

HYPOTHESIS

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE RESEARCH SECTION OF MLA

Contents

HYPOTHESIS. The Newsletter of the
Research Section of MLA
VOLUME 14, Number 2 Summer 2000

Research Spotlight	1-3
Officers & Executive Committee, 2000-2001	3
Editorial Opportunity	4
Research Section News	5
“Call for Research Manuscripts” for new Journal	5
Time to update your links	5
Minutes of 2000 Business Meeting	6-7
EBL Implementation Committee.....	7
MLA Research Section Awards for 2000	8-9
Chapter Research Committees Column	10
Food for Thought	10
International Research Reviews	11-12
Call for MLA Awards Nominees	12
Literature Review	13-15
MLA 2001: Research Section Program	16
MLA Research, Development and Demonstration Project Grant	16

Research Spotlight

Comparing Credentialing Processes Across Professional Organizations: A Benchmarking Study

Shelley A. McKibbon, MLS
(MLA Research Section New Researcher Award Winner)

Martha C. Adamson, MLS, MABA, AHIP
UT Southwestern Medical Center Library Dallas TX

Background:

The Academy of Health Information Professionals is MLA’s credentialing body. The designation “AHIP” after a medical librarian’s name indicates that one has put considerable time and effort into professional development, as well as shown a certain degree of dedication to the profession of medical librarianship. MLA members have mixed feelings about AHIP: some say the program motivates them to grow professionally, while others feel it is too bureaucratic and its benefits too intangible.

At the request of MLA’s Credentialing Committee, the authors undertook to gather information the committee could use to review the AHIP program. The purpose of our study was to compare MLA’s credentialing process to those of other professional organizations. Toward that end we created a list of organizations to study, choosing those that appeared to have characteristics in common with MLA.

Methodology:

The authors used a variety of web search engines and portal web sites to identify potential benchmarking targets. In selecting targets, the authors looked for:

- professional organizations with a membership largely composed of holders of post-baccalaureate degrees
- organizations with an established credentialing program
- organizations with Web sites that included telephone contact information for follow-up interviews

See Research Spotlight, page 2

Research Spotlight, from page 1

Fifteen associations were selected for further study. The associations chosen ranged from health- and mental-health related organizations, to technical and business associations. There was also one education-related body.

The authors examined each association's Web site for preliminary information on their credentialing programs. If the Web site answered all of our questions, we called the association to confirm the currency of the Web site data. In some cases, however, complete information was not found on the Web site. In those cases we called the associations to clarify and complete the information. We then entered the results into a database for further analysis.

The authors asked twelve questions of the organizations:

- Does your credentialing program require academic preparation such as an undergraduate or graduate degree? Does your program require certain academic courses?
- Does your organization have a defined skill set and knowledge base requirement that a candidate must meet in order to be accredited? To be reaccredited?
- Does your organization require that a candidate pass a formal examination for initial accreditation? For reaccreditation?
- What cost or fees are associated with these exams?
- Is the candidate required to submit a portfolio for initial credentialing? For renewal?

TABLE 1

- American Board of Industrial Hygiene
- American Board of Professional Psychology
- American College of Healthcare Executives
- American Occupational Therapy Association
- American Speech-Language-Hearing Association
- Association for Investment Management and Research
- Canadian Association of Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists
- Institute for Certification of Computing Professionals
- International Conference of Building Officials
- Medical Review Officer Certification Council
- National Association of Social Workers
- National Board for Certified Counselors, Inc
- National Board for Professional Teaching Standards
- National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants
- Society for Human Resource Management

**Shelley McKibbon**

Shelley McKibbon is a native of Miramichi, New Brunswick and a graduate of the School of Library and Information Studies at Dalhousie University in Halifax, Nova Scotia. She worked as an intern at the W.K. Kellogg Library at Dalhousie during the 1998-1999 academic year. Shelley is currently employed as a reference librarian at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas. Along with her co-author, Shelley presented the results of this study at MLA 2000, and received the Research Section's Best New Researcher Award. For further information she can be contacted via email at: shelley.mckibbon@utsouthwestern.edu

- What, if any, supporting documentation is required to accompany the portfolio?
- Does your organization require continuing education as a condition of renewal? For renewal?
- Does your organization require participation in the professional life of the organization for renewal?
- What is the timeline for accreditation and renewal, that is, how long is the period between the initial accreditation and the requirement for renewal?
- What is the average per-year cost of initial accreditation? Of reaccreditation?
- Is the credentialing system based on peer review or administrative review?
- Is there discussion among your organization's membership about changing your program?

Results:

- 11 of the 15 organizations required an academic degree, and the bodies that did not specifically require one preferred this qualification.
- 9 of the 15 groups required certain academic courses as preparation.

- 14 of 15 organizations also had a defined skill set for credentialing.
- 14 of 15 organizations require that their candidates pass a qualifying exam.
- The majority of surveyed organizations do not require a recertification exam.
- The fee charged to take an exam averaged \$452 USD.
- The average yearly cost of initial credentialing is \$130 USD.
- The average per-year cost of renewal is \$55 USD.
- 8 of the 15 organizations do not require a portfolio.
- All organizations that require portfolios also require some kind of supporting documentation.
- Continuing education was a necessity for renewal in 8 of the 15 organizations.
- Continuing education requirements averaged 19.14 hours per year.
- No organizations surveyed require professional association activities for credentialing.
- Renewal cycles averaged 3.53 years among those programs where credentials are not permanent.
- The credentialing systems of 9 out of the 15 organizations are based on administrative as opposed to peer review.

Discussion:

The authors found that MLA's credentialing system has key areas of similarity and dissimilarity to those of other professional organizations. MLA's system is like others in that it requires a certain level of educational attainment, is based on a defined skill set or knowledge base, requires continuing education for renewal of credentials, and requires that supporting documentation accompany the portfolio – although the majority of organizations did not require a portfolio, those that did all required supporting documentation.

MLA's credentialing is unlike that of other professional organizations in that it does not require specific academic courses for credentialing or renewal, nor does it require a qualifying examination. However, MLA does require a portfolio as well as professional activity for credentialing and renewal. Also, the fact that MLA bases its program on peer review makes it unlike most of the organizations in this study.

Conclusion:

This benchmarking study was intended to offer a snapshot of the current state of credentialing among professional organizations. It demonstrates that most professional organizations' credentialing programs have distinct areas of similarity, and notes where MLA's program conforms to, as well as deviates from, that norm.

