

THE CALL

THE MAGAZINE OF THE JACK LONDON SOCIETY

HELP SAVE JACK LONDON STATE HISTORIC PARK!

Elisa Stancil

Jack London Society members and readers of *THE CALL* know of the amazing 1400 acre park in Glen Ellen, Jack London's Beauty Ranch. But who would have thought when 70 parks were chosen to close due to budget issues that Jack London's home would be one of them? In the past several years, budget issues in California have drastically reduced funds flowing to park operations and several times state parks throughout the state have been scheduled to close. Not long ago ALL 270 parks were on the chopping block. The matrix used for selecting parks to close included revenue and cost of operation. Historical significance was said to play a part but no London enthusiast would agree with the California parks officials' decision! In fact, all three state parks in Sonoma County, California, are scheduled to close. The fiscal value is considered minimal to the overall budget, in fact many believe parks and threatened closures are being used as a political football. California State Parks Foundation is working hard to reverse the decision, legislators are besieged with requests to reconsider. Yet closure appears imminent.

On or before July 2012 Jack London State Historic Park will no longer be operated by the state of California. Budget cuts are forcing the closure of 70 California parks, including Jack London's beloved Beauty Ranch, his cottage, and the Wolf House ruins. Already, the park is closed two days a week, and this winter more reductions are expected.

Valley of the Moon Natural History Association (VMNHA) is proposing to operate the park. This historic park has unique collections and artifacts that require museum-level curation. A grant is being sought to train a small number of docents for these duties going forward. Over the next several weeks an operating contract will be drafted and will then be negotiated. The operation of state parks by other entities is not new, but a park with historical and cultural collections requires special care. After 34 years of volunteer interpretation and docent training VMNHA is uniquely qualified to take on the stewardship of the legacy. But our all-volunteer organization must now expand its role, and the board is responding by restructuring, and preparing to hire staff in order to keep the park open.

You CAN make a difference, join us and help SAVE JACK LONDON PARK! Send in a donation through our website link:

www.jacklondonpark.org

Or mail to: VMNHA SPECIAL DONATION
PO BOX 2168
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Your charitable donation will help create the best solutions for our treasured park. Every year more than 75,000 people visit the park, and many of them are from Russia, Japan, Brazil, and France. Jack London enthusiasts world wide look to the park as a touchstone to the past, and a monument to Jack's unique vision. Join us today! See more about the park at www.jacklondonpark.com or see a video of the park at www.jacklondonlake.org

Contact VMNHA publicity director Elisa Stancil at 415-902-6230 or estancil@earthlink.net

NONPROFIT PROPOSES TO SAVE JACK LONDON STATE HISTORIC PARK

On November 1st, the Valley of the Moon Natural History Association submitted a comprehensive proposal to keep Jack London State Historic Park open. Scheduled to be shuttered on July 1, 2012, along with nearly 70 other state parks, Jack London Park has 60-70,000 annual visitors, with nearly half from out of the area. Closing of the park would mean the loss of 26 miles of hiking, cycling, and horseback riding trails. In addition, this National Historic Landmark would no longer provide visitors with a glimpse into the life, the passions, and the projects of Jack London, the famous California author. Beauty Ranch, where London wrote many articles and books, created a progressive farm, and experimented with agricultural innovations, would be closed to the public. The House of Happy Walls, a stone museum built after London's death by his wife Charmian, which houses exhibits, artifacts from London's South Seas voyage, and the Wolf House ruins (a monumental stone structure) would close. All artifacts would have to be moved to storage should the park truly be closed.

Working with the Parks Alliance of Sonoma County, California State Parks, and community partners, Valley of the Moon Natural History Association (VMNHA) crafted a solution to keep the park open. Collaborating with Sonoma Ecology Center, Sonoma County Trails Council, Back Country Horseman, United Camps, and Conferences and Retreats, VMNHA proposes to keep the park open five days a week, Thursday through Monday, and offer the park to private events during evening hours and on the days the park is closed to the public.

On November 2nd, the board of VMNHA got word the proposal was accepted for review and negotiation.

A meeting will take place next week to go over California State Park staff comments and concerns. The process, which many expected to be lengthy, may actually be fast tracked, and an answer could come as early as January, according to Chief of Concessions Jim Luscutoff.

The transfer of operations between state parks and another operating entity has been done before, but AB 42 (legislation introduced by Jared Huffman and recently signed into law) allows non-profit organizations to take on park operations for the first time.

VMNHA has a 34-year relationship as interpretive specialists for Jack London, Annadel, and Sugarloaf Ridge State Parks. Elisa Stancil, Vice President for VMNHA, remarked that "our intention is to bring fresh energy to our treasured state parks. At the legislative hearing on Tuesday, Bill Herms of California State Parks, said the state is willing to be flexible in

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order to keep parks open. We appreciate this and know flexibility will be key to developing unique solutions on a park by park basis." Greg Hayes, President of VMNHA, pointed out that the proposal for Jack London is an important first step, but explained that "our mission is to serve Annadel, Sugarloaf Ridge, and Jack London State Parks, and our board and community partners will focus our efforts during the next few months to craft solutions that will meet the needs of these three amazing state parks in the Valley of the Moon."

Major issues to be reviewed in the next few weeks include liability and security. VMNHA hopes to provide a roadmap for other organizations who hope to save their parks. Stancil stated that "the Parks Alliance partnership has helped us work directly with public agencies and non-profits in our county. The synergy and support helped us immeasurably. This is a forum for sharing what works and airing frustrations, ultimately pushing us to do our best to save the parks."

Nam-Bok and the New Wave; or, How Jean-Luc Godard Read Jack London

Kevin J. Hayes

The story of how New Wave filmmaker Jean-Luc Godard read Jack London starts in London with the publication of the *Fitzroy Edition*. This collection of Jack London's works, which Arco Publications issued during the 1960s, was the brainchild of I. O. Evans. A South-African who spent most of his working life as a British civil servant, Evans devoted himself to literary pursuits after retiring from the civil service in 1956 (Reginald 89). His friend C. S. Lewis called him a "brother scienfictionist" (584). In the late 1950s, Evans spearheaded a collected English translation of the works of Jules Verne as a way of introducing his writings to a new generation of English readers. When the Jules Verne edition proved successful, Evans sought to do the same with Jack London.

The first volume in the *Fitzroy Edition of the Works of Jack London* appeared in 1962. Before the year was out, three more titles in this collection appeared. Arco issued additional titles through 1967, including *Children of the Frost*, London's sympathetic collection of short stories about the native people of northwest Canada, which appeared in 1963. Copies of this new edition of *Children of the Frost* also crossed the channel to France. *Children of the Frost* had been translated into French in the 1930s, but the translation had been out of print for decades. After Godard got hold of a copy of *Children of the Frost*, the work exerted an important influence on his filmmaking, an influence that has yet to be fully appreciated.

When Jack London published *Children of the Frost* in 1902, reviewers often singled out the third story, "Nam-Bok the Unveracious," as the finest one in the whole collection ("Books" 12; "Fiction" 12; "Jack" 12). When London first tried to publish the story in the magazines, then titled "Nam-Bok, The Liar," he met with considerable resistance. He successively submitted it to eight magazines before one accepted it for publication (London, *Complete* 3: 2511).



