a form of miniature or puppet theater dating back to the early nineteenth century in Europe. Sold as kits at the concession stand of an opera house or theater, toy theaters were assembled at home and performed for family members and guests, sometimes with live musical accompaniment. This 1835 kit for Edward Fitzball’s play, based on Edward Bulwer-Lytton’s Newgate novel *Paul Clifford*, dramatizes the exploits of the title character’s dual life as a highwayman and a dashing, chivalrous gentleman.


This long narrative poem is one of the masterpieces of imaginative literature inspired by true crime. Browning based the work on a vellum-covered book he found by chance in a flea market in Italy; the volume was a collection of documents relating to an obscure triple murder committed by Count Guido Franceschini in Rome in 1698. Browning’s poem is an artful rendering of the ambiguity of courtroom testimony and, with the poet as his eloquent spokesman, the murderer finds much to say in defense of a heinous crime.


Charles Dickens’ *Bleak House*, seen here in both its first appearance as monthly installments published from 1852 to 1853 as well as an 1873 edition of the popular novel (nos. 39 and 40), includes a character named Mademoiselle Hortense who is closely based on the real-life Maria Manning. Dickens had witnessed the public hanging of Manning and her husband, for the crime of murder, in 1849. Albert Borowitz has a special interest in the cultural impact of this execution and published a book-length study of the Manning case: *The Woman who Murdered Black Satin*.

### CASE 6. POPULAR CRIME PAMPHLETS OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

Small books or pamphlets were published widely during this period. Often cheaper than newspapers, these pamphlets were available to a large audience and were closely connected to the various forms of social and political discourse of the time: transcripts of meetings, speeches, sermons, and letters were all reproduced in pamphlet form. And, as can be seen in these examples, high-profile trials, murder cases, scandals, and all varieties of swindlers and thieves were popular topics for these small books. Graphic and gory illustrations heightened the sensationalism (and probably the sales) of many.

41. Williams, C. J. *Greenacre, or, The Edgeware-Road Murder: Presenting an Authentic and Circumstantial Account of This Most Sanguinary Outrage of the Laws of Humanity; And Showing, upon the Confession of the Culprit, the Means He Resorted to, in Order to Effect His Bloody Purpose; Also His Artful and Fiendlike Method of Mutilating His Murdered Victim, the Inhuman Manner in Which He Afterwards Disposed of the Mangled Body and Limbs, and His Cold-Blooded Disposal of the Head of the Unfortunate Female, on the Eve of Their Intended Marriage; With a Full Account of the Facts Which Led to the Discovery of the Atrocious Deed, His Apprehension, Trial, Behaviour at the Condemned Sermon, and Execution. Derby: Published by Thomas Richardson, [1837?].*

42. Holmes, the Arch Fiend, or, *A Carnival of Crime: The Life, Trial, Confession and Execution of H. H. Holmes; Twenty-Seven Lives Sacrificed to This Monstrous Ogre’s Insatiable Appetite*. Cincinnati: Published by Barclay & Co., [1890?].


The Life of Richard Turpin the Notorious Highwayman: Containing an Account of His Adventures, Trial and Execution. London: Printed for Orlando Hodgson, [1840?].


The Life, Confession, and Atrocious Crimes of Antoine Probst, the Murderer of the Deering Family: To Which Is Added a Graphic Account of Many of the Most Horrible and Mysterious Murders Committed in This and Other Countries. Philadelphia: Published by Barclay & Co., 1866.

The Life and Adventures of David Haggart: Written by Himself While under Sentence of Death, With an Account of His Execution. Glasgow: Printed for the booksellers, [1821?].


CASE 7. THE TWENTIETH CENTURY: AN EXPLOSION OF CRIME LITERATURE

The Borowitz Collection’s holdings reflect the enormous production of crime literature throughout the last century, and the examples seen here are just a tiny fraction of the materials available to researchers. Serious book-length studies of individual criminal cases, as well as works of fiction, were published with increasing frequency. Two famous novels blurred the conventional lines between works of fact and fiction: Truman Capote’s In Cold Blood and Norman Mailer’s The Executioner’s Song. The Borowitz Collection provides extensive documentation of the many genres of literary works that have grown out of the enduring cultural impulse to deal with crime.


Dreiser based this novel very closely on the 1906 murder of Grace Brown by her lover Chester Gillette; he studied the case carefully, saving newspaper clippings about it for several years and visiting the scene of the murder. To provide authenticity to the courtroom scenes, Dreiser, according to his biographer, W. A. Swanberg, “clung to fact when he could, lifting some 30 pages verbatim from New York newspaper accounts of the court proceedings...” Dreiser named his fictional character Clyde Griffiths, intentionally giving him the same initials as the real-life Chester Gillette.


