

# **Advancing the Scholarship of Library History: The Role of the *Journal of Library History* and *Libraries & Culture***

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Founded in 1966 at Florida State University by Louis Shores, the quarterly *Journal of Library History* moved to the University of Texas at Austin in 1976 and continues to be published by the University of Texas Press. It was renamed *Libraries & Culture* in 1988. While there has been some continuity in the Florida and Texas years, during the former period the journal seemed linked more to the library profession, whereas during the Texas years it has been linked more to the literary humanities and the history profession. A catalyst for promotion of its focus, it presently strives to be “an interdisciplinary journal that explores the significance of collections of recorded knowledge—their creation, organization, preservation, and utilization—in the context of cultural and social history, unlimited as to time or place.” The history of this unique journal is intertwined with the evolution of library history in the last third of the twentieth century.

The idea for a journal devoted to library history came in a meeting of the American Library History Round Table. That is the way Louis Shores remembered it. In a 1974 memorial for his friend and colleague Wayne Shirley, Shores recalled events from decades before—events that would lead to the formation of three pivotal institutions for the study of library history in this country.<sup>1</sup>

First, Shores remembered how at the 1946 ALA Convention he had joined with Shirley in discussing with President Carl Milan the possibility of a greater role for library history in the ALA. The result of the conversations held by the trio of library leaders was the formation of a round table for all those interested in discussing and supporting library history. At the 1947 annual meeting of the ALA, the American Library History Round Table (ALHRT) gained official recognition.<sup>2</sup> Both Shirley and Shores continued to support the fledgling ALHRT for two decades, the former as chairman, the latter as secretary. For fifty years the Round Table has provided an institutional home in which those interested in the field of library history can gather together once or twice a year to read papers and, in general, to assess the state of the field.

Later, the ALHRT played a significant role in the founding of another institution of library history in this country, one that provided an ongoing opportunity for the exchange of scholarly communication. For as Shores also recalled in the same memorial to Shirley, "It was at ALHRT meetings that the idea for the first library history journal was born and nursed. Out of repeated urgings, and encouragement from Wayne, I, as his ALHRT secretary, undertook to launch the *Journal of Library History, Philosophy and Comparative Librarianship* (JLH) at Florida State University in 1965."<sup>3</sup> Throughout its thirty-four years of existence, the *Journal* has provided about 600 articles, 1,470 book reviews, and a continuous flow of current information in the field of library history.<sup>4</sup>

Shores also mentioned a third influential institution of library history, the Library History Seminars. That institution, too, emerged from meetings of the ALHRT and, in particular, from the personal urgings of Wayne Shirley.<sup>5</sup> Taking this cue, Shores collaborated with John David Marshall, and together they instituted the first seminar in 1961.<sup>6</sup> A total of nine seminars have been held between 1961 and 1995, with the tenth scheduled for the year 2000. They have provided periodic opportunities to read and discuss important papers and issues in the field.

The original idea of Shores and Shirley to seek a larger role for library history bore enduring institutional fruit. The Round Table (1947–) provided the institutional framework and inspiration for the formation of the Library History Seminars (1961–) and, a few years later, for the foundation of the *Journal of Library History* (1966–). All three institutions remain important for the field of library history and, as their interrelated origins imply, continue to derive strength from one another.

Of the three institutions, the *Journal*, because of its ongoing interaction with a relatively large number of individuals, has had the greatest opportunity to solidify and extend the efforts of the other two. Therefore, focusing this essay on the origin and subsequent history of the *Journal of Library History* may provide us with some insight into what role that scholarly journal has played in the development of the field. Over the last thirty years, the *Journal* has manifested itself as an institutional presence at two schools of library science, Florida State University (FSU) for the first ten years, followed by more than twenty years at the University of Texas at Austin (UT-Austin). That same geographical and chronological sequence—FSU (1966–76) and UT-Austin (1976–)—will be the framework of this paper.<sup>7</sup>

### **The *Journal* at Florida State University, 1966–1976**

Louis Shores, the individual so influential in the formation of a journal of library history, was a person of wide-ranging interests and talents. Ideas on reference works and service, the educational role of encyclope-

dias, the library-college concept, media, and library history all jostled for preeminence in his fertile and protean thought. It was history, however—a philosophy of history essentially Hegelian and mystical—that formed the core of his deepest thought and sustained him throughout a professional career in librarianship that spanned more than fifty years.

