

June 2010

Booklover -- Sea

Donna Jacobs
MUSC, jacobsdf@musc.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <https://docs.lib.purdue.edu/atg>



Part of the [Library and Information Science Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Jacobs, Donna (2010) "Booklover -- Sea," *Against the Grain*: Vol. 22: Iss. 3, Article 27.
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.7771/2380-176X.5566>

This document has been made available through Purdue e-Pubs, a service of the Purdue University Libraries. Please contact epubs@purdue.edu for additional information.

peer institutions, is creating a robust shared access and preservation service for our mass digitized books, one that adheres to professional standards, through our partnership in a groundbreaking enterprise called the **HathiTrust**. If you haven't heard of **HathiTrust** yet, you soon will. No UC library user need go to **Google** to search the full text of our books, or to find accurate bibliographic information, or to view and download those that are in the public domain: s/he can go to <http://catalog.hathitrust.org/> and be reassured that those books will be there, in ever-improved versions, for the long-term. **HathiTrust** now numbers 5.4 million volumes from 26 libraries and is growing at a rapid rate, all searchable, all viewable if in the public domain (or otherwise rights-cleared), and all designed to inure to the long-term benefit of the nation's libraries and their users. The digital library of the future resides not with **Google**, but with us. And we are building it today.

At the same time, **Google**, **Internet Ar-**

Ivy Anderson was appointed to the **California Digital Library** effective January 2, 2006. In this role, **Anderson** coordinates and provides systemwide leadership in buying and licensing digital content. Her efforts also extend beyond licensed information, to the acquisition and management of select printed materials and reformatting. She also plays an important part in the university's strategic goal of addressing the profound problems in the marketplace for scholarly publications. Prior to joining the **CDL**, **Anderson** worked at **Harvard University Library**, where she developed a digital acquisitions program. She is widely known for her work in advancing the goals of libraries and library consortia. 🐼

chive, and others, are providing an invaluable service in bringing the vast holdings of the great research libraries to a worldwide audience and integrating that content with general-purpose internet search services and other content. As one colleague has written, "Who among us has not benefited from a **Google** search?" In participating in these efforts, we are fulfilling our long-standing public service mission. The **Google Settlement**, if approved, will further these aims by providing more content, in more ways, to an even wider audience.

But in the end, approval of the Settlement is not a make or break event for libraries. Despite the claim that the **Google Settlement** promises

to build "the greatest library in history," libraries are not leaving the future of information to **Google** and these other partners alone. Nor need we wait, Godot-like, for fugitive national legislation to begin the work of serving up our cultural heritage in digital form. Through a combination of efforts, including public-private partnerships such as that of libraries with **Google**, we can go forward in this transformative enterprise together.

This piece was initially published in **Anderson's** blog, at: <http://www.cdlib.org/cdlinfo/2010/02/16/hurling-toward-the-finish-line-should-the-google-books-settlement-be-approved/>. 🐼

Booklover — Sea

Column Editor: **Donna Jacobs** (Research Specialist, Transgenic Mouse Core Facility, MUSC, Charleston, SC 29425) <jacobsd@muscu.edu>

On the last Sunday of April, in Mt. Pleasant, SC, the shrimp trawlers nose out of Shem Creek festooned with brightly colored flags. They parade by the pier at the new Memorial Park to receive their blessing. Many feel this annual event is essential, prior to the beginning of the shrimping season. Each boat is called by name and given a special blessing for good harvest and safe return to harbor. Then the festivities begin. Music, food, shrimp eating contests, dancing, and arts and crafts entertain the crowd that has gathered to witness this fishing community tradition.

My husband and I used to be a part of this shrimping community. We owned a shrimp trawler that was tied up at the Geechee Seafood Dock on Shem Creek. Every spring brought an intense time of repair and maintenance culminating in our blessing. The season opened soon after the event, and the long hours of trawling for shrimp began. We have long ago traded our life in the mercurial shrimping community for a somewhat more regular life in the marine research field. But every year during spring there is the intense time of repair and maintenance before my husband returns to the sea, taking the marine biologists wherever along the South Atlantic coastline they want to go. His love for the sea extends from his profession into his recreation, as he loves to fish and dive.

