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New Voices/New Views:
The Next Wave of Librarians

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**Upcoming
Issue**

Summer 2007

*President's
Conference Issue*

New Voices/New Views:
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New Voices/New Views:
The Next Wave of Librarians

Last summer, we asked OLA's new and aspiring librarians to share their ideas and opinions about "what our libraries could be doing, where we should be going with services and collections, and how we should get there." With no limits on topics, content, or point of view, we were eagerly anticipating what the next generation of librarians would have to say. We were not disappointed by the results: a wonderfully diverse collection of voices and perspectives.

As we read first drafts, and conversed with the authors about their ideas, we were both struck by how important it is that we all help strengthen the new voices in our profession. As a new member of a community, it is difficult to speak with authority about where things should go. It is very easy to think, "I don't really have anything new to say." Our seven essays show clearly that the next wave of librarians has a lot to say. In our profession, the pace of change continues to accelerate. We need to encourage these new librarians to raise their voices now and become part of the conversations about issues that will shape the future of libraries.

In "Finding My Library Niche: Making Jello Without a Mold," 2006

Emporia graduate Sue Phelps echoes our call for engagement. She urges her peers to get involved in organizations like OLA, to speak up and to be positive forces in how the profession addresses serious issues like employment. Phelps' essay describes how many new graduates can feel disconnected from the profession as they struggle to find permanent employment in libraries. Despite this, she believes that new librarians "can make an impact on what libraries and librarians will look like down the road if we are involved in library organizations, the community, and the institutions that support our libraries."

Roberta Richards looks at where today's new librarians might be a few years down the road. In "A New Librarian Prepares for the Future (Or, Reflections on Right Livelihood)," this 2006 Emporia State graduate applies the Buddhist tradition of Right Livelihood to librarianship. In this ancient tradition, she finds a way that new librarians can maintain their passion for their chosen profession in the face of the day-to-day challenges all librarians face.

We expected to see new librarians focused on the future of our profession, and we were not disappointed. It is

very striking, though, that while these new librarians are looking forward, they remain very powerfully connected to the values and practices of the past. Current Emporia State students Nancy Lynn Peate, Melissa Ludeman and April Younglove all grapple directly with the question of change.

In "Danielle Steel, Splinters and the End of Reading," Peate considers the current divide between the pre-post-Google generations of librarians in light of past divides. Her interviews with librarians illuminate the consistency of change and our common resistance to it.

Melissa Ludeman goes a step further in "Librarians and Books: Value Beyond Content." She argues forcefully that librarians must think of books as more than information receptacles. She worries that by focusing on information and information technologies, librarianship might lose an important connection with the past, not only of our profession, but also of our culture.

Younglove's essay, "Cataloging Today: Thinking Globally, Acting Locally" looks for ways that libraries can strike a balance between locally-focused practices of the past, and the efficiencies made possible by the cooperative regional, national and even global

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relationships that shape cataloging in the twenty-first century. Talking to several catalogers from Oregon libraries, Younglove looks to both the past and the future, identifying the value of our individual practices and describing the technologies that might help libraries preserve that value in an increasingly networked world.

We also heard a call for new approaches and refreshed commitment to library services and users. Sue Kunda and Monique Lloyd encourage us to consider new collaborations and different ideas.

Kunda, an Emporia MLS student, examines the importance of collaboration and cooperation in today's libraries in her essay, "What's a Second Grader Doing in the University's Special Collections?" She urges us to take a holistic view of information literacy, arguing that it can not be seen as the purview of one group of librarians: school, academic or public. To give Oregon's students what they need to be successful students and lifelong learners, cooperative partnerships between all of these libraries are needed with particular attention to the potential leadership role of academic libraries.

Lloyd, also an Emporia MLS student, describes her recent path to librarianship as a Baby Boomer and uses her experience to chide our thinking on the profile of our staffs and our users. In "Perspectives of a Baby Boomer: What Boomers Will Do To and For Oregon Libraries," she suggests that the tension between the Boomer Generation as both library staff and library users is an important considering for the future of library services, spaces and resources.

Listening to the new voices reminds us that we too were new to the profession at one time. It is work to find your voice and your place in librarianship. But, it is worth it. That is what we told our authors as they struggled to get their thoughts and ideas into words that would communicate their vision and respect for their chosen path.

Anne-Marie Deitering
Valley Library
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Janet Webster
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Guest Editors

Finding My Library Niche:
Making Jello Without a Mold

by Sue Phelps
Washington State University Library, Vancouver

2006 Graduate of the School of Library and Information Management, Emporia State University

After the celebration of graduation and a short rest we, newly minted librarians, are hitting the bricks anticipating our first professional job. Some of us have left careers in other fields and expect to start over. Some of us are entering librarianship as a first career. Presumably, all of us have high hopes of putting what we have learned into practice in the library specialty of our choice. I am looking forward to a career in an academic library and look to the literature of local and national organizations and publications to assess the current employment climate.

The Oregon Library Association's Vision 2010 committee developed a plan for the future of Oregon Libraries based on a vision of what Oregon will be like in the year 2010. In their profile of academic libraries, one of the issues the committee addressed is the declining applicant pool of qualified individuals. Additionally, the Association of College and Research Libraries has also named recruitment, education and retention of librarians as one of the top seven issues facing academic libraries (Hisle, 2002).

These organizational reports give me the impression that academic libraries are in need of new librarians and that jobs should not be in short supply. At the same time library literature validates the experience of many in my graduating class who

Sue Phelps

are having a hard time finding a full-time, permanent, professional position in an academic setting. Why is this? In seeking to answer this question, I learned that it is not just job seekers in the academic field who are struggling. In fact, according to recent articles in library journals, entry-level professional jobs are hard to find in every area of librarianship. If we thought library school was tough, now we really have our work cut out for us! Here is what I found that may explain the discrepancy.

Projections from the 1990 census data indicated that there would be a large number of librarians retiring between 2010–14. However, those predictions have changed since the 2000 census. Now we are looking at those retirements being pushed back to 2015–19, assuming a retirement age of 65. Furthermore, there is no guarantee that the jobs retiring librarians will be leaving, many in management, will be filled with current librarians, leaving vacancies for new graduates to move into entry-level positions. Librarians, it seems, are not eager to move out of frontline jobs to assume management positions. Though there is a need to prepare the leaders of the future, the potential candidates are not motivated toward that end, leaving a shortage of qualified managers (Gordon, 2006).

Gordon describes this as a glut on the front lines, which is made more difficult by the cost-cutting measures seen in all types of libraries. According to a survey of nearly 900 job advertisements, full time, professional, entry-level positions are rare (Holt and Strock, 2005). Many professional positions are being refilled with non-professional staff or not being replaced at all. In addition, the entry-level positions that are available are going to librarians who have already been working in the profession. Holt and Strock, citing an earlier ARL Bimonthly Report published in 2000, state

that of 800 new hires in academic libraries in 1998 only one third were new graduates. This is also happening in public libraries. Professional jobs are being reduced to part-time or being filled by paraprofessionals or non-librarians with skills in technology.