Shores, however, had not started out to become a librarian; his earliest efforts were devoted to the field of education. He began his graduate work by gaining a master's degree at City College of New York in education following undergraduate work at the University of Toledo. It was only the lack of opportunities for him in education that turned him in the direction of librarianship, whereupon he decided to enter the new School of Library Service at Columbia University. He received the B.A. degree from that institution in 1928. A few years afterward, at George Peabody College for Teachers, Shores wrote a doctoral dissertation on the history of American Colonial college libraries.<sup>8</sup> It was an excellent work, one that some have cited "as the beginning of the current library history movement."<sup>9</sup> Shores always believed that the historical research connected with his doctor's degree molded his entire historiographical approach.<sup>10</sup> It is also reasonable that the research played a part in giving birth to what he called the "tangibles" of his Library History Crusade: the ALHRT in 1947, the Library History Seminars in 1961, and, finally, the formation of a journal for library history.<sup>11</sup>

After succeeding in founding the first two tangibles earlier in his career at FSU, Shores began to make plans for the journal in the mid-1960s. Despite his avowed love of library history, there is no indication that he harbored any grandiose conceptions of its academic status. In his estimation, the subfield of library history, though rarely exposed to open derision, was in reality the neglected child of the library science family. After the founding of the journal, Shores referred to this benign neglect when recalling "the previously neglected areas of library history, philosophy, and comparative librarianship."<sup>12</sup> That neglect, he implied, was longstanding but in its current manifestation was traceable to a quixotic quest for novelty and change begun in the 1950s and 1960s by many American library leaders. In that trendy cultural milieu, the stolid writings of the historians "have found no outlet in professional journals that for the most part are committed to the current scene."<sup>13</sup> In all likelihood, Shores believed that the broader and longer perspective engendered by a journal of library history would act as a voice of reason in the midst of the cacophony of the change agents.<sup>14</sup> Furthermore, the journal would assume a practical role by providing a convenient place for publishing some of the better papers originally read at the Round Table meetings.

Based upon his extensive previous experience in journal publication, Shores estimated that three hundred subscribers were needed in order to sustain the new journal. When a comprehensive campaign for subscribers

finally raised the required number, he gave the approval to proceed.<sup>15</sup> The inaugural issue of the *Journal of Library History, Philosophy and Comparative Librarianship* was published by the library school in January 1966. Links with the past were maintained when Wayne Shirley, Shores's friend and colleague, sent congratulations from the American Library History Roundtable of the ALA.<sup>16</sup> A new journal had been born.

The editorial and advisory boards for the new journal were impressive. Shores had gathered a cadre of local volunteers around him, people like N. Orwin Rush, Richard A. Bartlett, Martha Jane K. Zachert, and, a few years later, Barbara McCrimmon.<sup>17</sup> All of these individuals were listed on the masthead of the first issue. Shores, of course, was listed as the editor, but six other editors were provided in the categories of associate, department, and consulting. In addition, an administrative assistant, Marguerite Sellars, was listed. As Shores's secretary, she artfully handled a multitude of duties, including "bookkeeping and subscription services, the shuffling of manuscripts, and the organizational structure of the journal."<sup>18</sup> In addition to the editorial assistance, a second category, the faculty publications board, listed three chairmen. These individuals acted as referees for the articles submitted to the journal. A third category was the international advisory board, which listed eighteen advisors from five continents and the United Nations.

The new journal published by the FSU team came off the press in an eighty-eight-page, saddle-stitched binding format, sporting a light green cover with the stylized logo "JLH" on it.<sup>19</sup> The cover of the first issue gave the name, the *Journal of Library History*. The title page, however, provided a fuller title: the *Journal of Library History, Philosophy and Comparative Librarianship*, but with the additional words of the expanded version in a smaller size type. When the title of the journal was given in the text, most writers used the short title, but others used the expanded version.<sup>20</sup> Much to the consternation of catalogers, there was always some degree of ambiguity about the exact name of the *Journal*.

The overall arrangement of the journal was a composite or mixed format, being comprised of both scholarly articles and editorial columns or departments. The six editorial departments were "Epitome," "Of Librarians and Historians," "Vignettes of Library History," "Libraries Abroad," "JLH Bookshelf," and "Sources." The editorial approach of the departments (except for the last two) was to present a personal view of the library world, stressing current events and conditions.

