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Consent Form for Oral History Interview (2002 version)

This confirms my understanding and agreement with the Medical Library Association (MLA) concerning my participation in an oral history interview as a part of MLA’s Oral History Program.

1. I agree to be interviewed by Rick B. Forsman
   on November 14-15, 2020. I understand that my interview
   will be recorded and that a transcript and edited version of my interview will later be created.
   I understand that I will be given an opportunity to review and edit the edited transcript before
   its release.

2. I hereby grant and assign all right, title, and interest to any and all recordings and
   transcripts of my interview including copyright [and all rights subsumed thereunder] to
   MLA. I will be given a copy of the edited transcript for my personal use. I understand that the
   transfer of these rights to MLA confers no obligations on MLA to promote, market, or
   otherwise make publicly available copies of the interview.

3. One or more edited and/or condensed versions of the interview, approved by me, may be
   disseminated by MLA, as it deems appropriate.

4. I understand that the original, unedited recording of my interview and the original unedited
   transcript will be maintained in the MLA archives at the National Library of Medicine, or at
   such other place as MLA may reasonably designate, and may be made available to
   researchers who have demonstrated that they have appropriate qualifications. I further
   understand that the original unedited recording and/or the original unedited transcript will be
   made available with the following restrictions (Check one):

   [X] No restrictions
   [ ] The following specified portions of the interview will not be made available
      to anyone until ________________

Jean P. Shipman
Name of Interviewee
Signature
Date 11/16/2020
Accepted by: MLA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Rick B. Forsman
Name of MLA Interviewer(s)
Signature
Date 11/15/2020
Date 4/23/2021
**Biographical Statement**

Jean P. Shipman, AHIP, FMLA, was executive director of the Spencer S. Eccles Health Sciences Library at the University of Utah. She was also health sciences library director and associate university librarian at Virginia Commonwealth University. Combining her varied experience in five academic health sciences libraries, two Regional Medical Libraries, and a hospital library, she capped her career at Elsevier as vice president of global library relations. She is recognized for her professional contributions to scholarly communications, innovation, health literacy, and mentoring.

Shipman was interested specifically in medical librarianship from an early age, influenced by her mother’s job in a university library and her sister’s career in health. She pursued her goal in library school at Case Western Reserve University and sought her first position at the 1980 Medical Library Association annual meeting. She began her career at Johns Hopkins University where she worked for Nina Matheson and gained lifelong lessons on risk-taking and an expansive role for libraries. After a position at the Greater Baltimore Medical Center, she went to the Southeastern/Atlantic Regional Medical Library at the University of Maryland at Baltimore as resources management coordinator. A move to the University of Washington followed, working in fee-based services and as associate director for information resources management.

Her next two positions saw her assume directorship roles. At Virginia Commonwealth University, she started consumer health libraries and extended her experience in relations between academic and health sciences libraries. She then went to Utah, where she succeeded Wayne Peay. In addition to the library, she directed the MidContinental Regional Medical Library and the National Training Center of the National Network of Libraries of Medicine and led information transfer for the Center for Medical Innovation. Eccles Library staff took on many new roles involving collaboration with partners and application of technology, such as a database to assist researchers at different stages, working with medical therapeutic gamers, developing an electronic channel to document content in innovation, and creating an applications user lab in a digital consumer library.

Shipman served on the Medical Library Association Board of Directors and as 2006/07 president. She planned the Informationist Conference sponsored with the National Library of Medicine. Her presidential priorities included health literacy, with a research project funded by NLM to assess hospital administrator awareness and build an advocacy role for librarians. She received MLA’s Marcia C. Noyes Award in 2017. Shipman coedited two books, on information and innovation and on strategic collaborations in health sciences libraries.

Another thread throughout Shipman’s career was building bridges between publishers and librarians. She served as co-convener for the Chicago Collaborative between the Association of Academic Health Sciences Libraries and publisher associations and on the Society for Scholarly Publishing Board of Directors. Her final position at Elsevier used her background to help her represent the company and the library profession worldwide to one another.
Medical Library Association Interview with Jean P. Shipman

[M4A file 1: GMT20201114-185933]

RICK B. FORSMAN: This is the official beginning of an interview with Jean Pugh Shipman, and it will be the first MLA oral history conducted using Zoom technology in light of the complications of travel during the COVID-19 pandemic. Today is November 14, 2020. The interviewer is Rick Forsman. Jean, thank you for working with Carolyn Lipscomb and myself to refine the interview questions and to set up a time for our dialogue. We particularly appreciate your willingness to forego an in-person interview and experiment with substituting a virtual dialogue.

So, let’s begin with some personal history. Tell me about where you grew up and any family or other circumstances that set the stage for your later education and career.

JEAN P. SHIPMAN: Thank you. I appreciate, first of all, that you’re doing this for me, and I appreciate MLA’s backing to have an oral history of my life, so thank you.

I grew up in a small town in Pennsylvania. It was Orrstown, still is. There was a population of 300, and now there’s 299. One of the reasons that I wanted to become a medical librarian was to get out of that little town. It was a delightful town to grow up in, don’t get me wrong, but I wanted to do something more with my education. Also, I had the backing of my parents, who really were not college graduates but wanted their children to go to college.

I had a very extended family. On my father’s side of the family, he had five brothers and they all got together every Sunday night. A lot of the cousins would kind of coach each other and talk to each other about what we wanted to be when we grew up. Some of us are still doing that. But we had a very close-knit family. One of the things my one cousin would say was, “Well, what do you like? When you grow up, what do you really appreciate?” And it just hit me at that point, I really appreciated learning, and I really didn’t have one focal area that attracted me as far as wanting to focus my whole life on. I wanted to focus it on learning.

Luckily for me, my mother was a civil servant at Shippensburg University as a library assistant in government documents. And bless her heart, how she could have done government documents, I don’t understand. But she loved them and she just loved the whole library world. So, she had me go in and talk to some of the librarians there when I was thinking about things. To back up a little bit, my sister is five years older and she wanted to become a pharmacist. She wanted very much to be working in a health care field. So, I kind of had her health care influence and then my mother’s library influence. Talking to this cousin, I said, “Well, I think I want to do something mixing libraries and health care.” I didn’t know what that was. But when I went to the library where I met with these different librarians, they introduced me to medical librarianship. I spent more hours researching it and decided that’s what I wanted to be.
I didn’t tell my mom, and I didn’t tell my father. We went to Gettysburg College, which was where I wanted to do my first interview. We’re in the interview and they said to me, “Why are you here?” And I said, “Well, I want to be a medical librarian.” And everyone kind of paused in the room. They said, “You know we don’t have a library school here,” and I was like, “Yeah, I know.” And they’re like, “Okay.” I said, “But I want to get a biology background, a BA in that, and then I’ll get a liberal arts education here with that, and then I’ll go to grad school and get a master’s in library science. And they said, “You need one for that?” and I said, “Yeah, that’s pretty much the [standard]—to practice, a graduate degree is pretty good.”

So, lo and behold, we get back in the car, and my mom’s like, “You didn’t tell us that.” I said, “I know. I was kind of holding it back.” But what I didn’t honestly tell my mother was why I wanted to become a medical librarian. I read that they were only in big cities primarily, and unless you were in a hospital library, rural environments were not as common. So, I picked medical librarian to get me out of the little city. I wanted to be a librarian, but that’s how I fell into medical librarianship. Luckily, I was able to do some work in high school at the regular library there to get ready for library school.

RF: So, that’s amazing, because you had a pretty clear idea, and you also had a path that you had picked out for yourself of how to achieve that at a pretty early stage in life.

JS: It’s true, and the bad side of that is, I guess I didn’t feel I had many other options. I was still in that era of, you became a teacher or a nurse. The fact that my sister became a pharmacist was really huge in our small town. I think I glommed onto the library because it gave me an opportunity to learn, but also, then, I saw it as hitching my ride onto that wagon outside to the big city. And I haven’t regretted it. That’s the good news.

RF: It’s also interesting because you developed a plan at a point in time where I think a lot of us looked at what our parents were doing, and the people tended to move into jobs and either stay with a company or stay in a job for extended periods of time, sometimes their entire life. And that certainly changed as we moved up in our careers. But that was not the mindset when you and I started… And then following up on your plan, in 1979, you obtained a BA degree cum laude in biology from Gettysburg College in Pennsylvania, and then you graduated a year later, in 1980, with an MSLS in library science from the library school at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland—where I also got my library degree. So, you had done some work in high school in the library. And obviously, with your mother’s background, you knew quite a bit more about libraries than many people did entering our profession.

We’ve talked about how you first became interested and how you chose medical librarianship. Did the LIS program at Case when you were there, Jean, have medical librarianship courses?

JS: It did. There were three universities that I looked at attending: University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill was one; University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign; and then also, Case Western Reserve University. I picked Case mainly because of Robert
Cheshier. He was the director of the medical library there—but also very well known in helping with placement of graduates and giving a lot of career advice over time. Also, I really liked that they did have these—I think it was [six]—courses that were targeted toward medical. It wasn’t a certification or a minor, but it was pretty close to that, whereas the other two schools didn’t have that kind of track at that time.

RF: Yes, Bob had definitely invested a lot of time and thought in building that specialized medical library track at Case. And, you’re right, he was a mentor for many people in figuring out how to go through that program and then finding their first jobs. He essentially helped me find my first job.

JS: Yes. And they had a rotation in each of the departments of the library, so you actually got paid to work in the library as a course, but it exposed you to all different parts of the university library, like reference, cataloging, all that. Because when I started, I didn’t know the difference. When they asked me what kind of librarian I wanted to be, I said, “Medical,” and then they’re like, “But what kind of medical?” “Um…. I have to pick even further?” So that course really helped determine what area I wanted to go in post-college.

RF: And it was, I think, a unique program in terms of not only giving people specific medical library experience—because you needed to work while you were in the program—and specific content for skill sets that you would need in working in a medical library; but also, the context of the sociology of health sciences professions, and understanding better, I think, than many people did when they graduated, just what’s the universe that you’re going to be launching yourself into.

JS: Right, and particularly that one course was something like “Environment of a Health Science Librarian,” but it did take you through all the different types of professionals in the health sciences, and then what hospital librarians do versus medical school ones. It was an excellent environmental scan of where you were going to practice later.

RF: Yes. And certainly, one of the strong programs, and strong ongoing programs, until they closed the library school.

JS: Right. And I’m responsible. It was [six] years after me, so I don’t take credit for that [laughter]. [Editor’s note: The school was closed in 1986.] But it was a good program. I came from Gettysburg College, which was pretty intellectually intense. And I do have to say that library school was not as hard as I anticipated it being, but it was a good program in that it gave you this practical experience combined with theoretical. And then with Dr. Cheshier’s backing, it landed you right into a perfect opportunity to get a job.

RF: Were there other people besides Bob that you remember from that time?

JS: Oh, yes. Ginger—and I’m trying to remember her maiden name, but it’s Saha now.
RF: Ginger Garvin.

JS: Garvin, thank you. She was instrumental. Oh, my gosh, we loved Ginger. She did a lot of practical work, again, with setting up a library. I remember a project was [creating a library plan] taking it from [electrical] outlets to books to everything. If you had to plan a library, what did you have to consider? Policy, practical facility planning, as well as rules and staffing. It was an excellent course. It was all year. That was the only course that went both semesters, if I remember right. But she was just so lively and engaging.

RF: And so enthusiastic about this profession.

JS: We just couldn’t wait for [her class]. The other ones I remember, Rickie, and I don’t remember her last name. She was at the Allen Library, because there was the Allen—which was more for a medical association in Cleveland that met there—and then the health sciences library that was more modern and part of a medical school and a nursing school and different programs there. [Editor’s note: The Cleveland Health Sciences Library was formed in 1965 by an agreement between the Cleveland Medical Library Association and Western Reserve University. It operates in two locations: Allen Memorial Medical Library and Health Education Campus Library.] Rickie taught reference, I believe, and was very good also. And there were quite a few: Susan Hill, I remember, who taught cataloging. Of course, being so close to OCLC, we had that opportunity in Ohio to learn from that whole structure. That was fairly new at the time, starting out.

RF: It’s interesting, because the education of librarians has really changed since the time that you and I obtained our degrees, and new graduates enter the workforce with vastly different skill sets than we did. Are there any comments you’d like to make about the difference in your own education versus what we see from graduates today?

JS: Well, I definitely remember one course where we learned about the personal computer. And it was a binary—you know, on-off, one-zero-one-zero kind of thing. It was mind-boggling, because someday you’re going to use this equipment to do banking and checking out books and cataloging books, and it was just like, bahh! Beyond understanding, really. So, I think the biggest difference is that we—you know, I graduated in 1980—it was right, I think, as PCs were coming to be more common, and so all the digital learning that they’re doing now on how to set up websites and the whole digital library, the preservation of content through digitalization, we did not have any of that. We did probably get a little more theory about the background of libraries and all the different classification systems. I really don’t know if that’s still being taught today.

RF: Probably not as much.

JS: I would think something has to give. But I definitely believe that digital is all new from when I went to school.

RF: I took advanced automation when I was at Case, which was IBM punch cards.
JS: Yes. I can remember in biology, we had to do a punch card computer project, and it was very hard.

RF: Yes, automation has really morphed.

JS: Yes, thank goodness. Or we wouldn’t be here today, right?

RF: Right. So, we talked about the fact that at an early age you set your career goal and you had a path for yourself of how to get into medical librarianship. As you were finishing your library degree, did you have specific career goals at that point or a career plan or ideas about what you thought were going to be the most important components for your first professional job?

JS: Yes, and it’s embarrassing to tell you what it is. Unlike my desire to be a medical librarian that was planned, the whole looking for jobs was dependent on how close I could get to Eva. That was my roommate’s name.

It was interesting because I do remember—and this is another embarrassing story—but when I graduated, my parents came out and we attended an event. I had a roommate at Case, and we had an apartment the last months of school. And I met this guy who was an Irish doctor, and he wanted to come after graduation to meet me and my parents back at our farm, because he had just kind of picked up on me at graduation—and all the months I was there, nothing happened, right? As we’re leaving, he decides to come visit. My parents agreed to it. He drove me crazy, because I’m getting my life ready to go find a new job and I was buying a used car, a Camaro heaven forbid, and he was Mr. Practical, and he said, “You’ve got to look for less of a car and you have to be saving your money, and you need…” And I’m like, who is this guy? He’s just coming to visit.

It dawned on me, as I read some of the letters he wrote me afterwards, where he said, “You have an intent to be a world premier librarian. You have this goal to be known globally. And how are you going to achieve that, and how are you going to deal with it if you don’t reach that accomplishment?” And if you’d asked me yesterday before I read these letters again, I would have said, “Ah, it was just happenstance.” But I guess I really did have this kind of thought that I was going to do as much as I could with this profession. This was a long story, but it was kind of funny. It was just like, get out of my life; you’re not in it [laughter]. Let me move on. But he did help me focus that I had this intent.

RF: Right. So, you had pretty lofty goals for yourself from the outset.

JS: Yes. I was pretty quiet as a teenager and college student, so I guess I internalized a lot of things, and it helped to build a foundation of what I wanted to do that I wasn’t sharing with a lot of people.
RF: So, after graduation, you started as an entry-level reference librarian in the Welch Medical Library at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore in 1980, and then you progressed to becoming a senior reference librarian and access librarian in charge of circulation and interlibrary loan. And then, finally, you became supervisor of the psychiatry/neurosciences satellite library. Tell me about those early jobs and your choices in switching duties.

JS: Well, again, with all the job rotations from Case Western, I realized that I was more of a public services, as we called it, type of person, so being in reference was probably the job that I preferred over cataloging or behind the scenes technical services work at the time. Now, technical services has changed a lot.

When I went to get my job—I’ll give you a little history—I went to MLA [annual meeting] in 1980, and it was the meeting right after Mount St. Helens had blown and there was all this commotion about ash at MLA. And I had, I want to say, twelve interviews over the course of two or three days. The Hopkins one was the very last interview. I was exhausted. I just was like, I can’t do one more. I opened the curtain and there sat two people instead of one, and I just went, oh, my gosh, this is just over. So, I went in. And I guess I was just so calm and relaxed that I got the job. My roommate, Eva, was in Reisterstown, Maryland, so it was close enough to be meeting that criteria. And at the time, I didn’t know what Hopkins was. Again, I came from this small town and it was, well, it’s not too far from home. It’s a two-hour drive. My parents can come visit; my family can come visit; my roommate’s close by. And there’s this place called Hopkins that I can go work in Baltimore.

It cracks me up when I think back about how naive I was, but it was actually the best place to start out, I think, because of being so close to the National Library of Medicine, also. Bethesda, Maryland, wasn’t that far away, and in Baltimore itself, we had the University of Maryland at Baltimore, we had the [Medical and] Chirurgical Faculty library, and we had Hopkins. So, we had a cohort of librarians of the university stature right in the town, plus we had a lot of hospital librarians also. And then this national library not far away.

RF: Yes, definitely a lot of resources right there in the Baltimore area. Who were the influential or key people that you worked with when you were there at Hopkins?

JS: Well, Nina Matheson would be the most familiar name. She came four years after I [started]. But early, before her time, it was Karen Higgins, who hired me as a reference librarian, and Bob Gresehover, who went to the Hopkins Applied Physics Lab library and stayed there for most of his career. They really were great encouragers and mentors.

I can remember starting with Karen as a reference librarian. We all had desks out in the reading room, which was a historical reading room. No offices, no privacy. There were four of us out there. And then we had a little alcove where we had our computers as far as the thermal coupler terminal for MEDLINE searching. And then we went up to the
big dot matrix printer, BRS kind of big machine. But we all escaped to this alcove to do our searching.

I had really good mentors. Mary Ann Williams was a fellow reference librarian, and Janet [Everitt]—I can’t remember her last name, but she went, then, to be part of the Michigan drug company [Upjohn]. They were very willing to take their time and help train me, and Karen was an awesome supervisor as well.

Then when Nina came, Gretchen Naisawald (Arnold) came to be head of reference overall, and she and I got to be good friends. She taught me how to make fun at myself and relax a little bit. I was pretty intense, and still can be that way, but she just kind of loosened me up a little bit and would keep saying, “You know, it’s not the end of the world if you don’t get this done,” or “It’s okay.” So, I give her a lot of credit, and to this day, I still feel a close friendship with her.

We all went through the ‘Nina Days,’ as we called them. And I told Nina this—I had drinks with her about four years ago—how we all wanted to impress her so much and, yet, she scared us to death. Not because she was evil or mean, but she just had this vision, and we would just sit there and listen to her and then we would huddle afterwards and say, “Anybody understand what that was?” and we’d look it up and try to figure it out. It was things like text editing and data mining and natural language. So, Nina taught us an awful lot, and we still laugh about it. The best thing she taught us was to take risks and to put librarians in places where they had not gone before. She had authored the IAIMS [Integrated Academic Information Management Systems] report with the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC), and she came with an agenda on her part to want to demonstrate the IAIMS model. Which, as we all know now, there is not one model; it all varied depending on where you were and what your institution was doing. She really encouraged us to jump in and look at where librarians could be placed that were not typical, and to not say, “Oh, I can’t do that.” You always say, “I can do that,” and then you come back and figure out how you’re going to do it. So, she was most instrumental the last four years.

At that time, I was over at the Psych/Neuro Library, as we called it, so I was a little bit buffered from the intensity. We just had a cadre of librarians that are still best friends today because of that experience—we called it boot camp; we had kind of gone through boot camp together. But she was brilliant, and is brilliant, and I think all of us have done better with her mentoring behind us.

RF: But I can understand exactly what you’re saying as far as her brilliance and intensity. I know when I interviewed with her, I was scared that if I took a job with her, she would just burn me out in a month.

JS: I have to admit that the reason I left was, I was in charge of the stress committee, and I was so stressed out [laughter]. And I finally said, you know, I think I need to make a change here. And some personal things were happening, too, that just wanted me to do that. But I don’t regret what she taught us, and again, I don’t want her to ever be thought
of as being mean or evil; she was just brilliant. And we all thought we were brilliant by working at Hopkins, and then to not understand what she wanted or what she was trying to achieve, it was just kind of like, oh, my gosh. But it forced us to do what you were supposed to do with a liberal arts education, which is not to know something but to learn how to learn about it and apply it. And so, we did learn how to do that.

RF: No, I can understand why that would be a great learning opportunity. And then in 1988, you moved to the Greater Baltimore Medical Center as library and audiovisual services manager, and you stayed there for two years. How did you like working in the hospital library, and why did you decide then to return to academic institutions?

JS: Yes. That was a nice little break. I met my husband, Mark, during this time. And when I was going on dates with my Apple computer and working, again, we kind of had a signal that I probably needed to do something different.

Elizabeth Connor had the job at GBMC, which is Greater Baltimore Medical Center. She had just left for Saudi Arabia for a librarian position there, and called me and said, “There is this awesome job here at this hospital. Why don’t you try that?” Because we had worked together at Hopkins, too. And, so I applied.

The great part about the hospital experience was—it had a brand-new conference center that was attached to the hospital, opposite end of the hospital from the library, unfortunately, so I did lose a lot of weight running back and forth—but it gave me an insight into how hospitals operate. Because if you’re scheduling all the meetings and attending all the meetings because you’re running the audiovisual for the meetings, you’re getting to hear firsthand what the issues are for a health care system. At that time, the union was trying to come in and be a part of our hospital, so there were tons of meetings about the union, and I got to understand the negotiation process. Just really got to see how internal structures can work.

And then, my father died, and so I think between the two life events—getting married and my father’s death—Cyril Feng from University of Maryland had just called me and said, “We have a position in the Regional Medical Library [RML] at Baltimore and I’d like you to apply for it.” I thought, well, I have always respected the Regional Medical Library Program. I had gotten a little tired of [adding paper to] the photocopier machine and putting ink in it, which you have to do as a solo librarian. I did everything from busing tables in the conference center to putting slides in for the AV to running the library. Back and forth. I missed also the stimulation of colleagues. You have it as far as health professionals, but you don’t have it as far as a librarian. I was a solo librarian. I really did miss it, especially after working with Nina, where I had been on thirty committees and really part of a bigger process. I felt kind of isolated.

So, when Cyril called, I did interview. Unfortunately, he passed before I even got the position, but that’s how I got, then, to the University of Maryland at Baltimore. Faith Meakin was the executive director at that time of the RML. She and I hit it off at the interview because I answered a question about what I liked most about the [position], and
I said, “Well, budgeting.” And they were just in the process of having to renew their contract, and Faith does not like numbers as much as I do. So, she instantly was like, “Oh, here, I can work with this one.” I did get hired and got the job. I was kind of back, then, to academia, but in a different setting of the academia. We can talk about the Regional Medical Library, but it was another expanse of experience getting to see all the libraries of a thirteen-state region, in the Southeastern/Atlantic Region in Baltimore.

RF: It did require you to think about medical libraries in a different way, because you had to now shift to the mindset of the RML Program in what was being done, and think about a thirteen-state region instead of the smaller settings that you had been working in before. So, that was quite a different perspective. And what kind of transition did that require of you?

JS: Yes. I took the DOCLINE coordinator role, which, I think it was called resources [management]. I had the expertise as far as interlibrary loan from the Johns Hopkins library when I was access librarian, so that helped. And I did a lot with DOCLINE statistics and trying to encourage equal sharing and that kind of thing. But what it gave me the opportunity to do was implement Loansome Doc, which was a big program at that time to connect doctors, nurses, and health care providers that didn’t have an affiliation with a medical library. It worked through DOCLINE. But there was a lot of apprehension by librarians about it, and what did it mean for them, and what were they becoming…? There was a phrase, ['hewers of wood and drawers of water.']. We were just filling documents, and was that what librarians were supposed to be doing? [Editor’s note: Herbert White used this biblical phrase in a 1991 Library Journal column that argued the National Library of Medicine’s move to marketing to doctors as end users had left the unskilled labor of document delivery to local medical libraries. He and NLM director Donald Lindberg debated the primary role of NLM at the 1992 MLA annual meeting.]

Because I was a DOCLINE coordinator, I got to go travel in the region to teach Loansome Doc to the librarians, so I got to actually go to all thirteen states and teach, including Puerto Rico, which was one time where being a DOCLINE coordinator was really helpful, because no one else could teach DOCLINE. So, I was like, that’s my Puerto Rico, my trip. It was expansive in looking at how so many libraries—I said it was like music—they all have a common purpose and notes and scales, but how they organize it and theme it is quite different. It was really fun to see the variety and yet the commonness of our medical library world. And thirteen states plus Puerto Rico and St. Thomas [U.S. Virgin Islands], it was a lot of geography to cover, for sure.

RF: Yes, it’s definitely a big region.

JS: But it was a great experience, and I can’t encourage future medical librarians enough to think about it, because it is a great way, again, to work closely with the National Library of Medicine. And again, due to my Baltimore days connection, that helped, I think, a lot, too, to work with the different aspects of NLM, especially as I went then to become a director of the Regional Medical Library in Utah.
RF: Right, that gave you very good early experience in how to compete for a contract.

JS: Exactly. And Faith was wonderful in letting me be right in there and helping tremendously with the budget, especially, and also with putting a proposal together.

RF: Right, and understanding what NLM’s goals were for that whole program.

JS: Right. RMLs have cycles of staffing, and sometimes it lasts for a long time and then other times there’s quite a rotating door. We had some permanent staff and then we had a rotating door. So, I got to do things outside of my position like the newsletter. I got to put together a print newsletter, laying it out, I learned all about that. It was quite interesting. So, while I was the DOCLINE coordinator, I did get to do more than just DOCLINE.

