

# Curation in Special Libraries

## Abstract

*In chapter 5 of Library Technology Reports (vol. 50, no. 7), “Social Media Curation,” the authors report on interviews with librarians at special libraries who curate large digital portals. These librarians’ major concerns center on ensuring the quality and integrity of their collections, ensuring the appropriate description of records, and ensuring that their efforts are discovered and used.*

The special librarians we spoke with described efforts curating large digital portals. More than any other segment, they described collection development policies and protocols and expressed concern for the life cycle of records and the dangers of link rot. Their major concerns centered on ensuring the quality and the integrity of their collections, ensuring the appropriate description of records, and ensuring that their efforts were discovered and used. They discussed new strategies for integrating open educational resources (OER) and user-generated content. Marcia Mardis, Distinguished Research Fellow with the National Science Digital Library and a principal investigator on the Web2MARC project, discussed the importance of interoperability and new features that will allow users to save digital records in local databases and share via social media. She shared concerns regarding the concept of letting a thousand flowers bloom and the need to address emerging issues related to scale and efficient management. At the Maryland State Law Library, Debbie Judy and Mary Jo Lazun spoke of the importance of preserving content using the analogy of saving baby seals. As law librarians, they regularly use social media to discover content of interest to judges, lawyers, law clerks, and law students and are looking toward new strategies

for marketing their efforts. Lesley Farmer described philosophical considerations in the representation of knowledge and spoke of curation as a form of storytelling. Dan Cohen and Luis Hererra at the Digital Public Library of America emphasized the importance of connecting culturally diverse collections. They spoke of community engagement—about engaging in local digitization activities, of engaging families in personal archiving—in sync with the new efforts of the Library of Congress—and of teaching young people about the importance of curating.

## Marcia Mardis, National Science Digital Library (February 21, 2014)

*Marcia Mardis, associate professor at Florida State University’s College of Communication and Information, School of Information, is a Distinguished Research Fellow with the National Science Digital Library and principal investigator on the Digital Libraries to School Libraries Project (DL2SL) and the Web2MARC cataloging tool. Marcia described her role guiding the development of two large digital libraries when we spoke with her on February 21, 2014.*

**JV: Can you define curation? In your place in the library world, why is it important to curate? What is your role?**

**MM:** Curation spins off of collection development. It’s about arranging a set of resources that meet clearly articulated standards, around a certain theme. It’s the ways in which collection is promoted. If we focus on creation and sharing, the promotion piece is the extending piece, the piece that allows people to take

it further. Content wasn't as accessible in a less digital world.

**JV: Can you share your curation journey?**

MM: I was a practitioner originally. I worked at a science-focused private school in San Antonio, so science was my entry point. Later, I worked on the Last Mile Project, an NSFNET partnership devoted to building national backbone network service. Then I got an NSF grant and some Michigan Department of Education money to found a digital library for teachers. We set out at that time to build a highly curated collection of resources. There were fewer resources to choose from then, and we came upon some early issues relating to curatorial policy that curators had to deal with. For instance, whose notion of quality are we really putting forth?

We went through a couple of different models of who would be involved in our collection development. We weren't 100% satisfied with the stuff selected by the folks who were just classroom teachers because that represented a certain perspective. We weren't 100% satisfied with the way the collection development looked with people who were solely domain area experts because that represented another perspective on what the resource is about, what it's used for, and how to promote it. Ultimately, we decided that our collection developers, or curators, should be school librarians who collected in their area of domain expertise. So, for instance, if you were a K-5 school librarian with a biology degree, you would be collecting in K-5 science. That represented the best of all worlds.

We got the pedagogical piece, we got the domain expertise piece, and we got the other domain expertise piece. We needed to consider: What does a high quality information resource look like? For instance, is it persistent? Is it usable by multiple populations?

It was my first entrée into taking what I knew to be best practice and what we saw evolving as best practice. It was my first entrée into what does it mean to take what you know as collection development and to put it outside you as a policy? We developed a set of policies because we wanted to ensure metadata quality as well as resource quality. I did that from 1998 till 2008. The Michigan Online Resources for Educators [M.O.R.E.] still exists.

We were one of the first digital libraries to assign curriculum standards to digital resources, so we wanted to make sure we were creating the highest quality metadata possible and not let it become a complete free-for-all. But certainly users could suggest, tag, rate resources.