Officers & Executive Committee, 2000-2001



Chair

Jon Eldredge, Ph.D. jeldredge@salud.unm.edu

Chair-Elect

Leslie Behm behm@pilot.msu.edu

Past Chair

Gary Byrd, Ph.D. gdbyrd@buffalo.edu

Section Council Representative

Dixie Jones djones@lsuhc.edu

Secretary/Treasurer

Joyce Backus joyce_backus@nlm.nih.gov

Newsletter Editor

Jan LaBeause labeause.j@gain.mercer.edu

Web Site Editor

Kristin Stoklosa stoklosk@nihrrlib.ncrr.nih.gov

Awards Committee Chair

Bob Wood rwood@lsumc.edu

Bylaws Committee Chair

Andrea Ball alball@facstaff.wisc.edu

Evidence-Based Librarianship (EBL) Implementation Committee Chair

TBA

Membership Committee Chair

Sarah Adcock sadcock@rowland.umsmed.edu

Nominating Committee Chair

TBA

Program Chair

Leslie Behm behm@mail.lib.msu.edu

Research Resources Committee Chair

Jana Allcock allcockjanac@exchange.uams.edu

Continuing Education Liaison

Gale Hannigan ghanniga@medlib.tamu.edu

Governmental Relations Committee Liaison

Gary Byrd, Ph.D. gdbyrd@buffalo.edu

Section Nominee to the MLA Nominating Committee

Ann Weller acw@uic.edu

For additional contact information, see MLA Directory or Research Section Home Page <http://www-hsl.mcmaster.ca:80/lrs/index.html>

Editorial Opportunity



Help shape the future of the Research Section by serving as Editor of Hypothesis. The Editorial Board is seeking creative, energetic applicants interested in moving our newsletter forward and earning valuable AHIP points at the same time!

Qualifications: member of Research Section of MLA with excellent written communication skills. Some experience with desktop publishing is preferred. For more information, contact Jon Eldredge, Chair of Research Section; Jan LaBeause, Editor of Hypothesis; or any Editorial Board member.

HYPOTHESIS. The Newsletter of the Research Section of MLA
<http://gain.mercer.edu/mla/research/hypothesis.html>

HYPOTHESIS (ISSN 1093-5665) is the official newsletter of the Research Section of MLA. It is published three times a year by the Section: Spring (March), Summer (July/August), and Fall (November). It is also available at: <http://gain.mercer.edu/mla/research/hypothesis.html>. Items to be included should be sent to the Editor by the 15th of the preceding month (i.e., February 15th for Spring, June 15th for Summer, October 15th for Fall). Copy is preferred by e-mail, but will be accepted in other formats. *HYPOTHESIS* is indexed in the *Cumulative Index to Nursing and Allied Health Literature*TM and the *CINAHL*[®] database. Copyright © 2000. All rights reserved.

Jan LaBeause, AHIP, Newsletter Editor
Medical Library and LRC
Mercer University School of Medicine
1550 College St.
Macon, GA 31207-0001
VOICE: 478-301-2516
FAX: 478-301-2051
E-MAIL: labeause.j@gain.mercer.edu

Miriam Hudgins, Layout Editor
Medical Library and LRC
Mercer University School of Medicine
1550 College St.
Macon, GA 31207-0001
VOICE: 478-301-2881
FAX: 478-301-2051
E-MAIL: hudgins.m@gain.mercer.edu

Editorial Board

Anne Brice
Health Care Libraries Unit
University of Oxford/Institute of Health Sciences
Old Road, Headington
Oxford, OX3 7LF
UNITED KINGDOM
VOICE: IHS (01865) 226688 or HCLU (01865) 221952
FAX: 01865 220040
MOBILE: 07771 966710
E-MAIL: anne.brice@health-care-libraries-unit.oxford.ac.uk

Alexandra Dimitroff, Ph.D., AHIP
School of Library & Information Science
University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee
P. O. Box 413
Milwaukee, WI 53201
VOICE: 414-229-4707
FAX: 414-229-4848
E-MAIL: dimitrof@csd.uwm.edu

Martha F. Earl
Preston Medical Library
UT Medical Center at Knoxville
1924 Alcoa Highway
Knoxville, TN 37920
VOICE: 423-544-6616
FAX: 423-544-9527
E-MAIL: MEarl@mc.utmck.edu

Gillian Edwards
Library & Information Services
Greenwich Healthcare Trust
Vanbrugh Hall
London, SE10 9HE
UNITED KINGDOM
VOICE: +44-181-312-6220
FAX: +44-181-293-4030
E-MAIL:
Gillynip@arcadia.idiscover.co.uk

Jon Eldredge, Ph.D., AHIP
Health Sciences Center Library
The University of New Mexico
Marble & Stanford, NE
Albuquerque, NM 87131-5686
VOICE: 505-272-0654
FAX: 505-277-5350
E-MAIL: jeldredge@salud.unm.edu

Ruth E. Fenske, Ph.D., AHIP
Grasselli Library
John Carroll University
20700 North Park Blvd.
University Heights, OH 44118
VOICE: 216-397-4523
FAX: 216-397-4256
E-MAIL: rfenske@jcu.edu

Elizabeth (Beth) Schneider, AHIP
Treadwell Library
Massachusetts General Hospital
55 Fruit St.
Boston, MA 02114-2696
VOICE: 617-724-2791
FAX: 617-726-6784
E-MAIL: eschneider1@partners.org

Ann Weller, AHIP
Library of the Health Sciences
University of Illinois at Chicago
1750 West Polk St.
Chicago, IL 60612
VOICE: 312-996-8974
FAX: 312-996-9584
E-MAIL: acw@uic.edu



Research Section News

Hypothesis has been changing in many positive ways in recent years. As a reader you have come to expect a far greater focus upon actual research.

This "Research Section News" column will replace the longstanding column "Message from the Chair" from this issue forward. This name change for the column and the migration of this column to a less prominent location signals a larger trend. *Hypothesis* has evolved away from serving primarily as a section newsletter toward a publication primarily concerned with library research. Consider it one of the several benefits of your membership in MLA's Research Section.

Hypothesis now features the following types of articles:

- ◆ Original research
- ◆ Research projects in progress
- ◆ Practical advice on conducting research
- ◆ Research results not readily accessible to *Hypothesis* readers such as the "International Research Reviews" column
- ◆ Aids for conducting research such as literature reviews, websites, and bibliographies

As you are aware, an Editorial Board has been appointed to aid in the publication of *Hypothesis*. I am happy to welcome five new members joining Alex Dimitroff, Ruth Fenske and myself on this board for the coming year:

Anne Brice, Martha Earl, Gillian Edwards, Beth Schneider and Ann Weller.

CINAHL has agreed to index the contents of *Hypothesis*, indicating an appreciation of how our section's publication contributes to the progress of library research. Editor Jan LaBeause has been tenaciously attempting to have other services such as *Library Literature* and *LISA* index our contents.

Many Research Section leaders in recent years have encouraged these trends in *Hypothesis*. The single most important person responsible for the transformation of *Hypothesis*, however, would have to be Editor Jan LaBeause. During her four years of service Jan has skillfully transformed *Hypothesis* into the fine publication we know it to be today.

All of these accomplishments are dampened somewhat then by Jan's announcement that she will be stepping down as Editor after this issue due to other professional responsibilities. We congratulate Jan on these new opportunities, but are saddened to see her leave. Please see the announcement about the search for a new Editor elsewhere in this issue (pg. 4).

Also elsewhere in this issue you will learn about the formation of the new EBL Implementation Committee (pg. 7). If you have an interest in joining this new committee charged with making Evidence-Based Librarianship a reality, please contact me at jeldredge@salud.unm.edu or call me at 505/272-0654.