RF: I’m sure moving into that setting presented lots of opportunities for acquiring new skills and thinking about things differently.

JS: Yes. And Faith was a great mentor. I was petrified of public speaking, and in that position, with all the DOCLINE training, I had to get over it. And we laugh to this day—we had a West Virginia CE class, and I just must have perspired so much that—I had a purple dress on with a big, thick belt and after I was getting ready to go out to dinner, I had a purple streak around my tummy [laughter]. I had sweated so much. So, we still laugh about my purple belt days. I still don’t want to say I’m great at it, but I learned how to deal with it and move on and not take it so seriously.

RF: And definitely, those RML jobs require you to figure it out and pretty much master it.

JS: It does. And the other great thing about it is the networking. You get to learn about so many people and get to be friends with so many people. And to this day, a lot of my Facebook friends are still from my Baltimore RML days. It’s kind of interesting.

RF: It also gives you lots of good visibility for future job prospects.

JS: And I’m sure [visibility for] the MLA presidency, that exposure, that way, too.

RF: So, after thirteen fruitful years in Baltimore and work in three different library settings, in 1993, Sherrilynne Fuller, director of the Health Sciences Library at the University of Washington in Seattle, enticed you to jump to the opposite coast to become outreach information services librarian. Tell me about that job—moving into fee-based services and serving the unique needs of the state of Washington.

JS: Well, actually, I’ll never forget this day. My husband came home and said, “I’ve got a job opportunity in Seattle. Do we want to consider it?” And I just looked at him and I said, “Sure, we’re going.” I think he fell over. I can’t remember for sure, but I think he
fell off his chair. He said, “You’re serious?” and I said, “Yeah, let’s try it. We don’t have children. Let’s just go and try it.”

Then I thought about, well, he has this great job, but what am I going to do. I did remember seeing a job opening at University of Washington under Elaine Martin. Elaine and I had worked together in the Mid-Atlantic Chapter (MAC) of MLA when I was in Baltimore. I called Elaine and I said, “Is your position still open?” and she said, “It is, but know that you have to apply just like everyone else. This is not a friend shooving you in.” I said, “No, no, I understand that. I just wanted to know if it was still available.” I applied for that job. I applied for a Microsoft job; I think I went to an Internet network office and applied for a job there. But I got an interview with Sherry Fuller and Elaine and different staff at University of Washington. I went in for my interview and they said to me, “Well, why are you here? You’re coming from Baltimore. Why are you in Seattle?” And I said, “Well, my husband and I talked about where we wanted to live. We talked about living in the Southeast.” And they all looked around. They’re like, “But you’re in Seattle.” And I said, “I know. It’s good to be flexible because when life throws you lemons, you make lemonade.” I said, “My husband got transferred here, and so I’d like to get a job here. I do know it’s not the Southeast.”

I did get the job, and it was a fee-based job, meaning that I had two years to create my salary out of dues or fees that we charged, mostly to legal firms and biotech companies. This was when Seattle was booming with genetic biotech companies, and it also was when Jack in the Box had the [E. coli] outbreak, where they were being sued left and right. So, a lot of my income came from that lawsuit, as well as the biotech firms. I think I would have made the money in two years, although Elaine Martin then got the position at University of Illinois as director and left after six months.

[The job] wasn’t for everybody. I sat in my little cubicle, because I had the ugliest cubicle of all, being the new librarian, and I thought, well, surely, Sherrilynn will know that I have experience with talking and working with big groups and could be maybe Elaine’s replacement. And I thought, but I shouldn’t assume. So, I just sent her an email and said, “Sherry, I hope that you’ll give me some consideration, at least for an interim position while Elaine’s departing.” And within seconds I got, “Oh, my gosh, I didn’t think of you. Come, talk to me.” I ended up in her office and got to be interim while Elaine moved on.

Seattle—we always said the Mount Rainer effect applied to salaries. You didn’t make so much but you had a great environment and a lot of nice views. I was interim [head, access services] for two years, I think. And they saved a lot of money in that time. I was making less money than a lot of the people I supervised in the position. But then when it came to being a permanent position, they only interviewed me, even though it was open internally to anybody. So, I guess it was time to get the long-term position.

Then that long-term position actually was a little different than what I was in the interim. The interim was more like interlibrary loan, circulation, access, and the longer term was more tech services. It included [access], but it also had electronic journal and
subscriptions and print materials as well. It was right when the digital journal was coming out, so, nobody knew how to license them, nobody knew how to negotiate for these electronic journals. And so, not having that ‘tech services’ background, I was kind of great, because I didn’t have any qualms about just jumping in from Nina’s mentoring and just testing the waters.

And then Sherry made it even more fun, because she was so unique in her project work that she wanted content to be licensed differently than just a journal. She wanted to actually get the raw data from different databases and content to repurpose it in her projects. I got to where I was negotiating content, really, and not journal licenses. And that was a very expansive opportunity that I think probably took me to Elsevier days that we’ll get to later. But it helped to get that mindset of, well, content does have a value. Content does have many renditions as far as expression. And you can monetize, as I learned the word, on that different content depending on how you structure it.

So, that was how I got to Seattle. My fee-based services I stayed with, even though when I did get to be interim, they did allow me to hire a librarian to actually do the day-to-day fee-based services, making her own salary in time. I learned about billable hours. Oh, my gosh, it was like having your own business but not having your own business. I had to do all the publicity, I had to do the design of the brochure, and how you’re going to articulate it to the community. And we did have some pushback from the information brokers in the area with the concern that a state university was competing, so I went through that whole experience of how to address their concerns. And then I went on to become permanent information resources management associate director. The other really cool part of working at University of Washington was photocopy. And the youngsters of today would find this funny, but we had such a booming business of photocopy.

RF: Yes, we did.

JS: We were making money left and right, and we had to be cost recovery, so we couldn’t make money. We put it back into the business. But it was so fun, being the numbers person, just looking at how to manage this kind of business world in the library environment as well.

RF: That was probably the only time in medical library history when there was a huge revenue stream.

JS: Exactly. And we did use it. We bought more content with it; we bought better photocopiers for everybody. It truly had to be cost recovery. And every year, we had to set our rates. And you did in Colorado, I know, working with their interlibrary loan. We were down to how much an envelope cost, how much a stamp cost. We had to cost out everything. But I absolutely loved it.

RF: Well, and it was an interesting business orientation that a lot of libraries don’t have to have. I thought it was also interesting, your comment about having to move into
electronic licensing. Because I don’t think it mattered, Jean, whether you came from the public services side or the tech services side—it was all brand-new for all of us.

JS: Exactly. I was just one of the pack.

RF: I think we were all just kind of muddling our way through it. And then realizing that our purchasing departments didn’t have a clue.

JS: Exactly. And thank goodness that Sherry was willing to be a risk-taker, too. At Seattle, we had our own budget, but we were part of a university library system. And she would take a lot of concern from the academic library about how rogue she would go on these licenses. It was interesting. She didn’t care. She was willing to do what it took to get the content she wanted. I remember her saying, “One day we’ll go up to the hill and talk to him, but don’t give him anything without saying, ‘I have to ask Sherry first [laughter]’” So, it was great.

RF: And I think that is a theme that shows up on some of the campuses, where the health sciences library and the university library either have overlap, or don’t, and work cooperatively, or don’t. Because I’ve heard, when I’ve been interviewing on campuses like that, or from our colleagues who work on those things, that the medical libraries are often viewed as being more innovative, more risk-taking, better funded oftentimes, and the university library sometimes has a concern that the health sciences library might set the service standard that the rest of us can’t attain. Or outshine us too much.

JS: Yes. Because we are more nimble; we can be more nimble being smaller. I can remember explaining to somebody at the academic library one day saying, “Well, you have to understand, Sherry is phenomenally brilliant in our world, and then she comes to your library and gets treated with a slap.” And they were like, “Oh…” And I was like, “Yeah.” But I learned a lot about academic libraries through that, too, so that kind of work [transfers] into the VCU [Virginia Commonwealth University] job.

RF: Were there other key people that you worked with in Seattle?

JS: There were. Debbie Ketchell, who probably people don’t know right now, but she was brilliant as well, and she was very good—kind of more the director. Sherry went more university-wide. Sherry got into public health and she got into bioinformatics and kind of brought the library to more involvement outside of the library walls, and then Debbie did more of the operation management of the library. I learned a lot from her.

Terry Jankowski and I were peers, but we still laugh and have the stories that you share over drinks, can you believe we got through this or we did this, or we survived that or whatever. But she was a phenomenal searcher and worked with me on cost out a lot of things related to a fee-based service.

And there are just a ton of others, like Janet Schnall, Leilani St. Anna, Sherry Dodson. There are just tons of great people who worked there. And then the RML people, of
course—Neil Rambo and Cathy Burroughs. I wasn’t a part of the Regional Medical Library there, but because I knew DOCLINE from Baltimore, I would go with Nancy Press to Canada and teach DOCLINE. We had a buddy relationship with University of British Columbia because they were feeling isolated as a health sciences library. There weren’t that many in Canada—it’s a big country. We would reciprocate visits every other year. One of us would host a meeting and go back and forth. That was a great exposure to international copyright… So, while I wasn’t RML, I kind of put my hat in the ring sometimes with the RML.

RF: And while Neil was there at the RML, I remember there was a lot of outreach to Native American populations in the state. Did that transfer over at all into things that you worked on?

JS: No. I heard about it, but I didn’t really participate with that. But Sherry was quite involved with the Native American outreach—I guess her husband was involved with some tribes that she was able to help get information to. Elliot Siegel, Rob Logan, and Fred Wood from NLM would work with her on these [listening] circles, and Dr. Lindberg got involved with it.

And then at Utah, as you know, we have the Four Corners directors, and so some of that knowledge carried over into my Utah job. When you think about your life, it’s not a linear life; there are all these different things that weave in and through. And you don’t know it at the time, but they benefit you later by having that experience.

RF: Well, that’s a perfect segue into my next question. So, thinking back about your career progression from academia to hospital librarianship to RML work and then back to academia, were there important distinctions or contrasts that you saw between those different settings?

JS: I do remember thinking, when I got to University of Washington, there was a lot of having to communicate with other people; like, if you were leaving the building, you had to sign out on multiple boards to let people know you were leaving, not because they wanted to give you permission to leave, but just, if they were looking for you, they knew you were gone. And after being in the solo hospital library where you were just it, no one tracked you or wanted to know where you were, that was a little different.

And then also, going from the reference library to being in charge of access services at Hopkins and then the Psych/Neuro Library, where you were in charge of a satellite library, and then jumping back into start-up academic librarian again—really, the fee-based services was—not entry-level, but it wasn’t super management-oriented, it was kind of like, I had to build my career ladder back up. But thank goodness for Elaine’s departure, because it was more fast-forward than I thought it would be.

But again, there are so many different things that each job taught me. I remember someone saying, “Don’t stay in the Regional Medical Library too long because you can’t jump back to an academic library. You get too specialized.” And I kept thinking, well,
what does that really mean? But it kind of was true. I don’t think it’s so true anymore. Directors of medical libraries are usually not from RMLs directly. They tend to be a deputy director or associate director to be considered for the directorship.

RF: So, then, after seven years at the University of Washington, you jumped back east to become director of the Tompkins-McCaw Library and associate university librarian at Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond. And while you were there, you balanced a wide range of tasks from new services initiatives, to contract negotiations, to management of the Community Health Information Network and other consumer health resources. And I also think during that time, you spent some of your efforts planning and looking at operation of the general VCU academic library. Talk to me about some of those things. I’m sure there must have been some translation of working within the larger university system in Washington to moving to VCU, but I’m interested in that significant change and shifting back to the east.

JS: The reason I looked at a position at VCU—Virginia Commonwealth University—was that Judith Robinson [Mercer] was a great mentor to me when I was in Seattle. She had come up through tech services at UVA [University of Virginia], and she helped guide me a lot through the regular subscription journal process and budgeting and things like that. And those that knew Judith knew what a hoot she was. She had personality-plus. I still have Judy-isms that come to me, like, “Everyone else you can drop, but your family you have to be friends with, so it teaches you how to work with people.” That was a Judy-ism. She was the director at Eastern Virginia Medical School, and Linda Watson was director at UVA, and they were both saying to me, “Why don’t you apply? Then we three could be the medical library directors in Virginia.”

The other reason for looking at the position was that Mark’s family were ailing health-wise—his parents—and my parents were getting older. He’s from Florida and I’m from Pennsylvania, so coming back east made a lot of sense at the time as well.

So, I applied. And I can remember thinking, well, this would be good because my experience at University of Washington, working so much with the academic library on electronic and information resources, will apply, because at VCU I was director of the medical library but associate director for the library system. I did not have a separate budget, so that was a little setback because of my love for numbers and crunching budgets. But I then got to say that I did have the exposure of working with the library system and that helped, I think, with my hiring as well.

John Ulmschneider was the university librarian, and he just retired this June. He was an incredible mentor. He had been an NLM associate fellow back at the start of DOCLINE. In fact, I think he helped to do some of the technical development of DOCLINE, if I understand right. So, he always had an appreciation for medical librarians and tried to be a very good, balanced director for both the academic and the medical library. But it’s always hard. Your allegiances tend to be what you’re most involved with, in that he was physically involved in the academic library. But I really learned a lot from him, and I
appreciate to this day that he hired me and I got back to the East Coast during the time our parents needed us as well. It was good to be back.

RF: Yes, it was important for you to be back, but as you say, a difficult time, too.

JS: I worked with great people there, too. I had the exposure of working [with the academic library]—I actually was part of the management team for the academic system, so I would be at the academic library a couple times a week for meetings and managed hiring people there as well as in my medical library.

Consumer health was, I guess, the biggest thing I got involved with. [By] happenstance pretty soon after I was hired, the head of the hospital auxiliary of women volunteers contacted me—who had been the wife of the past vice president of the health system—and said that she and a bunch of her friends were putting together this new consumer health library in the hospital. Judy Jones was her name, and she had so much spunk and character. She and I put together this hospital consumer library called CHEC—it was Community Health Education Center. It was right off the lobby of the hospital. And it was fun. Laura Bush came and did a dedication of it. I can remember sitting in the library with these circles on badges. I looked down and thought, I have a target on me! There’s Secret Service outside the windows, and I’m like, okay, aim here. Because we had to stay in the library, we didn’t get to hear her, but then she was ushered into the library and we got to shake hands with her and she talked to us personally and all that. It was a big day, that dedication. It was awesome. And from that library, I got involved with this very strong women auxiliary group, and I’m still having lunch with people today from that group. They just were a hoot.

They opened up the women’s health center in a Stony Point facility of VCU, which was across the river. And in Richmond, the river divides the town, and it really does divide the community. They had this new facility for health care, and they wanted a consumer library for women placed in that facility. So, not only did I get to open CHEC, but I got to open up this women’s health center library in this new building. Betsy Humphreys, Martha Fishel, and Becky Lyon, I think, came from NLM, because they gave funding for us to work with the information prescriptions, when that was a project that Dr. Lindberg helped to develop with the American College of Physicians—ACP group. The idea was that a health care provider would write a prescription for information just like they do for medication, and it would go to the library to be filled. So, the patient would come out, we’d be right there, and then we could help fill it with digital information at the time and print. So, I got to open up two consumer libraries for the VCU libraries.

And construction—that’s where I started to have the hard hat that never came off. We did remodel the first floor of the Tompkins-McCaw Library, and I think we started on the second floor when I left. It was finished in Teresa Knott’s day, but we planned it, I believe.

RF: And then, in 2008, there was another jump, this time back towards the west as you became executive director for knowledge management and director of the Eccles Health
Sciences Library at the University of Utah in Salt Lake, plus some significant other responsibilities. Your titles also included director for information transfer in the Center for Medical Innovation, and director for the MidContinental RML and National Training Center.

Along with these more straightforward titles, there was the one that I find the most intriguing and probably unique in our field. You were the librarian and the Clifford C. Snyder, MD, Far Eastern Presidential Endowed Chair. So, we’ll talk about all of these, but I’m really curious about what Eastern philosophies and presidential pursuits came along with that endowed chair that you held.

JS: University of Utah came to be after I was Medical Library Association president—soon after. I was contacted by Joyce Ogburn [university librarian at the University of Utah], who I’d worked with at University of Washington, where she was head of the tech services for the academic library and had really tried to recruit me to stay and work as an acquisition librarian with her when I went to VCU. And she’s from Richmond, so there are so many connections with her. She wrote and said, “Can you apply for this position?”

Wayne [Peay] had told me that he would let them have my name when he was ready to retire. We had visited when GIR—[AAMC] Group on Information Resources—met in Salt Lake City. I fell in love with the beauty of Salt Lake, and the hotel was just glamorous, and I just thought, oh, this is so beautiful, Wayne. He took us up on the tram to the top of the hill where the university was and took us around. It was just gorgeous. I had been after him, “Wayne, Wayne, when are you retiring? When are you retiring?” He goes, “Well, I’ll tell you.” So, he did tell me. At that point, I couldn’t even think to put a letter together for applying for a job. I was just so tired from being president. I told Joyce, “I’d love to think about it, but honestly, I can’t right now. So, please move on.”

And I really liked my job at VCU. It wasn’t a desire to leave Richmond; I loved Richmond itself, I loved our house, I loved our community. We had the best community I’ve ever lived in in Richmond.

But six months later, I get another email from Joyce saying, “Well, how about now?” And I was like, oh, man. At least now I can put a letter together. I learned in life that a lot of times, after Cyril asked me to apply for the RML [for example], that you don’t get the third chance. I was given two chances here, so I said, “Well, I’ll apply, and if you want me to interview, I’ll interview, but please know I won’t take the job.” And she said, “That’s okay, just go ahead and apply and go from there.” So, I applied and I got an interview. I got on the plane and Mark’s best friend was flying somewhere to Salt Lake, and he’s like, “What are you doing?” I said, “I’m going for an interview.” He said, “Take the job. I’ll have a ski house then! I can hang my skis in your garage.”

I got to Salt Lake City expecting to hate it as far as not wanting to move. And, oh, my gosh, Wayne had set up such a beautiful position there. He had helped to build this new Health [Sciences] Education Building. HSEB was the nickname for it, which was where all the [health] schools taught classes. They had simulation patients already before that
was really part of things, like live patient actors, and the library helped to run it. He had helped, I think, to lay the wire in the library for Internet. The rumor was he helped to get the university on email. Wayne had set a lot of things up to create an enticing job.

And in the typical Wayne way, he told me about different things, and then the very last comment was, “Oh, yeah, there’s this chair.” “What do you mean, you have a chair position?” He’s like, “You know, like being a chair of a department, or like chair, endowed chair.” “How does that work?” He said, “Well, it helps to fill in your salary.” And I was like, “All right.”

What I learned was that this chair position had actually been given to the department of surgery. This fellow, Dr. Snyder, was actually a surgeon, but he fell out with the department of surgery, and over that he decided to give the chair to the library, because the library had been so kind to him and helped him, the staff, particularly. So, that’s how Wayne got to be funded and then how I got to be funded when I accepted the position. It was, and is, I think, a fairly unique opportunity, because you did get to go to donor dinners and meet the Snyder family—his son, his wife, and kids. I actually went out to their house and got slides that we digitized then of Dr. Snyder’s surgeries, and we created a collection and put that in our digital collection. And it did supply, if I remember right, about a third of my salary. But the department of surgery the whole time I was there was trying to get it back, and, as far as I know, it’s still with the library. I had no idea what the Far East [connection was]. I do know I was accountable for publication. I did have to publish like a faculty [member] and submit a yearly document of what publications I had done, along with activity, service, etc. Kind of like a tenure document, like what was my job and what did I do for service and what did I do for scholarship, to [give to] the family.

RF: So, there wasn’t a strong Far Eastern component. You didn’t have to learn meditation or Zen or anything?

JS: I wish I would have had something, but no, nothing. Wayne may have a better knowledge of when it came to the library. It was kind of fun to be a chair.

RF: Yes. And as you say, highly unique.

JS: The whole situation—the faculty of the library there, we weren’t faculty but we were faculty. When I was there, we offered to become a school so that we could have real faculty appointments. But they had just started a school of dentistry and didn’t want to entertain a school of library science or information science. But I was really balancing, why are we held to these strict criteria of faculty, and yet not have a school to back us up—it was an interesting position to be in. But the chair gave me more credibility, especially with the head of surgery. He’s like, “How come you have that chair?” and I’m like, “It’s mine, don’t touch it.” I said, “I don’t know, either, but don’t touch it [laughter].”

RF: You can’t have it back.
JS: We had a good relationship. When I started the position, Wayne had gotten the Regional Medical Library, and he had worked, I think, with you and other directors of the six-state region to apply as a distributed model. And that really intrigued me, too, from my RML days in Baltimore. I loved working with what’s now the National Network [of Libraries of Medicine (NNLM, formerly NN/LM). Editor’s note: At this writing, NNLM now stands for Network of the National Library of Medicine.] So, that was a draw to me. A lot of people said afterwards they didn’t want the position because they had the RML as a part of it, but to me it was a real [draw]. [Sharon] Dennis, who had been working a split job with UCLA, actually wrote the proposal to become the [National] Training Center. We didn’t have the Training Center the whole time I was there; that came with the new contract, which was 2011, when I believe it started.

A lot of these positions morphed as I was there. I was hired as the director of the Spencer S. Eccles Health Sciences Library, and then I negotiated in time to be the executive director, which in our system was a little bit more prestigious as far as recognition from the university. Then we had the Center for Medical Innovation, that came to be part of the library space. There was a lot of negotiation there that was good and bad, but it was to be complementary to the library because libraries are spaces of discovery and innovation, but there was a lot of politics involved. That came in 2014 that I got the title, then, to be the [director for] information transfer.

We tried to work with a lot of their innovation documentation and get them the resources they needed, like specs and IEEE documents and things that we didn’t normally collect. But we also had a lot of fun figuring out how a librarian can work with innovation in a whole different way. We had gamers—medical therapeutic gaming and apps—The GApp Lab [Therapeutic Games & Applications Lab], as they called themselves, physically came into the space, too.

I kept saying, “Well, when are they coming and when are we going to have planning meetings and what kind of space do they need?” and everything was like, “Oh, yeah, soon, soon.” And then one day I get a call, “Well, we’re here.” I’m like, “Okay, so what does ‘We’re here’ mean?” And they’re like, “Well, we’re here, we have twenty students and we need computers and we need desks and…” And I’m like, “Oh, my gosh.” The funny thing was, of course, coming from the library world where we plan and we execute and we probably pontificate way too much about what could be or what shouldn’t be, we became looser with our planning, and this gaming group became tighter as they partnered with us. It just got to be fun to watch how the cultures kind of morphed to being a pretty good relationship with The GApp Lab by the time I left.

I understand there is tons of construction still going on at that university, but The GApp Lab is going to stay with the library, while the Center for Medical Innovation is going to move out into a new medical building, a new one besides the Health Sciences Education Building that we had helped to build.
RF: That’s interesting. As you know, Wayne had built—because he’d been there for such a long time—a lot of personal credibility on campus. Wayne was not afraid to reach way outside the boundaries of the library and look for partnerships and look for ways to sell information to other units on campus as a valuable resource. And so, when the unique situation at Utah meant that there were leadership gaps, Wayne would step in, like helping build that education building and then taking on the responsibility for running it, and realizing, well, we have space in the library that we don’t really need to devote to journal stacks in the way that we used to. Can we bring some partners into the library?

You walked into a very unusual situation and one that, again, required you to sort of figure out how to position yourself in the library.

JS: Right. And I had a Wayne folder, I tease him, in my email. I had a Wayne folder, and he would just send out these really astonishing emails and I would read them and then I’d drop them in his folder because I wanted to come back and think about them a little more. And I’d tease him. I say, now I know when I got there why he had these great thoughts: because his view out the window of these gorgeous mountains was incredible [laughter]. But he did have a great way of building relationships and making people think differently about the library.

The other reason I really was attracted to [the job]…was Lorris Betz; he was the VP for health sciences, and he really treated me like a dean. Even though I wasn’t a dean, because the library didn’t have a school, I got to go to all the ‘healthy dean’ meetings, he called it, that were held, and I really got to participate as head of the interprofessional education initiative for years. That was partly because of HSEB being an interprofessional education building; he felt the library did a great job with that. But we were so neutral and also, we were able to build bridges with different schools that might be competing among themselves, like nurses and physicians kind of thing. It was really fun to be treated in that regard by Dr. Betz.

He then retired, or tried to retire, and we had Dr. Vivian Lee, who, again, brought so much to our campus. It was phenomenal what she was able to generate as far as excitement and pride in what we had. She was an Asian American radiologist, so we were not sure how it was going to go with the culture of our university, city. The university can be more liberal and more accepting, but there is a lot of culture you have to deal with in Utah, and she unfortunately fell victim to some donor relation fallout and actually left and has done well; she’s now with Google, Alphabet, health department [Verily] and is doing great things and has written a book [The Long Fix].

She had a belief in libraries that was great, and then I felt like she wanted the space and kind of wanted the library to go away. And I was being very innovative in how we could be part of all this stuff, and it was a lot of tension towards the end. Not realizing all the tension she was facing herself, I took it personally.