*Marcia believes that user-generated content and commentary are valuable, but first-level cutting is important in education resources.*

MM: The user voice has to be there, but there are so many different views of quality assessment. As the person running a collection, you need to stay committed to the idea that you have to decide what standards you are going to set and how are you going to enforce those standards. That's the whole difference between curation and the free web. What you're promoting is your view of how things need to go together around a particular theme and the best resources to reinforce that theme. You need to make choices; you need to clearly articulate policy. The people who were our collection developers out there in the field believed in our policies.

**JV: Is it important that librarians engage in digital curation?**

MM: It's important to curate. I have a hard time seeing a place where an information professional wouldn't have a lot to contribute to the curatorial enterprise.

My work centers around open education resources. Learning takes place best from high quality contextualization of resources. While I am not against the British Museum model, that has to be highly mediated; it is all about the context you wrap around it.

At the National Science Digital Library [NSDL], there was a strong commitment to letting a thousand flowers bloom—let everything in, let the user contextualize it. But what we were hearing from users was: "If I am going to go to a curated collection, or a collection that seems like it should be curated, I expect curated stuff to be in there. So, if you're going to collect stuff, and you are not going to assure to me that it has good science, that it's appropriate for the audiences that it's intended for, we're not interested."

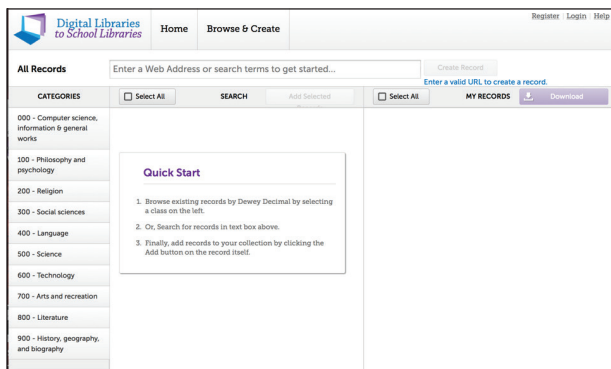
That might be the role of metadata. That might be the role of the person presenting the collection. In each one of the roles, I see a place for the voice of an information professional.

In a formal education situation, with agreed-upon standards of knowledge like good science, there is a lot of discovery to be done, but there are some foundational elements we need to at least put in place.

**JV: Do the major digital libraries discuss their varied approaches to digital curation?**

MM: This a very interesting time in the lives of all of these projects. They are transitioning into a post-federal funding period. It makes sense to pool the curatorial piece and the policy and philosophy pieces. It's not about building, it should be scalable and demonstrate efficiency in management.

Everyone is pleased to swap technology approaches. I think there'll be a larger push for metadata interoperability, to share objects across collections, and exciting approaches to search. We may see a



**Figure 5.1**  
Web2MARC tool to facilitate import of web-based OER content into local catalogs

metasearch develop. From the user perspective, perhaps the pesters from collection to collection will disappear. Perhaps search will become more seamless.

There are territory issues. Projects want to own their individual identities. Trying to get people to agree upon a common metadata standard is never really going to happen, and maybe it shouldn't happen. However, better crosswalks and better interoperability strategies can address a lot of issues. However, anytime you create a crosswalk, you run the risk of losing something. This is a role for the information professional that I see persisting.

**JV: So what about all those silos the user sees? The user is not likely to discover or invest the energy in visiting and separately searching all of the portals that will likely have valuable content.**

MM: There are new opportunities for tool-builders to curate so all the user sees are the objects that are dynamically combined from across collections. We're moving toward personalization, and a spot for such a tool will not be left empty for too long. So it will become less about visiting the individual collection and more about the tool learning what you need or you telling the tool what you need and it pushing the resources to you from trusted providers.

*Marcia Mardis and her team have developed a Web-2MARC tool to facilitate the import of web-based OER content into local catalogs (figure 5.1). I asked her about the progress of that project.*

MM: Right now we're building out the functionality in a number of different areas. For K-12 users, we're building out the next generation science standards applications, the Common Core State Standards [CCSS], some additional vocabularies, controlled vocabularies—there are already uncontrolled vocabularies features. We're building additional capacities for

ratings, reviews, and other aspects of personalization. The other thing we're looking at is increasing the number of output formats, not just MARC, but XML and a few other formats that will make it easier for the records to be ingested in a number of different types of repositories, not just the school library catalog, but also, for instance, the state Department of Education's OER repository. You can already bring records into your personal repository like Zotero or Endnote.