If that weren't' enough to put a damper on the job search, think of the ALA estimates from 2000 predicting approximately 41,000 job openings between 2000 and 2010, or 4,100 jobs a year. At the same time, ALA also reported an average of 5,000 new MLS graduates entering the job market each year (Holt and Strock, 2005). Locally, two library schools and numerous online programs make the Northwest market especially tight for the place-bound job hunter. Even those casting a national net are likely to look for about a year before finding their first job.

Despite the difficulties described in the literature, people from my graduating class of May 2006 have found jobs during library school and since graduation. Many of those jobs are part-time, temporary, on-call, or paraprofessional. Happily some have found full-time permanent jobs in their chosen specialty. Still, like other MLS graduates around the country, others are considering leaving their hopes of being a librarian behind to see where else they can put their degree to work.

Graduates who have taken part time, temporary and on-call jobs have a mixed take on their status, myself included. First and foremost, we are happy to be working in a library. For those of us who are in our first library job it is the type of immersion learning that is just not possible in a brief practicum experience. People who are working part time or on-call in more than one library learn different systems, network with many different librarians and have the opportunity to learn skills and discover where they fit into the profession in a way

that someone in only one library cannot. For those who have family responsibilities, part-time positions might be just what they need in the professional world for now.

The down side of these part-time, temporary and on-call jobs is at least financial. It feels like an added cost of the MLS. For people who want a full-time professional position, we miss the sense of belonging that comes with having a job that fits your needs and matches your skills. This lack of belonging can translate into a lack of commitment as the librarian looks for permanent work elsewhere. It can be a nerve-wracking process to be in a temporary position waiting to see if your contract will be renewed or to be interviewing for your job along with other candidates. For those who work in more than one library, there is a risk of becoming over extended as you take on projects that interest you in each site and soon find that there is no time to do it all.

Currently, there is a two-year study sponsored by the Institute for Museum and Library Science looking at the future of librarians in the workforce. Headed by Dr. Jose-Marie Griffiths, Dean of the School of Information and Library Science at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, investigators will conduct a series of Web-based surveys of public, academic, school and special libraries. The goal is to assess the anticipated labor shortages, the types of jobs that will be available, and the skills that will be needed to fill vacancies, as well as how the field should approach recruitment, education and retention. For more detailed information check out the Web site at http://www.libraryworkforce. org/tiki-index.php. We can hope the outcomes will resolve the conflicting information that we are hearing at this time.

So, what can make the difference for students and graduates looking for jobs

right now? Experience! Practicum placements, especially for students who are new to the library field, are invaluable to add hands-on experience to academic learning. Though practica are encouraged, many people do not want to pay tuition in order to work for no compensation. Consequently, they miss out on the opportunity to gain valuable library experience. This experience is especially important because of the theoretical nature of MLS programs based on ALA accreditation. Projects completed during a practicum are often something that can be added to a resume, to say nothing of the professional reference from the site supervisor. There are also instances where practicum placements have turned into jobs.

Graduates can benefit by volunteering at a library or working in a part-time or temporary position to gain experience

to include on a resume while continuing to look for full-time employment. Staying in touch with the library and other librarians after losing regular contact with library school can help aspiring librarians avoid the temptation to give up as well as provide opportunities to network and make contacts that could be references or leads to jobs. Additionally, looking at job ads to see what skills are desirable and considering continuing education can make for a more attractive resume. Just when you thought you could read novels and take long walks on the beach …

Finally, as we advance in our careers we need to consider how our choices contribute to the future of librarianship as well as to our own success. Though right now many of us are focused on looking for our first professional job, there are questions to answer and problems to be solved about employment and other issues in our new profession. Technology, the economy and politics on a local to global scale will have an impact on how we are able to provide information services in the future. It is both exciting and frightening to take responsibility for what becomes of libraries in this new environment. We have a tradition to uphold and a future that looks like "jello without a mold." We can make an impact on what libraries and librarians will look like down the road if we are involved in library organizations, the community, and the institutions that support our libraries. We can all read Vision 2010, the white papers and reports offered by OLA and ALA, and find an area of interest in which to work and make our contribution. The greatest challenge may be to keep an open mind while we ride the wave of ambiguity we've heard so much about. My hope is that as members of the professional library community we can support each other through the challenges and spark each other's imaginations to creative solutions. After all, isn't that how we got through library school?

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A New Librarian Prepares for the Future (Reflections on Right Livelihood)

by Roberta M. Richards
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We new librarians are zealots. In library school, we embrace the concept of libraries as the cornerstone of democracy. We are inspired by the concept of intellectual freedom, and are eager to start doing our part to protect the free flow of information. We know the power of information literacy, and cannot wait for the opportunity to start promoting it. Many of my classmates entered library school after burning out in the private sector, and came to library school to seek more meaningful work. What could possibly be more fulfilling than spending your days connecting people and information?

With our idealism running high, imagine our surprise when we learned that some veteran librarians do not share our enthusiasm. Early on in our library school program, a professor instructed us to go to a reference desk with a question and see how we were treated. We visited a range of different libraries, both public and academic, in several different states. Most students reported being treated satisfactorily, and a few received exemplary service. However, a surprising number of us got a response that was perfunctory at best. We had just studied the art of the reference interview, and were dismayed that some librarians did not bother to delve deeper into the questions we brought them, even when they were not apparently busy. Worse yet, a few of us encountered librarians who were dismissive, and one was downright surly.

Perhaps these crabby librarians were burned out. They definitely did not seem to be enjoying their work. The thought of a burned out librarian, however, is a difficult concept for the enthusiastic library school student to digest. In a tight job market, these working librarians have the privilege of staffing the all-important reference desk and getting to use those incredibly cool information tools we were studying. They spend their days basking in the satisfaction of helping patrons meet information needs. On top of all that, they even receive a paycheck. How, we wondered, could anyone get tired of connecting people and information, upholding democracy, and defending intellectual freedom?

Of course, my classmates and I well know that when we (hopefully) find jobs, we will need to find ways to sustain our enthusiasm as our ideals come face to face with the mundane realities of daily life as a librarian: equipment failures, belligerent patrons, budget cuts, meager salaries, and the like. Assuming that we succeed in our first challenge, finding jobs, we will eventually face the challenge of not becoming burned out like some of the librarians we encountered at various reference desks. Fortunately, some of us can bring insights from our previous jobs to our new careers as librarians. I am one of those fortunate ones. My previous job was teaching world religion classes. My students and I explored the ethical tenets of different traditions on a range of topics, including the subject of work. Here I encountered the intriguing Buddhist concept of "right livelihood."