The contemporary appreciation of the story by the reviewers of *Children of the Frost* provided some vindication. Changing the title when he revised the story for the collection, London cancelled the word "Liar" in favor of "Unveracious." The word seems strange now, but it was absolutely commonplace in the early twentieth century. Coined by Thomas Carlyle in the 1840s, the word "unveracious" frequently occurs in the turn-of-the-century political discourse.¹

Jean-Luc Godard's response to *Children of the Frost* parallels the response of London's contemporary readers. Godard also found "Nam-Bok the Unveracious" to be the most memorable story in the collection. He was so taken with it that he made it a part of *Band of Outsiders*, a playful film he made the year after Arco republished *Children of the Frost*. Based on *Fools' Gold*, a Dolores Hitchens crime novel, *Band of Outsiders* tells the story of one woman, two men, and a badly botched robbery. The woman is named Odile. Played by Godard's wife, Anna Karina, Odile has discovered that Monsieur Stoltz, a boarder living in her aunt's villa, has stashed hundreds of thousands of francs in the armoire of his room. She tells Franz, who is played by Sami Frey, about the loot. He, in turn, tells his friend Arthur, played by Claude Brasseur, who schemes to steal the money with their help. Franz and Odile are dating casually as the film begins, but Arthur steals her away from Franz, as well.

Once Arthur and Odile meet, Franz seldom has a chance to be alone with her, but he takes advantage of one opportune moment shortly before their attempted

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robbery. The two discuss what they will do afterwards. Odile asks where he will go, wondering if he might go to South America. No, Franz replies, he will go north to Jack London country instead. "He wrote some terrific books," he tells Odile. To prove his point, Franz provides a fairly detailed plot summary of one particular Jack London story. He does not name the story, but, sure enough, Franz relates the plot of "Nam-Bok the Unveracious."

"There's one about an Indian who's a big liar, but really big!" Franz begins. "He's such a liar that the villagers, fed up, say: 'Go. Come back when you stop lying.' They send him off in a canoe and he travels for two years. He comes home and everybody asks how his trip was. He says: 'Great. I saw these huge machines rolling along . . .'" To demonstrate the sight and sound of a railway train, Franz moves his arms piston-like and makes a chugging noise. "There were others that flew like this," Franz continues, moving one of his hands to imitate an airplane. Obviously Franz does not remember the details of the story precisely: "Nam-Bok the Unveracious" originally appeared two years before the Wright Brothers made their famously flight at Kitty Hawk. Franz continues: "And there were these great big houses." They all look at him and say: 'As big a liar as ever!' So they send him off in a canoe again, this time for good."

Franz's version of "Nam-Bok the Unveracious" changes the story considerably. In Jack London's tale, Nam-Bok leaves his community by accident when his kayak veers off course and drifts out to sea. As Franz retells the story in *Band of Outsiders*, Nam-Bok is initially ostracized from his community for telling lies. His early behavior thus establishes a precedent through which the members of his community can interpret his later behavior, and they subsequently interpret the truths he tells as lies. Franz's version of the story essentially eliminates both the ambiguity and the supernatural. In Jack London's story, Nam-Bok has no history of lying. Upon his return, the members of his community cannot discern whether Nam-Bok has returned from his travels a liar or if the figure that appears is the spirit of Nam-Bok from the world of shadows, a supernatural presence whose strange tales strike fear into the native people.

Regardless of his inaccuracies in relating the tale, Franz's passion for the works of Jack London remains clear. His fascination is consistent with other aspects of his character. He



has a penchant for all things American. He wears a trench coat and a fedora reminiscent of Humphrey Bogart. He studies English, plays basketball, and aspires to race in the Indianapolis 500. He enjoys many aspects of American literature and popular culture. He closely identifies with Loopy de Loop, an American cartoon character with French Canadian overtones. A Hanna-Barbera creation, Loopy de Loop is a cartoon wolf that wears a toque and speaks English with a French accent. Loopy de Loop essentially bridges French and American culture. Occurring shortly before Franz relates the plot of "Nam-Bok the Unveracious," the reference to this wolfish character anticipates the reference to Jack London, the author of the greatest wolf story in American litera-

ture. Taken together, the two references blend popular culture and high culture, something which is characteristic of Godard's work, characteristic of New Wave cinema, and, indeed, characteristic of postmodern expression.

Back at his flat, as Godard explains in his voiceover narration, Franz has a whole shelf of American books, works that shape the way he sees the world. As he and Arthur discuss their robbery plans, Arthur cannot understand why Monsieur Stoltz would keep his money in plain sight. Franz can: He remembers a story he had read in one of his American books about a man who has stolen a letter and hides it simply by keeping it out in the open. Franz does not name the author or the title of the story, but he obviously has in mind "The Purloined Letter." Franz's enthusiasm for Jack London parallels his enthusiasm for Edgar Allan Poe and, indeed, for so many other aspects of American culture.

Yet the attention that Jean-Luc Godard gives to "Nam-Bok the Unveracious" in *Band of Outsiders* goes beyond his attention to Poe and well beyond what seems necessary to develop Franz's fascination with American culture. By the time he made *Band of Outsiders*, Godard had already established a reputation for placing numerous literary references in his films. When François Truffaut made *Fahrenheit 451* two years later, he boasted that he would include more books in one film than Godard had used in all of his films. Though numerous, most of the literary references in Godard's films pass very quickly. Often he includes actual books as part of his mise-en-scene, flashing close-ups of their cover titles or showing his characters in the process of reading. The reference to "Nam-Bok the Unveracious" is considerably more extensive—and deservedly so: "Nam-Bok" accomplishes

much, not only in *Band of Outsiders*, but also in Godard's oeuvre as a whole.

Franz relates the plot of "Nam-Bok the Unveracious" after Odile has professed her love for Arthur, but the story helps Odile to see something in Franz she had not noticed previously. Franz's knowledge of exotic, faraway places gives him a romantic aura. Jack London's books have broadened his perspective, allowing him to imagine travel to distant parts of the globe.

The story of "Nam-Bok the Unveracious" also extends the theme of deceit that runs through the film. Earlier in the story Franz had lied to Odile; she had lied to him; and both had admitted their lies freely. In the picture of modern Paris the movie paints, lying seems like a given, part and parcel of everyday social interaction. People not only are expected to lie, they are also expected to accept the lies that others tell. The pervasive nature of lying in modern society may help to explain why Franz somewhat misremembers the plot of "Nam-Bok the Unveracious." By making Nam-Bok a liar from the start, Franz imposes his own world view onto the story. The story of Nam-Bok, on the other hand, offers an alternate way of life. Instead of tolerating lies, the members of Nam-Bok's community mete out swift justice when it comes to liars. In Franz's version of the story, Nam-Bok is temporarily banished from his community for telling lies. After his brief return, Nam-Bok is permanently banished for telling what his friends and family take to be lies. There is a certain allure to the community in "Nam-Bok the Unveracious." This is one place that has a no tolerance policy when it comes to lying.