A decade after Truman Capote published his “nonfiction novel,” Norman Mailer called this work his “true life novel.” The Executioner’s Song, about Gary Gilmore, executed by the state of Utah for murder in 1977, is based almost entirely on interviews of family and friends of Gilmore and his victims. Mailer himself conducted about fifty of the interviews used and states in the afterword, “The story is as accurate as one can make it. This does not mean it has come a great deal closer to the truth than the recollections of the witnesses.”


In this 1913 novel, Belloc Lowndes freely recreates Jack the Ripper as a prohibitionist and religious maniac named “Mr. Sleuth” who murders drunken women and pins notes to their dresses signed with a flourish, “The Avenger”. *The Lodger* focuses on the murderer’s landlords, who keep their suspicions to themselves because Mr. Sleuth’s rent money is the only thing that stands between them and starvation; its theme is an examination of social responses to deviant and criminal conduct. The novel is the source of Alfred Hitchcock’s classic silent film of the same title as well as several later remakes.


Capote’s true-crime masterpiece is a compelling narrative of two events, that, in the author’s view, equally constituted the taking of lives in cold blood: the 1959 multiple murder of Kansas farmer Herbert Clutter, his wife Bonnie, and two of their children and the 1965 hangings of the killers, Richard Hickock and Perry Smith. Capote had proposed the project to the *New Yorker* magazine, where it was published first in 1965 as a series of four installments. The “Editor’s Note,” seen here in the first installment, is careful to point out that all quotations are factual—having been taken from official records or from verbatim transcriptions of conversations between the author and the people involved. The piece was an immediate sensation and was published in book form in January of the following year (no. 62); there have also been three film adaptations based on the book (no. 64). *In Cold Blood* examines the complex psychological relationship of the two murderers as well as the lives of the victims and the effect of the crime on the community where they lived. It is regarded by critics as a pioneering work of the true crime genre.


Best known for his famous and influential novel *Dracula*, Bram Stoker also published a few works of nonfiction; this last of his nonfiction works examines several cases involving impostors and hoaxes. It includes a chapter on the case of Arthur Orton, an impostor who attempted to claim inheritance of the vast Tichborne estate. In Stoker’s words, Orton was “…the originator of one of the most colossal attempts at fraud on record.” The Borowitz Collection includes other materials about the case.
II. CRIME RELATED BROADSIDES, PRINTS, and ARTIFACTS

NOTE: This portion of the exhibition is located in the Borowitz Gallery, in the 12th floor hallway adjacent to the Special Collections and Archives reading room. Unless otherwise noted, all of the broadsides below are from the Borowitz Crime Ephemera: Criminal Broadsides of Nineteenth-Century England Collection.

68. “Full particulars of the life, trial, sentence, and execution S. Wright for the murder of Maria Green.” Spitalfields (London): Printed by Taylor, 92 Brick Lane, [1864].

69. “Dreadful murder of Mr. Burdon, by a man named Blakesley, Tuesday night at 10 o’clock, a most horrible murder was committed at the King’s Head Public House, as well as an attempt at the lives of two other persons, the sister of Mr. Bourden and his wife.” Spitalfields (London): Printed by H. Paul, 22 Brick Lane, [1841?].

70. “Shocking Child Murder, Boiling of the body and giving it to the pigs to eat.” London: Printed by Disley, [undated].

71. “Full particular of this dreadful murder. Copy of the verses on T. Drory and Jael Denny.” London: Printed by E. Hodges, No. 31 Dudley Street, Seven Dials, [1851?].

72. “The Murdered sister. Shewing the inhuman brutality of a brother towards his sister, who basely and most cruelly murdered her in his father’s park.” London: J. Catnach, Printer, 2 Monmouth Court, 7 Dials, [undated].

73. “Execution. A full and particular account of the confession and dying words upon the scaffold, of Elizabeth Robinson. Midwife, aged 50, who was executed at Essex, on Tuesday, the 28th November, 1820, for the murder of Margaret Thomson and her child in her delivery.” [London?, 1820].

74. “Horrid Murder and Mutilation of a Woman, And recovery of different parts of the body from various places on the banks of the River Thames.” London: Printed by Disley, [undated].

75. “Life, Trial, Sentence, and Execution of Lamson. Who was executed this Morning at Wandsworth Goal, at 9 o’clock for the Murder of Percy Malcom John.” [London?, 1882].


77. “The Undaunted Female” and “Speak of a Man As you find Him.” London: Printed at the “Catnach Press” by W. S. Fortey, [undated].