The "Articles" section, though, was the centerpiece of the quarterly journal. Over the 11 volumes (44 issues) at FSU, there were a total of about 165 articles, though admittedly a few of the articles were simply brief informational pieces. The articles dealt with all of the varied aspects of the field, including books, libraries, librarianship, printing,

library education, and a number of other areas. All periods of history were dealt with, including ancient and medieval. A striking number of overview articles on libraries and librarianship in an international context (Colombia, Thailand, Pakistan, West Germany, India-Pakistan, Johannesburg, Jamaica, Pretoria, National Diet Library of Japan, etc.) were included.

The authors of the articles expressed an appreciation for viewing libraries within their surrounding cultures. Even with this view, however, the stress was strongly on the library as an institution of society, and decidedly less stress was placed upon the connections or nexus between the culture and the library. For instance, in the premier issue, Frank Woodford made the astute observation that “a history of a library reflects clearly the history of the community it serves, and it does it better than can the history of almost any other local institution.”<sup>21</sup> Despite this understanding, Woodford retreated to the tried-and-true approach of writing library history, focusing narrowly on the institutional histories of individual libraries. Woodford envisioned the task of library historians as being the compiling of more and more histories of libraries. It may not be too much to say that the understanding of “library history” during the FSU years placed a heavy stress upon the word “library” and less upon “history.”

As for the departments themselves, oversight of the premier one, “Epitome,” was the responsibility of Louis Shores. Featured at the beginning of each issue, it was laid out in sequentially numbered paragraphs in which Shores commented and exhorted on matters relating to library history, comparative librarianship, philosophy, and other aspects of the field.

In the back of each issue was “Of Librarians and Historians” under the editorship of Richard A. Bartlett of the Department of History at FSU. Bartlett commonly featured librarians or aspects of bibliophilic lore. Some of the beginning topics were “Ask about Values,” “Historians at the Huntington,” “How Strange about Books!” and “Treasures in the Attic.”

“Vignettes of Library History” was under the editorial responsibility of John E. Clemons. This department was similar to Bartlett’s department, providing brief stories or anecdotes about libraries or librarians. Beginning with “The Library That Saved a University” and “Dewey in Florida,” the column produced the much-discussed “Casanova, Lover of Books and Libraries” and, later, “A Regimental Library in the Confederate Army.”

“Libraries Abroad” was a department featuring comparative librarianship. Under the editorship of Miles Jackson, the department would describe newsworthy happenings in libraries around the world, including building projects and the like. There were often several pages devoted to

the department, in most cases categorized under the geographical headings of America, Europe, Asia, Australasia, and Africa. Sometimes, though, the entire column would concentrate on the building or renovation of a single library. Robert V. Williams, who assumed responsibility for this topic, discussed the issues in a 1973 editorial.<sup>22</sup>

John David Marshall was the editor of "JLH Bookshelf," which reviewed about two hundred books during the eleven years of the *Journal* at FSU. Each issue featured some four or five current works in the field of library history that were selected for review. Some of the reviews were two pages or more in length, though a few were cited with only a brief descriptive paragraph provided.

A new department, "Sources," was introduced several years later. Under the direction of Martha Jane Zachert, it was a valuable column that pointed library historians to the historical sources necessary for undertaking their work. "It will," the editor indicated, "from time to time, publish source material as examples of types or as specific items of interest to the community of library historians." It even began the innovative approach of making comments on the sources actually utilized by library historians in their published work, whether in the *Journal* or published elsewhere.<sup>23</sup>

As so often happens with a new journal, there were the inevitable personnel and format changes. Shores, for instance, held his editorship in "Epitome" through volume 4 (1966–69) and offered sporadic guest editorials thereafter. The department "Of Librarians and Historians," under the direction of Richard A. Bartlett, was active only through the first six volumes. "Vignettes of Library History" (edited by John E. Clemons) was a part of the first four volumes but appeared only occasionally thereafter. The situation was very similar with "Libraries Abroad" under the guidance of Miles Jackson.

The physical format of volumes 1 through 7 remained unchanged in typography and layout. However, the *Journal* was forced by financial pressures to experiment with a larger physical format with volume 8 (1973). The *Journal's* editorial board and subscribers were embarrassed by the resulting quality. Volume 9 reverted to the original specifications.