Buddhist teachings on the topic of work trace back to the Eightfold Path taught by Buddha over 2,500 years ago. The fifth step of this path, "right livelihood," joins the other steps (right view, right thought, right speech, right action, right effort, right mindfulness, and right contemplation) to define a life path for Buddha's followers in their quest for enlightenment. A right livelihood is one that avoids treachery, deceit, usury, exploitation, or other harm to humans or animals. Buddha specifically identified five occupations as violating the "right livelihood" requirement: trading in arms, living beings, flesh, intoxicants, or poisons. In the ancient Indian society in which these teachings

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arose, this tenet would forbid work as a munitions dealer, hangman, pimp, butcher, liquor store owner, or any other profession that brings harm to living beings.

Western Buddhists have embraced and expanded this concept of right livelihood, with a bit of creative reinterpretation (i.e., maybe alcohol really isn't as bad as Buddha thought). From the basic teachings that work should increase what is helpful and decrease what is harmful, modern Buddhists have developed the principle of meaningful work. Such work is beneficial and wholesome, producing useful goods and services. Choosing meaningful work means avoiding not only those jobs that are directly harmful, such as producing hazardous pesticides, but also those that may be subtly harmful, such as producing frivolous luxury goods or shoddy junk, or fanning desires through advertising. Vietnamese monk Thich Nhat

Hanh advises, "Select a vocation that helps realize your ideal of compassion" (Hanh, 1991). In a similar vein from a different tradition, Pope John Paul II taught that "human work has an ethical value of its own," and that properly exercised work should "increase the common good" and "add to the heritage of the whole human family" (Pope John Paul II, 1981).

The most frequent examples of contemporary meaningful work are doctor, nurse, teacher and artist. Shouldn't librarian also be included as an example of meaningful work? Unequivocally, librarians "add to the heritage of the whole human family" as we organize information and make it accessible. Without question, we "increase the common good" as we staff the libraries that are at the heart of many schools and communities. The respect conferred upon our profession by the public is ample evidence that our work is meaning-

ful. But is the recognition of the value of our work enough to prevent burnout? Perhaps not—those crabby librarians presumably began their careers full of conviction that their work was honorable and beneficial.

Here we must delve deeper into the world's religions. One of the points upon which all the great traditions agree is the need to overcome egocentricity, and to live in service of something other than yourself. That something might be defined as God, interbeing, society or nature, but the great religions and moral philosophies agree that the spiritually and morally mature life is focused on the Other, not on personal gain. Even those contemplative traditions that focus on inward meditation are not simply navel-gazing, but are seeking to transcend the sense of the 'skin-encapsulated self' to connect with the larger whole.

Western Buddhists use this non-egocentric spiritual foundation to provide advice for practitioners who are activists in the peace or environmental movements. These so-called "engaged Buddhists" are taught that certainly they should work as hard and effectively as they can to stop nuclear proliferation, rainforest destruction, or whatever their goal may be, consistent with the Buddhist teaching of "skillful means." However, if activists connect their egos to the achievement of these elusive goals, they may experience a sense of personal failure, followed by burnout. Activists should pursue their work from the spiritual foundation of a more expansive sense of self, one that includes both the rainforest and its loggers, the warmongers and their victims. From this non-egocentric perspective, activists do not need to be sustained by successes to continue the fight. They identify with their community and their world so completely that their work for human or ecosystem well being is natural and sustaining, just as our efforts to promote our own health are natural and sustaining.

We new librarians need not be enlightened Buddhists to learn something from these teachings about the connection between ego and burnout. We bring high ideals to our work, as we should, but are doomed to burnout if we tie our egos to achieving those goals. We are never going to teach all of our patrons to be critical about their information sources. We will never have the funding to provide all of the information sources our patrons need. We will never convince all of our leaders that information needs to be free. Certainly, we can make progress toward these goals, perhaps tremendous progress, but there will always be more new technologies to master, more information to organize, more information needs to meet. Perhaps we will be able to face this constant onslaught without burnout if our goal is service, not personal accomplishment.

This focus on service is what makes our profession such an honorable one. As a new librarian, I realize that I am not qualified to give advice or sermons to those with more experience working in this field. Decades of service for which one is overworked and underpaid may indeed push any of us who are not saints or monks down the path towards burnout. Still, it may help to keep in mind that our service is in the cause of noble goals, and that our livelihood promotes the common good. Being a librarian fulfills the criteria of some of the great religious traditions for work that is meaningful and beneficial. We new librarians may indeed be zealots, but our zealotry is well founded.

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Danielle Steel, Splinters, and the End of Reading:
Changes in the Library Over the Last 25 Years

by Nancy Lynn Peate
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The Google Divide

If you wonder what's being taught in library school these days, you might be comforted to hear that we still learn about the history of libraries and how to catalog such puzzlers as "The Poems of Robert Frost" by Mordecai Marcus. We also write blogs, learn about metadata and Web 2.0, and question why our relational database projects keep crashing. As library students, we are encouraged to keep one foot in the past while we plant the other squarely in the future.

It can be quite a balancing act.

This gap between the past and the future is what John Berry, in a recent *Library Journal* article, called the Google Divide. It is the difference between librarians whose careers began in the "pre-Google" era and the "post-Google" newcomers. According to Berry, the Google Divide frustrates many librarians. It appears when a post-Google librarian starts talking about his or her blog, or brags too long about the benefits of a Really Simple Syndication (RSS) feed. It shows up when a pre-Google librarian shrugs off a new program with a dismissive "We tried that twenty years ago and it didn't work." However, Berry does not think this frustration is anything new. As a profession, he says, "We have always

given vehement lip service to innovation and creativity, to change and progress. So those who were and are new to our profession were and are always surprised … to find deeply rooted resistance to new ideas and innovation." In other words, take a trip back in library time and you will find people resisting the future.

Is Berry on to something? Is opposition to new ideas part of our library heritage? I interviewed three longtime librarians in the Multnomah County Libraries (MCL) to get their perspectives: Candy Bertelson, an administrator at the Central Library; Margot Moore-Wilson, former librarian at the Sellwood-Moreland MCL branch; and Delette Huffman, former librarian and then human resources administrator for MCL. I wondered if they encountered resistance to

Candy Bertelson

new ideas when they started their careers. And if so, what were some of the divides before the Google Divide?

Looking at change from the Center

Candy graciously agreed to meet with me at her office on the second floor of Central Library in downtown Portland. If you have never been there, you are missing a treasure.