Jon Eldredge, Chair, MLA Research Section



"Call for Research Manuscripts" for new Journal

Haworth Press has announced the Spring 2001 debut of a new periodical *THE JOURNAL OF HOSPITAL LIBRARIANSHIP*. Anne Tomlin and Marge Kars, Research Editors for the publication, are soliciting research articles on hospital librarians and their work: administrative or management issues, in-house or consortial projects, technology, cost-benefit studies, value-added services, etc. Submissions should be 8-10 pages typed and double-spaced. Column material may be sent electronically to either Anne (atomlin@relex.com) or Marge (KARSM@bronsonhg.org).

Time to Update Your Links!



As of August 6, 2000

<http://hubnet.buffalo.edu/mla/> is the new URL for the Research Section's Web site. In turn the old site is scheduled for deactivation on September 6, so please change your links to reflect the new site. Do you have any Section announcements or updates to go out to your colleagues over the Web site? Contact kristin_stoklosa@nih.gov with postings or with questions about the update schedule.



Minutes of 2000 Business Meeting

Medical Library Association Research Section Business Meeting, May 7, 2000 Vancouver Convention and Exhibition Center Vancouver, Canada

- 1) Call to Order – Gary Byrd called the meeting to order at 7:30 am.
- 2) Approval of the Minutes - The minutes of the 1999 annual meeting business meeting as printed in the Summer 1999 *Hypothesis*, pages 12-13 were approved.
- 3) Reports of Officers
 - a) Treasurer's report – Joyce Backus reported that the Section balance was \$6054, but that the invoice for the Spring 2000 *Hypothesis* and business meeting breakfast had not yet been received
 - b) Chair-elect, Program Chair – Jon Eldredge reported that the Research Section sponsored two contributed papers sessions at the 2000 Annual Meeting on Evidence-based Librarianship, one with the Collection Development and Federal Libraries Sections, and the other with the Public Services Section. Jon announced that he was planning to create either a committee or task force to implement Evidence-Based Librarianship (EBL) after receiving input from Research Section members at the MLA/CHLE annual meeting.
 - c) Section Council Representative – John Coffey for Julie Kelley asked for comments on a Section Council question as to whether the Annual Meeting should change the number of available business meeting slots from 2-3 and lower the number of SIG slots from 1 to 2. Following a discussion, the membership decided not to support the change, but recommended staying with the current scheduling.
 - d) Newsletter Editor – Jan LaBeause explained that printing costs for *Hypothesis* were kept relatively low by changing to one color printing of the nameplate. A vendor approached the Section with the possibility of paid advertising in the newsletter, but the membership agreed that we do not wish to accept advertising at this time. Jan announced that, due to other professional responsibilities, she is stepping down after serving as newsletter editor for the past four years. Gary Byrd thanked Jan for her excellent service as the editor.
- e) Website Editor – Gary Byrd for Kristin Stoklosa thanked Kris Alpi and Linda Martin for their assistance with the web site. He brought up discussion issues for the Section as to whether the web site should be hosted on MLAnet rather than on an institutional host. Ellen Detlefsen, who is serving on the committee charged with making recommendations for MLAnet described some pros and cons of using MLAnet to host the site.

After some discussion, Research Section members recommended to the MLA Board the following improvements to make the MLAnet site more attractive to Sections and Chapters: provide a credit-card secure site to collect registrations and other fees, charge less than current rates, provide online membership lists that can be sorted and printed, and improve the search engine for better retrieval.
- f) Chair – Gary Byrd noted the work of the committees and task forces appointed during the year and thanked all the Section members who contributed to these efforts
- 4) Reports from Committees
 - a) Bylaws – Andrea Ball's report is in the most recent issue of *Hypotheses*.
 - b) Membership – Ann Weller reported that the Section has 30 new members and ranks 15th in size out of 33 MLA Sections.
 - c) Nominating – Julie McGowan reported that the nominating committee had proposed a slate of Leslie Behm for Chair-elect, Dixie Jones for Section Council Representative and Ann Weller to the Nominating Committee. These nominations were approved by a mail in ballot of the membership.
 - d) Research Resources – Leslie Behm- No report.
 - e) Continuing Education – Carol Gilbert for Julia Kochi reported that there are several research oriented CE courses slated for the 2001 Annual Meeting. Alex Dimitroff added that MLA will implement a new self-evaluation for instructors and a peer-review process for the next Annual Meeting in Orlando. Attendees discussed the possibility of shorter CE courses, but decided against this recommendation. Carol Gilbert agreed to investigate the MLA CE policy towards sending course participants some materials in advance which members agreed helps in meeting course objectives in the limited time available.
 - f) Government Relations – Gary Byrd noted the work of the Joint MLA/AAHSL Legislative Task Force and the Annual Meeting Legislative Update.
 - g) Awards – Gary Byrd for Jolene Miller reported that he and Ruth Fenske had agreed to review research papers and posters at the meeting and recommend

candidates for the best research paper and poster awards for 2000.

- 5) Reports from Task Forces
 - a) Research Distance Learning Course – Ellen Detlefsen reported that, after extensive e-mail discussions, this Task Force is submitting three recommendations: 1) the Section create a webliography, or “list of web-based resources to which a researcher might turn for help,” 2) that the Section have one or two members create a web-based course or textbook, and 3) that a distance-learning course on research methods is too complex for the Section to consider at this time. The Section accepted the Task Force recommendations.
 - b) AHIP Research Credit – Ann Weller reported that she is a member of the MLA group revising the MLA Credentialing Committee plan which was meeting at the annual meeting. She planned to recommend revising the point system for research activities.
 - c) Research Mentors – Gary Byrd reported that after e-mail discussion, this Task Force recommends better use of the Section web site to provide publicity and information about the Research mentors program. The Task Force will continue working during the next year and consider whether the Section mentoring program should be folded into a broader Association mentoring program.
 - d) Bulletin Research Content – Gary Byrd described discussions he had with the new Bulletin Editor, Scott Plutchak. Scott has expressed interest in working with the Section to improve the quality of research published in the Bulletin and Gary and others will work with him during the next year to make some concrete changes. Nancy Woelfl suggested that better statistical methodologies are needed and that some authors may need more mentoring. Ellen Detlefsen recommended directly encouraging doctoral candidates to publish their dissertation research in a Bulletin-appropriate format.
- 6) Discussion Items
 - a) Research Section paper and poster Awards – Gary Byrd and Ruth Fenske will jury the Research Section Awards during this annual meeting.
 - b) *Hypothesis* Editor – Jon Eldredge and Gary Bryd will be working to recruit a new Editor. Nominations and volunteers are encouraged.
- 8) Adjournment – Gary Byrd adjourned the meeting at 9:00 am until the Research Section business meeting to be held at the 2001 annual meeting in Orlando, FL.

... Submitted by Joyce Backus, Secretary/Treasurer

EBL Implementation Committee

Submitted by Jon Eldredge, Ph.D.