But I think we were able to advance libraries even in her mind about what we could do, and I actually documented our progress with libraries and innovation in a book, because I
wanted others to become centers for innovation as well. If I had been queen, I would have had the whole Center for Medical Innovation and the library [put together]—I had a name, Chi², the Center for Health Information and Center for Health Innovation…

Dr. Lee talked to me in a lot of great ways and really kept saying, “You’re not the typical librarian.” When I volunteered to throw out all of our books and journals that were in print, she said, “Are you sure you’re a librarian?” And I thought about that quite more than she wanted me to, and I’ll explain how I got to Elsevier then. But I realized that information is information and it doesn’t have to have a container. So often in library-land, we put everything in containers, being the journal or the book or the database or the whatever. But that content licensing back in the UW [University of Washington] days kind of helped me to see that libraries can still be excellent gateways to information that exist digitally and you didn’t have to have a physical space. I really wanted to try to do what Nancy Roderer had done at Hopkins, where there was not a physical library, but it was all going to be this big center of innovation and information. And this book helped to quantify a little bit of the initiatives I tried to do. [Editor’s note: Shipman and Barbara A. Ulmer coedited Information and Innovation: A Natural Combination for Health Sciences Libraries in 2017.]

I think it was a little bit before its time, and I think the donor of the library had a lot of, and still has a lot of, possession of that library for what it was as a building. It didn’t allow me to take the virtual information across the campus the way I wanted to and not have it be a physical building we had to maintain.

RF: Certainly, the Eccles family have their name on many, many facilities there—and I don’t know firsthand, but it always seemed to me from a distance that they felt quite a bit of ownership and active involvement in things.

JS: Right. When they say ‘Daddy’s library,’ that kind of gives you this idea that, yes, there’s an attachment there. And yet they were very—Spence Eccles [Spencer F. Eccles] is the son, and he’s probably mid-eighties at this point—but he was very wanting to still be at the frontier and at the forefront. For his eightieth birthday, I was so pleased. We’d hired Melissa Rethlefsen as deputy director by then, and she, of course, is of systematic review fame and does a lot of work with bibliometrics. She had just written an editorial for the New England Journal of Medicine with its editor about the value of using a library when conducting systematic reviews. As you know, the New England Journal’s front cover is the table of contents, so we were able to frame that where it had Spencer S. Eccles Health Sciences Library listed, and we gave him that for his eightieth birthday. And he just sobbed. He was like, “My library! It’s important still!” Or, “My daddy’s library.” It was just so cute. The HSEB building is named for him and his wife [Cleone P. Eccles], who has passed. She died from cancer. He’s still out there and very much wanting information to be given to people. But he wants that [library] building. [Editor’s note: The university renamed the medical school the Spencer Fox Eccles School of Medicine in 2021.]
RF: Jean, you walked into a setting, as we were saying, where there was a lot going on and a lot of opportunity to do outreach beyond the library with all kinds of different things. How did you prioritize how you were going to spend your time?

JS: That was probably my biggest fault. I grabbed onto a lot of things, and I really got excited by a lot of things. And sometimes I didn’t realize how intensely we would get involved. You light a spark and you’re not sure if it’s going to become a fire or dwindle. But we had such great staff that were willing to try things, and yet they were few in number.

Having the Regional Medical Library, we did a lot of outreach to the community through that. We also had a great person, Sally Patrick, who was our outreach librarian for many years and then she retired. She actually worked with public libraries in the state, and worked with teaching about health literacy and how people could go to their public librarian for assistance with health information. They didn’t just have to come to the only health library in the state, which was ours. What I gained from University of Utah—many things, but a key thing was working with non-health sciences librarians.

Coming from Baltimore, where I had so many [health sciences librarians] around me, going to Utah [was different because] we were the only ones. We worked with you and the Four Corners directors—Holly Shipp Buchanan, New Mexico, and then Jerry Perry after you [at Colorado], and Gary Freiburger and then Jerry Perry [at Arizona]. We would meet [quarterly]. I know that you guys started it, but we continued the tradition, because it did give you a cohort of fellow librarians to talk over issues with. And again, with the Native American population in almost every state, that was a common draw for that group as well.

I liked working with the [Utah] Academic Library Consortium, UALC—I got to chair it while I was there. It was a rotating position. You worked with public [libraries], you worked with school, you worked with academic, and then two law libraries and one medical. It was great exposure to the issues of everybody, not just medical library issues. [Editor’s note: The UALC consists of academic libraries in accredited public and some private institutions of higher education in the state.]

RF: You mentioned a little while ago the RML contract that moved from University of Nebraska to Utah. And I’m just curious about your perspective since you had worked in an RML setting in the [Southeastern/Atlantic Region]. Were there things that you saw that NLM learned from moving the contract and reconceptualizing the way Wayne did, going to a distributed model for the RML staff?

JS: Yes, I think Dr. Lindberg really, really liked the distributed model. What I liked about it was it engaged more people. Staff were staff of our RML, but also of the library in which they were housed. So, Nebraska had a librarian, Missouri, Kansas. And it was an interesting dynamic for Claire Hamasu, who was the executive director of the RML, who had staff that she had to have production out of, but didn’t manage directly. It involved the Resource Library directors. We would meet monthly. I think we had a
Because you really had to work with them to enable them to understand the importance of the program and where their program fit within the big scheme of things. To me, it was great, because you did get more engagement from more people. You did feel like you were actually doing outreach every day because you were outreaching to the Resource Library directors and their staff. But then they were on the ground in their state. They knew the issues, they knew the players, they knew their associations that were relevant for the projects. So, in a lot of ways, it was the best of all worlds.

As time went on, funding for the program got smaller, so we were facing, when I left, concern about, not every Resource Library could be funded with a subcontract. We had to start buddying up states, and everybody was gracious and people bowed out and said, “Well, this person should be it because of this or that, or we can work…” And now, with the proposals that have been submitted but not yet appointed [for the 2021-2026 award cycle], I think their proposal is even smaller as far as number of distributed places, but they’re still keeping that model going, as far as I have heard.

Six states went to three and then they added six more on. There are three original states of the [former MidContinental] Region and then six states added, so it will be a nine-state region with only three incumbent states. [Editor’s note: Beginning in 2021, the University of Utah will serve as the RML for Region 4 in a reconfigured NNLM map; three states (Colorado, Missouri, and Utah) remain from the previous region, merged with six new states.] It will be different for Utah, for sure. But in a [region] where almost every state had only one medical library, it worked really well to have that Resource Library be recognized internally. They could tout it to their university about how involved they were in this National Network. But it was also giving us that ability, then, to know where to hit the best sweet spots—using a tennis term—to get the most engagement from the community that we were looking for.

RF: Well, I think, certainly from the perspective when I was in Colorado, towards the end of the Nebraska period, there was getting to be more grumbling amongst the Resource Library directors that we would just get summoned to Omaha periodically and listen to presentations from RML staff and then we would go home [laughter]. And there was also, I think, a sense throughout the region that staff in the academic health sciences libraries felt totally disconnected from the RML Program. They didn’t see any impact; they didn’t have any contact. And suddenly to have a person living in your library who was an RML employee just changed dramatically the sense of participation and buy-in to the whole RML Program in a way that I don’t think could have happened any other way.

JS: Yes. Well, I was glad to hear they maintained it somehow. It’s a different version of what was the original, but it’s still distributed somewhat.

The other area I didn’t talk about yet was informatics and how I got involved in being adjunct faculty with that Department [of Biomedical Informatics]. Joyce Mitchell, who did a lot with the National Library of Medicine on Genetics Home [Reference] and different things, I think within two hours of being at the university, she called me and said, “You need to do this thing called MyRA that we wrote up in a proposal, and we
need to do it soon.” And I was like, “Oh, hello, Joyce. Thanks for the greeting and the welcome!” And she’s like, “I know, I know.” I know Joyce likes to get through the fluff and let’s get to the action.

We did what we called MyRA, and it was My Research Assistant. We did a lot with hiring a consultant to help understand researchers’ life workflows. This was before all this kind of stuff with research came to be, but we had a consultant follow people; we had her ask them, “Now, how would you get this piece of information that you just told me you needed?” We came back with an idea of trying to create an assistant database that would personify researchers, from junior to senior and then student to faculty. You could come in and understand how to work with the research units of the university depending on your persona. If you didn’t know where to go to get grant help, it would tell you. It was a life cycle. We had bubbles that said, “Well, if you need help on how to start your project, here’s who you can talk with,” and then it would link out to them. And then, if you wanted to get lab equipment and personnel, here are the places on campus to go.

We had worked on this for three years. I think it was awesome. It actually caused the Clinical and Translational Science Award, the CTSA—that’s a major award from NCATS [National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences] of [National Institutes of Health] that’s gone to about sixty universities to take benchside research to clinical practice at an accelerated speed—we actually housed the CTSA administrative suite in the library for a period of time as well.

It was awesome, really, because we got to partner with them. I was on the executive committee and I was on a couple of other committees. With Melissa and her systematic reviews, we actually got to be a research core for the campus. We could re-charge for systematic reviews and try to be able to be a re-cost center like we were with photocopy at University of Washington, this time for systematic review librarian searching support.

The CTSA—we had a thing called Ask MyRA, like Ask Jeeves, and you could throw in a question and the library would get it and then triage it to the appropriate unit on campus. And we tracked where the questions were coming from, what kinds of questions, and we quantified it to be able to create a FAQ site, Frequently Asked Questions, for researchers.

It got a lot of traction, and then it didn’t. And I think, to be honest, the reason it didn’t—and I’m trying to remember—there was a head of research at the main campus who was very concerned that we were replicating effort and taking their information [when really we were directing people to it], so that you didn’t have to go all over the Internet to find the different websites of the university, but it was in one place. I can remember Joyce Mitchell saying to this woman, “You’ve taken my intellectual property,” and she had hijacked it, more or less. It was just an interesting political thing. But now that research is really important, I think we were ahead of our time with this whole supportive research [site] as an engine within the university. The [Center for Medical] Innovation was part of the office of research, as well, so that kind of blended also. Just a very interesting time for us. [Editor’s note: The MyRA links were subsumed into the university Office of Sponsored Projects website in 2013.]
We had a position that was half-funded—we shared a position with the CTSA and the library—called a research concierge. We called him Myra even though his name was Peter. We tried to do some innovative things with that whole facility as well that I think put us in a different light than most libraries with the university’s office of research.

RF: So, in one way or another, you’ve worked with automation, as we all had to in our careers coming up in health sciences libraries. But in particular, it sounds like when you got to Utah—partly because of Wayne’s bent for loving technology, whether it was ready for us or not—the university there was, I think, also, or at least the health sciences component, ahead of its time in the electronic patient records and informatics component in the faculty. And then Wayne certainly pushed the library into all of those technology areas.

So, I’m curious about whether you revel in the use of technology or you tolerate it or you see it as a useful tool? What’s your take on the importance of technology for health sciences libraries?

JS: That’s a great question. When I interviewed with Dr. Betz, I said, “I’m not Wayne.” I said, “If you’re looking for Mr. Tech Person, it’s not me, and I want you to know that right now, so don’t even hire me if that’s where you want the emphasis.” I appreciate it and I’m glad that we have gotten to where email is more universally available and not having to be cranked up. I exaggerate a little bit, but I can just see Wayne in the back getting the engines cranked up and ready to get the different Internet switches going. But I said, “What I can bring is collaboration and the ability for the library to be partners in ways that you probably can’t perceive nor I can perceive. But I will always be looking for the opportunities.” And I feel that I did that. I feel I probably did it too much. I think I exhausted everybody. But we were a part of so many things. I just am proud of where we took information as a commodity, not how to just transfer it, but how to transfer the idea that information would add value to whatever endeavor.

RF: And a lot of that used technology as [a tool].

JS: Yes. Everyone needs information. Everyone thinks they know how to find it, but if you put the engine of a library in there, you’re going to find it faster and better. And it was illustrated so many times. What we actually found was that we were really good organizers of people. I started to say at meetings, well, we don’t have stuff anymore—after we threw out the [print] books and journals. We don’t have stuff—we’re organizing people and we’re organizing collaborators.

We worked with The GAApp Lab on what was like a Tinder for researchers. It was a way to partner—[highlighting the expertise] of the researcher available, so that you could flip through and if you needed a certain type of researcher to work with you, you found your match that way.
And we worked with gamers on another project with informatics as well. It was doodling. We were trying to understand [what images consumers would understand]; how could you communicate taking a medication, for instance, with graphics instead of words. We did a lot with pictograms, and we had a game that either you could get a word and you would draw a picture, or you’d be given a picture and get to select a word representing that picture. It was a way to build [a repository] of pictograms for medicine. There were just tons of projects we got involved in. It was just phenomenal.

The involvement with the hospital, I think, was where I took the library a little bit further than Wayne did. I think there had been political tensions between the hospital and the library for whatever reason—I think because they all liked technology a lot. But by the time I came, the technology people were more willing to work with me, and we actually did do work with health information records.

Another consumer library I got to develop that I didn’t talk to you about was at the University of Utah. The Eccles family had a clinical library that was named after Spence’s mother, that was on the fourth floor of the surgery department. And, of course, with print, people had to go there; it was a satellite library for the Eccles Library. But with digital, there was no need to have that [physical] clinical library. So, we made it all digital and then transformed the space and moved it to the lobby to be a consumer library, and we named it after his mother, Hope Fox Eccles.

In that library, we created an app lab [the UBar]. [It emulated] the idea of the Apple Mac lab where you go in to get help with apps at an Apple store. Well, we had all kinds of apps that had been vetted—by librarians and a whole team of clinical people who we worked together with—picking the best app for exercise, the best app for medication tracking, the best app for diet, glucose monitoring, whatever. We created this [lab featuring a] big video monitor, and we said, “Step right up to the app lab and we’ll get you ready.” We sold Fitbits in the gift shop across the hall. We were hoping to be able to [upload Fitbit data] to the medical record so that your provider would have your [exercise history]—I’m saying ‘Fitbit,’ but [data from any wearable device] could get transferred to your patient record. Of course, you can imagine the political fallout of that. We had to talk with a lot of the providers about how much time they had and how we were going to sort through all this data.

We did stuff like that. We were very engaged with the hospital and with this consumer library. We were hoping to close the loop. Our vision was the patient would be given a prescription for information from the provider. They would come down. We would help them. And then we’d record what we did in the medical record, which would go back to the provider, so that they were not feeling like we were misrepresenting any information they had given, or that they would know what we had given the patient for the next visit. We went through many renditions. We almost had it. I think at this point, the consumer librarian that was working on it had left and we didn’t get it completed. But that was an EHR [electronic health record] role that we took. With this app stuff and with the gamers, we were doing a lot with technology. We did a lot with technology, but it was more partnering with others and not doing it ourselves.
One last thing with technology: We did have Nancy Lombardo as a librarian who has worked with NANOS, which is the North American [Neuro-]Ophthalmology Society, on creating an educational tool [NOVEL] they had developed—now probably twenty years of programming for ophthalmologist training. It is very visual. So, she had a lot of digital library experience with that.

We had a consultant come in to work with the Center for Medical Innovation and what we could do as a library to document their innovation. We came up with a journal. We thought about sponsoring an innovation journal, a digital one, and then we realized that they didn’t really publish in the traditional way. They tend to do what The GApp Lab would do with their games. They tend to have what they call a rap sheet, where each team of students would have to put the code for the game, the graphic art for the game, the sound that they put within the game, and then put all that together in this rap sheet. We were trying to help them document that and then also who contributed to the game development. So, if it got sold, the IP could be tracked back to the originators. But gamers are not real good at details, and sitting them down and trying to get that kind of information out of them was very, very hard, so we never quite got that done, either.

What we’d ended up with instead of a journal was creating a channel—we called it e-channel after ‘Eccles,’ after ‘electronic,’ after ‘experimental.’ It was this idea of a digital repository for content that was innovative. It was locally generated. [The content] would never probably be in a PubMed Central database or another repository, but it would be university IP. We ended up with a lot of videos about innovation—in partnership with a guy [Andrew Maxwell] in Canada, of all places, because of a donor [Pierre Lassonde] that was common between our two universities. We created this thing called e-channel. We would put in all of the teams of The GApp Lab that created these games.

The Center for Medical Innovation has a competition that they run every year where they give a team of students from the business school, health sciences, and law $500, and they have to come up with a prototype of a medical device, market it, give a business plan—what it was going to cost, how much it was going to generate, etc. They had to do a [pitch] video ahead of time. Then they had, like, a Shark Tank night at the capitol every year. The teams would be all dressed up and give a two-minute presentation. They got big prizes. The biggest prize was like $25,000 plus [the backing and] opportunity to take [the device] to market. So, it was huge. We would capture the videos and we would capture the posters that they did that night [for e-channel]. We actually started a competition where the libraries gave an award for anyone who could demonstrate and illustrate that they had used information in developing their product. So, it was a way to kind of encourage teams to think of coming to a librarian and asking for help. The other library, the academic library, had a patent librarian, so he could help them search for patents and prior art, and then we could help them get their competition pitch together and how they were going to exhibit it at conferences. These students had no idea how you present at a professional conference, so we would tell them how you apply and get the submission rules and then how you submit a proposal.
Then we did a similar thing with patient education where we created competitions to create patient videos with student teams, and that was called Healthy4You. [That competition was led by librarians with teams of university faculty.]

It was just fun. Oh, my gosh, we had a blast. But it was exhausting, too, because it was really supporting the new frontiers. It really was. The book [see editor’s note on p. 21 of this transcript] quantifies a lot of what we did. We had an innovation librarian. We did use technology in so many different ways, but it was more, again, working with student teams, working with the CTSA, working with the CMI [Center for Medical Innovation], and working with BMI—the Biomedical Informatics Department. And then we did our own little thing with e-channel [to illustrate] what a library could do [innovatively].

I feel like I’m rambling, but you can tell it’s a passion.

RF: I don’t think you’re rambling; I think you’re just reflecting the huge scope of the activities at Utah. So, that makes me wonder, what gives you the most sense of satisfaction from the time that you were in Salt Lake?

JS: What I didn’t tell you was all the construction that went on at the same time. The whole building got more or less remodeled piece by piece; it was very piecemeal. Looking at the inside of the building, from when I came to when I left, was very pleasing to see what we had done.

But I think there are a couple of things. Innovation is definitely the most unique thing I think we did. I fear that a lot of it has fallen apart. Again, Vivian [Lee] was very much behind this innovation center, and with her departure, and then the head of that unit also going on to become a university president, it’s taken some backpedaling. But they are moving forward now. They’re building a new building for medical education for the School of Medicine. They’re ripping down what had been a 1960 building that was always coming down. Wayne would even tell you in his day, it was coming down tomorrow. It’s still not down, but it’s coming down. And the library apparently is going to become a bigger simulation center and virtual reality center [with CMI moving to the new building].

I brought a simulation center also into the library through this Center for Medical Innovation. The head of that was a surgeon, and he was able to bring in a lot of surgical simulation equipment. We had that, and we were working with them also on capturing their techniques of how they would teach simulated instruction on a dime. They had what they called recipes, and it was like, how do you replicate a heart when you don’t have a heart, how can you make it squishy and bloody? They had these ‘how-you-could-build-a-heart’ kind of recipes. We captured those and put them in databases for him.

What am I most proud of? The innovation, for sure. The e-channel was pretty awesome, to go from zero to seeing how much it was used and expanded to other universities and things like that. The construction.
To be honest and fair, I have to state things that I wasn’t so good at, too. I think what I didn’t appreciate was how much tradition the library had established that I tried to change. An example is, everybody that knows about Eccles probably remembers the leaf. The logo was the leaf. And I always thought that it was a Canadian maple leaf and I kept thinking, why a Canadian maple in Utah? I just couldn’t put it together. So, we tried to come up with a new logo that kind of had the veins of the leaf but then had some wavelength that brought in the ideology of innovation and ideation kind of themes, and it just never quite took off. We had tag lines, like ‘Innovate, Create,’ all this. But post-me, they’ve gone back and they’re actually [reusing the leaf]. What that leaf was, was a part of a tree of Hippocrates, and it was a branch or starter that the first director, Priscilla Mayden, had written to [Greece] and gotten this cutting from the real tree. It had grown and grown in front of the library, and they were quite proud of it. I just never got that pride out of it and tried to change it, and I shouldn’t have done it, because now, with all the new construction that’s coming, they’re going to put another part of the tree in the back to preserve it in case the big tree gets hurt by construction. [Editor’s note: A cutting of the tree was presented to the National Library of Medicine and planted on its grounds in 1961; a number of medical institutions also have trees cut or seeded from the original tree.]

So, I think to any new directors, I would say, really understand what traditions the library has as you go in and be careful which ones you try to change. And sometimes you just can’t. What is it, culture eats [strategy] for lunch?

But I worked so hard and I gave my all to that library, and I feel very proud of what we achieved. I think I had a team working with me, and then the whole politics of Vivian and the changes there and everything just kind of melted a lot of people. I’m happy that they seem to be coming back as a library team again.

RF: So, reflecting back from the beginning in Baltimore to the end of your time period in Utah, were there threads that you see that ran through your career, or lasting collegial relationships?

JS: Yes, and one particular one I had not mentioned yet and I was saving it because it’s so intense in my life and treasured—I’ll tear up a little bit, but my friendship with M. J. Tooey. She remembers the first day we met, I don’t remember that, or at least I tease her I don’t remember it, but I know it was in Maryland. We worked together at University of Maryland, Baltimore. She was in the regular library when I was in the Regional Medical Library. We would often have lunch and get together. But what a friendship, and a mentoring friendship, too. Add some competition along the way. That always feeds each other a little bit more, too. But I would die for her. I think she would for me too.

RF: It’s pretty remarkable.

JS: Yes. And you don’t often get friendships like that. I think about Lucretia McClure, who would talk to the new members of the Medical Library Association about the pearls of wisdom she would give. She’d say, “You’re going to be a medical librarian but you’re
going to have friends who are medical librarians for the rest of your life as a result of this,” and that’s so true. I think of a lot of people. I pick out M. J. because of our closeness, but there are just a ton of people in our medical library field that are exemplar people, bright, engaging, passionate for their job as well as for their life, and I just think it’s an incredible group of people to work with.

But M. J. and I, I can’t tell you how many things we have done together—we even coedited a book together and it didn’t kill our relationship. [Editor’s note: Shipman and Tooey coedited Strategic Collaborations in Health Sciences Libraries in 2019.] She and I competed for the MLA presidency and that didn’t kill our relationship. So, I think she is stuck with me for the rest of her life. What I liked about her and Judith Robinson, who is no longer with us, they were my peer mentors. I think that’s a good way to put it. You could sit down and talk about anything with both of them about what was happening politically—big university politics, internal library politics—and feel that you had a safe space and had smart people that would help you sort through issues and try to figure out which direction to head next.

RF: Very generous people.

JS: Very generous. And smart. Why aren’t they running for president of the United States? Don’t get me started on that. But that was the best thing that came out of University of Maryland, Baltimore, to be friends with M. J.

RF: So, that brings us to 2017, when some of us very naively thought Jean’s leaving the University of Utah, she’s going to retire, and she’s going to join the rest of us in the ranks of retirement. And then you just stunned everybody by announcing that you had become the vice president for global library relations with Elsevier. Talk about a showstopper. How did that come about, and truly, what the heck were you thinking at that point?

JS: Well, this is a good story, so take a seat. Jane Blumenthal, way back, invited me to be a part of LinkedIn and I was like, what is LinkedIn? I never saw a value for it—up to the point until I got this [message] from Elsevier… And I thought, oh, yeah, here’s a job at—. Now, I didn’t even print it out; I just flipped it, I think, and put it somewhere and thought, there’s no way in hell I’m ever going to work for Elsevier.

And I was ready to retire. At the university, you could retire at the age of sixty or after so many years of employment. Before we left Richmond, actually, we bought property in where we are now, Wintergreen Resort, to retire. Our thought was, we were going to retire in 2010. And then the Utah offer came up and then I said, “Well, we’ll go out there for a little bit and come back.” So, we were really ready to come back.

Then I get this message on LinkedIn, and I left it sit for a week and then I got to thinking. Well, I was going to retire and travel, and I was going to retire because things have changed a lot at the university and I felt that I had done what I could do there and it was time for the other person to have a chance at it. Melissa had joined us and she was brilliant and I thought, this is good for her. Let me look at that job. What did they send
me? I went back and I printed it out and read it, and I went, holy Hannah, if I could write a job, that would be the job I would write. And then I thought, oh, yeah—no, no. I pulled Melissa aside and I said, “Melissa, read this,” and she’s like, “It’s you.” And I said, “It is, isn’t it?” And she’s like, “It’s you.” And I was like, “Oh, man!”

I looked at it and I thought, okay, after Cyril and Joyce Ogburn, here’s another chance someone’s given me, so I should at least look at it. I put a resume together and cover letter and submitted it and the next morning I got a call from them. It’s very different working with a company than an academic personnel procedure. Their HR department called me and they said, “Well, we got your application and we want to talk to you about it,” and I was like, “Already?”

The beauty of being at the age I was and the stage of life I was at, I didn’t hold back on anything. I really was like, make my day. I had nothing to lose here. It was kind of like the Hopkins interview. I am tired; I have nothing to lose here. They talked to me, and it sounded really, really good. And then I started getting these phone calls from different people from Elsevier. And we would chat and have a great conversation and then next thing I know, there’d be a month go by and they’d say, “Well, we now want you to talk to so-and-so,” and we’d chat and I wouldn’t hear anything. And I was sure I didn’t have the job, but I thought, okay, well, I’ll get ready to put in for retirement. And then they called. I just was like, “What? I haven’t even interviewed,” and they said, “Well, no, you’ve been interviewing with all these phone calls.” “Ohh…” I said, “So you don’t want me to come and give a presentation and all that stuff?” “Nah. We want to hire you.”