Each of the departmental editors used his column to make personal editorial comments in an open and forthright manner. The result was both a bane and a blessing. On the one hand, the columns could manifest a personal, direct, and human quality, useful in drawing together supporters of the field; on the other hand, the columns could be used by some to perpetuate the stereotype that library history was insufficiently scholarly. In addition, the juxtaposition of editorial departments and scholarly articles in such close proximity gave the *Journal* a mixed quality that was sometimes jarring. Given the status of library history in the pro-

fession during the mid-1960s, the editorial board saw this approach as the best possible way to reach the broadest constituency.

The initial subscription statistics for the new journal were encouraging. Editor Shores noted that 650 subscriptions had been received as of the first issue. This gave promise of bright days ahead. One year later, in 1967, Shore announced the even more impressive fact that "over 1,000 subscribers have confirmed their interest in the previously neglected areas of library history, philosophy, and comparative librarianship."<sup>24</sup> The 1967 subscription level has probably never been exceeded.

By that same year, Louis Shores was in his early sixties and had been dean of the Library School at FSU for more than twenty years. He had been general editor of the *Journal* for its first two years, setting it on a course it would retain for the remainder of its years in Tallahassee. Shores retired in September 1967. After his retirement, though, he still retained a departmental editorship for two additional years and wrote sporadic guest editorials after that. He was in the background more or less through 1974.<sup>25</sup> It seems fair to say that Shores was the primary personality behind the new journal during its tenure at FSU. As a professional courtesy after his retirement, the masthead of the *Journal* continued to list him as the editor emeritus for the next nine years.<sup>26</sup>

Shores's successor as dean of the Library School was Harold Goldstein, who had come from a professorship at the University of Illinois. He held the position of editor of the *Journal* throughout the remainder of its days at FSU. By all accounts, Goldstein carried out his duties with professional skill and knowledge, with "a management style that got things done with dispatch."<sup>27</sup> In its tone and format, the *Journal* under Goldstein continued in the path laid out by Shores.

In many respects, that path more often than not led out into an academic wilderness, giving the *Journal* the opportunity to make a lonely witness to a scholarly world that seemed more preoccupied with other matters. To the *Journal*, library history, philosophic librarianship, and comparative librarianship mattered, and librarians who neglected the study of these areas maintained a truncated view of their own field. In a technological world that less and less saw the need for these types of nostrums, the *Journal* was determined to continue its lonely witness. Along with these concerns, it even had to contend with disputes from within the ranks of library historians.<sup>28</sup> Considering these difficult circumstances, the *Journal's* efforts take on an almost heroic quality. Dispensing library anecdotes from here and abroad, good solid, informative articles, and exhortations, it took its stand and made its case. Though there were no doubt detractors, the *Journal* persevered in its mission.

By any fair appraisal, then, the *Journal of Library History* was a success in what it tried to do. A scholarly journal had begun and continued for

over a decade. The writing of library history was being supported. Moreover, individuals interested in the field had a rallying point from which they could gain strength and encouragement. Those from outside the field could gain a clearer understanding of what it was that library history could say to the larger field of librarianship. One particularly interesting effort was beginning a program to publish bibliographies of library history for all fifty states; only fourteen actually appeared, some within journal issues, others as separate publications.<sup>29</sup> A glance at the *Journal* demonstrates that it promoted extensively the Round Table and the Library History Seminars. All of these facts are indicative that the *Journal* had made a good beginning, one that would provide the foundation for further growth in the future.

A similar assessment of the beginning of the *Journal* has been provided by library historian Lee Shiflett. "By any standard except financial," Shiflett proposes, "*The Journal of Library History* was successful. It was well received and immediately became a reputable scholarly journal attracting contributions from a wide variety of authors."<sup>30</sup> As Shiflett avers, it was in the area of finances that trouble arose. From the very beginning, the *Journal* had made a conscious decision to undertake its mission without pressuring FSU for financial assistance. The school provided space and some minimal level of financial assistance, but certainly not enough to support completely the scholarly effort. Without that level of complete institutional support, Shores was placed in the position of securing his own financial backing through a combination of subscriptions and advertisements. He later described it as starting a journal "on a shoestring with no subsidy."<sup>31</sup> The difficulties involved in undertaking such a project became more apparent over time.