Nancy Lynn Peate

When you enter the large lobby, you face a striking marble grand stairway. High-ceilinged rooms are filled with natural light and soft colors that enhance their Georgian design. Certainly this beloved building, first opened in 1913, contains a traditional library—but, wait, is that a pirate show at the top of the stairs? Everywhere you look there is something old and something new. This is fitting for an institution that must constantly find its balance somewhere between the past and the future. Yesterday, libraries might have been seen as the warehouses of dead paper; today, digital resources and Google have changed just about everything. The MCL Central Library is testimony to this.

Candy considers herself a librarian first, and a manager second. She performs four hours of public desk duty a week, in addition to her other responsibilities as a Central Library Administrator on the Central Management Team. Candy started as a library clerk in technical services and was a member of the last class of librarians graduating from the University of Oregon in 1978. She remembers learning to use a keypunch machine for basic computer commands and wondering how, as a librarian, she might make use of such obscure skills. In the early 1990s, she used tools such as Archie and Veronica to locate files on file transfer protocol (FTP) sites, and other technologies quickly made obsolete by Web-based search engines.

Candy's early days as a youth librarian at Holgate Branch of MCL in the 1980s present a stark contrast to the focus she sees now on early childhood at Multnomah County. There were no books for babies because, Candy remembers, babies did not read. As it became apparent that more children were in day care and more moms were going to work, the library started offering story talks at different times of day and broadening their focus to dads, working moms, and child care centers. Candy remembers this as a time of great change when community outreach gained importance.

During the same period, public librarians were influenced by Charles W. Robinson, former director of the Baltimore County Public Library and the controversial proponent of "Give 'em what they want" library service. Candy remembers older librarians counseling that "we should be telling people what to read." Without their wise counsel, people would only read romances, which is what popular literature was called. It was a big shift when the library began emphasizing high-circulating popular materials, and authors such as Danielle Steel appeared on library shelves. The library today carries many copies of best sellers and popular movies. Candy also notes that the huge growth in publishing has greatly increased the number of books available each year. Librarians cannot personally review every book that is purchased, as they used to, so they must rely on readers' advisories from publications and other libraries, as well as requests from users.

Since the renovation of Central Library, completed in 1997, the library has become a hub for Internet use. This has literally changed the way the Central Library is used as it evolves into a digital center for information. Candy remembers when the library first started offering the Internet to patrons. There was a mandate that computers not be used for e-mail; it was not considered an appropriate application for the library. Now, e-mail is one of the major Internet uses and an example of how policies evolve. Another illustration of change involves security in the library, particularly as more patrons access the Internet. Safety remains a concern for people working at all libraries, and may be why some librarians are not as interested in management positions as before.

In her early days of library work, Candy remembers a constant fear of lay-offs, major budget issues, and a perceived hierarchy, both between the Central Library and the branches, and between professionals and staff. This is something that Candy believes people are working hard to change. There is more collaboration and a stronger team approach today than ever before. Slowly the hierarchy is broken down in part as the budget strengthens and attitudes change. The library continues to grow and change.

Perspectives on change from the branches

Because of her long association with MCL, Candy can speak first-hand about the Central workplace. Has her experience been similar to that of a branch librarian? I interviewed two librarians, Delette Hoffman and Margot Moore-Wilson, at a coffee shop near the Sellwood-Moreland Library, to find out. Delette retired from Multnomah County in 2004 as a human resources administrator. Margot was the Sellwood-Moreland branch librarian for many years and also retired in 2004. Both Delette and Margot still work as on-call staff for the library.

Delette and Margot started their library

Delette Hoffman and Margot Moore-Wilson

careers on a lark. Delette began as a clerk "for the winter" in 1980 at Sellwood-Moreland. She was soon promoted to a supervisory position and stayed for 24 years. That same year, Margot answered a clerk posting at the old Hollywood Library, took a typing test, and was handed her work schedule without further training. On her first day, she learned how to operate a new technological device, the light pen.

Both Margot and Delette were interested in getting an MLS, but by then Oregon no longer had a library school and distance learning programs were not prevalent. It was neither practical nor economical to earn an MLS degree in Portland if you could not leave for one to two years due to work or family. Margot and Delette each earned degrees in other programs on their way to becoming librarians: Margot has a master's degree in urban planning and Delette has two bachelor's degrees, one in business and one in humanities.

Delette and Margot remember a strong sense of elitism surrounding the library when they first started. Some of the librarians they met projected an attitude that libraries were only for people who knew how to use them. Margot remembers new patrons sometimes wandered in through the front door, saying, "I had no idea there was a library here" because the library system was resistant to publicity. Later, this changed as public service was emphasized. When Delette was promoted to the library's only full-time employee as the Clerk-Librarian (combining two positions into one), one change that surprised her was that she was not given a desk. She was expected to rove around the library, offering assistance at the right time, in a manner suggestive of a Nordstrom's clerk. She remembers being exhausted at the end

of the day, and leaning on the circulation desk for rest, all for want of a desk.

One innovation that Margot and Delette would have welcomed was splinter-free bookcases. Staff constantly got splinters from the bookcases, and especially from the circulation counter because funds were so limited that the circulation desk was only finished on the side that patrons could see. Margot still has a scar on her thumb from a particularly nasty splinter. Perhaps it was not so bad that Delette did not get a desk!

In 1986, the Sellwood-Moreland Library was remodeled and both Margot and Delette remember this as a time of frantic worries about budgets. One of the goals of the remodeling was to make the library more competitive with bookstores, by having prominent displays of subject books such as "Cooking" and "Gardening." Margot and Delette remember this arrangement being resisted by some of the library staff because the displays were constantly shifting and books were moved out of their Dewey Decimal positions. During the remodeling, they parked the bookmobile outside, running electrical and phone cords up the side of the wall, through the window, and out onto the street so that they could continue providing service. Certainly a large gap exists between this era and today's environment in which facility managers cast a distrustful eye on such things as extension cords and unsecured windows.

In those pre-Google days, there were threats of popular culture and alternative media encroaching on the library's turf. Both Margot and Delette voiced that librarians feared that libraries were going to become obsolete. Everyone was starting to say that "books weren't going to be around any more" as television became embedded in our culture. Similarly, the introduction of audio cassettes was touted as "the end of reading." Both librarians remember these echoes of today's worry that the Internet will be the end of libraries.

Divides before and after Google

Talking to these library veterans makes one thing clear. Before the Google Divide, there was the Elitism Schism—and budget issues and popular culture wars and many other examples of resistance to changes. Some day, the pre-Google librarians will have moved on and post-Google librarians will be the Old Guard. Perhaps librarians will look back fondly to the days before the PepsiCo "Gotta Have It" Central Library had a corporate sponsor. Newly-hired librarians will be shocked that the public library did not always have its signature brew pub and ice-skating rink, and patrons and staff alike will have a rough time adjusting to the new holographic catalog. When the day comes that librarians are recognized and paid as well as Danielle Steel, surely we can expect less frustration with new ideas and innovation. Until then, there is still one thing I know for sure. The author of "The Poems of Robert Frost" is Mordecai Marcus. Or is that Robert Frost?