Well, this is six months after the process had started and I was only four months away from retirement, and I said, “Well, I’ll take the job at the salary you’re offering, but I need to retire from the university first.” And they were like, “What? Another four months?” and I was like, “Yeah, pretty much. But go ahead and keep interviewing people, and if you haven’t found someone, come back. But I am going to retire.” So, I get a call the next day from the person hiring me who said, “We all talked about it and we’re willing to wait for your retirement.” Now I’ve got to take the job!

So, that’s how it came to be. And I have to say, thank goodness I took the job. I can’t tell you what a fantastic job it was. It was exhausting because it was so much travel, but I built up tons of airline miles that don’t matter anymore now, of course, and I built up tons of hotel points so that when we can travel I’ll have a nice cushion there. But again, things I didn’t even think about I would learn. Time zones, first of all. Forget the Mountain, East, Central time. Now you’re dealing with Amsterdam time and South African time and many other time zones. The world clock is your best friend.

And I wanted to know if I could survive in a corporation. I had worked with the business aspect at UW—the fee-for-service and the photocopy. I liked the budget stuff. Can I really do it—can I thrive in a corporation? Well, what I didn’t know was how academic Elsevier really is. There are so many people who have worked in academia, from scientists to editors to whatever, that it’s more of a blend. It’s kind of, to me, what the
Massachusetts Medical Society must be like working with the *New England Journal*. It’s really a science-based company that’s trying to put forth good content.

My favorite story was Karen Hunter—who kind of had my position before me way back, although I think she had much more under her wheelhouse—had passed. The CEO of the Elsevier unit said, “Well, how’s our current librarian doing? I need to meet her.” They invited me up to the twenty-third floor in Amsterdam to meet him, and I’m going up and thinking, what the heck am I going to talk to the CEO about. I go in and I’m just kind of looking around and peeking behind the curtains, looking out at the view, and he comes in and says, “What are you doing?” And I said, “Well, I’m looking for the evil people because I haven’t found them and I figure they have to be here [laughter].” And he just started cracking up. He’s like, “Oh, my gosh, we do have that reputation, don’t we,” and I said, “Yep.” And he goes, “And that’s why we hired you, because we really need to change our reputation.”

But I can say it now, because I have nothing to lose, I’m not working for them, but the integrity of that company was incredible and not what I expected to see at all. It hurts me every time they get slammed because they just are a really good [company]. People who make the pricing [have a difficult job]—I know as a librarian I hated their pricing. But the company of Elsevier is not a bad company.

I can’t tell you how often I was consulted by people asking, what’s a librarian facing today, what can we do to help librarians, why can’t they get more money for subscriptions. And I would help to articulate the process of the budget and how it was not uniform across libraries, and all the layers of university administration you might have to go through. When a new building was built, there wasn’t always money given to the library [to support] what would go in that building and stuff like that. But they really wanted to do right by librarians.

And my two major accomplishments there—working with Elaine Martin—again, going way back to my Baltimore days. She is at Harvard and had been quite the builder-upper of library involvement in data management. I was talking to her one day and I said, “I have this opportunity. They’ve asked me what do librarians need? I think there’s a need for data management training. You’ve done that. How do you still feel about it?” And she said, “Oh, my gosh, I have had this proposal into IMLS [Institute of Museum and Library Services] for years and nobody will fund it. If you could get me money, I can get you a team of librarians to create a training program for research data management.” So, I wrote a proposal and defended it. [Elsevier] has given a lot of money to this team of librarians in the Northeast to create this online training program called RDMLA [Research Data Management Librarian Academy] that’s totally free and totally not a sales gimmick—truly wanting to help librarians succeed in the future within libraries.

That was one thing. Then right as I was leaving—I had gotten to be quite good friends with Roger Schonfeld from Ithaca S+R in New York, and he does a lot of academic surveys on helping with space in libraries. We had worked with them on a study of our space in the Eccles Library. He said to me, “What are medical librarians—you keep
saying there are different issues for them than academic librarians. What are they facing?” I mentioned I was concerned about would happen at Utah when I left—that there would probably be an incorporation of the Eccles Library into the academic library somehow, as that seemed to be the trend. While I loved a lot of academic librarians, there is a difference in what is needed by the users of medical libraries that I don’t think academic libraries understand. It would be really great when they did these kinds of surveys about the needs of libraries, if they did a separate one for medical. I kept saying, “You’re only hearing from the academics; you’re not hearing from the medical librarians.” Because they’d only [survey] one director from each institution.

Roger talked to me and we worked on this idea and then I talked to AAHSL [Association of Academic Health Sciences Libraries]. AAHSL gave funding and Elsevier gave funding to do this study. It’s kind of like the [Building on Success:] Charting the Future [of Knowledge Management Within the Academic Health Center, 2003] study that AAHSL did years ago about hiring a director—what was needed and where libraries were heading and medical libraries’ futures—to educate university administrators. I wanted this [same thought paper for people] who were thinking of merging medical and academic libraries.

The report [Academic Health Sciences Libraries: Structural Models and Perspectives, by Oya Y. Rieger, Ithaka S+R, 2020] just got issued two weeks ago, and AAHSL is working now on how to learn about it and how to incorporate it and how to promote it. For the findings, they interviewed academic librarians, they interviewed medical librarians, they interviewed university administrators. The findings came to show that there is a difference from the medical point of view and that the needs are quite different and you do lose some value by merging. It was a tough report to do because of trying to encourage people to be honest, particularly [those who] are reporting to an academic library at this point in time—how much could they say and still be anonymous. But I think it’s a pretty good report.

So, those two things. I was only with Elsevier [two and a half years]—I retired [from Utah] on August 6th [2017], on my birthday, and started August 7th with Elsevier. And then I retired again at the end of 2019 with Elsevier. And thank goodness I did, because as we all know what 2020 has brought. We were moving. We built a new home. And with the travel, I just couldn’t get the house ready for sale and pack and do all the things I needed to do to get to Virginia.

Also, nobody’s traveling now and it’s quite a different position. They were pleased with how many people applied for my position and the caliber of the people. Because I think I might have been the only one, when I got the job—I don’t know—but the interest I had expressed in how great the job was helped to generate interest in replacing me. They were able to get the woman who had been the executive director for OhioLINK, which is a big consortium of about 120 libraries in Ohio for licensing. I think she gives them a whole different perspective than I did. And I encouraged them to think about this position being maybe a two- to three-year one for everybody. Rotating people through
would give different perspectives. I felt a little unbalanced in giving a lot more medical library perspectives than academic library ones when I would have to voice opinions.

But I think Elsevier is just awesome. And I also didn’t realize Elsevier is one part of four parts that make up this global company called RELX. They actually do [New York] Comic Con. That’s their exhibit. RELX runs Comic Con.

RF: Really?

JS: Yes. They run a whole exhibit company. They run a legal risk analysis company. [Editor’s note: The company, previously known as Reed Elsevier, rebranded itself as RELX in 2015. Its market sectors are: scientific, technical, and medical (Elsevier); legal (LexisNexis Legal & Professional); risk (LexisNexis Risk Solutions); and exhibitions.] There are these four companies that make up the profit that’s touted everywhere. It’s not misinformation, but the information about their revenue and their profits are geared towards stockholders; it’s not tailored toward librarians. So, yes, they’re going to say they make so much money, but what they don’t say is what company part is making the money and not as much [revenue is coming from] the journals that libraries are paying for.

I understand that the administration of the company has changed over time, too, and there were days of evilness. But I can tell everyone that it was the best and most active two years plus. I got to travel to all the conferences, like EAHIL [European Association for Health Information and Libraries] and IFLA [International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions]. I got to go to Greece and Poland for IFLA. And again, the knowledge I got from Utah working with all kinds of librarians helped me with the Elsevier job, because I was meeting with all kinds of librarians and able to talk—and sometimes having to talk when they didn’t want to hear [laughter]. I can share some fun stories of how mean librarians can be to a librarian. It’s just funny. But it’s a really good company.

RF: That’s interesting to have as part of the MLA Oral History record because I think, as you alluded, Elsevier hasn’t had the most positive reputation in our field. You mentioned Karen Hunter. I think there was a lot of respect for Karen in lots of ways because she was very smart and she could be very straightforward and good to deal with. But I think people viewed her much more as a corporate creature than a library advocate. If there was a choice, she usually came down on the side of the for-profit [laughter].

JS: Yes. But they had such respect for her. They held her to the same level as Steve Jobs, somebody told me. When she passed, they put an award in honor of her in place and there was media. At University of Washington, we had this theory of drive-by emails: that you were copied but you didn’t quite understand what your role would be at first. Why did I keep being copied? And then it [became clear], we want you to put an award together for her, and I knew, aaah, okay, that’s why. But it was nice to see all the kudos and expression of respect that the higher-ups in Elsevier had for her. Total respect.
RF: And you mentioned that perpetual travel, that would be both wonderful and exhausting.

JS: It was. I’m a hotel rat to begin with. I really think I reincarnated from a hotel rat, because I love staying at hotels and I love just being out and about and seeing a lot of people. And most of the places I went, there were librarians to engage with, so I was never alone, I guess, is a good way to put it. I went to Taiwan and they had an earthquake, and we were all sitting in the hospital restaurant after visiting the hospital librarian. And they were all like, “Are you okay? Are you okay?” They were more scared than I was because I’ve been through some Seattle ones. And I was like, “It’s okay. We’ll be fine.”

But just the camaraderie of the employees. There were no strangers and yet everybody was a stranger in the company to me and yet I didn’t feel that way. I still am in contact with a lot of them as friends. They wanted to have a retirement [party], believe it or not. I wish I could have worked with them longer. I really wish I had started earlier in my career, although I wouldn’t have allowed myself to because of the uncertainty of, could you survive in a corporation, would you be fired—that kind of thing.

I just really enjoyed it. I’m also impressed with how smart they are about stuff that we think we know, but they know it, too. And it’s a little worrisome how our domains are diminishing as far as where our line of practice fits and where the lines of practices of others fit. And I think that’s the challenge that future medical librarians are going to have, with mergers and especially articulating what you’re actually bringing to the table as a medical librarian. [That] will be a big challenge of the future.

But I’m glad to be retired now. I really am.

RF: Living in one time zone.

JS: Only one time zone, and it’s the most popular one. But I have to confess that when I took the job, I asked about having to relocate, and they said, “Well, we’d like you to, but if you want to stay in Salt Lake, you can.” I didn’t think about the time [difference] between Salt Lake and Amsterdam. It’s eight hours. So, I was on phone call meetings at four-thirty in the morning a lot of times and ten o’clock at night when Japan or China [were involved].

They worked really hard, and I have a lot more respect for, when you go into an exhibit hall, there are people who probably have been at ten exhibits before that one, if not more. And they’re not sleeping. The time zone changes, the travel. They’re remarkable people. I don’t know how people do this for twenty years. I really don’t.

RF: It takes a physical toll and you have to be, I think, the right kind of person to be able to deal with that constant jet lag travel stuff.
JS: Yes. And it’s really bad when you get on a Delta flight and the flight attendants go, “Oh, you’re back!” You start to know about their lives and their families. Walk in the Delta Club and Mark says, “How do they know you?” I’m like, “I’ve been here a lot.” But I miss it now that we can’t travel. The first six months were like, oh, okay—kind of like the brain-dead after MLA presidency. I need a break from it and I got moved and settled and all that. But now I’m ready to travel and, unfortunately, I think that’s a little way off again.

RF: Well, you have those miles and hotel nights that you can use at some point.

JS: I hope. I think they’re going to roll over to ‘22.

RF: So, here you are in Salt Lake in 2019, and now it’s time to go cross-country again back to the east. Back to Virginia and real retirement. You mentioned earlier the hard hat that seems to be traveling with you. So, you’ve been busy building a new home, visiting wineries and other highlights in the area. I love seeing your pictures on Facebook because it looks idyllic in lots and lots of ways. It seems to me you’re very busy and engaged in all kinds of things still.

JS: I am. People always say, “Well, I didn’t know how I worked because retirement is so busy,” and I hate to use that same cliche, but it’s so true. The weeks fly by, and if I didn’t have my medicine pill counter thing that says, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, I wouldn’t know what day it was, which is always a great sign—that you’re living life and not the day and hour.

And I have done some work-related things. I’m now on the Friends of the National Library of Medicine board and have been working with them on being creative on how to be involved when you can’t have a live dinner event as your main fundraiser. So, we’ve been doing workshops—webinars—on different topics and putting that together. You can now join as a member, Friends of NLM—we put that all together this year. That’s been really fun. [Through the board] I’ve been back in touch with Carla Funk from MLA and Naomi Broering and Sandra Franklin from Emory and Elaine Martin and Tovah Reis and different people. So, it’s keeping me in the medical library loop.

And then I’ve just been playing tons of tennis. This week I had six days of tennis, so my legs are a little hurtin’ [laughter]. But I just absolutely love it. And I’m writing a novel, so that’s kind of fun, filling the days with my fantasy in a novel. I’m not done writing yet, either.

RF: Okay. You’ve got that liberal arts background.

JS: The hard part about writing the novel is that it doesn’t have to be true. All my life I’ve been such a science geek and publication documenter and all this stuff, and I catch myself going, it just doesn’t matter, Jean, just write something. It doesn’t have to be factual—although I’m trying to be a little bit, because there’s some historic involvement
and family issues, so I’m trying to be true to the date of the novel. But it’s fun to be able to just write and let it flow and not worry about how you’re going to footnote it.

RF: And do you have a timeline for when you want to wrap it up?

JS: I don’t, and that’s what’s surprising everyone, because usually I’m very task- and project-structured. But I’m just letting it be my last thing, when I have nothing else to do, that’s what I do. So, the last couple months it hasn’t got much attention, but during the real lockdown of COVID, I was able to write quite a bit, and I have all the chapters outlined. I have a name for it, I have a pseudonym; I have all kinds of things picked out. But it’s just fun. And I’m knitting and putting things in a craft store here.

I’m from Pennsylvania, a small town, as I mentioned, but here is like that Pennsylvania feel. I have the mountains that I had back home and I have the deer, and now they’re eating my landscaping, which everyone told me I would hate them for that and now I’m starting to. But they’re fun to watch. And we’re just getting settled. The community here, it’s not a retirement community, but yet most people are. And they’re very active. They’re outdoors, they’re walking, they’re playing tennis, golf, whatever. But it’s just beautiful. I just feel like I’m kind of the happiest I’ve ever been. It’s kind of nice to be at that point in life.

RF: That’s good. That’s the way it should be in retirement.

JS: That’s it. But I appreciate, again [your time]. Thinking through all this, I was dreading doing [the oral history interview] because you want to be able to talk about everything and not miss anything, but then, when you get it done, it is like, wow, that was kind of fun to rehash and go back and think about what all you did do in life. So, it’s a great opportunity.

RF: Good. Well, we will continue tomorrow. I think this concludes part one of our interview via Zoom. I did want to stay on for just a few more minutes and talk about some process stuff [Zoom-related discussion].

[Editor’s note: The conclusion of the first audiofile is selectively transcribed.]

JS: Thank you for your time, Rick. I knew all this happened behind the scenes, but this is helping me see how much you and Carolyn and all the rest of the people do—like Joan Zenan who came to do Wayne’s [interview] and she stayed at my house. There’s a lot of dedication you guys have given to the profession.

RF: I find it interesting and truly I’m fascinated and I’m amazed sometimes, because I knew you and Gretchen were friends for a long, long time, I had no idea when that started. And when Gretchen and Elaine and M. J. and names come up and people I know and think, oh, I know Nancy Ottman Press—hadn’t thought about her in a long, long time. It’s interesting and enjoyable for me to hear about these people who I admire and like and have known for a long time.
JS: As I was preparing for this, I always say it would be nice to have a ‘how-many-degrees-from-Kevin-Bacon’ kind of game for MLA, because there are so many connections of people that worked here, worked there, and people don’t remember it or didn’t know it at the time.

RF: I always say to Carolyn, I don’t know that there’s any way to do it, but I would love to see a super indexing of all the oral histories, because I would love to see the chain of who mentioned this Phyllis Mirsky and how many oral histories does Nina show up in.

JS: I thought about how it would make a great Janet Doe Lecture for someone to do that, to look into how many times who influenced who.

RF: We know people by reputation, the Louise Darlings and people who had huge impact on the field and huge impact on lots of our colleagues, but I think there are also lots of other people who just haven’t been recognized with that same kind of prominence but who really were influential.

JS: Exactly. I can think of tons—tons of people. Today at my tennis game I kept saying, “I’ve got to go” and they said, “Why?” “I’m getting this oral history done…” “Who’s doing this?” And I say our Medical Library Association... It made me think we are unique maybe in doing this. I don’t know how many fields really do oral histories to this extent.

RF: I don’t know either but I think this is probably one of the stronger programs and I just admire Carolyn as the continuity, the person who’s held it together for such a long time…

JS: You’ve lived a lot of Utah days directly too with Wayne. I’d love to talk even more about his stories. I kind of rushed very nicely over what happened there at the end, but it was a real case study about how [an administrator] built it up and then it [collapsed] and she took a lot of people with her. I heard that Wayne had some of those kinds of administrators in his time too.

RF: He did.

JS: You live and remember the good things and forget the bad things hopefully…

[M4A file 2: GMT20201115-145828]

RF: Good morning. This is the continuation of an MLA oral history interview with Jean Shipman on November 15, 2020. Did anything come to mind since we spoke yesterday that you would like to add to the prior conversation?

JS: Actually, there was one person I forgot to mention that did have a very monumental impact on me, and that was a friend whose daughter I babysat for in high school. She
was a school teacher and then she became a librarian. She knew our family and my other sister babysat for her daughter as well. And she said to me one day, “You really need to think about going to a college away from here.” I had intended to go to Shippensburg University. And she’s like, “You need to get your own life and your own way out.” She encouraged me to jump to Gettysburg College, which was only a half hour away, but it still was a big enough jump, and I lived on campus. I give her a lot of credit. Her name’s Betsy Haller, so I just wanted to bring that influence in here, too.

RF: I also wanted to ask, because you and I had talked prior to starting the interview, and you had mentioned Spencer Marsh. I didn’t know when you had worked or interacted with Spencer.

JS: Well, a great sidebar of the Regional Medical Library Program was getting to have dinners and talks with medical library directors across our region. He and I had a great dinner, as you can only imagine with Spencer. He liked his food. I asked him about—this was when I was still a reference librarian, I think, maybe Psych/Neuro librarian—I said, “Why did you become a library director and what makes someone take on that load of responsibility?” And he said, “Well, I just don’t want to work for stupid people.” And it resonated with me when I got to the point where I was ready not to work for—I wouldn’t say stupid people, but I saw what he meant. There reaches a point in your career where you want to try to impact with your ideas, and your directions, and your strategies.

Tom Basler was another one that I can give a little bit of a story about. I’m sure there are many people who have stories of Tom. He said to me one day in a Regional Medical Library meeting—a RAC [Regional Advisory Council] meeting—he said, “You know interlibrary loans are like fleas. You keep treating them, you keep working with them, and they don’t go away; they just keep coming back.” We’d talk about it at every meeting. And for the rest of our lives, I was always like, “Tom, I still get those interlibrary loan fleas [laughter].”

RF: Too true. Yes, still there. Yesterday when we stopped, we were talking about your career in Utah and then the move to all the traveling that you did for Elsevier, and now you’re in retirement in a very pastoral, lovely, relaxing setting, although you’re busy busy busy. So, let’s move from the career track to professional service and start by focusing on MLA. When and how did you become involved in professional library organizations?

JS: I mentioned yesterday that how I got my first position was interviewing at the job placement service at the Medical Library Association meeting in 1980. I joined to be able to attend that meeting. It was in DC, so it was not far away. And then I stayed a member, but I actually got more involved with committees and activities and offices in the local organizations. Maryland, again, had a lot of librarians in the Baltimore area, so we had this group called MAHSL, which was Maryland Association of Health Sciences Librarians. And that’s when I really remember meeting M. J. Tooey and working with her on committees. Then I went to the regional group, which was the Mid-Atlantic Chapter of MLA (MAC), and then worked on different committees with Suzanne
Grefsheim and again Elaine Martin, all these people that have stayed friends throughout life, more or less.

From there, then, I think when I got to the Regional Medical Library Program in Baltimore, Faith Meakin really wanted us to be active in MLA, and she helped to encourage us—which committees to try to join, which juries—start with getting appointed to a jury was her recommendation, and then you can work up from that to a program committee or the more hot committees, I would say, for MLA. Not that juries are not, but it was easier to get into a jury than a National Program Committee.

Again, I mentioned yesterday that Hopkins didn’t mean anything to me when I started, but once I got into that group of librarians, we were very competitive in a good way. And we were very much encouraged by Nina to be seen nationally and present at conferences and things like that.

So, then I got into the whole cycle of wanting to do more and be more a part of things and be more active in the organizations. It became a way of life then. As I would mention to my employees, when work really gets you down, seek your professional association and do something there that you feel good about and creative about. And then when you get tired of that, then you go back to work. And balance those two as you would two parents, where you kind of make the best of the time with [each]. And I had found that that was really true—that times where the work might have been a little less pleasant, the kudos that you would get from working within an association made you feel good.

RF: That’s a great way to look at it.

JS: Yes, it is. And it gives you an opportunity to work with people that then later on you may actually be working with. That was also the networking idea: On a committee, you met with different people across the country, and then when you went for a job, they knew who you were and they knew what you could produce and how you would interact as a team member. And it helped to facilitate your entry into other positions.

RF: And when you joined MLA in 1980, did you have strong initial impressions about the association and the people in it, or did that just develop over time?

JS: I did. I had a lot of reverence, I guess, for the leaders. I can remember Lois Colaianni from NLM. I think she spoke and talked about being a dinosaur. I still remember that talk. Like, what was she talking about? And now I realize exactly what she was talking about. [Editor’s note: In her 1991 Janet Doe Lecture, Colaianni spoke of joining the ranks of the dinosaurs, quoting David Bishop who described his reaction to being named a Doe lecturer.] But those leaders seemed to be people who knew what they were doing, very impressive, very engaged, and trying to engage us all, and having to still push forward with where our profession was heading and all of the changes that we were dealing with, from the digital transformation, a lot of that, the leadership of MLA.
And I remember when we talked about the journal of our association going to open access. There was a lot of fright. Are we going to make the revenue up that we would lose. Those kinds of discussions were very good to bring them back then to the workplace and be able to help inform others.

RF: Sure. And at that first meeting in 1980, when you were there to apply for a job, how did that meeting feel to you? Was it exciting, overwhelming, chaotic?

JS: Yes. I’m sure I didn’t take advantage of everything I should have at that meeting, but my intent was to get a job. I did do those twelve interviews, and I spent a lot of time in those job booths, curtained booths, and looking through notebooks and trying to make appointments and things.

But I do remember the big lectures. I honestly probably didn’t get all the nuances of the sections and their tracks and their paper programs. I did remember the exhibit hall being pretty impressive. Walking in and seeing what all was being offered in areas—I was in reference—or wanted to go in reference—and so all this other stuff was kind of like, oh, what’s this, what’s that. It was an interesting time. But I just remember the focus was on the job, getting a job.

RF: Over time, you’ve served on over twenty MLA committees, task forces, and sections. Tell me about some of the memorable experiences that you’ve had in all of that work.

JS: Well, I think the greatest one was, of course, being president of the association in 2006 to 2007. And building up to that and spending three years [in my first term on the Board of Directors in 1999/2002] with insights of everyone on that board. I can remember the first year, you spend all your time trying to figure out what’s going on, because there was a lot of new information being shared. The second year you’re feeling a little bit more comfortable, and then you start being appointed to committees and activities and programs. And then the third year, you’re like, I got this. Then you start having to really lead committees and things. …I had quite a nice list of presidents I worked with the first three years. I know Michael Homan was one, Carol Jenkins was one, and…the first president [was Frieda Weise]… We did a lot together with that board.

The big opportunity there was the informationist. That was a model that Valerie Florance from the National Library of Medicine had put together with Frank [Davidoff], who was, an internal medicine individual. They had this belief that like a hospitalist, there could be an informationist who was rounding and being in an environment, more or less a setting, either clinical, educational, research. It started out clinical and then it went to the other settings. That person would not only bring information skills, but they’d have a subject knowledge of the discipline. If it was clinical, it would be health care, if it was research, it would be some branch of the research arm. But in addition to that, then the funding would come from the source of who that person was working with. It wouldn’t necessarily be funded by the library.
That model was tested and put in review by the joint meeting of NLM and MLA. At that point, Michael and Carol—I think Michael had just ended his presidency and Carol had started—so there was a lot of transition between the two helping me—who they put in charge of planning this symposium. [Editor’s note: The Informationist Conference, funded by NLM and hosted by MLA, was held at NLM April 4-5, 2002.] And they really did help me, because I was like, I’m doing what?? It was really fun to get their different approaches to how to organize thoughts around who needed to be speakers, what kind of format we needed, how long, all that. It was lots and lots of work just putting together the symposium, but we also documented it with webinars afterwards so that more MLA members could be a part of the discussion. Then we published a paper on it and different aspects of it.

And it’s still viable today. I don’t think it’s as widespread as Valerie and Frank had hoped originally, but it’s still being thrown out there as a model. I think the National Institutes of Health [Library], with Suzanne Grefsiem, was the one to actually take it and run with it the best. She had funding and got it from the departments of NIH to actually put a lot of power behind that concept and prove it.