While many thousands of broadsides were printed, the market was dominated by only a few printers. One of the most productive of these printers was James (Jemmy) Catnach, who produced broadsheets on Monmouth Street in London. Works of Catnach’s shop are well represented in the Borowitz Collection. Because profits depended on the printer’s ability to produce and sell broadsides quickly and cheaply, production costs were kept to the bare minimum. The prints were often crude, and were intended to be discarded after the fact. For this reason, early examples of broadsides are somewhat rare.

96. Rufford & Ollerton Association. “List of Subscribers...The following Rewards will be paid for the conviction of offenders...” East Retford: Hodson, Printer, Bookseller, Stationer, and Paper-Hanger, Dec. 12, 1845.


98. “Jack Sheppard! or, The Progress of Crime! Never Acted!! With the Express Sanction and Approbation of the Original Author Mr. Ainsworth, aided by Cruikshank's inimitable designs. Moncrieff's Jack Sheppard; Monday, October 21st, 1839, and During the Week.” Playbill. Lambeth (London): W. Peel, Printer, 9 New Cut, [1839].

On the morning of September 4, 1724, an inconsequential thief named Jack Sheppard (1702-1724), a handsome twenty-two year old at the time, was to be hung at Tyburn for stealing three rolls of cloth, two silver spoons and a silk handkerchief. But instead of the routine execution of another worthless felon, London awoke to the astonishing news that he had escaped from the death cell at Newgate. In his short criminal career Sheppard was arrested and imprisoned five times, and escaped four times, effectively cementing his image as an icon of criminality. Sheppard was as well known for his attempts to escape imprisonment as he was for his crimes, thus launching his story into the imaginations of the masses for generations to come. Further evidence of the cultural impact of Sheppard’s exploits can be seen in the Historical Survey of Popular True Crime Literature portion of this exhibit, inside the Reading Room (see nos. 32 and 33).


100. “Rules for the criminal wards of Ayr Jail.” Ayr, [Scotland]: Council Chambers, July 1826.


102. “Execution of William Shaw, For the murder of Rachael Crossley, at Kirkburton.” York: White, printer, [1830].

103. “The Last dying-speech and confession, of the two malefactors, who were executed at Northampton, on Saturday, March 4, 1780, viz. Thomas Pool, for the Murder of William Luck, by giving him two wounds with a knife. And Catherine Parker, for the murder of Thomas Cottingham, her apprentice, by beating, ill treating, and starving him.” [1780].


105. Frederick Manning and Maria Manning. Figurines. Staffordshire pottery, [1849]?

106. “Execution of Frederick Bracknell, at the Old Bailey, on Monday, August 1st, 1864, for the wilful murder of Jane Geary, on the 8th of June, at the Lion Tavern, Cattle Market Islington.” London, [1864].


108. “Maria Manning. From a Daguerreotype taken by Mr. Laroche during the Investigation at the Southwark Police Court Sept. 6th, 1849.” London: Printed by Powell, Old Montague-Street, [1849]?


One of the most shocking crimes of Victorian England was the so-called “Bermondsey Horror.” This horrific crime shook the foundations of a society that considered women incapable of such evil. Maria Manning was a Swiss domestic servant who was hanged, along with her husband Frederick, outside Horsemonger Lane Gaol, England, on November 13, 1849, after the couple was convicted of the murder of Maria’s lover, Patrick O’Connor. It was the first time a husband and wife had been executed together in England since 1700. At least 30,000 people came to their hanging. The novelist Charles Dickens attended the execution, and in a letter written to The Times on the same day wrote, “I believe that a sight so inconceivably awful as the wickedness and levity of the immense crowd collected at that execution this morning could be imagined by...”
no man, and could be presented in no heathen land under the sun.” Dickens later modeled the character of Hortense in *Bleak House* on Maria Manning (see nos. 39 and 40).

110. “An account of the inquest and particulars of the murder, of Mary Ann Melton, at Nocton, near Lincoln.” Lincoln: R. E. Leary, Printer and Bookbinder, 19 Strait, [undated].

111. “Life, trial, confession and execution of Emanuel Barthelemy for the double murder of Mr. Moore & Mr. Collard in Warren-Street, Fitzroy-Sqr...” Whitechapel (London): John Marks, 206 Brick Lane, [1855].


113. “The wild and hairy man; or, the English Hermit. Being an account of John Harris, esq, the English Hermit, now residing in a cave in a rock, known by the name of Allenscomb’s Cave, near the town of Harthill, in the county of Chester. He was discovered on the 5th of Nov. 1819.” North Shields: Printed by W. Orange, [1819].

