



Linked Open Dime Novels; or, 19th Century Fiction and 21st Century Data

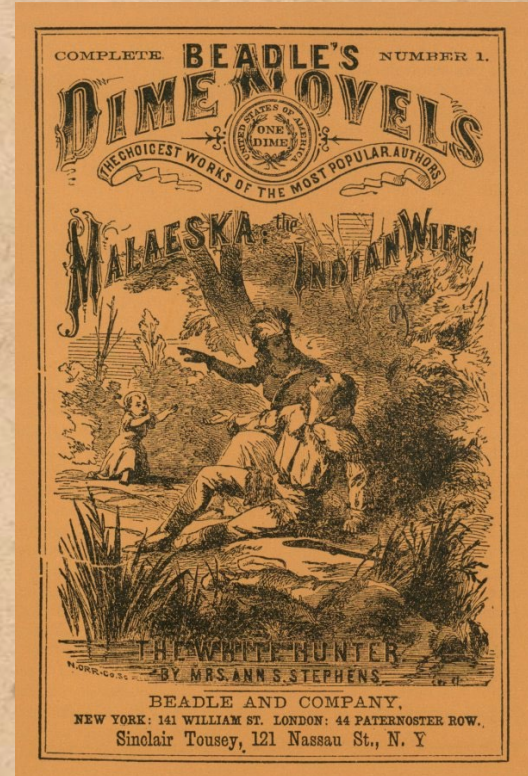
Matthew Short, Northern Illinois University
Demian Katz, Villanova University

2022 Digitizing Hidden Collections Symposium



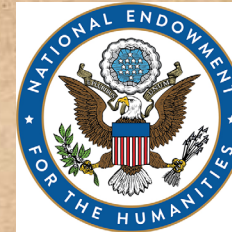
What are Dime Novels?

- Cheaply produced popular fiction sold in the United States in the 19th century (ca. 1860-1915)
- Popular among working classes, immigrants, and children
- Often deal with issues related to gender, class, race, and ethnicity
- Also where many genres of American popular fiction first evolved, especially the western and detective fiction



Dime Novel Digitization

- CLIR awarded a Hidden Collections grant to NIU and Villanova in 2016 to digitize NIU's Johannsen Collection
- Partnership expanded to include Stanford University, Bowling Green State University, and Oberlin College
- NEH Humanities and Reference Resources awards in 2020 for the Street & Smith Project and again in 2022 for the Tousey Project



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Bibliographic Nightmares

- Dime novels are always issued in a series, issues often contain multiple stories, and stories are sometimes serialized
- Stories are frequently reprinted or reissued, usually in different formats and with variations
- Stories are often attributed to pseudonyms, which may be shared by as many as a dozen real-world persons
- We usually know the real-world person responsible for a story through the work of bibliographers



How We're Using Linked Data

- Agree on a shared meaning about what entities exist, what properties they have, and how they're related (an **ontology**)
- Use shared unique identifiers (in the form of **URIs**) in our metadata, so that we can easily recognize specific entities in our cataloging
- Enable harvesting of data for use within digital collections



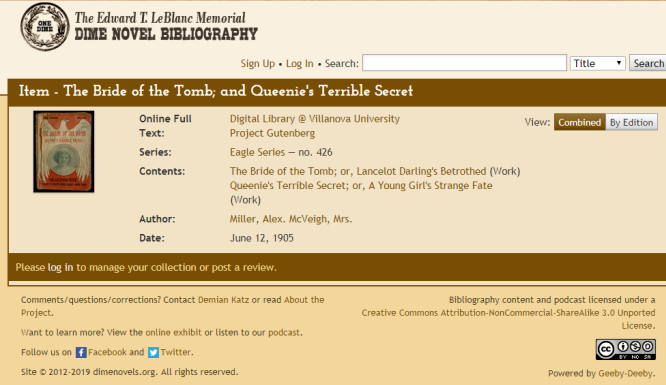
Publishing dimenovels.org as Linked Data