Yet this primitive community is no utopia. What Nam-Bok tells the people upon his return are not lies. They are truths, but they are truths that are so alien to the native inhabitants of his home that his old friends and neighbors are unsure how to take what he tells them. They simply cannot accept what he has to say at face value. Their intolerance for liars creates a major stumbling block preventing them from accepting the advances of science and technology. It keeps their minds closed and stops them from accepting or even considering new ideas.

"Nam-Bok the Unveracious" has implications beyond *Band of Outsiders*. Godard has often used literary allusion to link his films together. Generally speaking, Godard's films are marked by a sprightly playfulness, which provides one reason why he uses literary allusion to cross-reference his various films—but not the only reason. Godard's literary allusions also contribute to the continuity to his oeuvre. Frequently he has planted ideas in one film that he has cultivated in a later one. Alternatively, he has often used a later film to gloss an earlier one. The reference to "Nam-Bok the Unveracious" in *Band of Outsiders* functions as a gloss on a film he had directed the previous year, *Les Carabiniers*. The action of this film mirrors the action of Jack London's story. Toward the end of the film, the two protagonists, Ulysses and Michel-Ange, return home from war with a satchel full of postcards. They display the images to their wives as they try to convince them that they now own all the objects the postcards depict.

Godard would continue to read and refer to Jack London. *Pierrot le fou*, released the year after *Band of Outsiders*, contains another reference to Jack London. Toward the end of *Pierrot le fou*, Ferdinand, who is played by Jean-Paul Belmondo, grapples with the strange events that have occurred over the

course of the film. He uses his knowledge of literature to understand what has happened and briefly compares his experience with episodes from the novels of Joseph Conrad, Robert Louis Stevenson, William Faulkner, and Jack London. In no other film, however, does Godard give Jack London the kind of attention he gives him in *Band of Outsiders*.

"Nam-Bok the Unveracious" may have also appealed to Godard because it contains a reference to the cinema, which is remarkable given the date of the story. Unable to convince his old friends and family about the truth of anything he has



seen, Nam-Bok considers telling them about motion pictures and phonograph records—"machines wherein visions of living men were to be seen" and "machines from which come the voices of men," but he decides against it, realizing his people would never be able understand such things (London, *Complete*, 1: 584).

A self-reflexive quality marks the cinema of Jean-Luc Godard and, in general, the cinema of the French New Wave. Godard's allusion to "Nam-Bok the Unveracious" also functions as a comment on Godard's creative vision. Throughout his lengthy career, Godard has been especially attracted to literary works that can be interpreted as analogues for the cinema. Nam-Bok's storytelling process closely parallels Godard's filmmaking process. Essentially, Godard sees his films as exercises in truth telling. Referring to the speed a motion picture as it passes through a projector, the title character of *Le Petit Soldat* says, "Cinema is truth twenty-four times a second." The challenge Godard faces as a filmmaker is convincing skeptical audiences of the truths he tells, which is the identical task Nam-Bok faces. Godard's challenging films have often met resistance from his audiences. Sometimes fellow filmmakers have resisted his message. In a witty

redaction of Godard's famous saying, Brian De Palma has said, "The cinema lies twenty-four times a second" (qtd. in Lee-Wright 92).

Perhaps Godard has been attracted to Jack London's story because he can see himself in Nam-Bok. Throughout his lengthy filmmaking career, he has faced a daunting task: To try and make audiences understand the challenging concepts he presents to them. Like Nam-Bok, Godard has faced great difficulty making audiences understand him and accept the truths he tells. Or, to risk an even broader generalization: Jack London's works often serve as analogues for the difficulties man faces in the modern world.

Note

1. The *Oxford English Dictionary* cites a 13 April 1845 notebook entry from Jane Welsh Carlyle as the earliest recorded usage of the word "unveracious," but Thomas Carlyle was using the word at least two years earlier (118).

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Recent Jack London Publications

by
Calvin Hoovestol

Jack London: San Francisco Stories Matthew Asprey, Preface by Rodger Jacobs Sydney, Australia: Sydney Samizdat Press, 2010. 312 pgs. \$11.99 (paper)

Asprey teaches creative writing at Macquarie University, Sydney, Australia. He claims in the extended Introduction that he was inspired by a 2009 trip to San Francisco while he was "rooming with a transient crowd of international backpackers and vagabonds" at the Green Tortoise Hostel in North Beach to collect this anthology of London stories set in the San Francisco Bay Area. Some of the five stories in the "Youth" section and some of the four stories in the "San Francisco Past and Future" section are excerpts, but the seven stories in the "Tales of the Fish Patrol" section and the six stories of "The Bay Area" section are included in their entirety. London's "The Story of An Eyewitness" concludes the book as an "Epilogue: 18 April 1906" about the fire that destroyed the old city of London's youth. London reports that throughout the night "tens of thousands" of homeless people from all ranks of society fled the flames, "yet everybody was gracious. The most perfect courtesy obtained. Never in all of San Francisco's history, were her people so kind and courteous as on this night of terror." Rodger Jacobs's preface recasts the 2003 essay "Ghost Land" as a personal meditation on Heinold's First and Last Chance Saloon, (still open in Oakland today), where young Jack London studied, read, drank, fraternized, and wrote about his life and the people around him.

The Asian Writings of Jack London: Essays, Letters, Newspaper Dispatches, and Short Fiction by Jack London Introductory Analysis by Daniel A. Métraux. With a Foreword by Wilton S. Dillon Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 2009. ix, 322 pgs. \$119.95 (hardcover)

Wilton S. Dillon, Senior Scholar Emeritus of the Smithsonian Institution, notes in the Foreword that "London was alone among the writers of his era in his realization that the age of Western dominance was coming to an end." Daniel A. Métraux, Chair of Asian Studies at Mary Baldwin College in Staunton, Virginia, has a prolific publication background on Japan, China, Korea, and other Asian nations. In the Preface to this book, Métraux clarifies his

attempt to portray London's view of Asians as "sympathetic and well developed" rather than xenophobic, simplistic, or anti-Asian. Métraux does cite Jonah Raskin's argument in *The Radical Jack London* (2008) that London was a Social Darwinist who proclaimed superiority of the Anglo-Saxon; however, he also explains how London's essay on "The Yellow Peril," written in Feng-Wang-Cheng, Manchuria, for publication in the San Francisco *Examiner* on 25 September 1904, "peers into the future and predicts the rise of both Japan and China as major economic powers." London "suggests that the supremacy of the West will decline and that both Japan and China would emerge as strong modern powers later in the twentieth century with China in time surpassing even Japan." Métraux argues that London's "The Yellow Peril" essay is "a prediction, not a racist diatribe" and that London was "one of the few writers of the era who had a profound respect for Asians, who wrote about them sympathetically as real people, and who more often than not blamed his fellow 'Anglo-Saxon' whites for the misery of the Asians or other oppressed folk who often appear in his stories." In fact, "London near the end of his life had become an avid internationalist and strong supporter of a multiculturalism," culminating in his plea for improved communication between East and West in his 1915 essay "The Language of the Tribe."