Shores began the first issue with the relatively expensive subscription rate of \$10 per year (1966–72).<sup>32</sup> This figure was increased to \$12.50, beginning with volume 8 in 1973, after a notice of the price increase was given in the last issue of the preceding volume. Even this increase was not enough; just two years later the subscription price was raised to \$15, but this time no advance notice or reason was given.<sup>33</sup> In seeking to place the *Journal* on a solid financial footing, Shores sought more than just subscription funds. He also solicited backing from advertisers, and his initial efforts gave some opportunity for hope. For the initial issue, Shores filled the last six pages with advertising and the back cover as well. Regrettably, though, some of the advertisers later dropped their support.<sup>34</sup>

Despite all these efforts, the financial position of the *Journal* declined steadily, becoming critical by the mid-1970s. With regret, the decision was made to find a new home for the *Journal*. During the early part of 1976, letters were written to other departments of library science. Included in these potential sites were the University of Texas at Austin,

the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and, in all likelihood, the University of Illinois. It is also persistently rumored that a prominent commercial journal publisher was ready to take over the new responsibilities. Out of this flurry of activity, a new candidate for sponsorship of the *Journal* emerged as a likely successor. It was the University of Texas at Austin.

### **The *Journal* at the University of Texas at Austin, 1976–**

The initial letter to the Graduate Library School at the University of Texas at Austin could not have come at a more propitious time. A confluence of three critical individuals came together to bring the *Journal* to UT-Austin.

The first was a potential new editor in the person of Donald G. Davis, Jr., who assumed his teaching duties at the UT-Austin Library School beginning in 1971. The new professor arrived with an appreciation of history and a solid background in its study. He first earned an undergraduate degree at the University of California, Los Angeles, following that with master's degrees in history and library science at the University of California at Berkeley. After working in a college library for a few years, Davis was ready for advanced study in the doctoral program at the University of Illinois. His dissertation was a historical study of the Association of American Library Schools.<sup>35</sup> When, some five years later, the possibility of moving the *Journal* to UT-Austin surfaced, the young professor leaped at the new opportunity.

The second critical figure was the dean of the Library School, C. Glenn Sparks. Initially, the dean was not overly enthusiastic about the opportunity to be involved with the *Journal*. He read the letter from FSU in a faculty meeting of the Library School with a degree of cool detachment. Even after hearing of Davis's interest in the proposal, the dean expressed reservations about whether the young professor could handle the myriad details of editing a scholarly journal. After some discussion, however, Sparks became convinced that Davis was the right person for the job. The dean became an enthusiastic partner in the project, joining the *Journal's* editorial board as well as juggling academic schedules to free up time for the editor.

The third critical individual was Philip D. Jones, who had recently assumed the position of director of the UT Press. Having recently arrived from the lush journal-publishing fields at the University of Chicago, Jones was in an expansive mode of operation as he entered upon his new duties at UT-Austin. The sponsorship of new scholarly journals would add a measure of scholarly prestige to his new university. Thus, Jones, along with Ann Reinke, manager of the journals department, maintained

a consistently supportive attitude about bringing the *Journal* to UT-Austin. Therefore, when the proposition for a new journal was broached, the press director accepted the opportunity with some degree of alacrity. The importance of this ownership and support on the part of the UT Press can scarcely be overestimated. As the owner of the journal, the press was responsible for all financial obligations, copyediting, design, marketing, and bookkeeping. Editing responsibilities would be undertaken by Davis, with space requirements and part-time assistance provided by the Library School. This publishing arrangement, much more supportive than at FSU, proved of inestimable value to the *Journal*.

The confluence of these three critical individuals proved decisive. Within a matter of months of the first inquiries by FSU, a decision was made to move the *Journal* to UT-Austin. Once the decision had been made, the transition took place with minimal problems, despite occasional awkward moments. FSU agreed to send all typescript submissions to UT-Austin beginning in June. While Davis, the new editor, was hard at work for the journal edition of early 1977 (vol. 12, no. 1, winter 1977), the old editor was working on his final issue of late 1976 (vol. 11, no. 4, October 1976). In addition, FSU still retained responsibility for coordinating activities at Library History Seminar V, held in Philadelphia in October.

It was during the transition period that Davis began thinking about possible changes for the *Journal*. Taking for his example the redoubtable *Library Quarterly* and its editor, Boyd Rayward, the new editor envisioned a thoroughly objective and scholarly periodical—one that would place it within a broader conceptualization of the role of libraries within history. He was seeking a wider focus for the field of library history, in which the interpenetration of social, cultural, and intellectual history with libraries would be stressed. Once his thoughts had solidified and actually were implemented, they would result in the appearance of a number of changes in the *Journal*.