RF: It really placed people.

JS: Yes, that was the most monumental [project] when I was on the board, that I can recall. But we did a lot other things: looking at mid-career opportunities and how to be advancing if you wanted to become a director. There’s a lot of training offered. We worked on that. And Carol wanted to create a repository of our educational activities as medical librarians, called CORE [Center of Research and Education], and she was working quite strongly on getting people to contribute to that database. I think it’s actually come back around recently to be talked about again here with trying to get us to deposit educational materials. So that was a great board experience.

Do you want me to jump into when I was president?

RF: Yes, let’s go into your presidency, Jean, and how you selected priorities about what you wanted to focus on.

JS: I remember being quite honored to be elected, and I was thinking, do I have to have a platform, what kind of topics do I feel I have some expertise that I can bring to the association and members? After being at VCU, where we created two consumer libraries, and then also later at Utah, where we created another consumer library, I thought about consumer health, or health literacy.

Linda Watson, in her presidency [2002/03], had made that a platform, a strong focus area. At the time, I didn’t quite understand what she was talking about, to be honest. It was so new, this whole idea that literacy—everyone thinks literacy is about reading, but what made health literacy different was really not only being able to read, but being able to comprehend what you were being told or reading and then applying that, which is the
new emphasis on it. It’s not only enough to be given information, but do you apply it and
does it impact your health as a result?

So, I felt like that could be my strength area. I went mainly with that idea of trying to
look at health literacy, but emphasizing the role that librarians could play in their
institutions, and especially in hospitals, and teaching others about the awareness of health
literacy among health care providers.

I did reread my presidential inaugural address and I did indicate that that’s one area I
wanted to address. Which is probably why, soon thereafter, the reception that M. J. had
at her presidency that year at MLA [Tooe was president the prior year], Elliot Siegel
from NLM came up to me and said, “Can NLM help you with any of your initiatives? Is
there a way for NLM and MLA to work together on some of these?” And I said, “Well,
let me think about this, but sure, let’s do it.”

I wrote a grant within the first month of being president, and I remember Carla kept
saying, “Well, just submit something.” I’m like, “No, you have to submit a grant.” We
wrote an official grant and got funded [by NLM] for a quarter of a million dollars to do
some work with a consultant called TAP—I believe they’re out of Philadelphia—to
assess the awareness of hospital administrators and then hospital health care providers
[about health literacy’s value]. Did they understand about it, did they know about it, and
could an advocacy role for libraries be built into that needs assessment as well? [Editor’s
note: NLM funded MLA to conduct the Health Information Literacy (HIL) Research
Project under contract during 2006-2008.]

Then from there, we took what we learned and created a curriculum, and we hired a
consultant, Sabrina Kurtz-Rossi, who was well known in the Tufts University area for
health literacy. We hired her to work with us to come up with a curriculum that all
librarians could adopt and not have to create from scratch, so that they could teach within
their systems and their organizations.

And then the nicest thing we did—and I have to say, being from RML days and grants of
a quarter of a million—we had decided to give $5,000 stipends to seven hospital
librarians to actually help them support this training. And you would have thought we
gave them millions. It was such an impressive thing for their hospital administrators to
learn that they got any outside funding, and then that it was from the National Library of
Medicine and MLA was huge. These seven librarians—I still am friends with them
today—they just rolled with it and they made it probably a million dollars’ worth of work
that they put into it. Some of them got awards from their institutions for their efforts;
some of them got promotions. It was just incredible what impact that $5,000 had.

We all then gave a synopsis of our efforts at an MLA meeting and had speakers. I guess
there was a symposium kind of thing at MLA. [Editor’s note: A plenary session and
open forum on health literacy were held at the 2007 annual meeting, open forums at the
2008 and 2009 meetings, as well as other papers and posters.] So, that I was very proud
of, taking the idea of health literacy forward.
And it wasn’t the only thing. We talked a lot yesterday about technology, and the personal health record was really starting to come into play around that era. We also put a task force together to look at how librarians could be a part of personal health records: in educating patients about the use of them and also in educating the hospital providers, again, of the value of having a librarian on their committees. And then linking content within the electronic record, that kind of started at that point, too. That task force was headed by Dixie Jones, who later became MLA president. She did a fantastic job getting inventory of what all types of personal health records were present at the time, and then also getting encouragement through an article in different media, outreach that we did with MLA’s PCI media company to promote librarians as partners in this whole endeavor. So, that was applying technology, again, with the people aspect of it more so. That was fun.

Then the other big thing was ‘Magnet status.’ The nurses in their professions had gotten to this point of adopting a Magnet status, which required an institution to go through a lot of review of their nursing program, their education for nurses, continuing education, and more. And again, librarians weren’t mentioned, so we put together a task force. Margaret Bandy and Melody Allison put a great white paper together that hospital librarians then could take forward. The outpouring from that was incredible, too. It brought the librarian to the table. They recognized the input—the value of information that could be provided to nurses to improve their practice—and encouraged the development of the Magnet status, which became a real recruitment arm for hospitals to get nurses in the nursing shortage. Being part of a Magnet hospital is huge.

Those are the three main things I remember from my presidency. There was also continual emphasis on research and education. I know there was a task force, and I think you, Rick, had the education or the research one that you did a white paper on.

RF: Education.

JS: Education, okay. And then Joanne Marshall did the research. Those were happening during those years as well. It helped establish a basis for where librarians should be practicing in those two areas. [Editor’s note: Task forces to revise MLA’s educational policy and research policy statements were chaired by Forsman and Grefsheim, respectively. Marshall appointed the task forces as president and was a member of the research task force.]

It was a great time. The lessons I learned were knowing a lot more about libraries all over the country, and creating more of a network. But time management was something I had not anticipated learning. I used to just always want to put things in place and do them as I wanted to do them, but with the MLA presidency and keeping a full-time job, too, you learned that something had to slide. So, you started to learn how to prioritize and how to say, if this happens, is there an outcome if I don’t do it, or what’s the outcome if I do do it. And I really have continued to apply that lesson through the rest of my life. Everything doesn’t have the same urgency.
RF: Right. And as you say, you have to juggle a lot of different potential priorities as you figure out what’s really important.

JS: Yes. And my sandwich of presidents around me was terrific. I had M. J. Tooey in my beginning [president]-elect year, and then me, and then Mark Funk as my past president [year] president. You can only imagine the fun that was had, too.

M. J. had started a whole program for hospital librarians. As normal, hospital libraries were closing, so we did a lot of work inventorying how many and what the conditions were and was there anything MLA could do to help to not have them close. She put together a program called Vital Pathways, and I also worked with her on that, particularly with accreditation for graduate medical programs. There used to be a belief that if the library was included in the ACGME [Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education] requirements, that guaranteed they couldn’t be closed. But standards over time started to drift from being a physical library and a librarian, to being access to information. We did an inventory of all the programs that were out there and what the requirements were, so that we had a better understanding of where could we count on those standards… Diane Schwartz headed that task force, of which I was a major part [Health Sciences Librarian in Medical Education Task Force, under the auspices of the Task Force on Vital Pathways for Hospital Librarians].

Then the other thing M. J. started and which I continued was—and pushed by Lucretia McClure, with her mentoring as she can only do—was to reach out to library schools and make sure there were connections with MLA, and understanding what their curriculums were, and were they coherent with what MLA was offering as far as continuing education, and how could we encourage more students to go into medical librarianship. So, M. J. started it and I continued. I visited, I think, about eight schools in my year and just had a wonderful time. My favorite one was with Ana Cleveland at University of North Texas, and she just had I don’t know how many people show up for my talk. It was just wonderful. And again, I still have Facebook friends from her students from that one meeting. It was great.

RF: Well, dear, dear Lucretia was a power to be reckoned with, and she certainly pushed a lot of us in directions that she thought were important.

JS: In a great way. You never knew that you were getting pushed. It was really kind of interesting [laughter]. And a great dancer, too.

RF: Yes. Now, Jean, you were on the board from 1999 to 2002, as well as, during your presidency period, from [2005] to 2008. Were there differences in those board experiences?

JS: Well, I think the [2005] to ‘8 years, we did a lot more with how to incorporate librarians in areas where they typically weren’t recognized, perhaps, like the Vital Pathways and the health literacy programs. And then Mark Funk did emphasis on
technology and improving our skill sets, so that we could be seen as the technology gurus at our organizations. So, all three were kind of advocacy-based, I would say.

Then on the previous term on the board, it was the informationist and the CORE. So there, I would say it was more a documentation, perhaps, of what we do—educators, being parts of teams. The informationist was this idea that you would recognize when an information opportunity came up where you could insert yourself—kind of like a clinical librarian program, but even more, because you were living with these people in the environment continually. You weren’t just part of rounding that the clinical librarian did. So, I think there it was [a focus]—I hate to say on more traditional librarianship, but we were focusing really on the skills that we felt we had to offer. And then in the second set of three years, it was more how to advocate for those skills further.

And then around that whole time—though it’s a little blurry—is the whole digital transformation of collections, too. I think we talked about the [Journal of the Medical Library Association] going digital and then how to open it in the following years for open access. That whole [experience of how to help] move to a digital environment.

RF: And we were all working through licensing and negotiations and transformation from print to digital during that period as well.

JS: Right. When M. J. was president, she spoke at the Society for Scholarly Publishing, trying to build a bridge between publishers and librarians. I continued that in my presidency, too, and have become a very active member with SSP. I love going to their conferences and hearing them talk about meta[data] tagging. I sat there the first time I heard this, and I’m like, well, that sounds like cataloging to me. And sure enough, a little bit more glamorous sounding, but it was [the same]—learning from them how to make [our work more] business sounding. Then building the friendships and the relationships and understanding their issues and how we could help them as well as they could help us. It’s a society that does cater to everybody. It’s not a publisher society, even though that’s in the title. But it’s meant for librarians and publishers and editors and authors, to be a safe space to come together to talk about the issues that we were all—and especially in 2008—we were all kind of at odds with one another. The public access thing [NIH Public Access Policy] had just been released from NLM and this whole idea that documents should be stored somewhere that was not from a publisher. It kind of led into AAHSL starting Chicago Collaborative. And we can talk about that later. That whole scholarly communication involvement started with M. J. and then continued with me. Then Mark, I think, didn’t do as much with it because he was more focused on technology. But that’s also partly why I got involved with SSP, and then that probably led to the Elsevier job as well. Another web of thread.

RF: And as a result of all of your contributions to MLA, in 2009, you were named as a Fellow of the association. Why is that meaningful to you?

JS: I love it—to be part of the cadre of brilliance that that fellowship pool represents. I was equal, [alongside such a] person as Lois Ann Colaianni, who I had revered in my
1980 days. When I look at who all’s in that group, it’s just amazing to me the knowledge and the years of contribution to our profession that is represented. And I guess it’s kind of like that, they want me to be a part of their club—Groucho Marx said, they want me to be a member of their club. But it was just a recognition by peers that you worked so hard with over the years that you’ve reached a status of being remembered in that way, and it was a great honor. We do meet at the annual meeting, as everyone did, but it’s a great way to keep in touch with people and learn. Over forty years you develop friendships, and this is a way to continue those friendships a little bit more formally.

RF: Yes. It is a group of very wise, experienced people. And then the next stage, in 2017, you received the Marcia C. Noyes Award, the association’s highest honor in recognition of a distinguished and fruitful career. Did that honor cause you to think back about the experiences that you’d had and the diversity of health care institutions you’ve worked in?

JS: It did, but it also helped me to think forward. Because as I was receiving it, I knew I was going to be going to Elsevier, and I kind of had that moment of what are you doing, because people would laugh at me, saying, “You’re going to the dark side.” It’s like, well, am I really going to the dark side, or am I bringing along the profession to the dark side and making it a little bit brighter on that dark side? I did put a lot of thought into what I was going to say [when I accepted the award]. It was right around the time when misinformation was starting to be recognized also and the whole harm of that. So, I encouraged the membership to really believe in what value they would bring to put forth quality and accurate information. And that, from my background, came with the idea that you would bring it to many settings—you’d bring it to hospitals, you’d bring it to academic centers, you’d bring it to Regional Programs, and outreach programs to the community, to consumers, and then to each other.

I think we’re pretty unique among library associations, from what I could tell when I was doing a lot of meetings for Elsevier, with our continuing education program and how we self-educate within in an exemplary way really. We don’t have to bring outside speakers or instructors. Sometimes we do for special things, but normally it’s ourselves teaching each other and doing it quite well. I think MLA needs to be recognized for that contribution.

RF: And I think it really is. When I was doing attendance at IFLA meetings and when I was involved in library school accreditation, I got a very distinct impression interacting with other librarians that MLA was envied and admired because it had such a strong continuing education program for its practitioners. And I think other people looked at that and thought, wow, I wish I had that kind of opportunity in my branch.

JS: Indeed. And I think SLA [Special Libraries Association] may be the closest thing to MLA with offering that kind of [continuing education]. They tended to be more financial for a lot of their classes.
I can also give NLM credit because a lot of academic library people throughout my life would always say, “Well, you have DOCLINE and you have SERHOLD and all these things that support your infrastructure that comes from a federal library. We have Library of Congress, which is great for preservation and maintaining knowledge that’s been produced, but there’s not a lot of programming that comes out of LC for academic libraries, per se, like the equivalent of NLM for MLA.”

So, I do think we were envied, and we can just throw out an idea and we can react and get on it and move forward and not worry about charges or committee structures or all those things that would drive me a little crazy with academic library bureaucracies.

RF: Early in my career, LC was certainly a fundamental service to all libraries because of catalog cards.

JS: Right [laughter].

RF: But when that importance faded away in our field, then I think people see LC as not being so supportive any longer.

JS: They’re great and they do a lot of good things. I got to tour it as part of Elsevier and meet [the leadership] on the top of its roof. We had discussions there. And it was just wonderful, the programs that they do have, but it’s not tailored to only librarians. It’s tailored to the general public, which is great, too.

RF: You mentioned Carla Funk when we were talking just a few minutes ago, one of the consummate executive directors of any professional association. What a wonderful [leader she] is.

JS: I have the utmost respect for Carla. I think it was the years of my presidency, she expanded to also managing the ALISE [Association for Library and Information Science Education] group, the education group, helping them out. And as I would travel with her, her recognition from other association directors was huge. They looked to Carla for guidance on things, and that ALISE agreement cemented it and was just the capstone of that kind of appreciation for her expertise and skills.

I can remember many conversations with her about, how do you like having a new boss every year [laughter]. No one else has to go through quite that much, although sometimes I thought I did in hospitals. Every year a new president would come in, and she’d have to learn how to manage them. We talk about managing up or managing down, but she had to manage across in a lot of ways, and maintain some aspects of each presidency that hadn’t gotten finished, but also be open to wanting to be enthusiastic for the new president’s issues, and then recognizing the capacity of her staff and headquarters to handle everything. And yet she did it with great finesse, and you never felt like she was telling you no. It was always kind of like, well, let’s think about how we can do that with having this and this and this, too. But, impeccable, impeccable person. And I’m so glad I get to still work with her on the Friends of NLM board.
RF: She is a great person. Anything else you’d like to say about state or chapter involvement before we move on?

JS: I think the chapter involvement was really [valuable], and I think it gave you leadership opportunities and expanded your network and knowledge of what different libraries were doing.

I also really enjoyed the chapter meetings as MLA president. Everyone says that and I heard it for years and years, but when you live it, you really get the knowledge and experience of why that was so important. Each chapter kind of had its own reputation in a good way and also its manner of operating. You learned, again, that while music can be the same kind of basis, the themes are different. Libraries and chapters were that way. We all had a common purpose, but we expressed it in different ways.

My favorite meeting, in retrospect, was the [Upstate] New York-Ontario one, where it had a lake-effect snow, in the middle of October, unknown to anyone. And I had booked myself so tight—I was going from there to Southern Chapter. I can remember standing in the Delta line where they handwrote the boarding passes because the computer system was down. I think I still have that pass somewhere, because you look at it and you’re like, oh, my gosh. I made it. I was one day late to Southern Chapter, but I made it. Consequently, Joanne Marshall and I hung out in her suite, where she had a TV and we were watching it as we became snowbound in Buffalo, New York. Those kinds of memories—again, it was great training for when I got to Elsevier, where you were juggling one trip after another.

I didn’t talk yesterday about this, but the funniest trip of Elsevier was, I was stuck in DC at the Delta Club—and that was through my credit card, not through Elsevier. I saw the president of the University of Utah, and this was after I had left there. And I was in the club. We kept watching all the flights get canceled except ours, and we’re like, aren’t we lucky to be in Salt Lake City? And then, of course, ours got canceled. And I just sat there. I said, “Oh, my gosh, I have to be in Amsterdam tomorrow and I don’t have my passport. I need to get to Salt Lake to get my passport to fly out to Amsterdam.” And she’s like, “Okay, I’ve got this.” When we did get on the plane the next day, when everyone was getting off the plane, she stood up and said, “Everyone sit until Jean gets off this plane [laughter].” And they all listened. It just cracked me up. I’m like, “Ruth, you are too funny.”

I got off the plane and I had made arrangements for Mark to come with a little duffel bag of all the things I needed, like passport and change of clothes and stuff. We switched it out in the airport and then I went to my gate for Amsterdam to sit there while the plane got delayed and delayed and delayed. And then they brought us pizza to the gate, which, I’ve never been served pizza, which was not a good sign. We were all like, this is not a good sign. Then after dinner, they said, “Well, we’ll have to delay takeoff till tomorrow.” Well, I think I was the first person to leave. I went home, did laundry, had a nice evening with Mark, and then went to the airport and got to Amsterdam on time the
next day. I just learned after that to always carry my passport, because the next trip may come up that has a similar situation.

RF: But you made it.

JS: I made it. No one died. Life goes on.

RF: And we learn to be nimble, don’t we?

JS: We do. And things that you just never think about, like why would I take a passport to DC.

[Break]

JS: Before you go forward, I did look at my notes, and Frieda Weise was the other president when I was on the board. Frieda and I worked together at Maryland, so I should have remembered her, but I wanted to just say that. It was great to work with her in a different capacity as well.

RF: We had the good fortune of working with so many good people over time. It’s hard to always remember who was where and when.

JS: Exactly. And it fades into the background, because you saw them every day in addition to seeing them as president.

RF: In talking about other organizations, you were active with the Association of Academic Health Sciences Libraries from 2003 to 2013, working on annual statistics, legislative issues, and scholarly publishing. What was the most significant involvement for you during those ten years?

JS: I would say probably the work that I did with the scholarly publishing. And that was a fluke. I wanted to be on the legislative joint task force with AAHSL and [MLA], and I guess they kind of strategically placed people with the issues of the time congressionally. Michigan was hot for something, so Jane [Blumenthal] got to serve instead of me. But then Linda Watson said, “Could you be on the Schol Comm [Scholarly Communications] Committee, and I was like, “Okay, sure.” I got on it, and Karen Butter was the chair, and Karen and I had also worked together at Hopkins. And I just learned a lot of things as we do as librarians about scholarly communication but from a librarian viewpoint and lens.

…Scott Plutchak put forth a proposal to AAHSL to think about working more closely with publishers, so that we didn’t have this confrontational kind of relationship… The AAHSL board believed that we shouldn’t work with publishers individually, but work with their associations and have a representative from each association versus individual companies and societies. [Editor’s note: Michael Homan and Gail Yokote co-chaired the Joint AAHSL/Publishers Liaison Task Force to support the effort and were the original
co-conveners of the Chicago Collaborative.] That was called the Chicago Collaborative and that started in...2008 and went for [about] ten years.

Karen Butter rotated off the AAHSL Schol Comm Committee, and I asked if I could be the chair. I think, to everyone’s chagrin, maybe, I was a little bit too publisher friendly for AAHSL’s taste, I don’t know, but I really did want to understand what their issues were and how we could collectively operate to create and shape the future of scholarly communications.

The best years were when I co-chaired the Chicago Collaborative with a publisher, Marty Frank from the [American] Physiological Society (APS), who was quite a spokesperson for publishers in a lot of the contentious arguments, and so people were appalled that I could even like Marty, let alone work with him. I think Marty’s a great man. He had a lot of good insights. I didn’t always agree with him, but he was just a great person to work with. Then I worked with other co-chairs throughout the years as well.

We still need to work together more closely as publishers and librarians, and I hope that more people think of joining the Society for Scholarly Publishing, where you can do that in a safe space—because they don’t talk about pricing and they don’t talk about the nitty-gritty that you often have to deal with as a librarian with a publisher, but the bigger issues. And I do also think that we harm ourselves by not entertaining open discussions and just close doors and say, you’re too costly for me and things like that.

RF: It was an era, I think, of contentiousness and difficulty on both sides of that divide, and I think that librarians were very focused on the pricing issues and the ownership of content and had only a limited insight into what it looked like on the publisher’s side, because they were moving from one economic model to another with no certainty that they would even survive.

JS: Exactly, and having to go digital at the same time. They had to go digital first so we could go digital, when you think about it.

RF: Right. They were taking the bigger risk to begin with.

JS: Yes. And I think they still are. I think this still isn’t settled. We’ve come to a point where OA [open access] is more prevailing, but the flavors of OA are many and becoming even more so, as we’re trying to find a sustainable model still for scholarly publishing. And as libraries are looking towards self-publishing, I think there are a lot of lessons to be learned about how you advocate for the resources to support that. And if the outcry right now is, well, all these journals that were started by libraries didn’t continue, where’s that preservation of that content, it’s like, well, that’s a cost that publishers have had to continue to absorb, too, over time. We just keep asking more of publishers—more platform device formats, more technological enhancements for journal articles, like the videos and the images that can be 3D and all that—and yet we don’t want them to raise their prices. I see both sides, and that’s what’s so hard about it.
AAHSL’s opportunity for me to be a part of that collective called the Chicago Collaborative was probably even more influential than my health literacy work days, to be honest.

RF: Were there particular things, Jean, that you think came out of the Chicago Collaborative that were important?

JS: There were. The tenor of the meetings from the beginning to the end were just so different. Everyone came to the first meeting [dubious]. Michael Homan and Gail Yokote were the co-chairs and just did a wonderful [job], as you can only imagine with their ability to defuse tension and kind of engage people. [Publisher representatives] would say, “We can’t talk about what we’re doing, because [it’s] business,” and then the librarians were just like, “Well, just tell us. We just want to know, so spill all the beans,” not recognizing that there was the Sherman Act that prevented them from sharing business models and details about their profitability or not.

At the end of the meetings—the fact that they were even co-chaired by a publisher [and a librarian] was a major step. And also, people looked forward to being a part of those meetings. I guess the reluctance of some members of AAHSL toward the whole thing was that it was seen as an exclusive club. AAHSL supported the travel for [the librarians] on the committee, and yet it was not widely available. We tried to have widely available programs, but people also didn’t want to hear the stuff.

So, I found it the best blessing of my professional work, yet also the most frustrating, because I just wanted my colleagues to be a little bit more open to learning about other aspects of [publishing]. What we ended up doing was putting together an educational program, Publishing 101, we called it. It was taught by publishers and librarians and was about what does it take to publish a journal. Where’s the editorial content, how does that control what’s published. And I learned that the publishers don’t have control over what’s published; it’s the editor, really. When you think of that—I don’t want to say ‘friction,’ but New England [Journal of Medicine] doesn’t say, “Well, this is what we want to put in our journal.” It’s the editor and the scientist that decide that.

To my point of view, it’s important to understand all these aspects before you start saying, “Well, you can’t raise your prices.” And I think publishers [want to understand libraries]. Especially with Elsevier, part of my role with them was explaining where budgets of libraries came from and that there wasn’t one unique model. It’s very much an institutional support basis, what you have available in endowments and funding from different departments as well as from the hospital or whatever. And that was a real shock to them.

The more people talk, the more understanding results. And sometimes, again, we weren’t always in agreement, but we chose to say, okay, we have to disagree on that. Let’s move on to something else. But it got to be where people felt very comfortable, I think, with the group that met for these ten years.
[Membership] shifted over time, but it was seen by AAHSL as being a financial burden, because it did fund the members who were on it to travel and then they helped to fund the administration of it. There was a lot of discussion about closing it down, and now MLA has the InSight program that has tried to replicate some of the intention of the Chicago Collaborative, but not quite as an ongoing commitment to it, I guess. It’s more thematic kinds of programming sessions than a continual discussion moving forth. [Editor’s note: The AAHSL Board of Directors ended support for the Chicago Collaborative in 2017.]

So, my not getting on the legislative committee worked out to be to my advantage [laughter]. And who knew?

RF: And moved you into an interesting area that you really engaged in. It is interesting to me because AAHSL, like the Fellows group, is a reservoir of really talented, experienced people who have succeeded in difficult, complex institutions. You would think that their perspective should always be broad and inclusive, and sometimes it’s disappointing that it’s a little bit narrow.

JS: Well, and it’s understandable, because you do get tired as a library director of always asking for more budget and explaining the inflation costs and the proliferation of branch journals and that there’s more out there to be absorbed, so we have to have more money. In fact, I was contacted by University of Utah post-retirement about what they could do to keep journal prices down, because [they thought I had] seen both sides of the equation: I must have the answer, right? And I said, “Well, I have an answer. You’re not going to like it.” And they were like, “Well, tell us.” And I said, “Well, if you didn’t require your faculty to produce as many journal [articles], but to produce quality journal [articles] of a limited number, that would help.” And it’s like, “Well, we can’t do that.” “Well, then, you can’t [expect prices not to increase accordingly].”