114. “Full Particulars of the life, trial, sentence, confession and execution of John Richard Jefferey for the murder of his son by hanging.” [London?, 1866].

The Ohio State Reformatory (also known as Mansfield Prison or Mansfield Reformatory) was built between 1886 and 1910, and remained in operation until 1990. The facility was used in a number of films (including several while the facility was still in operation), TV shows, and music videos. Its biggest claim to fame is its leading role in the film *The Shawshank Redemption* (1994).

The Borowitz Collection contains a sizable sub-collection of prison postcards from around the world. Souvenir postcard collecting became highly fashionable in the early twentieth century—a period often considered the “Golden Age” of picture postcards. During the fiscal year ending in 1908, the U.S. Post Office reported having delivered nearly 700 million postcards, more than seven times the total U.S. population at the time. Corresponding to the popularity of postcards was the rich variety of images and views to be had, ranging anywhere from landscapes, industry, and transportation to public buildings, monuments, and even prisons.
**TABLE CASE 2 (right): U.S. AND INTERNATIONAL PRISONS**

**United States:**
- Old Territorial Prison, Yuma, Arizona
- Folsom State Prison, Folsom, California
- State Penitentiary, Canon City, Colorado
- Kent County Jail, Dover, Delaware
- Old Jail, St. Augustine, Florida
- Joliet State Penitentiary, Stateville, Illinois
- Brown County Log Jail, Nashville, Indiana
- Federal Prison, Leavenworth, Kansas
- Cabildo, New Orleans, Louisiana
- Town Hall, Boston, Massachusetts
- Auburn State Prison, Auburn, New York
- Ontario County Jail, Canandaigua, New York
- Sing Sing Prison, Ossining, New York
- Federal Prison, La Tuna, Texas
- Public Gaol, Williamsburg, Virginia
- Jail, Charleston, West Virginia

**International:**
- Death Cages, China
- “Le Masque de Fer,” France

**Westward expansion in the United States during the latter part of the nineteenth century created uncertain and turbulent times. This played an important role in forming the image of the Wild West that is often depicted in film, music, and literature. Those in search of economic opportunities, religious freedom, and inexpensive land rushed to settle in the American frontier. Clashing of values, the lack of organized law enforcement, and invasion onto Native American lands all contributed to the development of often unruly western territories.**

**CASE 1 (left):**


120. Billy the Kid Belt Buckle. Metal belt buckle in the form of a wanted poster with text of a wanted poster offering a $5,000.00 reward. Borowitz Crime-related Artifacts Collection.

121. Billy the Kid license plate: “Member, Billy the Kid Outlaw Gang Inc., New Mexico Historical Society; Wanted Dead or Alive!” Borowitz Crime-related Artifacts Collection.
Outlaws, such as the James and Younger brothers, took part in mass murders, the derailing of trains, robberies, and shootouts with lawmen. Although they were often caught and punished for their crimes, these men and women were commonly romanticized and celebrated in popular culture by being transformed into dusty tragic heroes instead of being recognized for the fear and dread that they created.

Perhaps cultural fascination with crime and the unknown allows society to sensationalize the mayhem that these men and women caused. Does it really matter that the accounts of the outlaws’ exploits are often historically inaccurate or does a good story reign supreme?

The Borowitz Collection features a variety of Wild West materials including audio recordings, photographs, film stills, and over 470 examples of literature ranging from dime novels and other fiction to nonfiction accounts.
136. Younger Brothers Gang. Typed caption: “John Younger, Killed in a gunfight with L. J. Lull on March 17, 1874 ... The Younger brothers were cousins to Jesse and Frank James, and along with Bob and Charlie Ford rode with the notorious Jesse James Gang.” Photograph. Borowitz Crime-related Graphics Collection.


When asked what sparked his interest in book collecting, Albert Borowitz credits his father David Borowitz, a prominent collector, as his inspiration. At the age of twelve, Albert asked his father to buy for him an edition of the complete Sherlock Holmes stories. Arising from the shared interest of father and son, the fiction of Arthur Conan Doyle is now one of the many high points of the Borowitz Collection. Albert Borowitz is a prize-winning graduate of Harvard University with a B.A. in classics, an M.A. in Chinese regional studies, and a J.D. While a student at Harvard, Albert Borowitz studied criminal law under a professor who introduced him to the field of true crime literature. It was also there where he met his wife, the late Helen Osterman, a Radcliffe student who went on to become an art historian and noted scholar at the Cleveland Museum of Art. Along with their distinguished professional careers and raising two sons and a daughter, the Borowitzes together built a vast, unique, and unparalleled collection on the theme of true crime incidents and their influence on the arts, culture, and society.