We're also spinning off an API part, a plug-in so you can pin records on Pinterest, share on Facebook, and tweet. You'll be able to click on a button and generate a record from wherever you're browsing, rather than having to copy the URL, go to the Web2MARC tool, paste the URL in the box, and create the record.

**JV: Kind of like a bookmarklet?**

MM: Yes, but it will result in a record you can take with you and put wherever you would like it to go. The nice thing is that every record generated goes into a common database so that as a user, you can grab a record out and it becomes its own self-curated depository of high quality descriptions. As people refine those records, it becomes a crowd-sourced repository of high quality descriptions. And then repository providers can harvest that repository as well, and it becomes part of a life cycle of high quality metadata.

**JV: Anything I forgot to ask about curation and the library world?**

MM: I see opportunity everywhere. I am just really excited. There are so many people in libraries who have been shaming themselves for really enjoying building their collections. That's just too bad. It's such a fantastic and singular activity. It's at the core of what we do, and the rest of our jobs do not make sense without it.

*Digital Libraries to School Libraries Project*  
[DL2SL] Web2MARC Cataloging Tool  
<http://dl2sl.org/about/project>

*Michigan Online Resources for Educators*  
(M.O.R.E.)  
<http://more.mel.org>

*National Science Digital Library (NSDL)*  
<https://nsdl.org>

## Debbie Judy and Mary Jo Lazun, Maryland State Law Library (April 28, 2014)

*The State Law Library, Maryland's oldest law library, features one of Maryland's most extensive collections of legal and government information resources, such as the digital collections of the Rules Committee Materials, Task Force Reports, and Judiciary Conference Proceedings. It is staffed by eighteen full-time and part-time professional and paraprofessional employees and stands ready to serve users from all walks of life.*

*The State Law Library is one of four libraries participating in the Chesapeake Digital Preservation Group (CDPG), which also includes the Georgetown Law Library, Harvard Law Library, and Virginia State Law Library. It is part of the Legal Information Archives. CDPG preserves legal materials, reports, and documents posted to the web. In the seven years since the formation of CDPG, it has built a digital archive collection comprising more than 8,954 digital items and over 4,000 titles. Much of the originally posted content has been disappearing over time. The CDPG documents legal website instability with reports titled "Link Rot" and Legal Resources on the Web.*

*A court-related agency of the Maryland judiciary, the Maryland State Law Library "serves the needs of Maryland's government and citizens by: building and preserving collections of legal information resources, promoting access to these collections, and creating educational opportunities that enhance the understanding of legal information."<sup>1</sup>*

*According to its website*

*The Maryland State Law Library believes that libraries from all kinds of institutions play a noteworthy role in the provision of information services. Therefore, while most requests may be met at the local level, larger libraries, such as the State Law Library, may contain the materials to better respond to unique information requests. With a full-time and part-time team of twelve professionals and six paraprofessionals, the Library stands ready to help other librarians meet the information needs of their customers through both informal guidance and convenient services.*

*Librarians from many institutions may benefit directly from the following popular State Law Library services:*

- *The easy-to-use document delivery, with the capability to pay by Visa or MasterCard for "rush" copying, including PDF scans via e-mail*
- *Interlibrary lending via OCLC*
- *Phone and email reference assistance*
- *Remote Z39.50 access to the Library's catalog*
- *Access to Maryland state agency publications in digital format via the library catalog<sup>2</sup>*

*We spoke with Debbie Judy, Maryland collections librarian, and Mary Jo Lazun, head of collection management, Maryland State Law Library, on April 28, 2014.*

**DC:** How do you define digital curation for your community?

DJ & MJL: Not an easy one! We believe that digital curation is synonymous with digital preservation. We have a collection development policy that guides identification, selection, and preservation of our unique collections.

We tend to use digital preservation. We believe in offering multiple access points to our collections that comprise scanned and born digital documents and resources. The collection is available from the Maryland State Law Library Catalog and from WorldCat. We harvest documents, taking the entire content and preserving it in PDF format. We have found that, over time, web information disappears. Our annual survey data show that 50% of the digital content from .gov sites has disappeared.

**DC:** What are your platforms/tools of choice?

DJ & MJL: We use a variety of tools to find content of interest to judges, lawyers, law clerks, and law students, such as Google Alert. We outsource the scanning of print documents. PTFs Archivalware allows us to store, search, retrieve, browse, and manage a diverse set of content/digital objects within one easy-to-use system. Content is cataloged and organized with CONTENTdm Digital Collection Management by OCLC; editing metadata; and index documents.