The MLA Research Section has created the new EBL Implementation Committee to make the MLA Goal #4 of fostering EBL a reality. Research Section members interested in participating should contact Jon Eldredge at jeldredge@salud.unm.edu for details. The following draft document captures the basic direction of the EBL Implementation Committee.

Goals:

To foster Evidence-Based Librarianship (EBL) and to integrate its principles into the practice of health sciences librarianship.

Objective 1:

Relevant research questions: identify the most relevant and answerable research questions currently facing the practice of health sciences librarianship.

Objective 2:

Research results dissemination: to recommend methods for improving the timely dissemination of research results to MLA members; to examine the issue of requiring structured abstracts for all contributed papers and poster sessions at MLA and MLA chapter annual meetings; to examine the feasibility of posting, in easily searchable form, such abstracts on MLA and MLA chapter websites for at least five years.

Objective 3:

Research incentives: to recommend incentives to encourage librarians to conduct and report the findings of their research; to identify incentives for health sciences libraries to support and encourage their librarians to conduct research.

Objective 4:

Practice guidelines: determine whether MLA should coordinate the creation of practice guidelines based upon the best available research results; if so, how might MLA accomplish this objective?

Objective 5:

Internal communication: this committee will employ listserv discussions, conference calls, emails, and other means to accomplish its goals and objectives.

Objective 6:

External communication: this committee will communicate all current findings and recommendations to the MLA Research Section membership via *Hypothesis* and other media at least once per year, preferably by the first week of April; this committee will selectively communicate its most important findings and recommendations to the MLA membership via electronic or print (e.g., *MLA News*) media.

MLA Research Section Awards 2000

Editor's Note: The Best New Researcher, Shelley McKibbin, is featured in the Research Spotlight of this issue, pages 1-3. Watch for the other winners in future issues of Hypothesis.

Congratulations to the winners! This year's Research Section awards are for papers and posters given at MLA 2000. The Awards Committee was composed of Gary Byrd and Ruth Fenske.

Best Research Paper Award Category

Best Research Paper Award

Are Dragons Really Free? A Comparative Study of the Costs of Online Journal Access

Frances L. Chen, head, Collection Development, Arizona Health Sciences Library, The University of Arizona-Tucson; Judith L. Rieke, assistant director, Harley French Library, University of North Dakota-Grand Forks; and Paul Wrynn, head, Collection Development, Ehrman Medical Library, New York University Medical Center-New York

Purpose: A comparative study examining subscription increases for journals offering "free online" access with a print subscription.

Setting/subjects: 300 core journals, including Brandon/Hill titles, at three U.S. health science libraries.

Methodology: Using longitudinal quantitative analysis of subscription price increases over five years, the authors examine journals offering "free online" access with print.

Results: Journal bundling online with print subscriptions average significant price increases over the past five years in comparison to the increases of titles without free online access. Online for a separate price or as a package deal is also analyzed.

Discussion/conclusion: Close examination of journal price percentage increases over five years showed that offering of "free online" affected the standard patterns of subscription increase and carries significant costs. Even though institutional subscribers have the option of activating the online access, prices were automatically increased. Do librarians have any control over these latest price increases? To take control of the free dragon of journal prices, librarians must first of all be aware of how much they are affected by the move to online access and its hidden consequences, and realize that there are no bargains in the world of online access.

Best Research Paper Honorable Mention

Real-Time Evidence Based Medicine (EBM) Searching Instruction: a Randomized Controlled Trial in the Neonatal ICU (NICU)

Doreen R. Bradley, public services librarian; Patricia W. Martin, head, Electronic Services; Gurpreet Kaur Rana; Taubman Medical Library; and Robert E. Schumacher, Department of Pediatrics; University of Michigan-Ann Arbor

Purpose: Improving house officers' evidence-based medicine (EBM) searching skills through "on-site" instruction in the NICU.

Subjects: House officers in the NICU of a university medical center.

Methodology: Randomized house officers into two groups, one receiving instruction and one group receiving none. Search questions generated from ICU patients. Data collected through observation, search analysis, and individual surveys. Librarians observed searches and collected data on questions, independent searching skills, search problems, plus topics taught to the test group. Unsuccessful searches underwent failure analysis. To determine intervention efficacy, participants performed unassisted searches based on a Cochrane review.

Results: For the test group, the most frequent topics taught were MeSH, limits, and EBM strategies. This group formulated better questions and applied subheadings and limits more effectively. The control group was less satisfied with retrieval and had more searching errors. Test searches revealed three basic patterns of errors. At six months post-instruction, search methods taught are still used.

Best Research Poster Award Category

Best Research Poster Award

Representation and Uniqueness of Neonatology Acronyms in the UMLS

Ramak R. Amjad, post doctoral fellow; Timothy B. Patrick, assistant professor; Health Management and Informatics; Mary Ellen Sievert, professor, School of Information Science and Learning Technologies; University of Missouri-Columbia; Beth G. Carlin, McGoogan Library of Medicine/NNLM, University of Nebraska Medical Center-Omaha; and John Pardalos, assistant professor, Child Health-Neonatology, University of Missouri-Columbia

Purpose: Neonatologists, like other clinicians, use many acronyms in communication and documentation in their daily progress notes. In highly specialized areas, such as the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) these acronyms may have an entirely different meaning than the same acronym used in another clinical milieu. This can have a deleterious effect on the ability of clinicians, students, and other health care professionals to perform effective literature searches, discuss clinical cases across disciplines, and collaborate on chart review studies. We undertook a project aimed at studying the use of acronyms in a clinical setting (NICU) and then examined how well they are represented in the UMLS both literally and conceptually.

Setting/Participants/Resources: Progress notes from four neonatologists working in a neonatal intensive care unit at an academic medical center were analyzed.

Methods: A list of neonatal acronyms, from the previously described study, was collected. This list was then analyzed to eliminate duplicates using Microsoft Access. The resulting list was then queried against the UMLS for string matches. Once a match was established the UMLS term was examined manually to verify congruity of meaning.

Results: The initial analysis resulted in 143 acronyms. These were then mapped to the UMLS resulting in fifty-three string matches. The manual examination of concept congruity showed that twenty-six out of the fifty-three matched the clinical meaning used in the NICU.

Best Research Poster Honorable Mention

Reference Statistics: Rethinking Data Collection in the Electronic Age

Kathleen Bauer, informatics fellow; and Lynn Sette, senior librarian, Cushing/Whitney Medical Library, Yale University, New Haven, CT

Purpose: As the Cushing/Whitney Medical Library has moved to a model of providing services to patrons remotely, it has redesigned methods for gathering data on reference transactions. Reference transactions are counted wherever and however they take place.

Setting/Subjects: Reference transactions completed by staff of the Cushing/Whitney Medical Library; at the Reference Desk, in patrons' offices, at librarians' desks, in-person or via e-mail, Web, or phone.

Method: Counts of reference transactions are taken on two randomly selected sampling days per month. Librarians are asked to keep counts of all reference transactions. Computer server logs are analyzed to track patron usage of reference information from the Web.