The more journal articles that you decline as a publisher, the higher the cost is because you get nothing for those declined articles as far as income. You only get income for what’s accepted. To me, it was like interlibrary loan—the fill rate. You had to work on all of the requests, but you only got paid for the ones you filled. So, to me, it was quite easy to understand why more input was costing more to produce even the same amount, let alone even expansive amounts of publications. It could be like an interlibrary loan flea, the OA flea of the future, which we keep talking about for years and years still to come, because it’s still not resolved.

RF: No, and I’m not sure that it will be. But it was interesting working on it in our careers.

Were there other professional associations that were important to you at different stages in your career?

JS: There were some peripheral ones. The Council of Science Editors, I got to speak at their conference. I think it was because of the Chicago Collaborative. I got to see what their issues were. They’re very similar to a blend of publishers and librarians, because
they have to worry about the cost of publication in their own way, and yet they’re the selector of the content—and trying to look at plagiarism and copyright issues and preserving the intellectual property rights and all those kinds of things. Between the SSP, the CSE, and MLA, it’s like this continuing equation of what contributions each put toward a final, similar result. But it was, again, a different slant, a different perspective, and forced you to kind of think a little differently about what you were having to deal with as a librarian. So, that was quite interesting.

IFLA—I’ve gone now to three or four meetings. And I find it interesting as far as the world expanse of librarianship. I’m still not sure I understand all of the goals of IFLA. There just seems to be so much going on, especially with the sustainable goals that include knowledge transfer and things like that. But they were fun meetings. And the fun part was that Carla Funk would always put a dinner together of the American attendees—and I guess some British ones got involved at times. It was just a fun night to get together in a foreign international space and commune and share what you’ve learned there.

I didn’t mention how I became familiar with SPARC [Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resources Coalition]. SPARC actually started when I was at the University of Washington. Betty Bengtson, who was the academic library director, actually started it when she was ARL [Association of Research Libraries] president, with the idea that it was not an advocacy group like it is now, but it was a way to encourage editors to leave current journals and start up new journals that were less costly. What it did was encourage some of that to happen, but it also then added another journal to purchase. The old journal didn’t go away; we just added more journals.

But then SPARC became this whole advocacy thing for open access. I actually got to serve on their advisory group. I was supposed to be on it for a three-year term. I think I was so vocal—again, toward publishers—that after the first year they said, “Well, we’ve revamped our terms and we’re only going to have you serve for a year,” and I was, “Okay.” I’m not sure where SPARC’s going to head, but I’ll leave it at that. But that was interesting to watch that transition from Betty’s viewpoint of it to where it is today. And I got exposed to the European SPARC as well.

Those were the others. NLM, now working with the Friends board has been great, too.

RF: You commented earlier about the advantage of having your work responsibilities balanced with professional activities, and looking for encouragement and [creativity] from one when it might not be happening in the other. Is there any other value that you see in particular in participating in associations and that kind of thing?

JS: I sure do, and I think everybody who’s a professional needs to share their knowledgebase. By contributing through continuing education courses—I developed a couple for MLA with Elaine Martin on fee-based services when I was the fee-based librarian at UW, and then on document suppliers—teaching each other. I gave MLA a lot
of credit for encouraging us to do that, because we do have a lot of expertise in our small collective of people. We learn from each other.

Also, at UW, I did get my faculty appointment officially there. We had to go through the tenure process, and I got appointed as a professor, or librarian level, which I was able to transfer to Utah. We also had faculty status even though it wasn’t, as I mentioned earlier, true faculty. But we had to produce publications and scholarship as part of our annual review and portfolio for promotion or retention, and continuing appointments. It was important to be active. [Your status was] based on your job responsibilities, your professional activities, and then your scholarship contributions—that could continue to live after your time. That was the other reason for being so active.

I always thought of myself as an introvert, but I guess I’m an extrovert as far as wanting to always work with others. I will do anything if there’s someone else involved, whereas, if it’s something I have to do myself, it’s like, uh, I don’t know. So even though I like my downtime, it’s that extrovert in me that likes to partner with others and work on things, and the professional organization activities permitted that in many ways. Now more virtually, but it used to be you got together for meetings or did a blend of the two by phone and meeting in person.

I think if we are going to be seen as professionals, we need to act as professionals. And we all know how faculty are required to publish, and that’s why our journal prices are out of control. We need to do activities and publication to be equal to a faculty member.

RF: Be seen as peers.

JS: Taken seriously, yes.

RF: I’m also curious about your perspective, because you did get involved in the work of the National Library of Medicine early on in your career, and you’ve continued with that collaboration throughout. And certainly, NLM has had a huge impact on the entire library and health care communities. You’ve talked a bit about the role that NLM played in your career at different times. How do you assess the success of NLM in furthering in the evolution of quality health information services?

JS: Having been so close to NLM in my career has definitely been advantageous. They’re definitely moving forward to looking more at data as the new content, in addition to preserving the journal article and the book content. There’s a lot of training that’s happening at NLM on data management, and we were hoping to partner with them on this RDMLA that didn’t quite work out, but it was intended. Elaine and I had some discussions with them about it.

I think that they have a lot that they have to address. They’ve gone more to the informatics side in some ways, and yet it just dawned on me recently that that’s because that’s still a relatively new field compared to the library side that’s been around forever. When Dr. Lindberg put a lot of emphasis on that, it wasn’t intending that libraries
weren’t important. It’s just, he had to start up a program and get knowledge out there about what informaticians could do, whereas librarians were a given and a constant. It’s kind of hard when the things that are operational and not so glamorous don’t get the attention that glamorous things do.

I’m really pleased they are putting a book together for Dr. Lindberg’s legacy. I was asked by Betsy Humphreys to coauthor with others a chapter on the National Network, which is now called the Network of the National Library of Medicine, so I was quite honored. Because I do believe Dr. Lindberg gave us a lot of advancement for our profession that we may not have always given him recognition for. He definitely knew what was happening at NLM, and yet he let Betsy be a lot more of our front person—visible person. But that didn’t mean he didn’t care what was happening to us.

I can remember—I don’t know why I got to do this—but when the launch of the information prescription program at the ACP meeting in New Orleans happened, I got to go there to represent MLA. Maybe it was the year I was president may have been why. Dr. Lindberg and I had time before the kickoff, so we walked along the marina and just were talking. And he asked me questions: “Why did I like consumer health, why did I care about consumer health?” As you can imagine—Dr. Lindberg was pretty tall and I felt like, uhhh. It was like stage fright. I’m like, “I don’t know [laughter].” But to this day, those questions still resonate. He just [asked the right questions and often the difficult ones].

Then he would come to Eccles when they had some yearly [informatics fellows] conferences. I remember when I was showing him the library and saying, “Oh, we’re going to be pitching all the books and journals in print and bringing in this innovation center, and there’s going to be this [shared creative discovery space].” He sat me down and said, “Jean, you’re not going to have a library anymore.” And I said, “Well, Dr. Lindberg, of course I will. It will be great. It will be more digital, we’ll expand out and be seen everywhere.” And then his thoughts kind of came [true]. Once you lose some of that space, you lose some of the collateral on campus. Having his influence [was important to me].

Patti Brennan [Lindberg’s successor as NLM director] is going very much into the direction of data. It was kind of a mandate given to her. I don’t know if it was her choice. But she is still remembering the library as well. Even with my days of Elsevier, I got to work with NLM. It was a little bit different than as a librarian, but it’s been nice to be able to go back as a librarian with them through their Friends program.

They have a strategic plan, and the three pillars of it—definitely one of them deals with workforce training to be to handle the world of the future, of which data is a big part. Librarians are included in that. And I know a librarian was training all of NLM on data management, so that was pretty exciting to see that recognition, too. I think they have a lot of challenging items for the future, but again, I think we’re the envy of many librarians to have them.
RF: Yes. And it is interesting, because NLM has had pretty much a continuous support mechanism, or intent, for supporting the education of strong health sciences library practitioners, whether they be traditional, whether they be informationists, whether they be data managers. The [NLM/AAHSL Leadership Fellows Program, there’s been a continuous support of that kind of investment in the personnel.

JS: Yes. And one program I didn’t get to talk about was their Associate Fellowship Program. They have a program where one year a selected individual who applied for a [fellowship] position at NLM learns different aspects of NLM, kind of rotating like we did at Case Western. Then they can go to a second year at an institution. That had been funded by NLM. Around 2013, I think, funding ended for that second year. I talked with Kathel Dunn about, well, why don’t you allow libraries to apply with funding and not close that program down? And she was able to keep it alive. Those [libraries] who could afford to pay the second year were able to apply, and it has kept that second year going.

I’ve had three second-year fellows—two were at VCU and then one at Utah. Now the Utah one [Jessi Van Der Volgen, is at the Network of] the National Library of Medicine, and the other two—Shannon Jones, who I think everybody knows because she is a larger-than-life personality and is a brilliant person as well, who’s at Medical University of South Carolina as the director now. Then Rachel Gyore, who was at Kansas for a long time and worked with creating a repository of documents of faculty publications, and then chose to work with nonprofit institutions.

In addition to those three second-year fellows, they have a one-week internship [where first-year fellows] can come visit with you for a week. I think I ended up with about five of those. Every year at MLA, we would have our fellow reunion breakfasts and keep in touch. We weren’t able to do that virtually this year. But with not having children, they have been my children, I guess, my cadre of these NLM fellows. They kind of keep in touch with each other, and some of them ended up staying at NLM. Patrick McLaughlin is there. Then Kathleen Amos went to the Public Health Foundation in DC. She was actually one I had in Utah as well. I guess I had two in Utah, come to think of it. Yes, two in Utah. So, I had four second-year fellows.

RF: I want to go back for a minute to Don Lindberg, because, as you said, he, as a longtime director of NLM, had such an impact on that institution, and by extension to the whole health sciences library profession in all of our institutions. My recollection is that when Don appeared as the new NLM director, he was not well received by the medical library community for the first few years.

JS: Yes, I remember that meeting [laughter].

RF: I think, over time, as people interacted with him and as he opened his vision and appreciation for the library community, I think the collaboration became more fruitful and beneficial on both sides. But he was the continuity for many, many years and the driver for so much innovation at that institution.
JS: He was. And he truly believed in these fellowship programs, too. He would talk to me many times about the value of these fellows and wishing that he had more funding to give even more people that opportunity as well.

While working on the NNLM chapter, I’ve had some chance to talk more with Betsy. Dr. Lindberg came from Missouri. I actually got to attend the tribute they had at University of Missouri for him. This has probably been about eight years ago now when I was the RML director. The [University of Missouri library] invited me to be a part of that tribute. He came from a state where there wasn’t a lot of opportunity to get information, so he really wanted to open up access. And he did that with Grateful Med, which was the ability for every person who had Grateful Med to do their own searching, which was what librarians thought their skill and value was. So, he was an immediate disruptor of that treasured role. There was the whole controversy of that. Well, yes, they think they’re happy searchers but they’re inept. And this whole thing went on. But he really was trying to get access to information to people, and that’s what open access is about today. So, it’s funny that the librarians were—I was there, too—it was like, what is he doing? He’s giving away our jobs, really. Then Loansome Doc came up and it was perceived as, well, okay, so, you gave away our searching but now we can photocopy and give articles to people [laughter]. Yay. So, it was kind of funny, but again, it was to get access to people who didn’t have a library, and that was the whole intent of Loansome Doc.

I think that was the initial rub, then as people got to looking at that whole OA aspect and then public access [NIH Public Access Policy], that happened in 2008, was really a turning point for where the two mindsets came more together—that information should be available if needed. But how you pay for quality information and who [pays], is still unresolved in my mind, because you get what you pay for.

RF: NLM, I think, has struggled a bit, and our perception has changed over time about their ability to attain that delicate balance between providing leadership and tools and products that are valuable to everybody, but also sometimes just steamrolling ahead with their worldview, their agenda, and the Washington Beltway perspective.

JS: Which is all uniform right now, we know [laughter]. Talk about a balance. Oh, my gosh. The next couple months are going to be incredible.

RF: I think the perception of NLM depends on how you view their success in doing that balancing act. And as I say, I think it has shifted over time, different years we’ve been more appreciative and in other years more critical.

JS: We have. And I think the next shift we’re going to see is—and I know in the past there’s been this little tension, too—with copyright. It was us photocopying copyrighted articles, and there was a publisher suit I think NLM brought about. [Editor’s note: Williams & Wilkins filed a petition in 1968 in the U.S. Court of Claims alleging that NLM and NIH Library infringed on their copyright by photocopying articles from their journals. The court ruled that making a single photocopy of an article did not violate...
copyright laws, and the Supreme Court narrowly upheld the decision in a tie vote in 1974. The Copyright Law of 1976 codified fair use.] But as they explore new opportunities and the repurposing of content, I think there’s going to be a possible new aspect of that tension coming forth, because they’re starting to compete with publishers again in a different way, especially with their data repositories. It will be interesting to watch. I hadn’t really lived through the copyright lawsuit era, but now I’m starting to think, well, there could be future [legal challenges], because we’re all in that same space now trying to figure out our niches, and they’re morphing even more than ever.

I think a lot of the librarian fear of Grateful Med was, I’m going to lose my job. Well, there’s that fear still present today with data management. If it’s done by others, well, what am I supposed to be doing? Photocopy is not going to take us forward. You see a product that’s done, you cross it off. That’s a great feeling, but it’s not professional.

They’ve always helped us with resource sharing and ILLs, and maybe that needs to end. Maybe there is a whole different model out there of how publishers can work with libraries on delivering articles at a reasonable delivery point, so that there isn’t this need for an intermediary of a library as a copier of content, but as a source of content, even for those that don’t have subscription access.

RF: Right. And another slice in that whole publishing arena: You’ve certainly had a long string of publications, several of them honored as outstanding articles in the field. You’ve done more than 150 presentations around the world.

JS: No wonder I’m tired [laughter].

RF: How did you ever find time to do all that and still accomplish your primary responsibilities as well?

JS: Well, my husband and I had this code term called ‘work-work’ or ‘work.’ And work-work was when I was working on my job responsibilities for my employer, my salary source, and then work was when I was working on professional organization things. But I did give up a lot of personal time to do the professional association work. I probably had more time not having children, but I also liked what I did, and so, to me, it wasn’t work; it was a hobby, more or less.

And yet, I’m enjoying not having a lot of that right now. I do feel that retirement is the chance to step back and let others have their opportunities and whatnot. I mentioned that I was at Hopkins and got into the whole cadre of excellent co-staff and people that encouraged each other: Let’s publish this, let’s present this. And then at Utah, oh, my gosh, it was almost like a daily topple of who’s publishing what where. Because we often would see places that did a lot of great things but never talked about it or got it out there, and so we didn’t want to do that. Especially in Utah, where you were the only health sciences library, it was important to expand [our influence] so that people [would know what we could do]. I think that was just part of the culture that had been built at
Utah, too, being very active with publication and sharing of knowledge—and trying new things. You really could try new things there.

It was funny. When I first met Mark, he was very much a hobbyist with work being secondary. I said to him, “Well, how do you put bike riding on your resume [laughter]?” And remember, I took the Apple Mac on dates. I was coming in and saying, “How does this compute?” and he’s like, “Jean, you can have fun, and you’re entitled to have fun. And you can have hobbies.” The marriage has been a nice balance of him becoming a little bit more serious with his work, and then me being a little bit less serious about my work. That work-work and work code term still cracks me up. “What are you working on? Are you working on work or work-work? [laughter]”

He got to come to a lot of our MLA meetings, and he traveled with me some with Elsevier. He didn’t go to Detroit. I don’t understand [laughter]. He picked the good meetings, like Korea. But he can pick up the MLA News, when it came in the mail, and would tell me, “Well, so-and-so’s doing this and so-and-so…” And I’m like, “You remember them?” He goes, “Oh, yeah, I know them.” So, it’s become kind of his family network, too, because the insurance world he was in did not have that kind of collaborative, collegial environment.

RF: I think very few professions have that. MLA is certainly, I think, unique in the degree to which we have longstanding personal relationships, like you and me. We never worked together on stuff for the association, but we have been friends and appreciated each other for a long time.

JS: Exactly. And I feel very pleased that even in later years we got to be even closer. I feel like I always knew who you were in my early years, but it was the later years that could have been the Midcontinental [Chapter] situation that we were able to get together at regional events and things like that. But I treasure our friendship, too. I wish it had come earlier, but we can continue it for the rest of our lives now.

I think there are so many friends. Like Lucretia says, you make them for life in MLA. Looking at ALA [American Library Association] and ACRL [Association of College and Research Libraries], there are pockets of that closeness, but they were such large organizations that people didn’t have that proximity to one other that we were able to have as a smaller organization. You didn’t really want to talk about anybody badly because you may be working for them down the road [laughter]. We were so small in that regard that it was important to be careful what you said. Growing up in a small town, I learned that was true to form there, too.

RF: You learned that lesson early on.

JS: Exactly. I had that discussion with Mark when we moved here. “This is going to be a small town, so you have to recognize, this is what you can’t say, and this and this, because that could be someone’s cousin.”
And I remember having that conversation with some of my staff, saying, “You can’t burn that bridge because that person may come back into your life within this small profession.”

It’s going back to the Judy Robinson statements of, it’s kind of like having a family member that you have to learn to deal with, because you can’t get rid of them. And that’s not an unfavorable expression, but be careful what you say, because they’re going to be around.

And maintaining those good relationships and the ability to work together is an important lesson.

It has helped us, I think, to go forward, because we don’t have the major disagreements that I have seen in other organizations that can fracture them or make them not cohesive in their efforts. I think we’ve done really well with that.

We have. So, before we wind up the interview, is there anything else you want to say about anything we haven’t covered in your career or your activities with MLA or other parts of the profession at large?

I did talk about my one book, *Information and Innovation*, but I didn’t really mention the book that I coedited with M. J. on *Strategic Collaborations in Health Sciences Libraries*. That was actually published by Elsevier, and we had committed to that even before I took the job. It was pretty funny when I went for my first retreat with Elsevier and they asked me what I was working on. I said, “I’m publishing a book with this very small publisher.” They were looking at me. I said, “Well, Elsevier. You may have heard of them.” And that started laughter among the group.

We had a great time editing that book with a lot of colleagues, too, and learning about their situations and then also helping to coach them on how to present some of their situations more positively. It was a great experience. However, we vowed never to do it again [laughter]. It’s a lot of work to be an editor. The first experience I had with that was actually two issues of *Reference Services Review*, which was an academic, more reference-oriented journal, that I did on changing roles of librarians. It was actually like publishing two books because there were so many articles contributed that had to be edited. But it was a good editing experience, and now I’ve done the three and that’s more than enough. Now I can write my fiction, that doesn’t matter. But I like looking at the shelf and having those books pop out.

As you think about the many roles and tasks that you were involved in as librarian, informationist, health information literacy proponent, scholarly author, innovator, etc., were there recurring themes or commonalities that you see across your career?

I think it all goes back to that risk-taking that Nina taught us at Hopkins. Never refuse an opportunity unless you really can’t see where you can contribute value to it. When someone gives you an idea, don’t just say no, but think about it first. And
sometimes go where it’s not comfortable and stretch yourself. Going to other organizations’ meetings is a good way to do that stretching, because, again, you may learn a different perspective of what you’re dealing with, but you also may learn other perspectives of what is happening in the world that we might not put on our agenda for a conference or a meeting program. So, keep expanding.

My original desire to be a librarian was to continue to learn, and I can honestly say I’ve continued to learn over these forty years, more than I thought I would—sometimes much more than I wanted to. We started in the print-only world and now have moved to the whole technology digital-almost-only world. Sometimes I think back—how did we do this? But we had a lot of resilience, we had to have a lot of belief in our ability to evolve. And I think medical librarians are one of the most nimble organizational mindset people to accept new challenges and look for new opportunities in what’s out there.

Sometimes, just take something on where you totally have no clue what you’re doing and see where you’re going to come out. It’s kind of fun to be able to prove to yourself that you’re able to accomplish something out of nothing.

RF: And you certainly have exemplified taking leaps, taking on very large and visible challenges, as Nina encouraged all of us to do. Librarianship as a whole is not known as very much of a risk-taking profession. I think, as you say, the health sciences environment, to some extent, has pushed us. But what do you tell colleagues who are not particularly eager to embrace risk-taking?

JS: Well, some days I think I probably didn’t even give them a chance to not even accept it [laughter]. I think back to one situation at Utah. I mentioned in an all-staff library meeting, “Just because I send you an email on Saturday doesn’t mean you have to answer me immediately. Wait till Monday.” All the jaws dropped. They’re like, “Really?” And I’m like, oh, my gosh. That was when I had the time, but I didn’t understand how impactful my behavior could be on their lives, in a not-so-good way.

I also tried to lead by example. I tried not to make anybody do anything I wouldn’t do if I had the opportunity. And probably, I did more than I should have done, and should have given more opportunity to others. But when the innovation center was going to be in our building, I thought, well, we’re not just going to house this center, we’re going to be a part of it. I went to the nth degree to make us a part of it, much to probably my demise of being a little bit pushy. I really fought for our [role]. In the book, I wrote it helps to illustrate how we were able to force ourselves in, in a space that may not have been anywhere near except as tenants in a building.

We kind of just kept looking for opportunities. And I think the culture, again, of Utah was such that the staff were willing and wanting to look for being different and being out there and being at the forefront of things. I do think people burned out: I do think all of us burned out as an institution. Like I mentioned, there was so much going on at the end. But I think now they’re coming back, and I think it’s going to be interesting to see the next generation of what comes out of Utah, especially.
RF: We’ve talked about a lot of people in this time period. Anybody else that you want to mention who you think was particularly influential in your life and career?

JS: I would say all of my medical librarian Facebook friends in today’s world. I learn so much—I guess this is that reverse mentoring concept—where their eagerness to learn new things and adopt new technologies, I learn from them now being out of the field. I’m keeping up some of my knowledge just from the messages that are going back and forth. And watching a whole nother pond layer. I was a bio major, right, so the pond theory—that you raise to the top and then you sink. I’m enjoying watching the next generation’s rise to the top. Not to say that I sunk, but I’m kind of a dinosaur now, to quote Lois Ann. It’s just fun, watching their approach to issues and how they seem to have a little bit more of a balanced life than I had as a director—most of them. But again, not knowing them individually, it’s [hard to tell as I don’t] interact with them as much as I did with my generation. It could be just the way they’re presenting it.

I think their issues are going to be tougher, and I think the biggest issue is, what is a medical librarian today. We had a lot of discussion when we were working on this building issue. Do we need a building? Do we need to be in a physical space or are we contained by that container in a negative way, because now people don’t come to us for books and journals. So, when they come in, what are they seeing? Nothing, really, except for innovation. Yet in [some ways, for the] embedded kind of professional, where you work with someone day to day, you know their language, you know their issues, and we don’t have that by being in a building of our own. But we would have lost that collegiality of our own profession.

So, where should a librarian be practicing in the future, and especially in a digital arena? And if information is open access totally—which I don’t think it ever will be—where does the library profession sit in that world where collection access or information purchasing is not your primary role? Will our other skills—which I think are even more valuable—like training and interpretation and advancement of managing information and organizing things, will those be enough to be of value to afford in an institution that’s strapped in today’s world?

I think that’s going to be the big challenge. I love to, as they say, get the popcorn and sit back and look to what will happen. But I do think if anyone can do it, the medical librarians can do it. I remember when Nina retired. She said, “My time is up. I handled as much as I could, I tried to advance as much as I could. You guys need to go forth now and carry on that tradition of innovation. And be entrepreneurial in how you think about yourself. Don’t put yourself in the box of a building. It’s too dangerous because that building can shift.”

RF: It’s interesting to me, because as I think about my time, when I started in MLA, and up to now, it does seem to me that we’ve always been focused in one way or another on what is the role of the medical librarian. Early on, we focused on basic skills and competencies and being the best catalogers, being the best reference librarians, being the
best online searchers. It’s shifted now into how are we going to be the best information professionals in a very different context. So, I guess I come to the question, are we just self-absorbed or is this a healthy, mature self-examination?

JS: I want to believe the latter. I want to believe that we’re always exploring what’s out there and looking at new possibilities and not closing our mind to new potentials and new environmental scans of where we can be practicing. I do think we need to give up a lot of the traditional or sacred cows, photocopy being number one. As much as I loved interlibrary loan as a part of my life, I would love to see it go away. I would love to see agreement at a way that people who need information can get to it and not be prohibited by costs, but also understanding that someone has to pay for that content to be good.

Is it a university problem? I think today the universities have not owned that problem. The librarians have absorbed it over decades to the point where we can’t absorb any more budget cuts. And now it’s like, well, if you’re not paying for my journal, who are you and what do I pay you for? So we really need to speed up making us indispensable to teams of providers who don’t have the time to look up information, or honestly don’t know how to find it in the best and most efficient way.

My last years at Utah, I kept saying, we talk so much in these committees about using the health provider at the appropriate level, having a nurse practitioner do a lot of the role because of efficiency and cost savings. Think of your librarian in that same way. Yes, you could have a surgeon do this and a librarian do it. Which is going to be more efficient use of their time and value cost-wise? I hate to admit that we were cheaper, but we were cheaper [laughter].

I think trying to explain ourselves in terms that our administrators and funders understand [is key]. And I think we also need to start thinking of becoming even more externally funded. Grants are one way, but I watch Oregon Health & Science [University] Library, that I think has to create their own revenue. Maybe more libraries should have to do that to appreciate what a publisher has to go through, or to appreciate that those who can do this are going to be able to go forth with funding that will help to keep the profession alive.