**DC:** Why is it important for you as a librarian to curate?

DJ & MJL: No one else is going to make these valuable resources accessible. We are earnest at preserving information; we use the analogy of "saving baby seals" as endangered species.

**DC:** What is your role?

DJ & MJL: Debbie, as Maryland collections librarian, is responsible for harvesting information resources. Mary Jo is head of collection management.

**DC:** What feedback do you get from your users?

DJ & MJL: We get great feedback from the Rules Committee Materials reports—we care a lot about this section. In addition, we get anecdotal information from our walk-in clients.

**DC:** What are your plans for the future?

DJ & MJL: We hope to expand our collections as time and financial resources are granted. There will be a new collection accessible soon, for instance, the 19th

Century Maryland State Bar Association Transactions Collection (late 1800s to 1990s). We are looking at expanding marketing our collections. Our director Steve Anderson has a forward focus for collection development.

*Maryland State Law Library*  
www.lawlib.state.md.us

*Collection Development Policy for Maryland State Law Library*

www.lawlib.state.md.us/aboutus/policies/  
CollectionDevelopmentMSLL.pdf

*Maryland State Law Library Digital Collections*  
www.lawlib.state.md.us/collections/digitalcollections.html

*“Link Rot” and Legal Resources on the Web*

http://cdm16064.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/  
reportsandpublications

## **Leslie Farmer, California State University, Long Beach (February 27, 2014)**

*Leslie Farmer, coordinates the librarianship program at California State University, Long Beach. She has worked in school, public, special, and academic libraries and formerly chaired the Education Section of Special Libraries Association. We spoke with Leslie on February 27, 2014.*

### **JV: Can you define curation?**

LF: It's hard to ignore the museum definition of curation, having worked in museums and having taken a course in curation. The core piece of curation includes the responsibility for a collection—what to collect, how you document the acquisition process, registration, cataloging, displaying, loaning and maintaining, consideration for provenance, doing interpretation, supporting documentation, looking at context and significance, sharing that information with the public, as well as display in whatever format. It's a cluster of different functions.

### **JV: How does the digital world change your notion of curation?**

LF: Even in a completely digital museum, you are still talking about selection of recorded information in its broadest sense. There are some philosophical issues for consideration. And there are two ways to dance that out. You have straight representations of

knowledge—blog, digital art, recorded song. And then there are reproductions of artifacts, like a photograph of an ancient pot. One is the actual item; the other is a manifestation of the item. There's a difference.

With a photograph of a 3-D object, the camera angle, the lighting, all that stuff, impacts it. And then we need to consider, what is your definition of digital and where do 3-D printers fit? It's very complex. Very nuanced, very exciting.

If you are looking at digital artifacts, you are still talking about how they were created, who created them, where they are housed, what is the affiliation. You're talking about Dublin Core stuff—about description and context.

When you put together displays and portals of information, you need to consider what kind of container will you choose. How will you present? It's not core librarianship, but it's an aspect of our work that's becoming increasingly important.

When we're teaching whatever level, it is important to think about information as a product; it has a container of some sort. We should be thinking about the context, keeping in mind the objective, the audience, the message we want to convey, what container we will use, and how will we share it. It's very intentional. You bring your own interpretation. It's also a relational thing.

### **JV: So the audience needs to be aware of the curator's lens?**

LF: Yes, if you're doing active curation, you need to be aware of voice. When we're teaching kids to curate, we need to ask them about their voice.

### **JV: So there's a filter bubble connected to curation as well as search? A specific lens, an echo chamber?**

LF: In that respect, museums are intentional in their development. Institutions have their missions. Collections represent the institution's perspective. Kids need to be aware of that. Whether it's a museum, your public library, Pinterest, or Digg. Selection is a very human, very intentional endeavor.

### **JV: And some efforts are intended to be a story? Like some of the Smithsonian exhibits in Washington.**

LF: Those exhibits only represent 5–10% of the collection. Right. There's the big collection, and then there's the educational aspect. The curator determines what's educationally important, of value. And then there's the interpretation that involves the story, the displays, the sequencing.