The Oxford Handbook of American Literary Naturalism Edited by Keith Newlin, Oxford UP, 2011. 534 pgs. \$150.00 (hardcover)

Keith Newlin, Chair of the English Department at the University of North Carolina Wilmington and a noted authority on naturalism in general and the work of Theodore Dreiser and Hamlin Garland in particular, has brought about an impressive collaboration of scholars as a representation of current research in American literary naturalism. Treating the subject both topically and thematically, the volume's essays link what Newlin calls "the naturalistic imagination" to a romantic "dream world" of "melodramatic vision" that distinguishes naturalism's moral "literature with a purpose" from realism's "observation" of life without the overt moralizing of "authorial commentary." Authoritative contributors present 28 original essays on Dreiser, Norris, Crane, and London. Accompanying these are other authoritative articles on the parameters of genre itself in animating "naturalist tensions" within issues of race, class, gender, sexuality, determinism, atavism, psychology, urban excess, crime, film, literary commerce, drama, and visual arts. Newlin's project suggests that "the traditional conception of naturalism as a movement occurring between 1890 and 1915 and focusing on deterministic depictions of humanity as the passive pawns of an indifferent world has, in recent years, undergone considerable shifting." He finds a

"continuing presence of naturalism in authors as diverse as Kate Chopin, Edith Wharton, Upton Sinclair, Ernest Hemingway, John Steinbeck, Richard Wright, Joyce Carol Oates, Cormac McCarthy, and Don DeLillo." This collection is a required scholarly read for naturalists, and happens to be a well-indexed, comprehensive reference work for the experienced specialist.

Critical Companion to Jack London: A Literary Reference to His Life and Work

Jeanne Campbell Reesman New York: Facts on File Inc., 2011. 423 pgs. \$75.00 (hardcover)

As the definitive compendium and essential reference guide for London's life and work, this single volume provides thorough plot synopses, critical commentaries, analyses of primary characters, and knowledgeable suggestions for further reading for all of London's famous texts as well as most of his lesser-known works. The dozen pages of introductory biography, punctuated with captivating photos, summarize the man and his artistry within the historical contexts of his life. Alphabetically organized entries are indexed for easy use, while a bibliography of secondary sources engages the curious scholar. A chronological bibliography lists all of London's novels, short fiction collections, plays, nonfiction books, fiction and nonfiction collections, letters, and notable modern editions. An extensive encyclopedia of People, Places, and Ideas related to London covers such broad topics as socialism, eugenics, and the Pan-Pacific Union as well as such specific ones as friends, family, and theorists London admired.

Jack London: Photographer Jeanne Campbell Reesman, Sara S. Hodson, and Philip Adam Athens: U. of Georgia Press, 2010. 288 pgs. \$49.95 (hardcover)

Blending the best elements of visual art and literature, this first-ever reproduction of more than two hundred high-quality photographs out of the nearly twelve thousand photos Jack London collected during his global travels simply overwhelms the reader with the vicarious thrill of experiencing London's creative vision in each captivating moment. Reesman is a renowned London scholar and legendary UT-San Antonio English professor. Hodson has administered the Jack London Papers for more than thirty years and currently serves as curator of literary manuscripts at the Huntington Library. Artistic photographer Adam has worked with California museums and cultural institutions for more than thirty years to preserve historical photo collections. This collaboration illuminates London's photographs as stories in themselves. Adam's duotone reproductions from silver gelatin prints recapture

the tropical lighting and deep shadows of London's originals, while Reesman and Hodson provide detailed historical and personal context with excerpts from London's novels, stories, newspaper articles, and personal notes about specific pictures. It is a stunning visual and literary presentation of London's "human documents" that embraced the demoralized poverty of *The People of the Abyss* in the slums of London, England (1903), the daily struggles of Japanese and Korean civilians during the Russo-Japanese War (1904), the devastation of the 1906 San Francisco Earthquake (with Charmian London's diary description of looking into the eyes of a dying young man amid the carnage), lively Samoa commerce and the ordinary activities of Hawai'ian lepers in the Kalaupapa settlement when the Londons visited on their boat the *Snark*, described in *The Cruise of the Snark* (1907-1908). London also photographed dozens of sailors suspended high above the ocean while clutching the crossbeam of the *Dirigo* (1912) and disheartened war prisoners of the Mexican revolution (1914). Philip Adam reminds the reader that "to make meaningful photographs, you must do more than look: as [John] Ruskin suggested, you must see." Close to 90 percent of London's photographs were made outside the United States, mostly in Asia and the South Seas, with sympathetic recognition of native self-respect and cultural pride. The introduction invites us to ponder these "moving portraits of individuals whose cultural differences pale beside their common humanity." This book is spectacular, even if you're not a fan of Jack London or have never read any of his work. If you open any page anywhere in the text, you will be hooked to return, reread, re-think, and re-view.

Jack London's Wolf House

Gregory W. Hayes and Matt Atkinson. Illustrations by Steven Chais. Glen Ellen, CA: Valley of the Moon Natural History Association, 2010. 66 pgs. \$12.50 (paper)

Former park rangers Greg Hayes and Matt Atkinson, who both worked at the Jack London State Historic Park for a combined 44 years, present a careful study of Wolf House, London's grand but doomed Sonoma Valley home that mysteriously burned in 1913 before it was finished. Illustrations by Steven Chais, rare photographs of Jack and Charmian in various areas of the nearly completed home, pictures of guests admiring the courtyard and pool, San Francisco architect Albert Farr's sketches, London's diary entries, Italian stonemason Natale Forni's arcades of volcanic rock, excerpts from ranch superintendent Eliza London Shepard's letter to her stepbrother Jack, ranch photos, working blueprints, detailed floor plans, a watercolor painting of the ruins, Charmian's account of the project and the devastating fire, newspaper coverage of the destruction, a bibliography, London's hopeful

1906 description of "The House Beautiful" that he intended to build, modern color photos, and computer-generated images reconstruct the magnificent edifice and justify London's pride in the expensive building project. Dr. Robert Anderson's Forensics Team analyzed the fire's source and presented their case, reprinted here, in 1996 at the annual Jack London Birthday Banquet in Sonoma. This attractive book is available at the park or online at www.jacklondonpark.com.

In Many Wars, By Many War Correspondents (Updated Edition) edited by George Lynch and Frederick Palmer, Foreword by John Maxwell Hamilton Baton Rouge: LSU Press, 2010. 239 pgs. \$22.50 (paper)

In 1904 journalist George Lynch of the *London Daily Chronicle* and a famous collection of war correspondents from Britain, the United States, Germany, France, and Italy assembled in Tokyo to cover the Russo-Japanese War. "Imprisoned" with wine and fine dining at the Imperial Hotel for months on end by excessively polite but strategically equivocating Japanese, the reporters were not allowed to travel anywhere near the fighting and were watched, under continual surveillance, by Japanese hosts. Lynch and Frederick Palmer of *Collier's* proposed that they all write a brief essay about the most exciting event in their careers. Printed in Tokyo, the book's 49 stories range from a personal witnessing of President McKinley's assassination and the suffering of women and children in "How South Americans Fight" to "the thirst question" and "How I Was Nearly Beheaded." Former foreign correspondent John Maxwell Hamilton, founding dean of LSU's Manship School of Mass Communication, explains in the Foreword that "for the first time in modern history, an Asian nation defeated a European one," and he introduces "stories that correspondents were regaling each other with in the hotel bar." Humor punctuates tragedy. Understatement amplifies the emotional impact of poignant vignettes. One writer huddled naked in a trench during the Boer war because a battle erupted while he was swimming. Another writer, hunkered in brush during a night of close gunfire, breathed easier when he realized that two baseball-sized objects that landed on the ground beside him were mangos rather than grenades or enemy signals. An Irish Brigade's clash with the Durban Light Infantry over a truckload of beer was nearly fatal. One man faced "an unpleasant choice" between jumping into a swarm of sharks or staying aboard a burning ship loaded with ammunition, and stories like "How Stephen Crane Took Juana Dias" are self-parodies of the reporter's role. Jack London's story about "A Camera and a Journey" recounts his dramatic capture as a suspected Russian spy and his Japanese trial for taking pictures of civilians. London's explanation that he took the photographs simply "for my pleas-

ure" didn't convince legal authorities until Japanese journalists came to his aid. These vivid stories transport the reader to the lively bar at the Imperial Hotel in 1904 and present wartime issues of artistic freedom.