Results: The print poster will consist of the problem statement, sampling methodology used, and the preliminary results in graphical and tabular format. The electronic poster will show computer log file analysis software used to analyze data from patrons accessing reference information from the Web. Spreadsheet files used in data analysis may be downloaded from the poster.

Best New Researcher Award Category

Best New Researcher Award

Comparing Credentialing Processes Across Professional Associations: a Benchmarking Study

Shelley A. McKibbin, reference librarian; and Martha C. Adamson, director, Libraries; Library, University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center-Dallas

Purpose: Compare MLA's credentialing process to those of other professional associations with credentialing programs. Areas of comparison include:

- Existence of a defined knowledge domain such as the *Platform for Change*
- Existence of a qualifying examination

- Cost of qualifying exam
- Requirement to submit a portfolio for initial credentialing
- Requirement to submit a portfolio for credentialing renewal
- Requirement to submit supporting documentation with portfolio
- Requirement for continuing education for renewal
- Cycle for renewal
- Cost per year for certification
- Peer or administrative review

Setting/subjects: Professional associations, especially those requiring a masters degree for certification.

Methodology: Analysis of association Websites, followed by interviews with association staff who administer credentialing programs.

Results: Most associations have a defined knowledge domain associated with their credentialing program. The majority have a certification exam and a requirement for a portfolio. Most require continuing education for renewal. The average renewal cycle is approximately three years. Per year cost for renewal is approximately \$150 US.

Discussion/conclusion: MLA's Credentialing Committee will review its processes and practices based on the results of this benchmarking study. One barrier to moving MLA's credentialing process to an all-electronic one is the current requirement for supporting documentation. Based on the experiences of other associations, the Credentialing Committee might choose to abandon this requirement.

Best New Researcher Honorable Mention

The NLM and Alternative Medicine: the Long History of a Trend

Catherine Arnott Smith, NLM medical informatics trainee, Center for Biomedical Information and School of Information Science, University of Pittsburgh

MeSH—with local enhancements—has traditionally served as the controlled vocabulary of choice for bibliographic retrieval in alternative medicine, both in and out of MEDLINE. However, the literature indexed for MEDLINE, and from which and for which these MeSH terms were developed, has historically been of the “Western,” “biomedical,” and “orthodox” variety, which poses interesting problems for alternative vocabulary developers. This report presents the results of a detailed analysis supporting a commonsense hypothesis: that citations have been indexed with Alternative Medicine MeSH terms at an increasing rate since 1966. However, this increase has little to do with a change in the number of journals indexed for the database that are devoted exclusively to the topic. For future research in alternative medicine, its utilization and its societal meaning, and to enhance the controlled vocabulary for better information retrieval in this domain, it is important to understand the diffusion of this amorphous concept in the biomedical literature.





Chapter Research Committees Column

Fourteen regional groups are affiliated with MLA and designated as official “chapters” of the association. Of the chapters, five currently have active Research Committees. Some of the recent activities of the Chapter Research Committees are summarized below along with contact information for the current Chairs, and URLs for the three committees currently maintaining Web pages.

Medical Library Group of Southern California & Arizona (MLGSCA)

The MLGSCA Research Committee is charged with administering the annual Research Awards Program. The Committee issues calls for research proposals, reviews proposals that are submitted for consideration, and recommends winning proposals. The Committee encourages members to engage in research activities and alerts members to continuing education opportunities that will help to develop research skills. The Committee also works to strengthen ties with the MLA Research Section and other related groups. For more information, contact Helen J. Seaton, AHIP (Chair), Arizona State University, Noble Science Library, Box 871006, Tempe, AZ 85287-1006. Phone: (480) 965-6588, Fax: (480) 965-0883, E-mail: helen.seaton@asu.edu.

Food for thought . . .



Never be afraid to try something new. Remember, professionals built the Titanic: amateurs built the ark.

... Anonymous

We don't ask research to do what it was never meant to do, and that is to get an idea.

... William Bernbach (1911-1982)
U. S. advertising executive and copywriter in “Quotable Business,” ed. Louis E. Boone, 1992.

Midcontinental Chapter (MCMLA)

URL: <http://www.kumc.edu/mcmla/MCMLARes.html>

In 1998-1999, the MCMLA Research Committee conducted several focus groups involving a mixture of MCMLA members discussing research and medical librarianship. The research ideas generated by these group discussions are posted on their Web page, and were mailed to library schools in the region to spark their interest. For more information, contact James M. Nyce (Chair), SLIM/Emporia State University, Emporia, KS 66801, Phone: 316-341-5320, Fax: 316-341-5233, E-mail: jnyce@rocketmail.com

Northern California and Nevada Medical Library Group (NCNMLG)

The Research Committee promotes research and related projects to foster knowledge and research skill development among NCNMLG members. Participation in research activities and opportunities is strongly encouraged. For information contact Daniel Angel, Ph.D. (Chair), Eoexchange, Inc., 282 Second St., Ste. 400, San Francisco, CA 94105, Phone: 415-538-8555 ext. 336, Fax: 415-538-8558, E-mail: danielscottangel@yahoo.com

South Central Chapter (SCC)

URL: <http://www.scmla.org/research.html>

The SCC Research Committee promotes research by SCC members, publicizes information about research activities and opportunities, and fosters the development of research-related skills in the Chapter. The Committee presents an award at the Chapter’s Annual Meeting for the poster or contributed paper best demonstrating research in medical librarianship, offers a research mentoring service members, encourages members to apply for SCAMeL Research Grants, and promotes ongoing research in the region by practicing librarians and by students at graduate schools of library science. For more information, contact Diane Faulkner (Chair), Memorial Hospital and Medical Center, Health Science Library, 2200 West Illinois, Midland, TX 79701, Phone 915-685-1648, Fax: 915-685-4085, E-mail: library@midland-memorial.com.

Southern Chapter (SC/MLA)

URL: <http://www.slis.ua.edu/researchcommittee-scmla/>

To accomplish their goals, the SC/MLA Research Committee publishes “Research Spotlight” in Southern Expressions; investigates and supports chapter-wide research projects, such as the journal usage study; sponsors research presentations at the Chapter’s annual meeting and encourages library school students to participate in paper and poster presentations; encourages chapter members to participate in research at the national level; maintains a Research Interests and Mentors database; seeks applicants for a chapter Research Award; and participates in the SC/MLA strategic plan. For more information, contact Marcia Epelbaum (Chair), Vanderbilt University Medical Center, Eskin Biomedical Library, Nashville, TN 37232-8340, Phone: 615-936-1364, Fax: 615-936-1407, E-mail: Marcia.epelbaum@mcm.vanderbilt.edu



International Research Reviews

Submitted by Ann Brice

There is international interest in making library and information services more effective, to maximise the impact that they have on health gain. But how do we know which services are truly effective? How do our organisations know which services and developments to fund? If we are to achieve the most for our customers or patrons, we need to base our decisions on sound, relevant research evidence. But how do you keep up with the huge amount of literature available? One solution is to use review articles which summarise individual pieces of research.