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Librarians and Books:

Value Beyond Content

*by Melissa Strand
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As a new library student, I was surprised to find that a number of librarians, in their effort to embrace technology, have minimized the importance of books. For centuries, the profession has been tied to books—until recently, they were the means of our vocation. Librarians have a deep connection and a long history with printed manuscripts. We have cataloged, acquired, organized, taught and, perhaps most importantly, made available written works for centuries. Are we afraid of being identified with our past because books play an unknown part in our future? We need to view books through a different lens: books have value beyond their informational matter and they have had a profound, undeniable impact on our civilization.

Often overlooked as anything other than a source of information, the book is a historical object, it is a collectible, it is a piece of art, it is an important artifact of our profession. It is, in fact, much more than content. The unique properties of the book deserve to be acknowledged and respected.

Melissa Strand Ludeman

There is a complex relationship between books and readers across time. Not only are readers impacted by the content of a book in different ways by different generations, the book is impacted by being handled and read. The book and its content face physical, social and contextual changes, both literally and figuratively. Often, the term "book" is meant only as a description of content, not as a physical object (Tanselle, 1992).

In our libraries, the term should encompass both meanings. The relationship between the content (intangible) and the object that transmits it (tangible) has value: the physical book can give us important information regarding the content, the time and place in which it originally existed. These details create a richer context for the whole; they create a periphery that makes the intangible focus more clear. Books, as "manufactured objects" may be read not only for content but also for history (Tanselle, 1992.) The print, binding, paper, and style are all evidences of the time and social setting in which the content was created. Just as ancient pottery can give us an idea of how another civilization lived, books show us a world that can't otherwise be known—that can be seen as separate from the content.

In an article regarding book collecting, C. Thomas Tanselle (1992) states, "Most literary works … are purely works of language; but any physical texts of them, though they are not the works themselves, are also of vital importance because they are the principal (and often only) basis from which we can reconstruct the works, regardless of whether we conceive works to be what their authors intended or what their readers perceived." Books evolve as historical objects and shed the human connections with their content. As time passes, physical attributes rise in importance and

the unsubstantial information between the covers fades: people do not seek old encyclopedias for current information. They might, however seek these encyclopedias to see how they were bound, what style was employed, or how often such an item was used. All of which is information that the author(s) did not intend but which is inherent in the object.

Another example of the division that sometimes exists between the content and object is viewing the book only as it relates to a specific reader or, its owner. Tichenor (2003) points out that books are sometimes a direct link to the person who owns or owned it. "Though my books certainly take up more space [than an Internet "favorites" list] that space holds a part of me and who I am; it reflects at least part of my personality, and can even be passed on to my children as a keepsake of their father." (Tichenor, 2003). Books can be a potent reminder of their owner because, unlike other keepsakes, the owner of the book has an interactive relationship with it. The interaction that the reader has with the intangible content has a direct bearing on the value of the object. Not only are personal collections made up of these priceless mementos, libraries also provide books that are a link to people who lived in a different time. One way this happens is through inheritance. Book collections are often specifically left to libraries after a patron's death. These collections tell so much about their owner: the various titles, the physical shape (much loved copies have folded pages and broken spines), notes in the text and forgotten bookmarks. There is a piece of the owner in these collections—information that exists inside of the book but outside of the book's content.

It is an honor to be a part of a profession so closely linked to books. Though they do not define us, books are important artifacts of our profession and of our his-tory as human beings. If we, as librarians, only see the book as a receptacle for information, we are missing a vital part of the information picture and doing our profession a disservice.

Though we are in a world of technological advancement, it is important that we do not forget our history and the importance of certain medias. Libraries have played a key role in collecting and preserving knowledge but "… to recognize in their history the means to interpretation and understanding of the history of the book, and an essential part of the relationship between bibliography and social values, as I believe is inescapable, is to express a credo of our civilization." (McKitterick, 1992). Books have an important place in our past, in our memories, in our imaginations and in our futures.

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Cataloging Today:
Thinking Globally, Acting Locally

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Cataloging has ceased to be a local process involving individual catalogers who create and maintain a limited collection of paper cards. It is now a global interaction between those who produce and exchange digital MARC records. The responsibility for the creation and maintenance of a modern Online Public Access Catalog (OPAC) is no longer the sole domain of librarians. IT personnel and even software vendors have a hand in how patrons search through and view the data that make up a computer catalog.

While modern electronic records allow librarians to quickly change or add records to the catalog, digital records lack the local and personal touch of old fashioned catalog cards. In a conversation, Clackamas County's network cataloger Judy Roberts shared with me that in the past library staff could add helpful handwritten notes to card records like "good for Mrs. Hall's 3rd grade class on volcanoes." These notes have been eliminated by catalog automation. In Oregon, where libraries are increasingly banding together and sharing OPACs, managing the content of electronic catalogs so that they turn up cohesive search results while still reflecting local interests is difficult. Reintroducing locally collected wisdom into catalogs that are becoming networked over wider and wider areas will require Oregon librarians to come up with creative and thoughtful new approaches to catalog design and implementation.

In the mid sixties, cataloging utilities like the Online Computer Library Center (OCLC) emerged and began facilitating the exchange of MARC records on a mass scale. Catalogers everywhere radically changed the nature of their profession by surrendering their absolute in-house authority over catalog records and accepting work from fellow librarians around the world. Because copy cataloging with OCLC reduces duplication of efforts by enabling libraries to download electronic records that have already been created by other institutions, most catalogs have become a mishmash of records from many sources instead of a cohesive data set created and controlled by a single indexer. As several Oregon librarians have explained to me, most catalogers would rather wait for an item record to appear in OCLC than create an original record and get the item onto the shelf more quickly. Letting items age until they gain OCLC records is often the only practical solution for a cataloger faced with the decision of either spending a half hour cataloging a single item or using that same time to slightly modify and then upload 20 existing records. As a result, libraries are using fewer and fewer records created in-house. Trends away from local control and towards sharing catalog records mean that librarians must be especially aware of how records are shared, stored and displayed so that they can maintain high

> Reintroducing local collected wisdom into catalogs that are becoming networked over wider and wider areas will require Oregon librarians to come up with creative and thoughtful new approaches to catalog design and implementation.

New Ad Coming Here

quality catalogs that serve the interests of their communities.