Wolf: The Lives of Jack London James L. Haley, New York: Basic Books, 2010. 379 pgs. \$29.95 (hardcover)

After the 1903 publication of his sensational *The Call of the Wild*, London was "a full-fledged literary phenomenon, a front-page celebrity, and the highest-paid writer in America"; yet he is "perhaps the most misunderstood figure in the American literary canon." Haley openly proclaims his disdain for "a tight circle of scholars intent on vindicating London as a Great Writer" and his deliberate intent to write a "guerrilla piece" of "penumbral investigation, researching around the subject" in opposition to the "establishment reactionaries" who lack his "biographer's eye" for unbiased reporting. Although he admires London's literary skill, Haley portrays London as "a poor husband and a disastrous father" because "while in some ways he was never a child, in other ways he never grew up . . . maturity and even fidelity still eluded him." Haley documents facts about London's life in extensive chapter notes, but he often presumes to know precisely what London and others are thinking. For example, wife Charmian buys London a horse named Washoe Ban that had "eyes as liquid as his own . . . London's heart melted at the sight of the magnificent animal. For once it seemed as though his life was on track." His tone frequently is combative, and his opinions are brusque. For instance, he remarks in a chapter note that "in one of the coats of white-wash in her biography, Charmian denied any trouble with Roscoe [Eames]." He repeatedly speculates that London was bisexual during various periods of his life (beginning when he was a teenage sailor) and that a supposed homosexual relationship with writer George Sterling, whose wife was "a sour old gossip-monger," created jealousy among both men and women (like London's wife Charmian), especially when the two men visited "the seamy parts of San Francisco." Where Haley conjectures homosexuality, most other biographers for the past hundred years have acknowledged London's open advocacy of heterosexual masculinity. Haley does not produce evidence, but his agenda prompts a question: Are issues of London's private sexuality relevant for an assessment of his literary legacy? Haley doesn't attempt to connect London's life to the novels or stories or to explain the relevance of alleged homosexuality rather than close friendships. The allegations are tedious and irrelevant. Haley writes with the creative enthusiasm of a fiction novelist, but his continual presumptions about what various individuals were thinking or doing at precise moments and his facile assumptions about individual motives violate the limits of credibility for legitimate biographical research.

Trends in Jack London Research 1900-2010

Eric Carl Link

Methodology

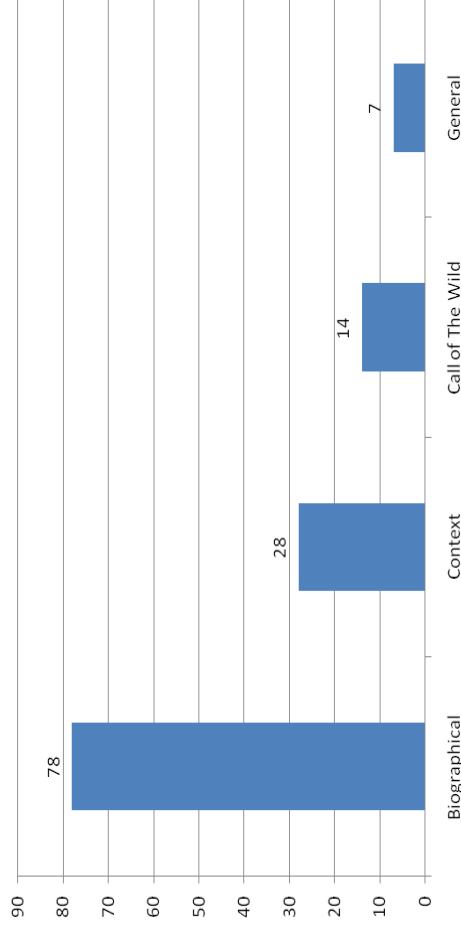
I classified, by page count, scholarship written on Jack London in each of the eleven decades from 1900 to the present. I relied heavily on Joan Sherman's *Jack London: A Reference Guide* (1977) for material published up through the mid-1970s, and the MLA Bibliography for material published from the mid-1970s to the present. These were the two primary databases I mined for information. However, I also used a number of other bibliographic resources along the way, including bibliographies supplied in books such as Labor and Reesman *Jack London: Revised Edition* (1994), among others. I did not count incidental references to London or very brief discussions of London, nor did I count early reviews, except when clearly a longer review-essay. For material that was reprinted, I counted, generally, only the first printing. I did not include any unpublished theses or dissertations, nor did I count, as a general rule, anything that appeared in popular magazines and other non-scholarly venues. I also left out material whose primary focus is on film adaptation of London's works. Finally, as will be noted below, in a few cases I chose to let certain key books stand separate, rather than attempt to lump them into a particular category.

I feel compelled to give a few disclaimers about this material. This is, at *best*, only a *semi*-scientific survey. I dare not say what it is at *worst*. I counted pages, not words, and I made no attempt at all to correct for font size or format. One page of a double-columned nine-point font printed in 8.5 x 11 format might be the equal—in terms of word count—of four pages of a single-column twelve point font printed in 5 x 7 format. And, beyond these irregularities, I am sure that I missed an item or two along the way.

Nevertheless, my goal was to see if I could spot *trends*, so missing a few pieces here and there is, I hope, within acceptable limits of the study. With all of these necessary disclaimers and apologies noted, let's proceed to the first decade:

At the 10th Biennial Jack London Symposium held November 4-6, 2010, in Santa Rosa, California, I had the honor of being one of the panelists in the concluding round-table discussion. The topic of the discussion was trends in Jack London scholarship during the past twenty years. As I started to gather my thoughts for the panel several weeks prior to the symposium, I decided it might prove an interesting exercise if I could try to assemble a few thoughts of a non-impressionistic, semi-scientific sort, rather than offer the audience my own impressionistic and subjective opinions on the matter. Once I got rolling on the project, it became evident that merely going back twenty years didn't give the "big picture" I was hoping for. And so I marched all the way back to 1900 and decide to try for the whole thing. The end result was a series of charts that attempted to paint, in *very* broad strokes, a picture of the development of Jack London scholarship for the past 110 years, and I presented these charts to the audience at the symposium. This report is a revised version of that material.