In the Research Section program at the MLA/CHLA 2000 conference a paper was presented on behalf of the LINC Health Panel Research Working Party which described two areas of work being undertaken in the United Kingdom to promote evidence-based librarianship. The first element of this work, a feasibility study to determine the practicalities of identifying and systematically reviewing the literature for comparing end user and intermediary information retrieval and behaviour, is described below. The second element of the presentation, a project to develop critical appraisal tools for assessing this literature, will be described in a future edition.

The report's recommendations outline an ambitious and challenging agenda, which would clearly benefit from an international approach, both to maximise effort and to enhance dissemination.

Library-LORE (Literature Oriented Reviews of Effectiveness)

Andrew Booth, Director of Information Resources and Senior Lecturer in Evidence Based Healthcare Information, School of Health and Related Research, University of Sheffield

Objectives

Systematic review is an established methodology in healthcare and related areas. It seeks to enable judgements of effectiveness through the identification and synthesis of methodologically rigorous studies. To date, however, there has been little attempt to apply this highly structured methodology to health information practice. This report set out to investigate the feasibility of conducting such a review and, using the topic of end user versus intermediary searching, and to illustrate the steps of finding

and filtering the evidence. Stopping short of the final step of synthesising the retrieved literature, the report made recommendations on the general implications of such a process for the commissioner, the Health Libraries Group, a constituent part of the LINC Health Panel Research Working Party (UK). This report therefore intended to:

- present a systematic search of the literature for research comparing end user and intermediary information retrieval and behaviour.
- outline the main characteristics of this literature.
- detail the practicalities of identifying and systematically reviewing this literature.

How the review was conducted

Systematic searches were carried out using library (LISA, ISA & Library Literature), health (CINAHL, EMBASE & MEDLINE), general sciences (Social Science Citation Index & Science Citation Index) and computing science (INSPEC & COMPENDEX) bibliographic databases together with library book catalogues and the Internet in general. Papers were assessed for relevance to the comparison of end users with intermediary searchers in a healthcare setting. They were divided into direct comparisons of end users with intermediaries, evaluative studies describing interventions for modifying end user behaviour (eg. training, feedback) and descriptive studies investigating end user behaviour. Papers that met only one of the inclusion criteria (i.e. they were comparisons from a non-healthcare setting, etc) were detailed in a table of excluded studies. Because of the remit, the feasibility study judgements of relevance and subsequent data extraction were based on abstracts only, where available.

Findings

1. Generally, the range of databases required for systematic searching will be prohibitive for any one institution.
2. There is extensive overlap between Library Literature, Information Science Abstracts and Library and Information Science Abstracts.
3. The three main biomedical databases MEDLINE, EMBASE and CINAHL are also essential in identifying candidate studies.
4. The computing databases INSPEC and COMPENDEX resulted in a high proportion of false drops.
5. Science and Social Science Citation Indexes provided useful coverage of both subject area (i.e. health) and the discipline (i.e. librarianship).
6. The Internet played a minimal role in the identification of useable materials.
7. Relevance judgements based purely on bibliographic data and subject indexing were almost impossible and coverage of abstracts is very sketchy.
8. Abstracts from the library literature are very poor at describing study design and methodology.

9. The heterogeneity of articles makes extraction of comparable data very difficult.
10. There do not seem to be enough similar studies of high methodological quality to conduct a Cochrane-type review.
11. A pragmatic paradigm, seeking **best available data** rather than only **highest quality studies** is therefore required.
12. A primary product would be evidence based guidelines indicating recommendations of research and strength of supporting evidence.

Recommendations

That the LINC Health Panel Research Working Party consider the following actions:

1. Encourage movement towards systematic reviews that use a pragmatic approach.
2. Promote a standardised review process and training of potential reviewers.

3. Disseminate evidence based guidelines as an agenda for discussion and local action.
4. Encourage publishers to improve identification of experimental studies e.g. via structured abstracts.
5. Build up a retrospective register of experimental studies from the three principal health library journals.
6. Improve access to the health information knowledge base for potential reviewers.
7. Instigate discussion on desirability of broad versus narrow reviews (“lumping” versus “splitting”).
8. Invite debate relating to quality of included studies; few high quality studies versus more numerous, less rigorous studies?
9. Identify priorities for review and feed these into library schools.
10. Promote an exemplar review together with the LORE protocol as a model of good practice.
11. Invite guest editors or authors to conduct reviews or to contribute commentaries on issues of current interest or to critically appraise a recent article.
12. Promote more rigorously conducted experimental research studies.



Call for MLA Awards Nominees

Honor a colleague by submitting a nomination for one of the MLA awards which will be presented at MLA 2001 in Orlando.

- The **Marcia C. Noyes Award**, the association’s highest honor, is presented to an individual whose career has resulted in lasting, outstanding contributions to medical librarianship

- The **Lois Ann Colaianni Award for Excellence and Achievement in Hospital Librarianship** recognizes significant accomplishments, continuing excellence, and leadership by a hospital librarian.

- The **Estelle Brodman Award for Academic Medical Librarian of the Year** recognizes the achievements, contributions, and leadership of a mid-career academic health sciences librarian.

- The **Louise Darling Medal for Distinguished Achievement in Collection Development in the Health Sciences** is presented to an individual, institution, or group of individuals for accomplishments in the area of collection development.

- The **Ida and George Eliot Prize** is awarded to the author of a work published in the preceding year, determined to be the most effective in furthering health sciences librarianship.

- The **Murray Gottlieb Prize** is awarded for the best unpublished essay on the history of medicine and allied health sciences written by a health sciences librarian.

- The **Rittenhouse Award** is presented for an outstanding paper written by a student or intern in a library science course or internship.

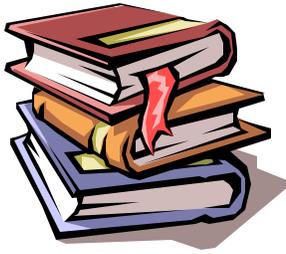
- The **ISI/Frank Bradway Rogers Information Advancement Award** is presented for outstanding application of technology to the delivery of health sciences information.

- **Fellows** are selected for sustained and outstanding contributions to the field of health sciences librarianship and to the purposes for which MLA stands. **Honorary Memberships** are granted to nonmembers who have made outstanding contributions to the advancement of the association’s purposes.

- The **Majors/MLA Chapter Project of the Year Award** is a general award for excellence, innovation, and contributions to the field of health sciences librarianship and to chapter members, demonstrated through special projects that creatively respond to the challenges of the health information field.

- Nominations are also being accepted for the **2002 Janet Doe Lectureship**, a lecture on either the history or philosophy of health sciences librarianship, delivered at MLA 2002 by a selected individual.

The deadline for nominations is November 1, 2000, except for the Majors/MLA Chapter Project of the Year Award for which the deadline is December 1, 2000. For more information or application materials, contact Anne Greenspan, Coordinator of Credentialing and Professional Recognition, at 312-419-9094, ext. 28; fax: 312-419-8950; or email: mlapd2@mlahq.org.



Literature Review

Submitted by
Ruth E. Fenske, Ph.D.