The love affair that men have with the sea is like no other, and two short novellas, *The Old Man and the Sea* by **Ernest Hemingway** and *The Story of the Shipwrecked Sailor* by **Gabriel García Márquez**, completely immerse the reader in the power and seduction of the sea. **Hemingway's** novella is probably one of the best known works of a **Nobel Literature Laureate**, as well as of the author. The lesser known story by **García Márquez** is remarkable in that it is true.

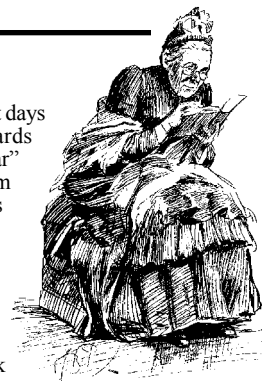
The Old Man and the Sea accompanied me on a recent trip to Boston. Periodically it is nice to reacquaint yourself with an old friend. It is not long before I am balancing myself in a fishing boat, smelling the salt air, and hoping for a good catch.

Everyone who has ever made a living from the sea can identify with **Santiago** as the old fisherman feels the tug of the fishing line after over 80 days without a fish. In simple declarative sentences, **Hemingway** gives the reader the intensity of every ache as **Santiago** first prays for the fish to come, then patiently triumphs over the fish, and ultimately loses his prize to the sharks. **Hemingway's** remarkable use of metaphors and imagery creates a story that commands a large presence in the literary world, not unlike the fish that is lashed to the side of **Santiago's** boat. Everyone who reads this gem of fiction has been touched by the novella and left with a sense of the sea's fickle nature.

While in Boston I stumbled upon the **Brattle Book Store** on West Street. Established in 1825 it claims to be the largest bookstore in the New England area and one of the oldest and largest antiquarian bookstores in America. Boston is a place where you could spend your life exploring the birth of independence, America's revolutionary history, and yet I gravitate to the bookstore. There I found *The Story of the Shipwrecked Sailor* by **Gabriel García Márquez**. **García Márquez** is one of my all time favorite authors so I decided to add this little book to my collection. On the return flight to Charleston I had the good fortune to be upgraded to Business Class, where I settled into the comfort of a large seat with ample legroom and began this tale of the shipwrecked sailor. Every seafarer's family members' nightmare is to learn of a loss at sea. Life rafts, flotation devices, GPSs, EPRBs, and radio communication are among the safety devices aboard every vessel. But the sea is temperamental, and what is beautiful can become deadly in an instant.

Luis Alejandro Velasco is stationed aboard the Colombian military destroyer *Caldas*. The ship is being repaired in Mobile, Alabama and will be returning to its home port of Cartagena de Indias, Colombia. As the date for departure nears, **Luis** is burdened with a strong sense of foreboding that he cannot reconcile. He goes through the motions of

good-byes in his last days in Mobile and boards the ship. His "radar" continues to tell him that something is off as the ship feels funny under his feet. All of the American "gifts" that crew members have purchased for their families back home in Colombia are stowed on the deck and, thus, the seaworthiness of the *Caldas* is compromised. **Luis** along with eight other crew members find themselves struggling on the deck during a violently rough sea. A wave washes over the deck, and all are instantly swimming. They fear the boat has sunk, but as **Luis** reaches a life raft he sees the *Caldas* crest a wave and continue along its course. One by one his shipmates are lost as the ones he can hear and see are unable to make it to the raft in the boiling sea. For the next 10 days the reader shares his tiny life raft with no water, food, or protection from the grueling sun, all told in simple declarative sentences. **García Márquez** was the ghost writer for **Luis's** recounting, and the story of this phenomenal event was published in 1955 as a series of newspaper articles in the *El Espectador*. The revelation that contraband was being transported on the military vessel was an embarrassment to the dictatorial government of **General Gustavo Rojas Pinilla**, which resulted in the closure of the newspaper and led to **García Márquez's** "nomadic and somewhat nostalgic exile that in certain ways also resembles a drifting raft." In 1970 when **García Márquez** wrote the forward to the book which compiled the series he mused that the publisher was more interested in **García Márquez's** notoriety as a **Nobel Laureate** than the incredible story which he had the opportunity to recount for the world.



So now it is April, and the sea once again sings a siren's song to the fishermen, sailors, and seafarers. My husband packs for his trip, and I have stashed my copy of *The Story of the Shipwrecked Sailor* in his bag. I will pray for his safe return and that he will never be lost at sea, only lost to the lure of the sea. 🐼