I always enjoyed being a medical librarian. When I was trying to be recruited at UW for acquisitions, I didn’t want to leave the medical library, because I did fear that I would lose that nimbleness, that being at the front—sometimes leading—edge of advances. But I do think academic libraries are starting to feel the same pain. Again, we were out there probably earlier. Knowing the Utah journal issues—they’re going to have town hall meetings that are going to be led, not by the librarians, about what can we do about these journal prices. It will be interesting to see. Do they talk about how they can help to control, versus, is it the library’s problem that we’re trying to fix?

I’m glad I lived when I did. I really give a lot of credit to our founders of MLA, because of the waters they had to tread to get the recognition and appreciation for what a difference a medical librarian could make. But I think we are almost at that same critical
cusp or tipping point. We have to say why medical librarians are different from academic librarians and why we’re still needed in a world where a lot of acquisitions are shared among medical and [academic libraries], and we have to be able to articulate that difference effectively.

RF: In that context, is there any particular advice that you’d give to people who are at the beginning of their careers in this profession? Because it is a very dynamic, fluid, challenging, chaotic picture.

JS: It is. I mentor on whiskey [laughter]. That’s not what you’re asking me, I know.

RF: Well, it is a part of life balance, perhaps.

JS: I think about that, and I think, would I recommend that people go into library science anymore? And I do, but not library science. I know, over my years, we’ve had many discussions about should we take the word ‘library’ and change it. And I did see it being a real ball and chain at my years in Utah toward the end, where, as soon as you mention ‘library,’ they think the building. No, I’m not talking about the building; I’m talking about the information transfer. And that’s why I chose information transfer for my title with the Center for Medical Innovation, because I was trying to get across that it was—think of it as that whole wave, ideation.

I was part of helping to do that and helping to look for prior art and helping to look for how your device differed from others, and did you have a market, and how do you find out the market space and potential revenue and all this stuff. We even created a course, Rick, using the Business Model Canvas, which is something innovators use that looks at your resources, your competition, your opportunities, spaces, your marketing. And I had an entire glass wall office at that time, so we wrote on the glass wall how libraries could impact these different parts of this Canvas, and teaching students how to think of your career as a product. I think you need to do that. You need to take that Business Model Canvas. Just do a search on the Internet and it’s there. Take that template and take your career, and look at what resources do you have, what resources do you need, who can you get knowledge from, what knowledge do you need, first of all, and who can you get it from, and then who can you give it to, and what cost is it all going to take? Do you need to get a scholarship? Do you need to get tuition funds or whatever? And then how are you going to market yourself, and how are you going to identify the places where you want to work? Look at the publications that are coming out of it, look at the conference posters. Where are you seeing vitality and advancement? But think of you then going into your interview as you’re selling your product, your Shark Tank opportunity to present yourself, and why you and not others should be funded.

I love innovation. I can just feel my heart rate is up. I can see it on my Fitbit [laughter].

RF: Are there any particular people that you think you’ve most influenced as you’ve come through the profession and tried to generate that enthusiasm, convey that message of how to be a successful professional?
JS: Well, I hope so. I hope that some of my staff—I hope a lot of the staff, actually—that I’ve worked with over many organizations. Particularly, I think, a couple of them do shine. Shannon Jones—I mentioned earlier—started with me as an NLM fellow. She had worked at Eastern Virginia Medical School as a clerk in the library and then knew Judith Robinson, and Judith had encouraged her to get a library degree. Of course, now she’s doing a lot with MLA and has done a lot with ALA and diversity and inclusion topics. I do try to keep in touch with her and vice versa. I think she teaches me a lot, too.

Melissa Rethlefsen, I think, is one of the most brilliant librarians I’ve ever met. She came to be the deputy director at Utah and then was interim director and now is moving from Florida to New Mexico director. She came to be mentored by me, but in some ways I think she mentored me more. She and I were able to meet every day for a couple minutes at least to go over all the things that were happening at the university in this chaotic time and to strategize about how we were going to react to this or that or be aware of what was maybe coming down the pike. I feel like I gained a lot from her and I hope she feels like she gained from me. I think those two individuals in particular.

And then Jessi Van Der Volgen, who became the [assistant director of the] training center for the Network of the National Library of Medicine [at Eccles], and [was an] NLM fellow. We spent a lot of time as a fellow-mentor. You do get to spend more time talking to them about their future as well as the advancement of the profession.

I hope those three are who I’ve influenced somewhat. I do have a lot of Facebook friends that are past staff, and I love seeing where they’re going. Some have become quite active in ALA. That was from VCU days and things. It’s fun to watch when people grow professionally themselves.

RF: It is. It’s very rewarding to see that.

JS: I know I’ve not mentioned many people that have definitely impacted my life, too, and I give a grand apology. It’s kind of one of those Oscar nights where you just can’t think of everybody. I mean, Wayne and his Wayne folder days. Wayne was great as a past director. He did not interfere. He did not come back and try to [stir things up] against me. He just definitely was a good past director. But he influenced me, definitely, in his time, too.

RF: That’s part and parcel of Wayne as a person. But I think, also, recognition of his admiration for you and his confidence in your ability to find a different path.

JS: Yes, I hope. And I did get to meet Priscilla Mayden once, and I’m glad I had that opportunity, because she was ninety pounds at that point but still a major force. I can just have seen her in her prime, because she really started the library and broke it away from the academic library. Her oral history at the university I read several times, because it was telling of how she had to present herself to a new school of medicine to get the
I guess one other piece of advice for new librarians is, don’t be afraid to move. I know it’s harder as you get older, and if you have children I know it’s harder, but you do get to see a lot more through movement, and you do get to experience different environments and start over sometimes. It was a refreshment—you know, you learn from the old job what you wanted to do and not do in the new job, and then you could feel engaged, and then you moved on with the next set of lessons. I think that has been really advantageous for my career to be willing to move.

RF: I think it’s also advantageous for people’s professional perspective, because you do have to learn that different institutions have different cultures and traditions and different ways of dealing with difficulty. And it just expands your thinking and your appreciation for options as you see those different institutional settings.

JS: And also, an institution can change itself. Leadership of an institution can change overnight, and it changes the culture also.

The other word of advice for directors is, make friends with people outside the library. Have your safe comfort friends. I felt lucky to have a dean of pharmacy and a strategist for the VP of health sciences, two of my closest friends at Utah. We did some search committees together, chairing them, which helped create that bond. I still am in touch with them today. Another perspective of the same institution from a different viewpoint was very helpful for me to simmer down sometimes: “This is happening to the library,” and it’s like, “Well, it’s happening to us, too.” “Oh, okay. It’s not just us.” Those collegial partnerships you make should be not just within the library when you’re a director. You need to think broader.

RF: For sure. Well, thank you. This has been fascinating. And I did want to ask you one more concluding thing, because we are doing this on Zoom for the first time. So, if you have any candid comments that you want to make right now while we’re talking about this vehicle for doing the oral history… It’s a lengthy conversation and in some ways, it is nice to do it in person because there is that interaction element, particularly for people like us who know each other, that makes the conversation perhaps roll more easily. But I don’t know if the technology has worked successfully from your perspective. Was it a comfortable experience?

JS: Well, for me, other than just wanting to be with you, it’s been a great experience. And part of that is, when I worked for Elsevier, I worked with Zoom. That was how we did all of our meetings. I would often be on Zoom from 5:00 a.m. until noon, constant meetings. So, going from meeting to meeting, this was like no stress at all in comparison. I didn’t have to switch meetings. People that may not have that background—although I think there are few people anymore who don’t have some exposure to Zoom—may not be as comfortable. But I’m thinking there was no loss of content of what I would say due to not being in person.
RF: Okay. Good. I would conclude, then, that you think this is a viable technology for MLA to do oral histories in the future.

JS: I do. I think probably the people interviewing like you can quickly assess if people are going to be comfortable. And maybe you do start with Zoom, and then if it’s totally not working for someone, you have to rethink it. But it would save MLA a lot—and your time, too, because you didn’t have to travel here. You will someday, though, have to come to Virginia, but that’s a lot more time on your part if you had to travel here than just doing this by Zoom.

RF: Yes, it definitely is. It makes it a multiday commitment, and that’s not been a problem in the past. I think one of the good and bad things right now about the period that we are living through, almost everybody is having to use virtual technology meetings. So, I think, as you say, more and more people are becoming quite comfortable with the technology. So, that’s good as far as the ability to use this successfully for interviews.

JS: Yes. And I know earlier we talked about, well, wouldn’t it be nice if more people could be interviewed, and maybe by switching to this technology, that will enable some of that to happen as well. I know it’s happened with the virtual meeting of MLA. More people were able to attend than could have physically come to the meeting. And yet you lose something by not seeing each other in person. So, there’s a definite balance and tradeoff.

RF: Well, there certainly is, as you say, always the cost consideration. And Carolyn, I’m sure, will be busy thinking about how successful was this, what does it mean for the transcription and the production of the things that usually come from the oral interview process. And then, are there significant cost savings that would allow for more interviews to be captured.

JS: And also, I’m thinking—just off the cuff here—would it give an opportunity, when there are big initiatives, like with the informationists, if there could have been an ensemble—not a wrap-up meeting, but a discussion of what that whole initiative meant to people, so that we don’t lose some of the key activities of our profession over the years. We can think differently about how to use this process in some ways from the individual to ensemble, related not to a person’s career but to an activity, possibly.

RF: Yes, that’s an interesting thought. Definitely we could look at topical approaches or significant milestones.

JS: Yes, or maybe a wrap-up of the board. At the end of the year, have a board Zoom, to cover what were good things, what could be improved, or what did they feel they accomplished in the year. Just a thought. Give you more work, Rick [laughter].
I appreciate all the oral history people’s time that’s involved in this process. And now having this experience, I understand how the sausage gets made. Up to this point, you just look at the oral histories and go, aren’t they nice, but now you understand that there’s labor involved and a lot of time and effort. Your crafting of the interview process was brilliant. It takes a good interviewer to make someone speak, too, so, thank you.

RF: No, thank you. It’s been a pleasure for me to talk with people and to edit some of the oral histories. The big reward for me is, gosh, I get to see all the names of the people that I enjoy and appreciate and have admired over time and have worked with and have friendships with. So, that has been a very enjoyable part of it for me.

JS: Well, we all thank you.

RF: So, I would say this concludes the interview with Jean Shipman on November 15, 2020. Thank you again for sharing your insights and your willingness to tolerate this physical distancing that is part of the conversation. One of the things I do miss the most in retirement is the interaction with my friends and colleagues. So, I had been looking forward to visiting you in Virginia. We’ll fit that in at some time. But it’s really been a pleasure to talk with you yesterday and today, Jean.

JS: Well, the same. And you’re welcome any time. And when we’re out there, I’ll let you know, too, so we can see where you are now. You’re enjoying a new living environment, too, and community. And now you’ve got Lisa [Traditi] nearby, and I think that’s really awesome, too.

RF: Oh, yeah. She’s coming for happy hour next Friday.

JS: Oh, now I’m jealous [laughter]. All right. Well, thank you, and be safe, and say hi to Kathy, and thank you, Carolyn.

RF: Enjoy the rest of your day. Bye.
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JEAN PUGH SHIPMAN

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2017-2019  Vice President, Global Library Relations. Elsevier. Librarian Emerita; Director for Information Transfer, Center for Medical Innovation; Adjunct Faculty, Department of Biomedical Informatics, School of Medicine, University of Utah, Salt Lake City, UT

2008-2017  Executive Director, Knowledge Management and Spencer S. Eccles Health Sciences Library; Director for Information Transfer, Center for Medical Innovation; Director, MidContinental Region and National Training Office, National Network of Libraries of Medicine; Librarian and Clifford C. Snyder, MD, Far Eastern Presidential Endowed Chair, Adjunct Faculty, Department of Biomedical Informatics, School of Medicine, University of Utah, Salt Lake City, UT

Administer the Eccles Health Sciences Library and its branch libraries, the Hope Fox Eccles Health Library and virtual Clinical Library; administer the interprofessional Spencer F. and Cleone P. Eccles Health Sciences Education Building; serve as principal investigator for the National Network of Libraries of Medicine, MidContinental Region and NN/LM Training Office; direct information transfer and result dissemination functions for the Center for Medical Innovation, administer annual library budget of $5.6M (including endowed chair), develop donor relations, direct strategic planning, and formulate policy for library and information resources, programs, and services; direct staff of 48, plus six subcontractors; advance new and innovative technologies and learning modalities in the health professions curricula; support health sciences faculty development in using new technologies for patient care, education, innovation and research; provide campus leadership in scholarly communications. Serve as co-chair of the University of Utah’s Health Literacy Interest Group. Serve as a member of the Utah Telehealth Network Advisory Board, the UUHC Patient Education Steering Committee, the Imagine Perfect Care Steering Committee, the CCTS Steering Committee, the Academy of Health Sciences Educators, the Health Sciences Global Health Steering Committee, the Health Sciences Brand Implementation Committee, and as an ex-officio member of the Senate Advisory Committee on Library Policy. Serve on various leadership teams for the Health Sciences and on faculty search committees.

2000-2008  Director, Tompkins-McCaw Library for the Health Sciences and Associate University Librarian, VCU Libraries
VCU Libraries, Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, VA
Develop and advance library services and collections in support of research programs and the educational curriculum; stimulate innovation and creativity in new service initiatives; advance the use of information technologies for collection and service delivery; manage fiscal resources of $3M annually; pursue external funding opportunities and develop donor relations; negotiate library service contracts with hospital; interact with VCU Medical Center faculty, deans, directors and other key personnel; assist with overall VCU Libraries’ strategic planning, governance, administration and budgeting; manage operations of COIN (Community Health Information Network) including directing operations of the Community Health Education Center and Women’s Health Resource Center at Stony Point consumer health information resource centers, administrate COIN grants and maintain community partnerships.

1995-2000
**Associate Director, Information Resources Management**
Health Sciences Libraries, University of Washington, Seattle, WA
- Responsible for $3.3 million biennial collection budget, two self-sustaining budgets and digital resource contract license negotiations; directly manage 4.5 supervisors; oversee supervision of 12.25 FTE library technicians and 18 FTE student assistants. Administer fee-based services, document delivery, interlibrary loan, circulation, photocopy, serials, acquisitions and collection management sections as well; serve as co-chair of HSL Service 2000 Team; serve as library liaison to various Health Sciences Center departments; serve as HSL representative on University Libraries’ policies and operations committees.

1993-1995
**Acting Head, Access Services**
Health Sciences Libraries, University of Washington, Seattle, WA
- Responsible for managing Document Delivery/Photocopy, Interlibrary Loan and Circulation Departments; directly supervise 3.5 FTE; member of library administrative team; assist with development of Libraries portion of Health Sciences Center web server and gopher; coordinate and implement special resource sharing agreements; managed two self-sufficient budget centers; prepare administrative reports; supervise fee-based service program; member of two University Libraries committees and numerous HSL committees.

1993-1995
**Outreach Information Services Librarian**
Health Sciences Libraries University of Washington, Seattle, WA
- Responsible for developing, marketing and providing fee-based services to non-affiliated clientele; serve as Washington state resource librarian; provide educational instruction sessions and reference assistance; perform database searches.

1990-1993
**Coordinator, Resources Management**
National Network of Libraries of Medicine, Southeastern/Atlantic Region,
Coordinate regional resource networks and sharing activities including DOCLINE, SERHOLD and the document delivery module of Grateful Med (LOANSOME DOC) for a 13-state region; negotiate and monitor subcontracts with constituency groups; develop educational materials and provide training sessions on computerized systems including end-user software GRATEFUL MED; represent the RML and NLM throughout the region at association meetings and health professional exhibits; provided consultation services and monitor regional programs and services; provide feedback to NLM on user needs and concerns; assist with planning semi-annual Regional Advisory Council meetings; participate in developing the UMAB Library's strategic plan. Contribute substantially to the writing and negotiation of the 1991-1996 RML contract.

1988-1990  **Library and Audiovisual Services Manager**  
Greater Baltimore Medical Center, Baltimore, MD  
Plan and administer activities associated with directing the daily and long-term operations of a 365-bed hospital library; supervise 1.7 FTE; conduct bibliographic computer searches; manage information resources; co-direct CME program; coordinate HSN educational programs; responsible for patient education closed-circuit television; coordinate meeting room scheduling and associated meeting services for the hospital; oversee audiovisual services.

1984-1988  **Psychiatry/Neurosciences Library Supervisor**  
Welch Medical Library, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, MD  
Manage satellite library's daily operations and 2 FTE staff; provide in-depth reference services to the Departments of Psychiatry, Neurology and Neurosurgery; perform computerized bibliographic services, orientations, microcomputer and end-user system consulting services; teach information management educational seminars; assist in the acquisition, maintenance and distribution of library resources; participate in over 30 library committees, chair several; member of strategic planning committee composed of supervisors and Library Director; solely develop a Psych/Neuro Core Concept database, a quality-filtered subject specialty bibliographic database; create system and user documentation for numerous library databases.

1982-1984  **Access Librarian**  
Welch Medical Library, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, MD  
Administer and coordinate the activities of the Circulation and Interlibrary Loan Departments which include developing, implementing, and monitoring policies and supervising staff of 9 FTE; responsible for the evaluation, tailoring, training, implementation and monitoring of the Circulation Subsystem of the Integrated Library System; develop procedures manual for Circulation Subsystem; responsible for granting library admissions and borrowing privileges to clients;
represent library in numerous resource sharing networks; manage the Information Resource Center satellite library which houses the reserve collection, CAI terminals and audiovisuals; prepare statistical reports of departments' operations.

1981-1982  **Senior Reference Librarian**
Welch Medical Library, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, MD
Concentrate primarily on searching online databases, providing orientations and tours, and conducting information resource seminars.

1980-1981  **Entry Level Reference Librarian**
Welch Medical Library, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, MD

**EDUCATION**

1980-1986  Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, MD
Miscellaneous graduate level credit and non-accredited courses.

1980  School of Library Science, Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland, OH, (ALA Accredited)
Master of Science in Library Science, Health Sciences Library Emphasis
Cumulative Grade Average:  4.00 on a 4.00 scale

1979  Gettysburg College, Gettysburg, PA
Bachelor of Arts, CUM LAUDE, Biology
Cumulative Grade Average:  3.42 on a 4.00 scale
Class Rank:  46 in 466

**PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS AND ACTIVITIES**

Academy of Health Science Educators, University of Utah Health Sciences
  2017- Member, Emeritus
  2015-2017 Member
  2014-2015 Chair, Marketing Committee
  2015-2017 Chair, Membership Recognition and Awards Committee

Entrepreneurial Faculty Scholars, University of Utah
  2014- Member

Coalition for Networked Information (CNI)

National Library of Medicine, Biomedical Library and Informatics Research Committee
  2015-2019 Member
Friends of the National Library of Medicine
2018- Board, Member

ICML 2021
2018- International Planning Committee, Member

CLOCKSS
2018-2019 Board, Member

Portico
2018-2019 Board, Member

RA21 Outreach Committee
2017-2019 Member

Society for Scholarly Publishing
2019-2019 Campaign Planning Committee
2018-2019 Education Committee, Co-Chair
2015-2019 Scholarly Kitchen Cabinet, Member
2016-2017 Certification & Training Task Force (CTTF), Member
2016-2017 Organizational Collaboration Committee, Member
2016-2017 Fellowship Program, Mentor
2015-2017 Chicago Collaborative representative
2015 Education Committee, Board Liaison
2014-2015 Communications Committee, Board Liaison
2013-2016 Organizational Collaboration Committee, Board Liaison
2013-2016 Board of Directors
2012-2013 Development Committee, Co-chair
2009-2012 Program Committee, Member
2007- Member

Medical Library Association
2017-2018 Insights, Elsevier Representative
2017- MLA Fellows, History Committee, Member
2011-2014 JMLA Associate Editor, Building Projects
2011-2013 Reviewer, Informationist web site on MLANET.org
2009-2011 Ex officio member, Ad Hoc Committee for Advocating Scholarly Communications
2009-2011 Member, National Program Committee, 2011 Annual Meeting
2007-2008 Immediate Past-President
2007-2008 Chair, Nominating Committee
2007-2008 Board Liaison and Member, MLA/NLM Joint Electronic Personal Health Record Task Force
2007-2008 Board Liaison, Awards Committee

Medical Library Association
2007-2008  Board Liaison, Grants and Scholarships Committee
2007-2008  Board Liaison, Donald A. B. Lindberg Research Fellowship Jury
2006-2008  Board Liaison, Task Force on the Health Sciences Librarian in Medical Education
2006-2008  Board Liaison, Hospital Libraries Vital Pathways Steering Committee
2006-2007  President
2006-2007  Board Liaison, National Program Committee 2007
2005-2006  President-Elect
2003-2005  Member, Information Specialist in Context Implementation Task Force
2002-2003  Member, Nominating Committee
2001-2003  Board Liaison and Member, Task Force to Plan Recruitment of the 21st Century Workforce of Health Information Professionals
2001-2002  Chair, Informationist Task Force
1999-2002  Board of Directors, secretary 2000-2002
1999-2002  Board Liaison, Membership Committee
1999-2001  Board Liaison, Mentor Task Force
1998-2001  Co-Chair, 2001 National Program Committee
1994-1998  Member, 1998 National Program Committee
1992-1993  Chair, Ida and George Eliot Prize Jury of the Awards Committee
1991-1992  Member, Ida and George Eliot Prize Jury of the Awards Committee
1984-1985  Ex Officio, Governmental Relations Committee
1980-  Member

Consumer and Patient Health Information Section of the Medical Library Association
2008-  Member

Leadership & Management Section of the Medical Library Association
2005-2006  Advisory Group, Task Force on Professional Development for Current and Aspiring Middle Managers
2001-2002  Member, 2002 Program Committee
2001-2002  Member, MLA/AAHSL Leadership Reconsidered Symposium Planning Team
2001-  Member

Hospital Library Section of the Medical Library Association
2007-  Member

Midcontinental Chapter of the Medical Library Association
2013-2014  Program Committee, Member
2012-13  Local Arrangements Committee, Exhibits & Sponsorships, Chair
2007-  Member

Southern Chapter of the Medical Library Association
2009-  Honorary Member
Special Library Association
  1993-1997, 2017-2019  Member

American Library Association
  2017-2019  Member

Association of College & Research Libraries (ACRL)
  2017-2019  Member

Association of American Medical Colleges. Group on Information Resources
  2008-2017  Member
  2006  Nominating Committee

International Association of STM Publishers (STM)
  2014-2017  Library Relations Group

Journal of Electronic Resources in Medical Libraries
  2005-2015  Member, Editorial Board

Association of Academic Health Sciences Libraries
  2011-2013  Chair, Chicago Collaborative Working Group
  2009-2011  Chair, Scholarly Communication Committee; Member, 2007-2010
  2007-2011  Member, Joint AAHSL/Publisher Liaison Task Force
  2009-2010  Ex officio member, Joint MLA/AAHSL Legislative Task Force
  2003-2006  Member, Annual Statistics Editorial Board of Directors

Chicago Collaborative
  2015-2017  Representative, Society for Scholarly Publishing
  2011-2013  AAHSL Co-Convener
  2008-2013  Member

Ninth Annual Health Literacy Conference, Institute for Healthcare Advancement
  2010  Member, Session Planning Team

Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resources Coalition (SPARC)
  2010-2011  Member, Steering Committee, Health Sciences Library Representative
  2009-2011  Member, Open Access Working Group (OAWG)

NLM/AAHSL Leadership Fellows Program
  2010-2011  Mentor

New England Journal of Medicine Library Advisory Board
  2008-2010  Member
AMIA: American Medical Informatics Association
2007 Paper reviewer for AMIA 2007 Annual Symposium

Medical Informatics Section of the Medical Library Association
1989-2007 Member

Public Services Section of the Medical Library Association
1998-2000 Secretary/Treasurer
1996-1998 Chair, Access Services Special Interest Group
1995-1996 Member, 1996 Program Planning Committee
1988-2007 Member

Mid-Atlantic Chapter of the Medical Library Association
1992-1993 Board Liaison, Honors and Awards Committee
1991-1992 Secretary
1991 Member, Financial Planning Committee
1990-1992 Co-Chair, Local Arrangements Committee 1992
1990 Member, Nominating Committee
1989 Hospital Luncheon Coordinator, Program Committee
1987-1988 MAC Nominee to MLA Nominating Committee Candidates
1987 Co-Chair, Exhibits Committee, Local Arrangements Committee
1985 Online Luncheon Coordinator, Program Committee
1984-1985 Chair, Governmental Relations Committee
1983-1986 Member, Governmental Relations Committee
1981-1993, 2000-2008 Member

Pacific Northwest Chapter of the Medical Library Association
1993-2000 Member

Evidence-Based Library and Information Practice 4th International Conference, Chapel Hill, NC
2007 Member, International Program Committee
2007 Session Moderator

National Library of Medicine Long Range Plan
2005-2006 Planning Panel 1 - NLM Resources and Infrastructure

Regional Advisory Council, Southeastern/Atlantic Regional Medical Library, National Network of Libraries of Medicine
2001-2006 Member

Virginia Council of Health Sciences Libraries (VaCOHSL)
2004 Chair, Nominating Committee
2003-2008  Member

Region 12 Literacy Coordinating Committee
2004-2005  Co-chair, Health Literacy Subcommittee

NASIG (North America Serials Interest Group)
1995- 2002  Member

Pacific Northwest Chapter of the Special Library Association
1994-1997  Member, Employment Committee
1993-1997  Member

Library Management Section of the Special Library Association
1993-1997  Member

Washington Medical Library Association
1996  Member, Semi-Annual Meeting Program Committee
1993-2000  Member

Seattle Area Health Library Consortium (SAHLC)
1995  Treasurer

Maryland Association of Health Sciences Librarians
1991-1992  Chair, Professional Development Award Committee
1991-1992  Chair, Bylaws Committee
1990-1991  President
1990-1991  Chair, Strategic Planning Committee
1990-1991  Member, Finance Committee
1989-1990  Vice-President, Program Chair
1989  Treasurer, Membership Chair
1988  Bylaws Committee
1987-1988  Treasurer, Membership Chair
1985  Editor, Membership Directory
1985-1986  Chair, Nominating Committee
1984-1985  Mailing Coordinator; Editor, Membership Directory
1983-1984  Treasurer
1981-1982  Member, Nominating Committee
1981-1993  Member

International Congress of Medical Librarianship
1993-1995  Member, 1995 Special Presentations Committee, Washington, D.C.
PUBLICATIONS


Farrell, Timothy W., Jacqueline Eaton, Jean P. Shipman, Kathy Supiano, Rebecca Wilson, Susan Chase-Cantarini, Alisyn Hansen and Gail L. Towsley. “The Development of a Communication Instrument for Long Term Care Providers and Staff.” Poster presented at the University of Utah Center on Aging Creative EngAGEment through the Arts, 12th Annual Research Retreat, April 5, 2018, Salt Lake City, UT.