- Existing schema conceptually similar to ontology, with “pretty” URLs for all entities (CreativeWork, Edition, etc.)
- Mapped existing schema to ontology
- Created alternate views through content negotiation to render linked data at “/rdf”

```
@prefix dime: <https://dimenovels.org/ontology#> .  
@prefix dc: <http://purl.org/dc/terms/> .  
@prefix rda: <http://rdaregistry.info/Elements/u/> .
```

```
<https://dimenovels.org/Item/505>  
  a dime:CreativeWork ;  
  dc:title "The Bride of the Tomb; and Queenie's Terrible Secret" ;  
  rda:preferredTitleForTheResource "The Bride of the Tomb; and Queenie's Terrible Secret" ;  
  dime:HasRealizationOfCreativeWork <https://dimenovels.org/Edition/534> .
```

<https://dimenovels.org/Item/505/rdf>



The screenshot shows the website 'The Edward T. LeBlanc Memorial DIME NOVEL BIBLIOGRAPHY'. The main heading is 'Item - The Bride of the Tomb; and Queenie's Terrible Secret'. Below this is a small image of the book cover. To the right of the image is a table with the following information:

Online Full Text:	Digital Library @ Villanova University Project Gutenberg	View: Combined By Edition
Series:	Eagle Series -- no. 426	
Contents:	The Bride of the Tomb; or, Lancelot Darling's Betrothed (Work) Queenie's Terrible Secret; or, A Young Girl's Strange Fate (Work)	
Author:	Miller, Alex. McVeigh, Mrs.	
Date:	June 12, 1905	

Below the table, there is a link to 'Please log in to manage your collection or post a review.' At the bottom of the page, there is a footer with contact information, a Creative Commons license (CC BY-NC-SA), and social media links for Facebook and Twitter. The footer also includes the text 'Site © 2012-2019 dimenovels.org. All rights reserved.' and 'Powered by Geeby-Deeby.'

<https://dimenovels.org/Item/505>

Using Data from *Nickels and Dimes*

- NIU includes identifiers in MODS for names and subjects (through LC's reconciliation service and \$1)
- These identifiers are used to match data between digital collection and dimenovels.org
- A custom import tool allows thousands of new dimenovels.org records to be created, uncovering numerous errors on both sides in the process



Using Data from *Nickels and Dimes*

```
dkatz@vu61162: /stage/local/gbdb
Adding date: 1890-08-06
Updating address to Beadle and Adams (1872-1898), No. 98 William St., New York
Adding OCLC number: 1021888561
Adding URL: https://dimenovels.lib.niu.edu/islandora/object/dimenovels:228210
---
Opening /tmp/pl/304.mods...
Working on Beadle's Pocket Library no. 344...
Added item ID 44317 (drummer sport, or, Captain Dasher's droll dilemma, The)
Added edition ID 81554
Attaching author ID 1508
Adding subject: Paducah (Ky.)
Adding subject: Tennessee River
Adding subject IDs: 849, 886, 1564, 1891, 899, 1557, 1534, 1394, 1803, 152, 1890, 3911, 3912
Adding date: 1890-08-13
Updating address to Beadle and Adams (1872-1898), No. 98 William St., New York
Adding OCLC number: 1021888651
Adding URL: https://dimenovels.lib.niu.edu/islandora/object/dimenovels:230322
---
Opening /tmp/pl/305.mods...
Working on Beadle's Pocket Library no. 345...
Found candidate(s) for match with Jaques, the hardpan detective; or, Captain Frisco, the road-agent by Cowdrick, J. C. (Jesse C.), 1859-1899

A. Dominie Detective, or, The Deedham sensation, The by J. C. (Jesse C.) Cowdrick (confidence: 23%)
B. Billy the kid from Frisco (alt. title for Silver-Mask, the man of mystery, or, The cross of the golden keys) by J. C. (Jesse C.) Cowdrick (confidence: 23%)

0. NONE OF THE ABOVE -- CREATE NEW ITEM.

Please select one: █
```