One of the consequences of copying records from many different sources is that the records all differ somewhat depending on where they came from. That is, if a single cataloger were entering all the data into a catalog's MARC records, he or she would probably consistently fill in the same fields. However, since records are now being created by many different people, they are all being filled out slightly differently. There are core data fields that must be present in every MARC record, but beyond these few key fields, how much and what information on each record is up to whoever created it. The disadvantage of this is that searchers can no longer familiarize themselves with a catalog's particular style and must guess which types of search information may or may not be contained in a library's records.

Internet record sharing has brought about such a dramatic increase in fast and easy copy cataloging that since the mid-90s libraries have been replacing cataloging professionals with less trained paraprofessionals, if they replace them at all (Rider, 1996). This tends to shift the burden of record creation and maintenance onto libraries that do retain qualified catalogers. In the end, it could also reduce the amount of quality records available online and will place even more cataloging authority in the hands of even fewer individuals. Local catalog control may further erode as these OCLC contributors are not all in the same country, let alone the same county. Libraries short on staff and money can even outsource cataloging duties by using services like OCLC's PromptCat, which allows vendors to send out pre-selected MARC records with book orders. While there have always been

records supplied through vendors—even in card catalog days libraries were able to order pre-printed catalog cards from the Library of Congress—such records were of a guaranteed quality and were understood to supplement rather than replace cataloging efforts (Mouw, 2005).

Fortunately, there are a number of librarians, both nationally and here in Oregon, who endeavor to retain high quality cataloging and who aim to restore local control to standardized electronic records and interfaces. Most of the librarians that I interviewed in Oregon still retain a measure of control over their catalog by adapting OCLC records slightly. They typically do so to aid specialized groups of users or to conform to local library expectations. For instance, Sara Nolan, Cataloging Librarian and Systems Coordinator for Clackamas Community College, adds the subject heading "High interest-low vocabulary books" for items that might interest ESL students, while Multnomah County supplements records with non-Roman characters like Chinese or Russian whenever possible.

A big change for library catalogs in Oregon over the past decade or so has been

April Younglove

the increase of shared online catalog groups. Libraries in Northwest Oregon have been especially adept at utilizing Wide Area Networks and shared software to consolidate county holdings, form powerful regional partnerships, and share collections. Even though alliances bring about exciting new opportunities for sharing materials between libraries, OPACs can be very complicated and can make once simple cataloging decisions complex. Response time to local issues may be slowed as decisions must often be agreed upon by a larger number of people.

Since Multnomah County's transition from being a cooperative to being a unified county system, branch libraries wishing to make procedural or labeling changes have had to band together and get up a quorum of librarians to make their case to the county. Meanwhile, according to Library and Network Service Supervisor for the Clackamas County Cooperative, Jeff Ring, different branches present their requests to Clackamas' county office and then the county either makes the modification if it only affects that branch, or has other member libraries vote on the proposed change. As systems become networked in larger and larger groups, maintaining good communication between branches becomes more challenging. The professionals most qualified to understand a problem may not necessarily be working on site anymore to notice it. In Multnomah County, technical staff must occasionally shadow reference librarians at various branches so that they can monitor their impact on actual services.

On a patron level, local OPAC users experience problems with shared catalogs when they get search results from all over the county or state but only want books in their immediate library—especially if how to sort search results by location is not im-

mediately obvious. Additionally, if several different libraries contribute similar records to the shared catalog, then the patron may be overwhelmed and confused by a list of 30 different item records that all seem to be the same. This lack of standardization can make records more difficult to sort through and can cause quality control issues. The Orbis-Cascade alliance group created a Duplicate Records Reduction Group that identifies similar records for merging, but not all cooperative cataloging groups have procedures to deal with this issue (Nathanson and Hackleman, 2006).

In Northwest Oregon, regional catalog consolidation has been driven, in part, by the amorphous character of the Portland metropolitan area. Library users, who rarely understand the complex municipal relationships between different libraries, have come to expect the simplicity and reliability of branch standardization. Jeff Ring explains that patrons who identify three or four different libraries as "home" libraries have promoted centralization efforts and catalog sharing. In 1999, Oregon librarians on the

Although Library 2.0 features will not eliminate all of the issues with modern electronic records and how they are shared in Oregon libraries, they will help to reintroduce lost local control …

Vision 2010 Task Force introduced the goal of creating a statewide shared cataloging network (Horan, 2004). Although OLA has decided in retrospect that a statewide catalog and statewide library cards are perhaps not as important as other goals at present, there is still a desire to foster regional unity by helping libraries throughout Oregon achieve similar levels of technical sophistication and increasing shared statewide lending privileges (Vision 2010 Committee, 2001).

Ironically, although participating in local networks sometimes reduces local control, one of its benefits is that greater pooled resources allow individual libraries to invest in the electronic features that help offset this loss. As OPAC interfaces become increasingly sophisticated, there are more options for staff, and even library users, to tailor their catalogs to their population. In the summer of 2005, Multnomah County's new user-friendly OPAC combined services from the vendor Syndetics with the customizable Innovative Interfaces. It now provides users with book reviews and in-catalog item pictures. One of its newest features even allows patrons to supply books with ratings. In the future, Multnomah catalogers suggest that patrons might even be able to contribute their own reviews.

When considering the possibilities of improving Washington County's OPAC with Web enhancements Sherwood's cataloger, Mary Madland, wisely points out that while, "some internet savvy patrons would love it, others still have trouble placing holds." Additionally, many of these interactive features, popularly dubbed Library 2.0, take power away from cataloging librarians and give it to users, an idea that makes those who worry about maintaining the quality of data in the catalog uncomfort-

able. However, Oregonians who are ready for a more interactive library catalog have recently begun requesting upgrades. Jeff Ring thinks that Library 2.0 contains many interesting new ideas that could help reconnect Oregon catalogs with this patron base. Ring is excited about Clackamas County's move from Dynix to Horizon because Horizon could support some of the features that the public wants. Library patrons could use RSS feeds to receive automatic notification when new books by their favorite authors are added to the catalog. Horizon could also potentially recall past searches and include library reviews from regulars. As an example of what an OPAC can aspire to be, Ring points out the Web site for the Ann Arbor Public Library in Michigan: http://www.aadl.org/.

According to Ann Arbor's Web site, its 2005 catalog remodel "has been selected by the American Library Association as the best library Web site in the nation for libraries with budgets of $6,000,000." In addition to patron RSS feeds and reviews by patrons and professionals, its site includes library blog entries that allow user feedback. Ann Arbor's catalog also offers unique options such as an online image database that invites local residents to contribute historical images of the town, and its interface allows people to see a visual representation of the catalog with a tag cloud. It is even experimentally allowing users to make "notes" on the virtual images of catalog cards—just as reference staff could make notations on real cards in the past.