## Library of Congress and Digital Preservation

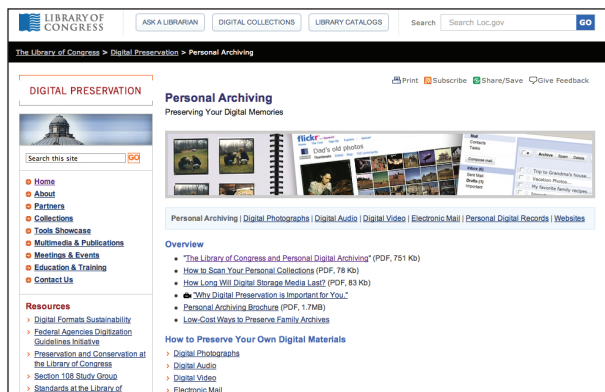
The Library of Congress, our nation’s library and the “world’s preeminent reservoir of knowledge”<sup>3</sup> holding millions of artifacts and materials in myriad formats, now seeks to help each of us become better curators and digital preservers of our own histories.

The Library of Congress Digital Preservation/Personal Archiving Outreach Program (see figure 5.2) is designed to help individuals preserve and manage their own digital content over time. Personal archiving is personal curation. It goes beyond the family scrapbook on the bookshelf. When family collections are preserved and shared in digital environments, they can take on new life and be used in new ways by others. Photos and online journals quickly come to mind, but so should other documents—e-mails and links to other curated collections that have held meaning for someone.

Scrapbooks, flash drives, and compact disks no longer can do the job of holding all of this good stuff for the long haul. To educate families about personal archiving and help them manage their growing digital files, the Library of Congress developed a program to reach out to individuals through their local public libraries.

The library began this task by simplifying the deep knowledge held by its staff working in digital preservation. A chief issue was helping people see potential loss through the rapid obsolescence of hardware and software used to hold digital files; in other words, understanding the need for digital preservation of personal items. To achieve the greatest reach possible, the library joined with ALA, the Institute of Museum and Library Services, and StoryCorps to begin collecting and documenting community projects. The library also offers an excellent guidebook, *Perspectives on Personal Digital Archiving*, that presents tips for preserving photos, text messages, and other materials. The guide also offers case studies, describes how librarians can bring this program to their communities, and more.

Further guidance for librarians and others interested in personal archiving comes from *The Signal*, a digital preservation blog written by Mike Ashenfelder and members of the LOC staff. Leslie Johnston, a regular contributor to the blog, defines curation as inherent in three realms: acquisition, exhibition, and preservation. Acquisition involves “considering and appraising, researching, contextualizing and selecting, constantly searching and refining.”<sup>4</sup> As a form of exhibition, curation includes “conceptualization, interpretation, and transformation . . . [to make] the message accessible to a wide audience.”<sup>5</sup> Preservation calls for storage and management as well as ongoing reappraisal.



**Figure 5.2** Personal archiving as part of the Library of Congress’s information on digital preservation

Noting the current pop culture usage of the term curation, Johnston opines that this common adoption may be just the inroad needed to build wider understanding of what curation is at different levels. As more people curate and archive their own histories, this understanding may grow and potentially lead to deeper interest in the excellent digital curations offered by the LOC and other fine institutions.

*LOC: Personal Archiving*  
[www.digitalpreservation.gov/personalarchiving](http://www.digitalpreservation.gov/personalarchiving)

*Perspectives on Personal Digital Archiving*  
[www.digitalpreservation.gov/documents/ebookpdf\\_march18.pdf](http://www.digitalpreservation.gov/documents/ebookpdf_march18.pdf)

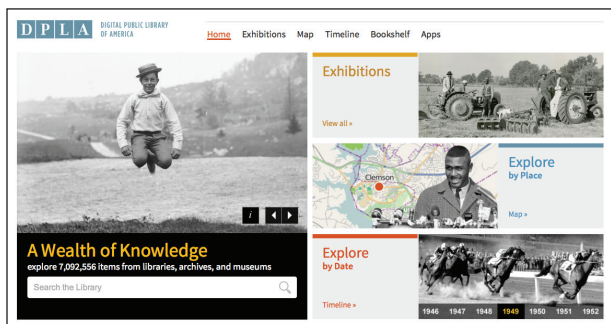
*The Signal*  
<http://blogs.loc.gov/digitalpreservation>