Kibirige, Harry M. and Lisa DePalo. *The Internet as a Source of Academic Research Information: Two Pilot Studies. Information Technology and Libraries.* 19(1):11-16, March, 2000.

Bar-Ilan, Judit. *The Web as an Information Source on Informetrics? A Content Analysis. Journal of the American Society for Information Science.* 51(5):432-443, March 15, 2000.

D'Esposito, Joann E. and Rachel M. Gardner. *University Students' Perceptions of the Internet: An Exploratory Study. Journal of Academic Librarianship.* 25(6):456-461, November, 1999.

Here we have one study which shows that Internet users in a university who use the Internet daily prefer search engines over online databases for topical searches (but those who use the Internet monthly or weekly prefer online databases (sic)); another study which shows that the "Web has an excellent potential to serve as a bibliographic database, although it totally lacks the appropriate interface for it," and a third which found that, although university students used and appreciated both Internet and traditional library resources, they did not associate the library with the Internet and did not think to ask a librarian for help in searching the Internet. The message might be: The Internet is being used, there's good "stuff" on the Internet, and how do we motivate our users to come to us for help in searching the Internet?

Kibirige and DePalo studied undergraduate, graduate, and post-doctoral users at four institutions of higher education in New York City. Forty individuals using the Internet terminal at each university answered questionnaires and some were interviewed. The authors tell us verbally, that, for the group as a whole, search engines are preferred for topical searching. That appears to be accurate, although no frequencies are given. They then use pairwise correlation coefficients to show relationships between frequency of Internet use and choice of a search engine or an online database. Tables 1 and 2 are Spearman's rho and Kendall's tau b matrices. The N for each entry in the matrix is four, implying that the ranks are based on the data for each group (i.e. for each college), rather than for each individual. However, interpretation is made to sound like individual data were correlated. Also, negative correlations are incorrectly interpreted. Overall, the

interpretation of the correlation data appears to be in error. Data for undergraduate, graduate, and post-doctoral users were not broken down. Level of student could also be a relevant factor.

Bar-Ilan analyzed Web information on informetrics. Specifically she compared bibliographic references extracted from Web pages and their links to those obtained through several commercial databases. Table 12 shows that for fifty-nine journal articles with informetric(s) in the title, the Web definitely has potential as a source of bibliographic citations. The commercial databases provided a greater number of citations, probably because they contain abstracts and subject indexing, usually not contained in bibliographic references on the Web. References on the Web were more likely to contain mistakes and inaccurate and misleading information.

Retrieval of bibliographic references on the Web could be increased by the addition of metatags. The author suggests that "intelligent agents, able to recognize and extract bibliographic information from Web pages will have to be developed for automatic creation of bibliographic databases based on information existing on the Internet." However, "the extracted bibliographic references would have to be filtered and evaluated to avoid the introduction of inaccurate and misleading information." It appears that searching the web for bibliographic citations may be useful when being comprehensive is absolutely essential. However, the quality and quantity of citations retrieved will not be comparable to the value-added citations retrieved from commercial bibliographic databases. This article certainly points to the value of the work done by information professionals.

D'Esposito and Gardner conducted focus groups with fourteen volunteer undergraduate university students who had used the library and the Internet within the last five months. Students found the library to be more organized, stable, and reliable than the Internet. Time, the nature of the topic, and teachers' directives influenced choice of Internet or library. Students thought Internet sources provided by the government, educational institutions, businesses, and corporations were the most reputable. Students thought Internet resources were ok for business people but not for physicians and lawyers.

Those who considered the librarian as a library resource believed the library was more user friendly. The Internet was considered to be more user friendly by those who tried to use the library without a librarian's help. Students were clear that using the Internet by itself would not do the job. Students did not think to ask the librarian for help in searching the Internet, either because they did not have access to a librarian when searching or they did not think they needed help or they did not perceive the librarian as being a person who would be able to help.

It would be interesting to gather similar information on students' in the health professions perceptions of the Internet, libraries, and librarians.

Allen, Bryce. Individual Differences and the Conundrums of User-Centered Design: Two Experiments. *Journal of the American Society for Information Science*. 51(6):508-520, April, 2000.

In a complex study, Bryce Allen does two experiments looking at individual differences and search performance.

In the first experiment, independent variables were cognitive ability (perceptual speed and spatial scanning), task (two different ones), level of word map used (two), and type of display (two). Four groups of dependent variables were identified: those having to do with recall, precision, vocabulary learning, and selectivity. Hypothesis testing was done using analysis of variance (ANOVA). Previous literature discussed capitalization and compensation matches between users and information systems. In the first, one capitalizes on one's skills; in the second, the system augments individual skills. Findings of this study show compensation more often came into play. Figure 3 is a model which shows all the variables and the capitalization and compensation effects. The conclusion is that "it is possible to designate a system configuration that would be optimal for users with specific levels of abilities accomplishing specific tasks."

The second experiment had to do with ensuring that users actually use the optimal system configuration for them. Users can either be categorized by tasks and abilities in order to be assigned to a system configuration or the user can select the configuration appropriate for his abilities and tasks himself. This experiment looked at the second option to see if users actually do select a system configuration appropriate to the task and their abilities. Procedures used in the first experiment were replicated with eighty new volunteers. Each had access to four system configurations. Twenty started with each of the four configurations. Half the subjects stayed with the original configuration and half changed. ANOVA and Scheffe post hoc analysis was performed. There were no significant differences in outcome between users who changed configuration and those who stayed with the assigned configuration. Users' cognitive abilities did not affect their choice of system configuration.

This study suggests that alternative systems for searching databases such as MEDLINE would be in order. However, the question is how to induce users to choose the system most compatible with their own particular pattern of cognitive abilities and task at hand.

Thornton, Joyce K. Job Satisfaction of Librarians of African Descent Employed in ARL Academic Libraries. *College & Research Libraries*. 61(3):217-232, May, 2000.

Thornton sent surveys to 216 librarians of African descent in the ninety-six United States Association of Research Libraries libraries. One hundred forty-six of 216 surveys (67 %) were returned. Two surveys from library deans were eliminated and eight from librarians at Howard University were not used, leaving 136 surveys for analysis. Eighty-four percent of the respondents were age 35 or older. Sixty-one percent had been in the profession ten years or longer. Forty-two (30.9%) work in reference, the most frequent area of service.

Part II asked for respondents' perceptions of the work environment. Table 3 presents Likert-scale responses as frequencies and the verbal interpretation includes percentages. Fifty-eight percent did not feel the work environment was hostile toward them and another 28% felt only a little hostility. Thirty-six had experienced racial discrimination in the workplace. Seventy-four percent felt a moderate or high degree of self-induced pressure to overachieve. More felt isolated in the institution than in the workplace. Over one-third felt a moderate to high degree of isolation in the workplace. More than half felt library administration is committed to diversity and welcomes it, but 60% felt diversity programs are not adequate.