Helen Osterman Borowitz (1929-2012), an art historian with literary interests, was a Phi Beta Kappa graduate of Radcliffe College and of Case Western Reserve University. She was formerly associate curator of the Department of Art History and Education at the Cleveland Museum of Art. Her museum colleagues remarked on Helen’s adeptness as an art educator. Her gallery talks were simultaneously accessible, entertaining, and rigorously scholarly in nature. Her numerous academic articles appeared in Art Journal, Criticism, Gazette des Beaux-Arts, and Modern Fiction Studies, among others. She authored significant books, including The Impact of Art on French Literature: from Scudéry to Proust for which she is well known. She also collaborated with her husband on book projects, most notably Pawnshops and Palaces: the Fall and Rise of the Campana Art Museum and the masterwork Blood & Ink: An International Guide to Fact-Based Crime Literature to which she made in-depth contributions.

Albert Borowitz is himself a scholar of true crime and has contributed greatly to the literature through the publication of numerous books and dozens of articles in the field. He coined the now commonly used phrase, “psychological kidnapping,” in his article “Psychological Kidnapping in Italy: The Case of Aldo Braibanti,” the original printing of which is on display here. A shared interest in collecting and writing true crime led to a close friendship with England’s pre-eminent true crime author, Jonathan Goodman, whose personal archive is also held in Special Collections and Archives. Arguably Borowitz’s most important contribution to the field is Blood & Ink: An International Guide to Fact-Based Crime Literature (2002), described by reviewer Anthony Case as “...a unique reference book a couple of inches thick that is written throughout with grace and style.” Noted historian Jacques Barzun said of the work: “This is an enjoyable and remarkable book. The variety of literary genres and languages is unique and should both instruct and entertain the large contingent of criminous minds.”


**BIBLIOGRAPHY OF WORKS CONSULTED**


**APPENDIX 1: EXHIBITIONS FEATURING THE BOROWITZ COLLECTION, 1990-2013**

- a catalogue or handlist was published in conjunction with this exhibition

1990: A Gallery of Sinister Perspectives: An Exhibition of Highlights from the Borowitz True Crime Collection

1993: 25 Years: Special Collections at Kent State University

1993: Four Presidents: The Deaths of Lincoln, Garfield, McKinley, and Kennedy

1994: An Exhibition of the Arthur Machen Collection of Albert I. and Helen O. Borowitz

1995: “Strolling Players” and the Music of George Gershwin

2000: The Arthur Orton Case and Selections from the Sherlock Holmes Collection

2001: Victorian Murderesses

2002: Blood & Ink: An Exhibition of Highlights from the Borowitz True Crime Collection

2003: Ohio Crime Cases

2004: Mysteries of the East End: Jack the Ripper in Print and Popular Culture

2006: Trial of the Century: The Murder of Stanford White, A Centenary Exhibition

2007: Borowitz Crime Graphics

2008: The Art of Crime: Crime-Related Artifacts from the Borowitz Collection

2009: Crime Fiction Dust Jackets

2009: The Life and Work of True Crime Historian Jonathan Goodman

2009: Crimes of the Century: The Lindbergh Kidnapping and the Leopold-Loeb Murder

2010: Musical Mysteries: Items from the Borowitz Collection

2011: A Nation in Mourning: The Assassination of Abraham Lincoln

2012: Pulp Fiction and Pulp Fact: Detective and True Crime Pulps

2012: Bibliomysteries: Bound by Crime

2013: From Crime to Culture: The 25th Anniversary of the Borowitz Collection at Kent State University
APPENDIX 2: THE BOROWITZ LECTURE, 1993-2013

1995: Jonathan Goodman: The Julia Wallace Case
1996: C. Owen Lovejoy: Forensic Anthropology in Criminal Investigations
1997: Mark Weber: Jewish Detective Fiction and the Issue of Jewish Identity
2000: Noel Polk: Gavin Stevens and the Law
2002: Sam Reese Sheppard: The Paper Trail and a Personal Experience of the Marilyn Sheppard Case
2003: John Stark Bellamy II: True Cleveland Crimes
2004: Jonathan Goodman, James Jessen Badal, Jack DeSario, and Bill Mason: True Crime Panel Discussion (moderated by Albert Borowitz)
2005: Mary Habeck and Albert Borowitz: Two Perspectives on Terrorism
2008: Elizabeth A. De Wolfe: The Murder of Mary Bean and Other Stories
2010: Albert Borowitz: Musical Mysteries
2013: Joanne Dobson: Biblio-mysteries