The most obvious change was cosmetic. The *Journal's* leadership changed the cover of the perfect-bound journal to a dark blue. Also, the *Journal* dropped the stylized JLH on the cover and instead depicted a bookplate. Each issue provided an explanatory essay on the bookplate. Each succeeding issue has featured a different bookplate, in the process representing many areas of the world.

Other changes were more substantial. Davis jettisoned the departmental format in an attempt to attain the academic tone he was seeking. The role of the editor was placed more in the background than it had been previously, yet at the same time Davis was thoroughly involved in every phase of decision making and production. Davis's plan was to structure the journal in three sections: "Articles," "Notes and Essays," and "Book Reviews."

With the first and last sections self-evident, the “Notes and Essays” section would provide brief essays that did not meet the length standards for articles. Second, he enlarged the book review section, both in quantity and in scope of coverage. Thus, 1,270 book reviews have been published in the *Journal* while at UT-Austin, an average of 13.8 reviews per issue, compared to the earlier 4.5 reviews per issue at FSU. Third, Davis instituted a policy of publishing periodic thematic issues, in which all or most articles were devoted to a particular topic.<sup>36</sup> All of these changes developed out of the conceptual approach taken by the new editor.

A change in the name of the *Journal*, adopted somewhat later in 1988, was more apparent than real.<sup>37</sup> Beginning with volume 23, the new title became *Libraries & Culture* with the descriptive subtitle, “a journal of library history.” This change did not indicate a shift from the original purpose of the *Journal* but rather a “broadening recognition” of the role of libraries within culture. Thus *Libraries & Culture* began describing itself as “an interdisciplinary journal that explores the significance of collections of recorded knowledge—their creation, organization, preservation, and utilization—in the context of cultural and social history, unlimited as to time or place” (vol. 23, no. 1 [1988]).

The broader conception envisioned by Davis is clearly demonstrated in the approximately 430 articles published in the *Journal*. The international perspective of the *Journal of Library History* is confirmed and expanded with numerous articles on international topics with an emphasis on their history and not current events.<sup>38</sup> In addition, all types of cultural and intellectual history related to libraries and their influence are regularly present.<sup>39</sup> A recent review of the *Journal* provides us with a good overview of its articles through an analysis of an index of its contents:

culture has twenty-one subheadings; history, ten; and intellectual history, nine. . . . By type of library, the public library (215 entries) has been written about most often, followed by academic libraries (117) and, finally, special libraries (forty-seven), not counting law, medical, or presidential libraries. Other frequently written about subjects include library education (seventy-eight entries), printing (fifty-seven), publishing industry (fifty-three), oral history (thirty-six), and archives (thirty-two). Furthermore, one can find extensive entries for bibliographies and literature reviews.<sup>40</sup>

One of the strengths of the *Journal* at UT-Austin has been the degree of stability and continuity in editorial practice and collegial relationships within the university. This is clearly evident in the day-to-day editorial assistance required to produce a scholarly journal. For most of the last fifteen years, Bette W. Oliver has served as assistant editor. She has

provided professional expertise, scholarly discernment, and editorial skill, all essential to the success of the *Journal*. During this period she also earned a Ph.D. in European history, thus strengthening her abilities and enhancing the *Journal's* academic and collegial relationships.

The same stability and continuity seen in the day-to-day editorial work is evident as well in the editorial board of the *Journal* at UT-Austin. Even with the inevitable changes in the board during the last two decades, continuity has been maintained, providing a secure foundation for the entire enterprise. Moreover, the board has become increasingly interdisciplinary, mirroring the interests of the *Journal*. Currently, the board is comprised of nine members, all but one of whom are at the University of Texas at Austin. Four of the members are in library and information science education, one is a librarian, and there is one each from the Departments of Art and Art History, English, French and Italian, and History.<sup>41</sup>

The stability and continuity, however, have not proven sufficient to stem a slow slippage in the numbers of subscriptions to the *Journal*. When Davis assumed control in 1976, the total subscriptions were approximately 900. By the mid-1990s, this figure had dropped to about 700. It is probable that this subscription decline over the last two decades follows the same declining trajectory as the status of library history among library educators. One can point to several encouraging factors in this otherwise distressing situation. First, the overall decline appears to have reached a plateau. In addition, there have been some gains in personal subscriptions, with the majority of the decreases coming from institutional subscriptions.<sup>42</sup>

From the beginning of its tenure at UT-Austin, the *Journal* has initiated a greater array of new professional relationships, both individually and institutionally, in an attempt to solidify its academic standing. It was not long before the *Journal* began attracting article contributions from various scholars outside librarianship, including cultural historians and those representing various international perspectives. Inevitably, therefore, the individual readers of the *Journal* have become an eclectic group of scholars, including librarians, historians, classicists, art historians, and others.

