Interview with Incoming GODORT Chair—Lynda Kellam

Favorite spot in Ithaca, New York
My favorite spot is my second floor porch looking out over the Fall Creek neighborhood. It is just a great place for people watching. I also love Ithaca Falls and Six Mile Creek. So much natural beauty here.

Favorite pastime/hobby
I am a big music fan so I guess my hobby is listening to music and collecting records. And yes I still have CDs. :) But my real hobby should be finishing my PhD. At least that is what my advisor would say.

Favorite TV shows
My favorite older shows are X-Files and Community. I also really like Hulu’s The Great about Catherine the Great. I was a Game of Thrones fan but I disowned that last episode.

Favorite book
Kafka on the Shore by Murakami. I love magical realism and the imagery and story have always stayed with me.

Favorite Government Document
My favorite government document is probably the Congressional Record. It may seem dry, but as a historical document, it is priceless. I’ve used it since the 1990s when Bob Gaines at UNCG taught me how to use it for a paper on the normalization of relations with Vietnam. I’ve also used it for multiple projects for my PhD.

Favorite movies
No Man’s Land. It is about the Bosnian War and its impact on three soldiers who get stuck in the middle. It is a smart film that deals with both the futility of that war and the international response and of war in general.

On your reading list now
I am currently reading Arc of Justice by Kevin Boyle. It was recommended to me when I was studying for my comprehensive exams in American history.

Music on your phone
Tons of it. I listen to many types of music. I just love music. I probably need more classical music.

Favorite drink
Bourbon sour.

Favorite type of food
All types (really). My favorite international cuisine is Mexican, but good Mexican food doesn’t exist in Ithaca.

Favorite conference city
I love going to Chicago. Great food and always fun even when we got nineteen inches of snow one year!

Favorite vacation spot
I love the Outer Banks of NC. I miss going there and hope to get back soon.

Historical figure you’d like to meet
I would love to meet Ida B. Wells. As the key anti-lynching advocate, she traveled internationally to bring attention to the issue and the rights of African Americans. She was also an inspiring orator so I would love to see her in action.

Pet peeve
I can be annoyed by sarcasm or negativity mainly because I try to stop myself from going down that road. It can be a needless spiral sometimes and brings down creative efforts.

What inspires you about your job?
In my current position I am more involved in project management and being able to see a project from conception to closing is quite inspiring. I am also inspired by the work we are doing at CISER on the Freedom on the Move (https://freedomonthe move.org/) database of runaway slave advertisements and other projects to promote data access and use.