## Digital Public Library of America: Luis Hererra (April 18, 2014) and Dan Cohen (May 12, 2014)

*Portal for discovery, a platform to build upon and a strong public option.*

—Emily Gore<sup>6</sup>

*The Digital Public Library of America (DPLA) is a single open portal to the digitized collections from museums, archives, and libraries all of kinds, with over seven million current holdings held in over 1,300 collections across the country (figure 5.3). With a single search, users can discover millions of related items from archives, libraries,*



**Figure 5.3**  
DPLA home page

and museums. Search results can be filtered in variety of ways, including geographically, by time line, or by desired format. The New York Public Library, California Digital Library, US Government Printing Office, Harvard Library, J. Paul Getty Trust, and Smithsonian are just a few of the current content hubs of the DPLA. DPLA offers a diverse assemblage of special exhibits, such as *Leaving Europe: A New Life in America* (curated in conjunction with European), *The Show Must Go On! American Theater in the Great Depression*, *Boston Sports Temples*, and *History of Survivance: Upper Midwest 19th Century Native American Narratives*. These well-curated exhibits bring together a range of materials and provide context for explorers, researchers, and learners of all ages. These fascinating exhibits will continue to grow and offer new opportunities to bring greater attention to our multifaceted American culture and history.

To achieve its purposes, the DPLA network consists of content and service hubs. Content hubs are primarily larger institutions, such as universities, that already hold major digitized collections. Service hubs, the aggregators of content, establish and maintain the relationships with the individual holders of content for their state or region. Although initiated through the use of state-level service hubs, the DPLA's aggregation model makes it sustainable for growth beyond geographic boundaries. Sustainability will also stem from DPLA's open data, as well as its open application programming interface (API), available to anyone who would like to develop apps for maximizing DPLA's collections. Some of the current apps available are *DPLAbot* (by Mark Sample), which randomly tweets items from the collection; *Culture Collage* (by Monique Szpak), which creates a continual photostream based on your search; and *Metadata Games* (by Tiltfactor), an app that inspires users to explore archives to gather "data on photo, audio, and moving image artifacts."<sup>7</sup> Open API enriches relationships as users reframe DPLA to local purposes. Naturally, DPLA also has a search widget libraries can embed for seamless searching directly from their local sites.

Easy creation of free accounts and the ability to save and share playlists of resources makes DPLA a powerful

option for researchers, students, and teachers. Making these vast collections readily accessible to everyone, the DPLA helps to "strengthen the public option that libraries represent in their communities."<sup>8</sup> By its one-year anniversary, the Digital Public Library of America had tripled its collections and garnered over one million unique visits to the site. In two separate interviews, Executive Director Dan Cohen (on May 12, 2014) and DPLA board member Luis Hererra (on April 18, 2014) shared their insights into this exciting project.

**BB: What are your thoughts and reflections on the success DPLA has had in its first year?**

DC: The DPLA is truly a social project and a political success, achieving buy-in from growing numbers of stakeholders at a variety of institutions. DPLA is a complementary service to these digitized collections by providing discovery layers for America's collections. I'm thrilled about the current status. We have materials with over 400 languages represented in the currently accessible materials, and several more digital libraries are interested in partnering with the project.

**BB: Was there a particular model followed for the design of DPLA, for instance, Internet Archive or Europeana?**

DC: There are many different models out there, but the goal was not to rely on specific collections, but rather on how many different kinds of collections can come together and bring them to one place. So the model is a hub networked one. The central office doesn't host, but instead links out to content hubs. It's a very webby model.

**BB: How do you see DPLA and the Library of Congress collections and personal archiving movement intersecting?**

DC: DPLA does not currently have a formal agreement in place with the Library of Congress, but we are hoping to eventually come to an agreement. Right now, the main focus is "surfacing content" from all over the country.

**BB: What are some of DPLA's goals for the near future?**

DC: The main thing is completing the map—getting content hubs in all 50 states. These are "on-ramps" for collections residing in large and small archives and libraries to come on board. We're planning for addressing subject and chronological and format gaps. Also, usage. We're thinking about ways to bring DPLA into classrooms and community programs.

DPLA's community representatives program is likely to be a major tool for meeting some of these needs. Currently, there are over 200 volunteer reps from all states and some foreign countries spreading the word about DPLA at the local level. DPLA does not hold the collections, but rather the metadata that enables seamless connection to resources from this one-stop portal. Building off of existing infrastructures, the goal is to be complementary to existing collections and to work with small cultural institutions to help their materials see the light of day.<sup>9</sup>

Luis Herrera, DPLA board member and city librarian of San Francisco, believes that removing barriers to access to this broad and growing range of culturally diverse materials across the country will be a key to the continuing success for the DPLA.