Part III rated respondents' satisfaction on twenty-three items. In this case, percentages are given in the table. The highest areas of dissatisfaction were salary and proportions of faculty of African descent in the university and in the library. Over 70% were satisfied with job duties, variety of tasks, interaction with users, autonomy, challenges of the job, working conditions, professional development, and job security. Over half were either neutral or could not decide about their satisfaction with the way administration handles problems.

Isolation in the workplace and in the university, isolation as it affects performance, racial discrimination, hostility in the work environment, and adequacy of the libraries' diversity program were plotted against age, gender, years as a professional, and years at present institution. Both frequencies and percents are given. This section would have benefited from chi square analysis to identify which relationships are statistically significant. Isolation was felt most keenly by those age 35 to 54 and inadequacy of the diversity program was noted by at least 55% of all except the over 55 and over group. Women were more affected by all six factors than men.

Fifty-eight percent had considered leaving their present position in the last two years, primarily for professional

opportunities and because of salary. The top ten sources of satisfaction and dissatisfaction are listed. It is unclear if they are listed in rank order.

There are no strong conclusions, other than the need to recruit younger African-American librarians into ARL libraries

Harris, Roma M. Gender and Technology Relations in Librarianship. *Journal of Education for Library and Information Science.* 40(4):232-246, Fall, 1999.

The purpose of this study was “to explore how the process of technological change affects individual library workers.” Seventy-one library staff in six academic and public libraries volunteered to be interviewed about how new technology affects their work. There were twenty-two men and forty-nine women, representing all levels of those who work in libraries. Transcripts were cluster analyzed. This paper reports on “ways in which new technology products are introduced . . . , the extent to which [library workers] are able to affect the integration of these products into their own work, and the impact of technological change on their careers.” Most of the paper consists of excerpts from the interviews. All responses are identified by gender and position.

In her introduction, Harris cites literature that suggests that “the outcomes of technological change may be quite different for male and female library workers.” She presents the polarization theory of occupational change which says the middle level of information worker (e.g. library workers) are being squeezed out in favor of low level information workers doing routine work such as data entry and high level information workers such as software engineers. Harris believe her data illustrate the polarization effect with library workers falling to the bottom. She also concludes that women, especially, feel little control over decisions relating to the introduction of new technology. My own reading of the interview excerpts points more to resistance to change than to a gender effect. Also, when decisions were made by upper level management, as is usually true in a large organization, mid- and lower-level workers felt they didn’t have a say. A male head of user support services is quoted as saying that all campus librarians and staff were allowed to “play” with two systems under consideration. The author sees “play” as a demeaning term, associated with childhood. It seems clear to me that librarians and staff were given a chance to experiment with the systems under consideration, a valid form of input. In another section, males and females both are found to be optimistic about the effects of technology on their careers.

I do not believe the author has demonstrated a gender effect. Level of staff and job attitude, to me, would better characterize the differences. Health sciences libraries

probably are not immune to similar problems. In small health sciences libraries, where staff may work together in greater harmony, change may be more favorably embraced.

Millennium Project Research Agenda: Cataloging and Classification. *Library Quarterly.* 70(2):ix-xx, April, 2000.

Continuing the series, *Library Quarterly* considers a research agenda for cataloging and classification. Seven faculty and practitioners were asked to comment on the state of research in cataloging and classification and what should happen in the future.

Elaine Svenonius, professor emerita at UCLA, says the trends are bibliographic modeling, conceptualizing bibliographic tools in linguistic terms, and “the progressive automation of those aspects of information organization that are clerical or algorithmic, as opposed to intellectual.”

Joan Mitchell and Diane Vizine-Goetz, of OCLC, make proposals in the areas of classification scheme development, alternative structures for classification systems, tools and rules for application in classification, automatic classification, and new uses of classification systems, including uses in the Web environment.

Ia McIlwaine, of University College, London, bemoans the development of search engines with no knowledge of what has been done in library and information science. He calls for improved communication between information professionals and computer scientists. He also says more work is needed on the knowledge structures of different disciplines and the problems of interdisciplinarity.

Crystal Graham, head of Digital Information and Cataloging at the University of California, San Diego, says that often cataloging “research” consists of anecdotal evidence, rather than controlled studies. She poses several questions about catalog design that should be empirically tested.

Ling Hwey Jeng, of the library school at the University of Kentucky, believes standardization in format and system structure will give way to “tailored customer service with locally defined structures.”

Finally, Michael Carpenter of the library school at Louisiana State University, poses three questions: “(1) What is it we are cataloging when we catalog something? (2) What are the objectives of the catalog? And (3) What are the useful attributes to form the basis of a classification scheme? For the latter, he is actually asking in the context of both cataloging and classification.

My questions are these: (1) Will cataloging take more or less time in the future? And (2) Will users be able to locate information more or less easily?

MLA RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT AND DEMONSTRATION PROJECT GRANT

GRANT: Range \$100 - \$1,000. More than one award available per year.

ELIGIBILITY:

- * Applicant must hold an MLS degree from an ALA accredited program or an accredited post baccalaureate degree in a relevant discipline.
- * Applicant must be a practicing medical librarian with a minimum of two years professional experience.
- * Preferred that applicant is an individual member of MLA.
- * Applicant must be a citizen or have permanent resident status of the United States or Canada.
- * Outstanding candidates not meeting these criteria may be considered.

APPLICATION INCLUDES:

- * A completed application form
- * Names of three references
- * Detailed description of the project design and budget

CRITERIA TO JUDGE APPLICANT'S

QUALIFICATIONS:

- * Education and training
- * Experience
- * Previous productivity

- * Adequacy of knowledge of research field
- * Demonstrated research competence

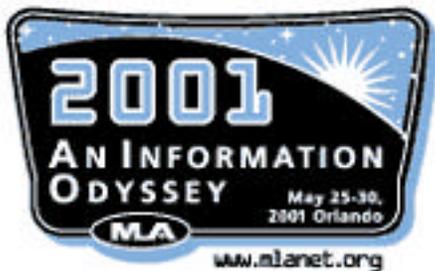
CRITERIA TO JUDGE MERITS OF THE PROPOSED RESEARCH PROJECT:

- * Relevancy to purpose of the Association
- * Originality
- * Importance to profession
- * Soundness of design and detail
- * Feasibility of scope
- * Plans to present or publish the results of the research project
- * Activities which are operational or have only local usefulness will not be considered

DEADLINE FOR APPLICATION: DECEMBER 1, 2000

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AND APPLICATION FORMS CONTACT:

M artha Earl
 Chair, RDEPG Jury
 UT Medical Center
 Preston Medical Library
 1924 Alcoa Highway
 Knoxville, TN 37920
 865-544-6616
 nearl@ utk.edu



MLA 2001 Research Section Program

The Program Committee, chaired by Leslie Behm, is planning two program sessions for the 2001 MLA Meeting in Orlando:

“From Idea to a Research Plan: How to Get Started”

This contributed paper session will focus on how librarians have accomplished research. Papers can be an overview of a project or part of a project and share how the researchers got started, collected data, analyzed their findings or reported the results.

“The Research Process”

Invited speakers will discuss the various aspects of the research process and the skills needed - developing a proposal idea, collecting data, analyzing findings, and reporting the results.