1900-1909



In this decade, writing on Jack London generally fell into four categories: *Biographical* (with 78 pages of material devoted to London biography), *Context* (at 28 pages), *The Call of the Wild* (with 14 pages), and something I'm calling *General* (at 7 pages). Two of these columns need some explanation. By *General* I'm lumping together those pieces whose primary purpose is not to break new interpretive or biographical ground, but, rather, whose primary purpose is to provide an introduction to Jack London for a more general audience. We all know the pattern: some light, non-probing biography, some summary of major works, a few non-threatening, inviting interpretive comments for the non-scholar, etc. The kind of writing that says "Hey! Jack London is cool. You should read him."

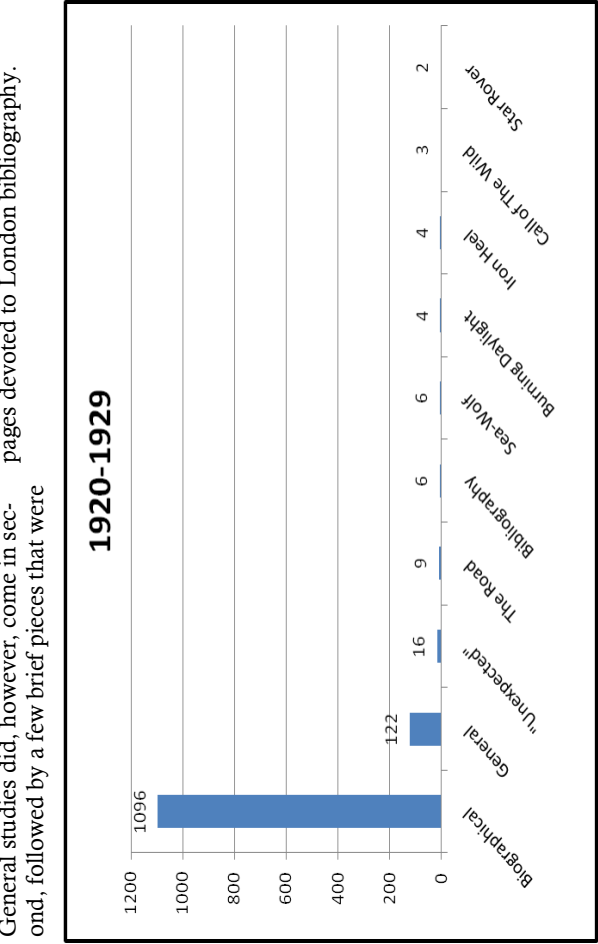
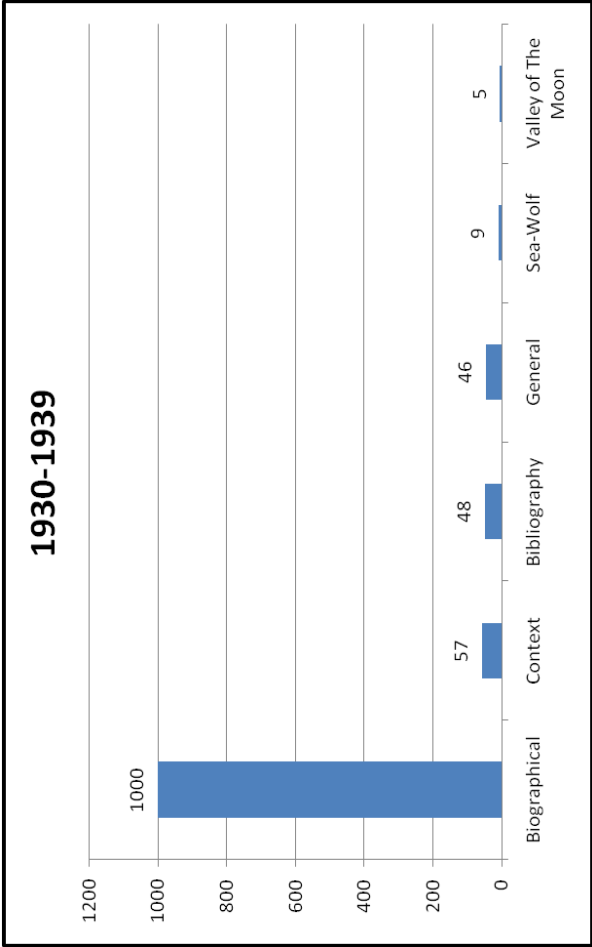
The trickier column, *Context*, examines the work of Jack London in relation to a particular theme, issue, or historical-philosophical framework. These are studies that typically treat more than one primary text (and sometimes many more). They are studies that do things like position Jack London within the tradition of the beast fable, or they look at several of London's works within the context of turn-of-the-century

Socialism, and so forth. Some of the dominant "contexts" that critics seem to return to with some frequency include looking at the relationship between Jack London, his works, and the following: Socialism, Naturalism and Philosophy, Boxing and Other Sports, Relationship to Other National Literatures, Race, Racism, Relationship to Native Populations and Imperialism, Animal Stories and Beast Fables, The Short Story, Women, the New Woman, Masculinity, Femininity, Androgyny and Domesticity, Agrarianism and Rural Living, Impact on Culture and on Other Writers, The Relation to London Biography, Plagiarism, and Science Fiction.

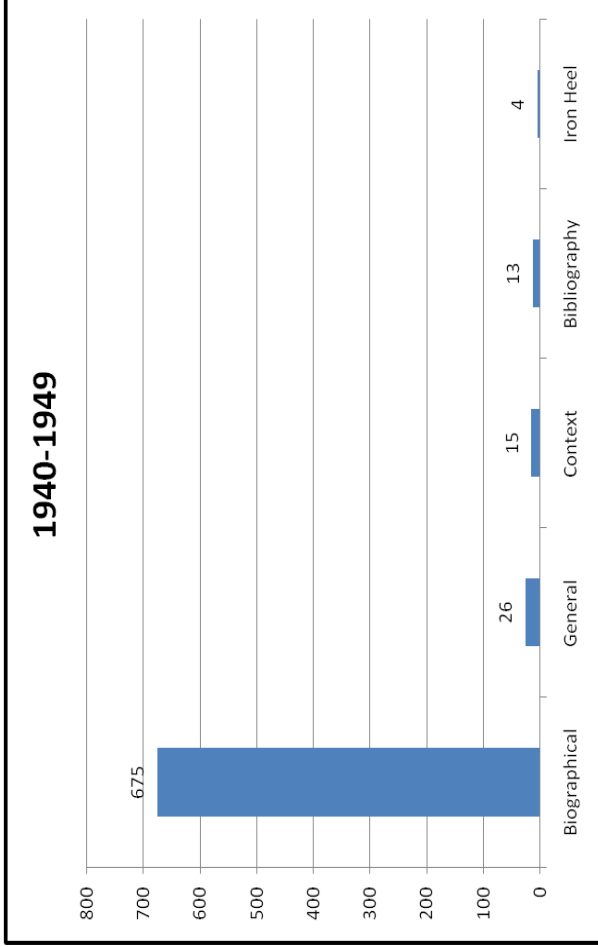
The list above is in no particular order, and some contexts, such as the socialist themes running through London's works, have attracted hundreds of pages of scholarly writing, while others on the list have not generated as much attention. Still, these are topics that have attracted numerous scholars over the past century and a case can be made that these are the topics, give or take, that have dominated "contextual" studies of London.