**BB: How do you describe DPLA's purpose? What does DPLA mean to us all?**

LH: It's about sharing our cultural narrative. DPLA is expanding access for the nation and beyond for rich content and culture at the local level. We're broadening reach and scale. We're excited about bringing these amazing collections to a much more accessible, user-friendly portal.

**BB: What are your thoughts and reflections on the success DPLA has had in its first year?**

LH: The initial vision was to have content reflect the broad range of the country. With over 7 million items and over a million visits to the portal, we're making great progress with content and service hubs. It's come a long way. Six months ago, California was not that active, so we saw this need to push from the grassroots to have the state library become a content hub and establish a new pathway.

**BB: As a director of a major public library system, what are your thoughts about the DPLA's community representatives and public library partnerships programs?**

LH: The California Digital Library model brings public library engagement in academic collections, a hybrid model. The success will be in how we scale it and how public libraries can also provide content services and build capacity. The local libraries prioritize collections and determine how to share with content hubs.

In San Francisco city libraries, space has been repurposed as digitization centers, inviting community members in to document and scan collections of small neighborhood archives. The digitization program not only brings attention to these small collections, but also provides training to those who want to learn how to digitize materials, exemplifying the makerspace model. Initiatives such as San Francisco's align perfectly with

the personal digital archiving outreach program of the Library of Congress and reinforce the importance of archiving neighborhood and personal histories. In this way, DPLA can fill gaps for communities that have not yet been represented.

**BB: What do you see as the essential value of this movement?**

LH: It is a democratic, inclusive approach, with people at the grassroots level determining what is of value and what needs to be shared.

**BB: What challenges does DPLA face?**

LH: We need to find a way to engage younger generations and find ways to engage a younger demographic, create some involvement in schools. We want opportunities for students to get involved and share their own unique content. It represents changes in how we are learning.

*What is striking about the DPLA is its capability to be leveraged not only for research and scalable sharing of resources but also for education in curation for young people. As schools increasingly extend learner ability to go beyond information consumption to content creation, DPLA could potentially see escalating involvement from communities of young learners, matching DPLA's goal of moving beyond geography to include learning communities of all types.*

## Beyond the Conversations

We know that special librarians work within their institutional or corporate cultures. Concerns regarding corporate intelligence and professional branding may impact their use of social media for curation. Among the examples of curation we discovered were the Ringling Art Library's rich and carefully annotated image collections on its Pinterest boards and the boards of the Library and Archives of the Institution of Civil Engineers, displaying such collections as New Books, as well as Inspirational Engineering.

In addition to thoughtfully described images from its glorious collection, the Biodiversity Heritage Library (BHL) presents on its boards Portraits of Naturalists and Books of the Week. The library, the foundational literature partner of the Encyclopedia of Life project, works to make biodiversity literature openly available. Its official home page provides access to the major collection of more than 76,000 online titles, while it mashes up an array of curatorial social media in the form of its blog, its substantial Flickr stream, and its Twitter feed—all of which enhance and further scale and share the resources of the library.



*Ringling Art Library Pinterest boards*  
[www.pinterest.com/ringlingartlib](http://www.pinterest.com/ringlingartlib)

*ICE Library: Library and Archives of the Institution of Civil Engineers Pinterest boards*  
[www.pinterest.com/icelibrary](http://www.pinterest.com/icelibrary)

*BHL website*  
[www.biodiversitylibrary.org](http://www.biodiversitylibrary.org)

*BHL Pinterest boards*  
[www.pinterest.com/biodivlibrary](http://www.pinterest.com/biodivlibrary)

*BHL Flickr albums*  
<https://www.flickr.com/photos/biodivlibrary/sets>

*BHL Facebook page*  
<https://www.facebook.com/BioDivLibrary>

*BHL on Twitter*  
[@BioDivLibrary](https://twitter.com/BioDivLibrary)

## Notes

1. Maryland State Law Library home page, accessed July 3, 2014, [www.lawlib.state.md.us](http://www.lawlib.state.md.us).
2. “Librarians,” Maryland State Law Library, accessed July 3, 2014, [www.lawlib.state.md.us/audiences/librarians.html](http://www.lawlib.state.md.us/audiences/librarians.html).
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