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# Editorial: Community

Mary Beth Weber



In the early stages of my career, it was challenging to stay current with standards and trends unless you attended conferences in person. Those fortunate enough to attend conferences got the opportunity to hear firsthand information from leaders and to network with like-minded individuals. Those who were less fortunate could wait and read conference proceedings, newsletters, and professional journal papers. Additionally, if one was lucky enough to serve on an ALA or ALCTS committee (there was a lot of competition and few available spots), there was a required commitment to attend both the Midwinter Meeting and Annual Conference. Attending a conference forged professional relationships and built a sense of community.

Things started to change in the mid-1990s when people began to have access to email. This enabled committees, interest groups, and task forces to communicate quickly and virtually. Discussion lists emerged from the need to share information and communicate via the internet. They helped develop online communities and were not limited to a geographic area or country. We suddenly had the ability to communicate and to exchange ideas with people worldwide whenever we wanted and from anywhere as long as one had access to a computer and the internet. Virtual relationships developed, and people sometimes also met in person at conferences and events. Information could be shared much more quickly, and discussion lists were used to announce professional meetings, calls for volunteers, and emerging standards. It was at this time that early electronic journals began to be published.

The internet enabled those who served on professional committees and groups to continue working between meetings. While budget constraints might have prevented conference attendance, the internet led to virtual conference participation. I served on the editorial board of an early e-journal composed of members from around the globe. Although editors changed over time, as did the host site, the journal continued to be published with no interruptions in service or quality. Likewise, there have been virtual members on the *LRTS* Editorial Board, plus members who are not able to attend Midwinter and Annual, or who occasionally might have to pass due to lack of funding. What matters is that, regardless of how members participate, they are engaged and participate in Board discussions via our Connect space and review and solicit papers.

In my role as *LRTS* editor, as an ALCTS member, and through membership on various technical services-related discussion lists, I feel a strong sense of community within my profession. We are collaborative, supportive, generous with our expertise, and patient when explaining things to others. When I need help resolving a problem, I have many resources available through my professional association and the larger online community. Additionally, I develop a working relationship with authors during the submission and review process for *LRTS* papers. These relationships often continue after a paper has been published. A number of Board members published papers in *LRTS* prior to joining the Board. When I see that an author's paper published in *LRTS* is cited, I share that information with the author. I appreciate and enjoy the support of my professional community.

The emergence of social media has added yet another dimension to the virtual library community. There are now Facebook groups and Instagram posts for libraries and library personnel, creating additional opportunities for learning, collaboration, and, in some cases, even friendship. We can respond to each other instantaneously and disseminate information to a wide audience almost effortlessly.

I hope that *LRTS* readers feel a sense of community regarding the journal and its mission to provide access to scholarly papers on technical services topics. That leads to the final part of this column, which is an overview of this issue's contents:

- Mary Burns's paper "RDA and Rare Books Cataloging, Part 2" completes the discussion of the challenges for catalogers using the Descriptive Cataloging of Rare Materials: Books, or DCRM(B) when Resource Description and Access was implemented. Burns's paper includes a wealth of information and supplementary materials, including illustrations taken from the rare book *Stirpium adversaria nova*.
- Jennifer Hain Teper addresses the issue of space management in libraries as realized through selection policies for withdrawal, particularly those for copies held in shared print repositories. Her study compares forty-seven monographic titles cataloged as identical items with differences in editions, printings, condition, preservation, and repair. A survey that she conducted revealed wide variability in the accuracy of cataloging records, historical use, physical damage, chemical deterioration, provenance, and presence in HathiTrust.
- "Establishing the Impact of Area Studies Collections and Exploring Opportunities for Collaborative Collecting," by Thacker, Teper, Lenkart, and Coşkun, examines the use of area studies materials by assessing five years of Interlibrary Loan (ILL) lending data and local circulation data from a single research library. The authors seek to establish the groundwork for future explorations into the implementation of a cooperative collection development model for area studies at the national level.
- In "A Case Study of ETD Metadata Remediation at the University of Houston Libraries," Thompson, Liu, Duran, and Washington provide a case study on remediating electronic theses and dissertations (ETD) metadata at the University of Houston Libraries. They detail the team's efforts to revise existing ETD metadata in their institutional repository as part of their commitment to aligning ETD records with the Texas Digital Library Descriptive Metadata Guidelines for Electronic Theses and Dissertations, Version 2.0 (TDL guidelines, version 2).
- Lastly, book reviews, as solicited and provided by my colleague, Elyssa Gould, *LRTS* book review editor.