Although Library 2.0 features will not eliminate all of the issues with modern electronic records and how they are shared in Oregon libraries, they will help to reintroduce lost local control without requiring

participants to abandon copy cataloging and shared catalogs. Libraries and catalogs in Oregon will inevitably become more networked, which is a boon to residents who desire increased borrowing privileges, and the time saving benefits of copy cataloging are too enormous to give up. Therefore, it is up to individual librarians in Oregon to ensure that local catalog records do not decrease in quality and that their patrons have access to a catalog that reflects the interests of their community.

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What's a Second Grader Doing in Special Collections?

Academic Libraries Reach Out to K–12 Schools

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Allison carefully puts the white cotton gloves on her hands and gingerly sorts through the photographs on the table in front of her, looking for local historical buildings and landmarks. Her classmates are spread out around the room conducting searches of their own, using materials provided by library staff.

Before tackling a research project, Tyler's class meets with reference librarians in the library's electronic classroom. After a period of guided practice and independent searching, Tyler feels confident he can find the information he needs to complete his paper. One of the librarians hands him her business card, encouraging him to call, e-mail, or IM her with any questions he has.

Jena spent the last year consulting with scientists, physicians, and nutritionists for a research project on celiac disease. After defending her thesis, Jena's paper is deposited into the university library's institutional repository where it can be accessed by other interested scholars.

Scenes like this occur daily in academic libraries but what makes these stories different are the students. Would it surprise you to discover Allison is ten years old and in the fourth grade? What about Tyler? He is a seventh grader at the local middle school. And Jena? Now that she has finished the required senior year research project she's on course to graduate next month—from high school.

With today's decreasing budgets and increasing workloads why would academic libraries stretch their already limited resources to develop partnerships with K–12 schools? Oregon's public schools and higher education institutes traditionally compete for the same spending dollars. What, then, compels academic librarians to share their "piece of the pie" with the competition?

It's the kids. Imagine the excitement of an eight-year old touching a cuneiform tablet dating from 3350 BC. Or the infectious enthusiasm of a group of sixth graders verbally sparring over a passage from *The Giver*. Even high school students are visibly impressed with the scholarly environment of an academic library. In spite of budget woes, time constraints, and heavy workloads, educators at all levels are searching for ways to provide the best possible education for every student, not just those with whom they have direct contact.

Information Literacy and School Success

Academic librarians realize that today's high schoolers are tomorrow's college students, many of whom arrive on campus completely unprepared for the rigors of academic work. While more than three-quarters of graduating seniors in the U.S. enroll in either a four-year or community college within two years of graduation, more than half of them fail to earn any type of degree, in part due to their inability to read and understand complex material. Additionally, more than half of college instructors feel freshmen lack adequate information literacy skills—skills essential for higher education's academic environment (Peter D. Hart Research Associates/Public Opinion Strategies, 2005).

What are information literacy skills? The Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) sees an information literate student as one who can:

- Determine the extent of information needed

- Access the needed information effectively and efficiently

- Evaluate information and its sources critically

- Incorporate selected information into one's knowledge base

- Use information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose

- Understand the economic, legal, and social issues surrounding the use of information, and access and use information ethically and legally

Why are these skills so important? Again, the ACRL sees information literacy skills as the very basis for lifelong learning; they allow students to:

- access materials in a productive and timely fashion;

- navigate the complex technological information landscape;

- combat information overload;

- improve self-directed learning;

- simulate skills necessary in the workforce;

- set a foundation for lifelong learning; and

- enjoy a rich personal life.

Information literacy does not start at the high school door. Librarians at all levels recognize the important role these skills play in ensuring student success. In 1998 the ACRL joined forces with the American Association of School Librarians (AASL) to encourage partnerships between the two entities. The resulting Blueprint for Collaboration (http://www.ala.org/ala/acrl/acrl-pubs/whitepapers/acrlaaslblueprint.htm) outlines ways these two organizations can initiate and foster collaborations to meet the information literacy needs of all students.

Statewide Collaborations

The two projects described below are examples of partnerships involving extensive discussion and planning, as well as funding

The truth is that, ideally, literacy is a life-long process that begins with learning to read and continues with becoming steadily more literate as the years go by. Literacy, seen as the spectrum of ability that it is, is clearly the concern of all libraries … from research institutions to elementary schools (Gorman, 1995).

from statewide organizations, before they were established.

Calisphere: A World of Primary Sources
*(*http://www.calisphere.universityofcalifornia.edu/)
Calisphere is a teacher's dream-come-true. This University of California, California Digital Library (CDL) project focused solely on transforming CDL research-based digital resources into appealing and accessible collections for K–12 teachers. In 2006, after countless hours of teacher interviews, Web site modifications, and usability testing by CDL and UC Berkeley's Interactive University, Calisphere was launched.

The Web site houses more than 150,000 digitized primary sources—photographs, newspaper clippings, correspondence, documents, diaries, and works of art. The themed collections, organized by historical era, include sets of appropriate images, brief overviews of historical issues, and classroom discussion questions, all aligned with California's State Board of Education Content

Standards. Teachers and students alike now have easy access to printable, high-quality, credible images to supplement lesson plans, course materials, and class projects

UDLib/Search
(http://udlibsearch.lib.udel.edu/)
Delaware is committed to bridging the digital divide—the gap between those having access to the Internet and those who don't—and students, parents, educators, and state officials are thrilled. The University of Delaware Library, with funding from the Department of Education, provides on-line access to more than a dozen periodical and encyclopedia databases to all computers in Delaware's K–12 public schools. Along with negotiating subscription and licensing agreements for the databases, the University of Delaware Library also provides related training and support to all K–12 school librarians, teachers, and administrators.

Local Collaborations

Collaborations don't have to be complicated or expensive, however, to be effective. Wanting to promote literacy, reading for pleasure, and family reading habits, University of Florida academic librarians partnered with a local middle school to form a parent-child 6th grade reading group. Administrators enthusiastically endorsed the project and classroom teachers loved the idea of highly-educated personnel donating their time and talents to provide educational opportunities for the students (Malanchuk, 2006).

University of Colorado Special Collections Librarian, Michelle Visser, regularly partners with local elementary, middle, and high school librarians to provide students with programs on a wide range of subjects. WWII springs to life for high school students seeing a book once held and signed by Adolf Hitler. A middle school writing club poring over Emily Dickinson's original work is mesmerized by the poet's handwriting. Illustrated medieval manuscripts spark a group of fourth grade boys' imaginations. A trip to the University of Colorado Library never fails to inspire discussion and, at times, can even ignite a student's passion (Visser, 2005).

Possibilities for Oregon

There are few academic library/K–12 school collaborations in Oregon. These numbers

Recently, staffs from the Oregon State University Library, Corvallis School District, and Corvallis-Benton County Public Library met to discuss possible future collaborations. At their first meeting, librarians and classroom teachers shared their concerns, hopes, and expectations with one another.

will certainly rise in the years to come for those reasons described above as well as those listed below:

- There is a growing acceptance of a seamless K–16 educational system, compelling educators who rarely dealt with one another in the past to work together now and in the future.