Harvesting Linked Data from dimenovels.org

- Built a linked data harvesting tool called Murpoint (because existing tools were too aggressive)
- Harvests all linked data from a single Internet domain to a single file
- Data is loaded into a Blazegraph instance at NIU for querying

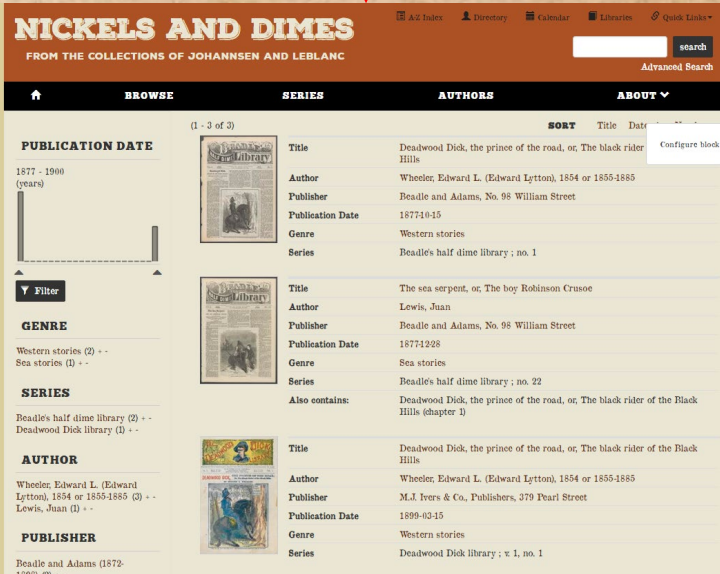


Using Data from dimenovels.org

- Edition URIs are used to search NIU's digital collection for digitized copies
- If multiple editions or parts exist, those are presented to the end user for browsing
- No need to consult bibliographies or other reference sources!

BROWSE ALL EDITIONS

- Deadwood Dick, the prince of the road, or, The black rider of the Black Hills



The screenshot shows the 'NICKELS AND DIMES' website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with 'BROWSE', 'SERIES', 'AUTHORS', and 'ABOUT'. Below this, there are search filters for 'PUBLICATION DATE', 'GENRE', 'SERIES', and 'AUTHOR'. The main content area displays a list of book entries, each with a thumbnail and a table of metadata. A red arrow points from the 'BROWSE ALL EDITIONS' box to the first entry in the list.

Title	Author	Publisher	Publication Date	Genre	Series
Deadwood Dick, the prince of the road, or, The black rider of the Black Hills	Wheeler, Edward L. (Edward Lytton), 1854 or 1855-1885	Beadle and Adams, No. 98 William Street	1877-1885	Western stories	Beadle's half dime library ; no. 1
The sea serpent, or, The boy Robinson Crusoe	Lewis, Juan	Beadle and Adams, No. 98 William Street	1877-1885	Sea stories	Beadle's half dime library ; no. 22
Deadwood Dick, the prince of the road, or, The black rider of the Black Hills (chapter 1)					
Deadwood Dick, the prince of the road, or, The black rider of the Black Hills	Wheeler, Edward L. (Edward Lytton), 1854 or 1855-1885	M.J. Ivers & Co., Publishers, 379 Pearl Street	1899-03-15	Western stories	Deadwood Dick library ; v. 1, no. 1

Useful Links

Nickels and Dimes: <https://dimenovels.lib.niu.edu/>

Edward T. LeBlanc Memorial Bibliography: <https://dimenovels.org/>

Villanova Dime Novel Collection:

<https://digital.library.villanova.edu/Collection/vudl:24093>

Geeby-Deeby: <https://github.com/demiankatz/Geeby-Deeby>

Murpoint: <https://github.com/FalveyLibraryTechnology/Murpoint>