Biographical studies define the second decade more traditional analyses of a particular work. In the 1910s, we also see a couple General studies did, however, come in second, followed by a few brief pieces that were



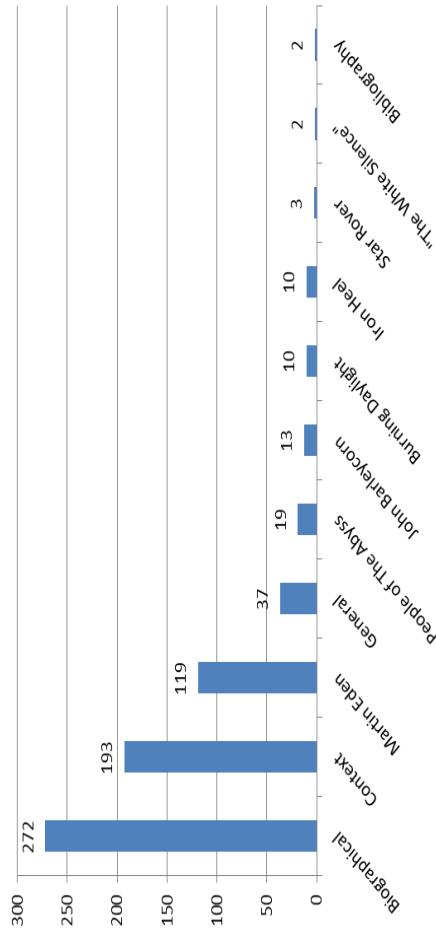
Again, London biography trumps everything. This is the decade, after all, of Charman London's two-volume *The Book of Jack London* (1921), which ran a solid 841 pages. The basic pattern that we see in the 1920s—



In the 1950s, however, scholars decided that there might actually be more to Jack London than his biography, and the pat-

tern of the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s breaks down:

1950-1959



Biographical studies still lead the pack, but don't dominate in the way they did in prior decades. Most importantly, however, is the increased interest in "contextual" studies, and the *slight* broadening of the number and type of primary texts by London that received individualized attention from scholars. This should come as no particular surprise. The shift in critical attentions given to

London parallels the shift in literary studies itself in the 1950s, with the New Criticism and its interests in close reading and intellectual history. In addition, it was a time when the English profession evolved rapidly and universities around the United States adopted more contemporary models of the professor/scholar.

1960-1969



The growing trend toward individualized treatment of single works in the 1950s exploded in the 1960s. And, biography was

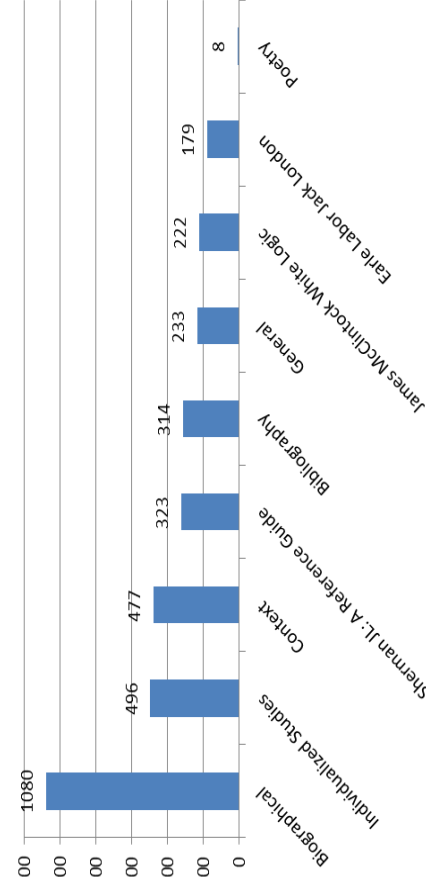
back on everyone's mind. We also see, however, a jump in attention paid to contextual studies, and the combination of contextual

studies and individual treatments of primary texts makes for a substantial increase in this decade in what we would consider traditional scholarship on London, and it makes the case that in the 1960s the academe began to lead Jack London into the stable. Finally, in the 1960s, for the first time, considerable effort was expended in bibliographic work on London, highlighted by the publication of

Hensley Woodbridge's *Jack London: A Bibliography* (1966), but also boasting some accumulated 122 other pages of bibliographic study beyond Woodbridge's work. From the 1970s forward, the proliferation of individualized treatments of primary texts necessities grouping them together into a single column—under the heading "Individualized Studies"—otherwise the chart would be unreadable.

Thus:

1970-1979



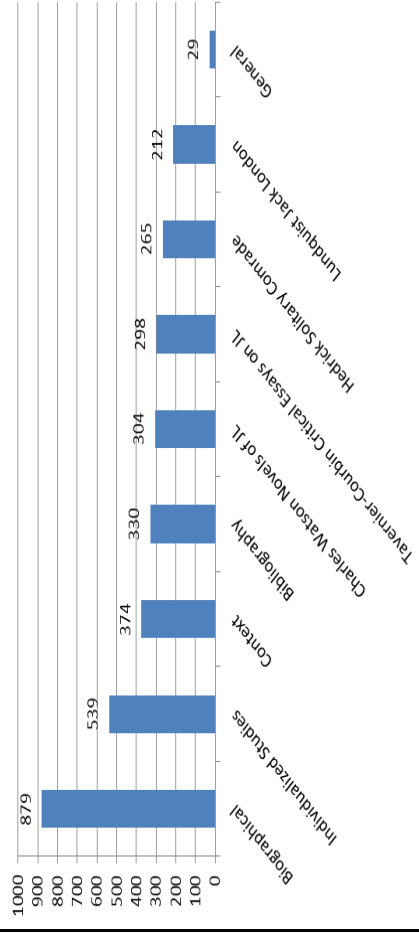
In the 1970s, the combination of individualized studies and contextual studies became something rather formidable. The decade also featured several books, such as Sherman's *Jack London: A Reference Guide* (1977) Labor's *Jack London* (1974), and McClintock's *White Logic* (1975), and, for the first time, if one adds together the individualized studies, the contextual studies, and the books by Labor and McClintock, then the amount of pages of analytical scholarship surpasses biographical studies for the first time. To illustrate the 496 pages of London primary works that received individual treatment on the '70s: here is how the 496 pages breaks down: *Martin Eden* (94), *Iron Heel* (74), *Sea-Wolf* (45), "The Red One" (28), *Call of the Wild* (23), *People of the Abyss* (19), *The Road* (18), *White Fang* (17), *John Barleycorn* (16), "To Build a Fire" (15), *Valley of the Moon* (15), *Before Adam* (12), *Gold* (11), *Little Lady of the Big House* (11), *On The Makaloa Mat* (11), "The House of Mapuhi" (9), "The