- Information resources are, increasingly, priced too high for individual institutions. Cooperative efforts are necessary to develop and maintain access to electronic resources and databases. On example is the State Library's work with Oregon Department of Education to ensure access to the Ebsco databases in Oregon's public schools.

- The lack of school librarians in Oregon leaves the teaching of information literacy skills to overburdened teachers who are often untrained themselves. Academic libraries can partner with local school districts to provide instruction and support to classroom teachers.

- Success begets success. As school and library staffs see the value of working together and discover rewards unique to these shared experiences, collaborative endeavors will increase.

Academic libraries, with their extensive collections and well-trained staffs, have much to offer the K–12 community. What can the K–12 community offer in return? It's the kids. The enthusiasm of younger students is a welcome relief from the oftentimes blasé attitude of college students. There's nothing quite like seeing a roomful of students' eyes light up with excitement or being on the receiving end of an appreciative six year-old's hug. And who knows? The young students you inspire today might very well be your academic library users of tomorrow.

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Perspectives of a Baby Boomer:
What Boomers Will Do To and For Oregon Libraries

by Monique Lloyd
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The day the youngest of our four sons began university, my husband turned to me and said, "So, what are you going to do for the next thirty years?" I just looked at him, stunned, as I had no idea. I had volunteered for years in the schools and my community, and was ready to give others those opportunities. I loved knitting, but my family and friends were more than adequately clothed. I had made so many quilts my husband half-jokingly predicted that we would die in a quilt avalanche. I took up gardening with a vengeance, and began blogging. I organized all the drawers and closets. It was not enough to satisfy my need to be involved with my community.

I pondered my varied skills without finding a good fit or interesting option. Then, on one of my weekly trips to the library, I was chatting with the circulation clerk who commented, with a smile, "You come in so often, you should work here!" That remark resonated; maybe I could work in a library. I began researching what people did who worked in libraries all day, and I found that working with people, teaching, writing, and technology meshed with my interests. Finally, I discovered what I wanted to be when I grew up— a librarian.

As one of the oldest members of the newest Oregon Emporia State University cohort, I am also a Baby Boomer, a part of that generation constituting almost one third of the U.S. population. I am not alone in seeking a new career, either. U.S. Census data show 30 percent of Boomers are considering going back to school and changing careers. We also expect to live active lives well into our 80s and tend to be affluent, well-educated, and techno-savvy. I believe Boomers offer three challenges to Oregon's libraries.

First, a new crop of librarians may be waiting in the wings who, like me, have come to realize that librarianship is a profession which can tap their experience and expertise, their enthusiasm, energy, love of social interaction, and fascination with new technology. I am not young, was not raised enmeshed with technology, and am not naïve about the work and the work environment. I may not be what you expect as a "newly minted" librarian. Boomers invented the term "over-achiever," redefining the world in our own image, and influencing every trend for more than five decades. We are independent thinkers and delight in never doing what others expect of us. You can call us Boomers, Abbies, or Zoomers, but do not call us senior citizens or old. We are interested in trying new jobs and staying involved. The first challenge for libraries: will you hire new librarians who happen to be older, or should I say booming, and then integrate them successfully into the profession?

Another challenge, related to staffing, is the potential surge of Boomer volunteers. Boomers in general intend to continue having meaningful engagements with their communities, and expect to both design and manage activities. They bring myriad skills gained from years of experience ranging from organization to marketing, fund-raising to tutoring, and mentoring. Libraries will need to develop volunteer programs that can best utilize these talents.

The final challenge for libraries is addressing Boomers' expectations for library services, space and resources. Those who retire or work part time will seek leisure activities that integrate education, technology, and social outlets. The library is the perfect place for them to congregate. Other Boomers will search for new

careers and will begin seeking information about career and educational opportunities which will impact both academic and public libraries. This challenge for libraries includes adapting traditional service models, changing their assumptions about older adults, and recognizing that Boomers will continue to be a vital political and economic force.

The physical changes Boomers encounter as they age will require more from libraries than just adding more large-print and digitized books to their collections. There will need to be changes to the physical building including brighter lighting, more comfortable seating, lower bookshelves, and fewer stairs (or more elevators). Library staff may need to adjust their attitudes towards older patrons or increase their awareness of different needs. Our parents, the Silent Generation, are far more compliant and cautious than Boomers, who enjoy learning for learning's sake and have high expectations for both themselves and others.

As the oldest boomers approach 60 and come closer to the traditional retirement age, we are intent on reinventing a new stage of life. The generation that once declared, "never trust anyone over 30" now proclaims "70 is the new 50." The realization that our time is limited pushes us to deal with unfinished business, fulfilling dreams deferred or delayed. Some of us will seek leisure activities involving self-improvement and education, others will look for challenging volunteer opportunities, and still others, like me, will begin new careers. All of these groups will have an impact on libraries. The times are indeed a-changing and libraries will need to adapt as Boomers continue to stir their vision and creativity into the mix for many years to come. ✍

Resources

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Annual OLA Conference

Finding Community :
Civics, Cyberspace and Change

LaSells Stewart & CH2M Alumni Center
OSU Campus, Corvallis, Oregon
April 18 – 20, 2007

Featured Speakers

KEYNOTE:
Rivkah Sass, LJ Librarian of the Year 2006 & Director, Omaha Public Library
http://www.olaweb.org/conference/2007Program/rivkahsass.html

THURSDAY BANQUET:
Maria Amparo Escandon, author of *Esperanza's Box of Saints* and *Gonzalez & Daughter Trucking Co.*
http://www.olaweb.org/conference/2007Program/mariaescandon.html

THURSDAY LUNCHEON:
Emily Sheketoff, ALA Executive Director, Washington DC Office
http://www.olaweb.org/conference/2007Program/emilysheketoff.html

Conference Highlights

PRE-CONFERENCES:
Teens & Today's Technology; Legal Ease: What Staff, Administrators, and Trustees Need to Know; Video/DVD Video Cataloging: The Basics and Beyond; The Power of Personal Persuasion: Advancing the Academic Library Agenda from the Front Line; From Demanding to Delirious: Tools for Dealing with Difficult Patrons; It's Not If But When: Basics of Emergency Preparedness in Your Library

A FEW OF THE EXCITING CONFERENCE SESSIONS!
Digital Connections; Read for Fun? No Way! Web Design Initiatives; Informal Mentoring in the Digital Age; Teen Programming Showcase; Toward a Learning Commons; One Book/One Community; Strawberries to Sapporo: Supporting the Export/Import Business; You Bought What? Picasso, Pollack & Programs; Curiosity: Does It Really Kill the Cat? And so much more!

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