Sanchez, John, Jean P. Shipman, Tallie Casucci and Anita Leopardi. “Students Dare to Dream with Health Video Productions.” Poster presented at the 2017 Medical Library Association Annual Meeting and Exhibition, May 29, 2017, Seattle, WA.


Schmick, Darell, Jean P. Shipman and Chad Johnson. “Telling our Story: One Library’s Effort to Create a Dynamic Annual Report.” Poster for the 2016 Joint Meeting of the Midwest and Midcontinental Chapters, Medical Library Association, Des Moines, IO, October 24, 2016.

Schmick, Darell, Heidi Greenberg, Erica Lake and Jean P. Shipman. “Gotta Catch’em All: Introducing our Augmented Reality Patrons to the Library.” Poster for the 2016 Joint Meeting of the Midwest and Midcontinental Chapters, Medical Library Association, Des Moines, IO,

Altizer, Roger Jr., Tallie Casucci, and Jean P. Shipman. “Virtual Team Teaching: VR and Serious Games as an Experimental Class by Games Faculty and Librarians.” Poster for the 2016 Joint Meeting of the Midwest and Midcontinental Chapters, Medical Library Association, Des Moines, IO, October 24, 2016.


Casucci, Tallie, Jean P. Shipman, Roger Altizer, and Jose Zagal. “Shhh! We’re Making Games in the Library and You Can Too!” Poster presented at the 2016 DiGRA FDG 1st International Joint Conference, August 1-5, 2016, Dundee, Scotland.


Le Ber, Jeanne, Jean P. Shipman, Jessi Van Der Volgen, Alfred Mowdood, Louisa Stark and John Langell. “Accepting No Limits: Librarians Lead Sex and Gender Differences Research Efforts.” Poster presented at the 2015 Medical Library Association Annual Meeting and Exhibition, May 19, 2015, Austin, TX.

Van Der Volgen, Jessi and Jean P. Shipman. “Raising Limits: Using Benchmark Data to Improve Salaries.” Poster presented at the 2015 Medical Library Association Annual Meeting and Exhibition, May 19, 2015, Austin, TX.

Casucci, Tallie, Joan M. Gregory and Jean P. Shipman. “Appy Hour: A Convergence of Health Sciences Professionals and Students to Learn about Apps.” Poster presented at the 2015 Medical Library Association Annual Meeting and Exhibition, May 19, 2015, Austin, TX.


Birks Amy B., Jessi Van Der Volgen, Jean P. Shipman, Trang T. Tran, Nancy E. Litz, Niloo Far Bakhti, and Joan M. Gregory. “ILLiad and Strategic Planning… The Lean Way.” Poster presented at the ILLiad International Conference, March 18, 2015, Virginia Beach, VA.

Casucci, Tallie, Joan M. Gregory and Jean P. Shipman. “Appy Hour: A Convergence of Health Sciences Professionals and Students to Learn about Apps.” Poster presented at the Midcontinental Chapter, Medical Library Association Quint Essential Meeting, October 14, 2014, Denver, CO.


Adamczyk, Abby, Amy Honisett, Peter S. Jones, Jeanne M. Le Ber, Jean P. Shipman and Jessica Van Der Volgen. “Unbound Communication: Partnering to Spread the Word.” Poster presented at the 2013 Annual Meeting of the Midcontinental Chapter/MLA, September 16, 2013, Salt Lake City, UT.


Gregory, Joan M., Christy Jarvis, Jeanne M. Le Ber, Nancy T. Lombardo, Jean P. Shipman and Joan Stoddart. “Discovery within a Library - Creating Experiences that Welcome and Invite a Health Sciences Community.” Poster presented at the 2013 Annual Meeting of the Midcontinental Chapter/MLA, September 16, 2013, Salt Lake City, UT.


Shipman, Jean P., Joan M. Stoddart and Wayne J. Peay. “Building projects in health sciences libraries: Spaces that support redefined roles of academic health sciences librarians.” Journal of


Beaudoin, Denise E., Amy E. Honisett, Jeanne M. Le Ber, Joyce A. Mitchell, and Jean P. Shipman, “Teaching Third-year Medical Students at the University of Utah: A Partnership between Biomedical Informatics and a Health Sciences Library.” Poster for the 2012 AAMC Western Regional WGEA/WGSA/WOSR Conference, April 2, 2012, Pacific Grove, CA.


Wright, Barbara A., Catherine S. Canevari, Irene M. Lubker, Margaret E. Henderson, Mary
Jane Green, Kristine M. Hughes, Alan T. Williams, Shannon D. Jones, Jean P. Shipman. “Striving for new peaks in reference services: Becoming strategic partners in research initiatives.” Poster for the 2008 Mid-Atlantic Chapter, Medical Library Association meeting, Morgantown, WV, October 21, 2008.

Shipman, Jean P., Dixie A. Jones, Michael J. Ackerman, Joan Ash, Patti Corbett-Bregman, Taney Koounce, Daphne Plaut, Catherine R. Selden, David Sweet, Carla J. Funk. “Frontier places: Librarians connecting with patients and providers through personal health records.” Poster for the 2008 Midcontinental Chapter, Medical Library Association meeting, Cody, WY, October 6, 2008.


Hammond, Patricia A., Jean P. Shipman, Catharine S. Canevari and Barbara A. Wright.
"Consumer Health Information Patient Bedside Rounds – A Proactive Role for Librarians." Poster for the 2006 Southern/Mid-Atlantic Chapters/Medical Library Association meeting, Atlanta, GA, October 14, 2006.

Shipman, Jean P., Catharine S. Canevari, Jill S. Stover, Rachel Gyore. "Librarians as Key Partners in Campus-wide University-Community Initiatives." Poster for the 2006 Southern/Mid-Atlantic Chapters/Medical Library Association meeting, Atlanta, GA, October 14, 2006.

Leisey, Monica, Jean P. Shipman. "Information Prescriptions: Real and Perceived Barriers to Fulfillment." Poster for the 2006 Southern/Mid-Atlantic Chapters/Medical Library Association meeting, Atlanta, GA, October 14, 2006.


Hammond, Patricia A., Jean P. Shipman, Cate S. Canevari. “A New Role for Hospital-Based Librarians in Academic Medical Centers: Providing Consumer Health Information Curricular-Based Practica.” Poster for the 2005 Mid-Atlantic Chapter/Medical Library Association meeting, Charlottesville, VA, October 5, 2005.

Seago, Brenda L., Lois Culler and Jean Shipman. “Collaboration between Library Professionals: Starting a New Medical School Campus at a Community Hospital in a Distant Location.” Poster for the 2005 Medical Library Association meeting, San Antonio, TX, May 17, 2005.


Shipman, Jean and Michael Homan. “Medicine’s library lifeline: librarians in the new role of “informationist” can help doctors and researchers stay ahead of the curve and may help save lives along the way.” Library Journal. Vol. 128(6), April 1, 2003, 49-50.


Shipman, Jean P. “Delivering Full-Text Articles to Desktops – One Library's Approach.” Supplement (the newsletter of the National Network of Libraries of Medicine, Pacific Northwest Region), Vol. 27(4), December 1996, pp. 2.

Shipman, Jean P. and Elaine R. Martin. NP 509: Planning and Administering a Health Sciences Library Fee-Based Information Service: Course Syllabus. 1995.


Libraries of Medicine, Southeastern/Atlantic Region, 1991.


PRESENTATIONS


Shipman, Jean P. “Librarians Partnering with Research Teams.” 2nd Japan Library Fair, November 14, 2019, Yokohama, Japan.


Shipman, Jean P. “The Circle of Scholarly Communications: With Health Sciences Librarians Located Squarely within the Circle.” Southern Chapter of the Medical Library Association’s 69th Annual Meeting, October 12, 2019, Savannah, GA.


Shipman, Jean P. “Strategic Collaborations for Health Science Librarians” Lecture for the Canadian Health Sciences Librarians Leader Institute, June 3, 2019, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada.

Shipman, Jean P. “My Career: Lessons to Share.” Keynote Lecture for the Canadian Health Sciences Librarians Leader Institute, June 2, 2019, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada.


Shipman, Jean P., Mary Joan (M.J.) Tooey, Bohyun Kim, Adam Griff, and Ann Gabriel. “Impact of Artificial Intelligence (AI) on Libraries.” ACRL 2019 Panel, April 12, 2019, Cleveland, OH.


Shipman, Jean P. “Research Data Management Librarian Academy.” ER&L 2019 Conference, March 4, 2019, Austin, TX.


Shipman, Jean P. “Advancing Open Science through Partnerships.” NFAIS OA Conference Open Access and Beyond, October 3, 2017, Alexandria, VA.


Co-instructor with Tallie Casucci. “CE101 - Accelerating Innovation through Information


Shipman, Jean P. “Putting the “You” in U-Bar.” Merge & Converge Tech Forum: Partnering with Technology Champions. Presented at the Joint Meeting of the Midwest and Midcontinental Chapters, Medical Library Association, 2016, October 24, 2016, Des Moines, IO.

Shipman, Jean P., Tallie Casucci and Anita Leopardi. “Students and Health Videos Merge and Converge. “Presented at the Joint Meeting of the Midwest and Midcontinental Chapters, Medical Library Association, 2016, October 23, 2016, Des Moines, IO.

Lake, Erica, Jean P. Shipman and Heidi Greenberg. “Inter-professionals Converge to Create a Health App Service. “Presented at the Joint Meeting of the Midwest and Midcontinental Chapters, Medical Library Association, 2016, October 23, 2016, Des Moines, IO.


Shipman, Jean P., Erica Lake and Heidi Greenberg. “Get Appy! A Mosaic of Personnel Offer an App Bar for Patients to Apply Apps to Their Health.” Medical Library Association, May 17, 2016, Toronto, ON, Canada.


Zeng-Treitler, Qing, Jean P. Shipman, Erica Lake, Roger Altizer, and Bruce Bray. “Game-based Learning to Improve Healthy Lifestyles.” MedInfo”15, August 19-23, 2015, Sao Paulo, Brazil.


Shipman, Jean P., Erica Lake and Jessi Van Der Volgen. “A Lean Application in Documenting Patient Education for Meaningful Use.” Medical Library Association, May 19, 2015, Austin, TX. Won MLA Research Section’s 1st Place Research Paper Award.

Lake, Erica and Jean P. Shipman. “Doodle Health: Developing Pictographs for Minority Health through Gaming.” Medical Library Association, May 19, 2015, Austin, TX.

Jarvis, Christy, Jean P. Shipman, Melissa Rethlefsen, Nancy Lombardo and Tallie Casucci. “e-channel: Forging into the Innovation Dissemination Wilderness.” Medical Library Association, May 18, 2015, Austin, TX.


Bell, Steven, Elliot Felix, Joe Lucia, and Jean P. Shipman. “Turn your library into an idea engine: Creating the ideal creativity space.” Creating sustainable community: ACRL 2015, March 28, 2015, Portland, OR. [invited panelist]


Jarvis Christy, Joan M. Gregory JM, and Jean P. Shipman. “Presto Chango: From Collection Stewards to Connection Instigators.” Presentation for the Midcontinental Chapter, Medical Library Association Quint Essential Meeting, October 14, 2014, Denver, CO.

Altizer, Roger, Jean P. Shipman, Megan McIntyre. “Games Good Are for You!” Salt Lake Comic Con panel. September 6, 2014, Salt Lake City, UT.


Loftus, Patrick D., Craig T. Elder, Matthew W. Sorensen, Jean Shipman, Troy D’Ambrosio, Tomasz Petelenz, Robert Hitchcock and John Langell. “Creating a Benchmark Medical Technology Entrepreneurship Competition: The University of Utah Bench-to-Bedside Medical Device Design Competition.” Presented at the 18th Annual Meeting of the National Collegiate Inventors and Innovators Alliance (NCIIA), March 22, 2014, San Jose, CA.

Shipman, Jean P., Deborah Ward, Marie Reidelback, Michlene Mankin Kirk Davis and

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Jones, Peter S., Jean P. Shipman. “Unbinding Traditional Librarian Roles: A Research and Innovation Concierge.” Presented at the 2013 Annual Meeting of the Midcontinental Chapter/MLA, September 16, 2013, Salt Lake City, UT.

Le Ber, Jeanne M., Jean P. Shipman, Joan M. Gregory, Alice Weber, Darby Fanning, Peter Kraus, Sarah LeMire, April Love, Alfred Mowdood, David Morrison, Jacob Reed, Catherine Soehner and Ross McPhail. “From Bench to Bedside - Building Interprofessional Innovations.” Presented at the 2013 Annual Meeting of the Midcontinental Chapter/MLA, September 16, 2013, Salt Lake City, UT.

Lake, Erica, Jessica Van Der Volgen, Jean P. Shipman, Darrin Doman, Alisha Richins and Madeline Araya. “Bringing Lean to Life in a Library.” Presented at the 2013 Annual Meeting of the Midcontinental Chapter/MLA, September 16, 2013, Salt Lake City, UT.


“Re-envisioning Information Use: Adding Value in a Mobile and Global World.” Presented at Grand Rounds, Tallaght Hospital, April 12, 2013, Dublin, Ireland.


“What’s being Served Up in Scholarly Communications - Crisis? What Crisis?” The Future of
Scholarly Communications and the Health Sciences Academy Panel, 5th Anniversary of the Health Sciences Library, University of Colorado, October 18, 2012, Aurora, CO.

“Reverse Information Specialists in Context? Bringing users back into the library by creating research and innovation centers and customize support and tools.” Presented at the Annual Meeting of the Midcontinental Chapter of the Medical Library Association, October 4, 2012, Kansas City, MO (won Innovative Paper award).


“Dreams do Come True! Librarians, Hospital Executives and Donors Launch a New Consumer Health Library.” Presented at the Annual Meeting of the Midcontinental Chapter, Medical Library Association, September 22, 2011, St. Louis, MO.

“Discovering Strategies for the Interprofessional Education of Health Science Students with a Library as Lead.” Presented at the Annual Meeting of the Midcontinental Chapter, Medical Library Association, September 22, 2011, St. Louis, MO.


“Changing Face of Scholarly Communications”. Open Forum panel at the 2012 Annual Meeting of the Medical Library Association, May 16, 2011, Minneapolis, MN.

“If You Build It, Will They Come? Navigating Change by Creating Innovative Research Spaces: MyRA.” Presented at the Annual Meeting of the Midcontinental Chapter, Medical Library Association, October 8, 2010, Wichita, KS.

“Symposium of Sages.” Co-instructor of CE course, 2010 Midcontinental Chapter, Medical
Library Association, October 7, 2010, Wichita, KS.

“Meaning to Mentor.” Presentation for the Utah State Library Trading Spaces Mentoring Program, August 17, 2010, South Jordan, UT.

“What Have We Learned about Health Information Literacy?” Virtual presentation for the Wyoming Symposium for Health Information Professionals, July 15, 2010, Laramie, WY.


“Results from the MLA/NLM Health Information Literacy (HIL) Research Project.” NN/LM Webinar given to the New England Region, December 11, 2009.

“Results from the MLA/NLM Health Information Literacy (HIL) Research Project.” NN/LM Webinar given to the SouthEast/Atlantic Region, November 18, 2009.

“Jammin’ with the Results of the MLA/NLM Health Information Literacy Research Project (research paper).” Presented at the Annual Meeting of the Southern Chapter, Medical Library Association, October 31, 2009, Memphis, TN.

“Health Literacy Workshop.” Workshop taught at the Taubman Medical Library, University of Michigan, October 23, 2009, Ann Arbor, MI.

“MLA Health Literacy Education.” Continuing education course taught at the Annual Meeting of the South Central Chapter, Medical Library Association, October 18, 2009, Tulsa, OK.

“Changing Attitudes and Reaching New Altitudes via Results of the MLA/NLM Health Information Literacy Research Project (HILRP).” Presented at the Annual Meeting of the Midcontinental Chapter, Medical Library Association, September 23, 2009, Breckenridge, CO.


“Results from the MLA/NLM Health Information Literacy (HIL) Research Project.” Presented to the Utah Health Sciences Library Consortium, August 17, 2009, Salt Lake City, UT.

“Update on the MLA/NLM Health Information Literacy Research Project.” Presented at the Sixth Annual Wyoming Symposium for Health Information Professionals: Plowing Through Pandemonium: Proactive Librarians, July 16, 2009, Laramie, WY.
“Results from the MLA/NLM Health Information Literacy (HIL) Research Project.” NN/LM Webinar given to the South Central Region, June 17, 2009.


“Results from the MLA/NLM Health Information Literacy (HIL) Research Project.” Co-presented at an Open Forum Session, 2009 Medical Library Association Annual Meeting, May 19, 2009, Honolulu, HI.

“News from the MidContinental Regional Medical Library and Results from the MLA/NLM Health Information Literacy (HIL) Research Project.” Presented at the Annual Meeting of the Kansas Biomedical Librarians, April 30, 2009, Kansas City, KS.

“Results from the MLA/NLM Health Information Literacy (HIL) Research Project and Vision for MidContinental Region of the NN/LM.” Presented at the ICON meeting, March 13, 2009, Omaha, NE.

“Innovation WOW! Projects.” Presentation given as part of the Utah State Library Leadership Series, March 5, 2009, Salt Lake City, UT.

“Results from the MLA/NLM Health Information Literacy (HIL) Research Project.” NN/LM Webinar given to the Midcontinental Region, January 21, 2009.


“Informationist or Information Specialist in Context: Who is this?” 72nd IFLA World Library and Information Congress, Health and Biosciences Libraries Section, August 21, 2006, Seoul, Republic of Korea.

“Getting high on MLA.” MLA Presidential Inaugural Address, 2006 Medical Library Association annual meeting, May 23, 2006, Phoenix, AZ.

“Tea and leadership.” New Leader’s Orientation, 2006 Medical Library Association annual meeting, May 20, 2006, Phoenix, AZ.

“Info Rx: Providing information first aid to your users.” Presentation for a concurrent session.
2004 Virginia Library Association annual meeting, October 28, 2004, Williamsburg, VA.


“MLA Mentoring Program.” Invited speaker for the 52nd Annual Meeting of the Southern Chapter, Medical Library Association, October 18, 2002, Nashville, TN.

“The Informationist.” Invited speaker for the 52nd Annual Meeting of the Southern Chapter, Medical Library Association, October 20, 2002, Nashville, TN.

“Capitolizing on Our Assets: A Partnership to Establish a Community Health Education Center.” Co-authored contributed paper presented at the 2002 Annual Meeting of the Mid-Atlantic Chapter, Medical Library Association, October 18, 2002, Washington, DC.


“Sync or Swim: Managing the Flood of PDAs in Health Care.” Medical Library Association Satellite Teleconference, Wednesday, February 6, 2002.


"NP 404: Planning and Administrating a Health Sciences Library Fee-Based Information Service.” Co-instructor of CE course, 1997 Annual Meeting of the Medical Library Association, May 28, 1997, Seattle, WA.

“Desktop Delivery of Articles via the Internet.” Presented at the Washington Medical Library Association Western Washington Internet Users Group Meeting, January 24, 1997, Seattle, WA.

“Desktop Document Delivery via the Internet.” Presented at the University of Washington IAIMS Selected Topics in Health Informatics Series, October 30, 1996, Seattle, WA.


"Biomedical/Health Information Resources and Services for Small Businesses." Presentation for the National SBIR Conference, November 16, 1993, Seattle, WA.

"Collecting Information via the Internet." Presentation for panel session "Linkages: Data and Programs Session" of the 1993 Washington Data Users Conference: Focus on Community Health, October 21, 1993, Yakima, WA.


"The WELMED Project - Featuring the Core Concept Database." Poster Session/Demo
exhibited at the 88th Annual Meeting of the Medical Library Association Expo 88, May 25, 1988, New Orleans, LA.


"In Search of the Perfect Software Collection." Invited Speaker. Presented at the Mid-Atlantic Chapter of the Medical Library Association Annual Meeting, October 16, 1986, Charlottesville, VA.

"Electronic Document Delivery." Online Searchers Luncheon Session Moderator, Joint Meeting of the Mid-Atlantic Chapter and Southern Chapter, Medical Library Association, November 14, 1985, Winston-Salem, NC.

RML-RELATED PRESENTATIONS

"Consortia Officers Workshop." Held in conjunction with the Georgia Health Sciences Library Association meeting, March 26, 1993, Jekyll Island, GA.

"Producing a Type-Set Newsletter." Panel presentation for the Georgia Health Sciences Library Association 1991/92 Annual Meeting, March 26, 1992, Helen, GA.

"Navigating the ILL Medical Network." Presentation for the Maryland Association of Interlibrary Loan Librarians, January 29, 1992, Baltimore, MD.

"Interlibrary Loan Practices & Copyright." MLA credit-approved Course Developer and Instructor. Course given to the West Virginia Health Sciences Librarians Association, April 18, 1991, Lewisburg, WV.

Also numerous presentations relating to DOCLINE, Loansome Doc, Grateful Med and RML Updates to regional, state and local library associations and health professionals.

GRANTS & CONTRACTS

2013-2016  Key Personnel (.05FTE) – Graphics to Enhance Health Education Materials for Underrepresented Populations. Qing Zeng (PI) 09/01/2013 – 08/31/2016 1G08LM011546-01 $286,893
2013-2014  Subcontracts with ICF, International. Jean Shipman (PI) 01/03/2013-09/17/14 $99,994
2012-2013  National Library of Medicine Associate Fellowship, Host Institution
NIH National Library Of Medicine (NLM)
National Network Of Libraries of Medicine (NN/LM) MidContinental Region

NIH National Library of Medicine (NLM)
National Network of Libraries of Medicine (NN/LM) NLM Training Center

2010  Reviewer, ZLM1 AP-G (J2) 1 Special Emphasis Panel, October 28-29, 2010.

2010-2011  National Network of Libraries of Medicine, MidContinental Region subcontract, Jean Shipman (PI), Development of an Open Source Research Process Assistance Template that Supports CTSA and Research Initiatives - $34,905

2009-2010  National Library of Medicine Associate Fellowship, Host Institution

2008-2011  N01-LM-6-3504, Jean Shipman (PI)  05/01/2006-04/30/2011
NIH National Library of Medicine (NLM)
National Network of Libraries Of Medicine (NN/LM) Service

2008-2011  5415-S-JB349, Jean Shipman, Joan Stoddart (PIs)  08/14/2007-04/30/2011
University of California Los Angeles, UCLA Project

2006-2008  National Library of Medicine, “MLA Health Information Literacy Research Project,” Unsolicited Contract - $250,000 (Co-Principal Investigator)

2006-2008  National Library of Medicine Informationist Fellowship

2005-2006  National Library of Medicine Associate Fellowship, Host Institution

2005-2006  National Library of Medicine, “VCU Information Rx Evaluation Project”, Unsolicited Contract, - $35,000 (Principal Investigator); #N01-LM-1-3522


2004  Reviewer, NN/LM SE/A Access to Electronic Health Information contracts, June 2004

2004-2006  National Library of Medicine, “COIN: Community Outreach Information Network”, Community Outreach Partnership Project, - $49,995 (Co-Principal Investigator)

2003-2004  NLM Associate Fellowship, Host Institution

2003-2004  National Library of Medicine, “COIN: Community Outreach Information Network,” Planning Grant, - $20,000 (Co-Principal Investigator)

2001-2004  National Library of Medicine, Specialized Information Services Division, “Women’s Health Network for Minority Consumer Health Outreach: Where Knowledge Empowers People” - $49,990 (Co-Principal Investigator)

HONORS AND AWARDS

2017  Utah Library Association 2017 Distinguished Service Award
2017  Medical Library Association 2017 Marcia C. Noyes Award
Commended Paper.

2015 Medical Library Association Research Section Award, 1st Place Paper, 2015 Annual Meeting of the Medical Library Association, Austin, TX for “Lean Application in Documenting Patient Education for Meaningful Use” - authors: Jean P. Shipman, Erica Lake, and Jessi Van Der Volgen.