We'll see a similar distribution of scholarly attention in the next few decades. During the 1980s, the individualized studies subdivide among these primary texts, with some of the usual suspects garnering the lion's share of critical attention: *Star Rover* (124), *Sea-Wolf* (104), *Iron Heel* (80), *Call of the Wild* (31), *Mutiny of The Elsinore* (28), "Eyes of Asia" (24), "The Red One" (20), *Cruise of The Snark* (18), *Plays* (18), *People of The Abyss* (15), "The Water Baby" (14), *Martin Eden* (11), "Goliath" (8), "To Build a Fire" (8), *Before Adam* (6), *The Road* (6),

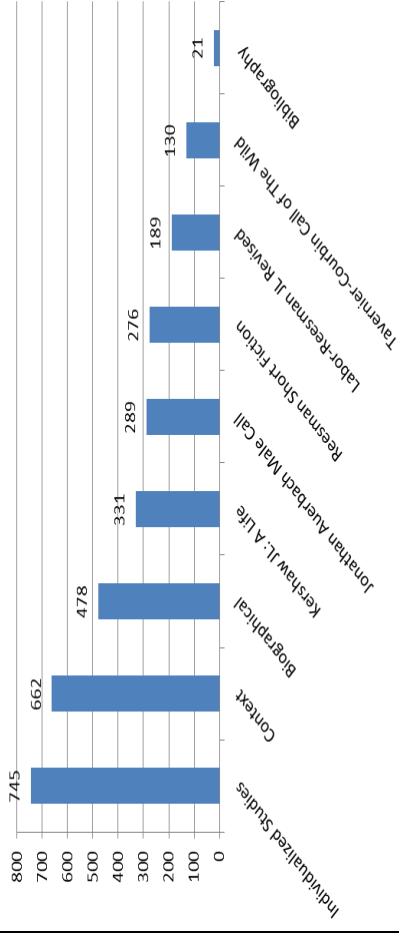
"Cherry" (5), "Koolah The Leper" (5), "God of His Fathers" (4), "Son of The Wolf" (4), "Law of Life" (3), *White Fang* (3).

During the 1980s, as is partially reflected in the graph, there were a number of significant books—by Watson, Tavernier-Courbin, Hedrick, and Lundquist—that solidified Jack London's status as a canonical writer. Biography remained of interest, and included in the 879 pages of biographical material full-length studies such as Stasz's *American Dreamers* (1988) and Perry's *Jack London: An American Myth* (1981).

1980-1989



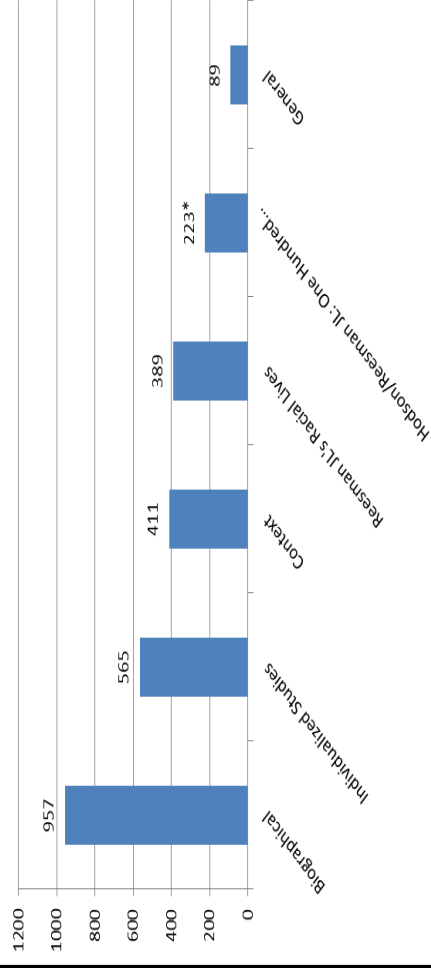
1990-1999



In the 1990s, individualized treatments of primary texts, for the first time, lead Jack London scholarship. Biographical treatments—if one separates out, as the graph does, Kershaw's biography—come in third, with contextual studies fast on the heels of the individualized studies. Even combining Kershaw's book with the other biographical treatments does not elevate biographical studies over the combined impact on field of the contextual and individualized studies, and when one adds to these analytical studies the books by Auerbach, Resman, Labor and Reesman, and Tavernier-Courbin, one might argue that the 1990s for marked the high point for analytical scholarship on Jack

London. As we saw in the 1970s and 1980s, the individualized studies covered diverse ground, with some of the same key works leading the charge: *Star Rover* (145), *Iron Heel* (92), *People of the Abyss* (57), *Call of the Wild* (50), *Sea-Wolf* (45), *Martin Eden* (29), *White Fang* (29), *Adventure* (27), "Cherry" (24), *Smoke Bellew* (21), "Koolah The Leper" (19), *Little Lady of the Big House* (18), *Cruise of The Snark* (17), "Strength of The Strong" (16), "All Gold Canyon" (14), *Valley of the Moon* (14), "The Red One" (11), "When The World Was Young" (11), *John Barleycorn* (10), Letters (10),

2000-2010



Once again, biographical studies lead the pack, but fully two-thirds of the 957 pages noted on the graph are consumed by two books: Clarice Stasz's *Jack London's Women* (2001) and James Haley's *Wolf* (2010). The amount of pages devoted to individualized studies dipped notably, but the diversity of treatment remains: *People of the Abyss* (83), *Martin Eden* (78), *Scarlet Plague* (42), *Sea-Wolf* (37), "Mauki" (27), *Call of the Wild* (25), *Valley of the Moon* (22), "Samuel" (21), "To Build Fire" (20), *Before Adam* (16), *Iron Heel* (16), *Star Rover* (16), *White Fang* (16), "The House of Pride" (15), "The Red One" (13), *Little Lady of the Big House* (13), "The Unparalleled Invasion" (12), *Cruise of The Snark* (12), "The Night-Born" (11), "South of The Slot" (10), "Law of Life" (9), *Adventure* (8), "A Piece of Steak" (7), "The Water Baby" (7), *John Barleycorn* (7), "The Chi-

The Road (10), "Samuel" (9), "Shin Bones" (9), "The Sun Dog Trail" (8), "Son of The Wolf" (7), "The Apostle" (7), "The Wit of Porportuk" (7), "White Silence" (7), "The Chingo" (5), "The Language of The Tribe" (5), "Whale Tooth" (5), *Scarlet Plague* (4), *Burning Daylight* (3). If the 1990s were the high-water mark for analytical scholarship on Jack London, the first decade of the 21st century didn't drop off too much, and witnessed the publication of a couple major books, of which Jeanne Reesman's *Jack London's Racial Lives* (2009) is arguably the standard bearer:

nago" (6), "The Sun Dog Trail" (6), "God of His Fathers" (5), "Priestly Prerogative" (5).

Clearly, we can't get enough of Jack London's biography. It has captured our attention for more than a century and won't let up, although one can't predict what the next decade will bring. The London renaissance was the 1960s. We had dipped our toes in the analytical waters in the 1950s, found the temperature inviting, and dived in during the 1960s. Most notable in the following decades is the diversity of primary texts that have caught scholars' attention. Yet, within this diversity of interests, a canon of London master-works seems to have been established, with *The Sea-Wolf*, *The Iron Heel*, *The People of the Abyss*, *The Call of the Wild*, *Martin Eden*, and *The Star Rover* as the central documents.