On the institutional level, the *Journal* has formed new relationships with other associations, both outside and within the field of library history. One example of this external outreach was the decision to join the Conference of Historical Journals, an association of scholarly history journals. Moreover, *Libraries & Culture* sought and gained recognition with other scholarly journals and is listed in the "Recent Scholarship" section of the *Journal of American History* and indexed in *Historical Abstracts* and *America: History and Life*.<sup>43</sup>

For institutional linkages more directly related to the field of library history, there have been a number of notable developments. Beginning about 1978, the *Journal* appeared to become a conduit in which its broader conception of history flowed into both the ALHRT and the Library History Seminars. The first indication of this broader conception on the part of the round table became evident when the word "American" was dropped from the official name. At the same time, the name change also appeared to signal a greater interest in the international aspects of library history. Much of this broadening in the focus of the LHRT can be traced to Davis's service as LHRT chair from 1978 to 1979. In much the same way, the broader conception flowed into the seminars. Concurrent with his chair at the round table, Davis was preparing for Library History Seminar VI (1980). Conspicuously, the theme of that seminar was "Libraries and Culture." Mary Niles Maack, in preparing a chronology for the fiftieth anniversary of the LHRT, concluded that the *Journal* was influential in bringing about a renewed international focus for library history.<sup>44</sup>

A second institutional linkage not only connects the *Journal* to the field but also links its two manifestations at FSU and at UT-Austin. The biennial literature reviews of American library history, having begun at FSU by Michael Harris, have been continued and expanded at UT-Austin by Wayne Wiegand and Ed Goedeken. The literature reviews cover books, articles, and dissertations.<sup>45</sup>

A further institutional development within the field was the decision to publish material from the Library History Seminars in the *Journal of Library History*. Beginning with Library History Seminar VI (1980)—the first seminar for the UT-Austin *Journal*—the seminar proceedings appeared as two oversized issues of the *Journal* prior to separate publication in indexed clothbound volumes. This practice indicates the rich intermixing of the round table, the Library History Seminars, and the *Journal*.<sup>46</sup> With the return to these three tangibles of library history, the story has come around full circle.

Meanwhile, the *Journal* continues within the environmental context of its professional home and of the economics of scholarly publishing. For many years it has tried to emulate the scholarly leader in the field—the *Library Quarterly*, published quarterly by the University of Chicago Press beginning in 1931. From its inception, this venerable publication has included some historical articles and reviews dealing with books, libraries, and librarianship, even as its editorial offices moved from professional schools at Chicago to Indiana and currently UCLA. However, especially in recent decades, the thrust of this research organ has been toward other interests. Though the prestige for publication is great, the audience is very diverse. *Library History*, published semiannually under

the aegis of the Library History Group of the Library Association (U.K.) since 1967, is more similar to the *Journal* because of its focus and audience. Though it was a slender publication in its early years, with some aberrations from its earlier pattern during the 1990s, in 1998 it was reorganized as a more international organ and has taken a serious new turn under its new publisher, Maney Publishing of Leeds. Its attractive new format and broader vision make it a companion of the *Journal*, and together they provide a richer diet for library historians everywhere.

Though friendly competition among these fairly priced scholarly journals with a historical perspective prevails, they all face challenges for serial acquisitions funds as the commercially produced scientific journals demand a greater share of research library budgets and as popular treatments of historical topics seem to suffice for much of the profession. The economics of scholarly publishing and the popular taste of the profession thus present their threats. Alas, the value of serious scholarship and historical perspectives in the profession cannot be assumed at the turn of this century.<sup>47</sup>

## Conclusion

A journal for the library history community was born thirty-four years ago and assumed the name the *Journal of Library History*. The new journal grew in stature and in strength, and its understanding matured and developed over the years. That same journal continues today in adulthood as *Libraries & Culture*. The adult journal looks at its earlier life and there sees evidence for everything that it has become. That life, like any life, can scarcely be summed up in a few words. Yet perhaps there are a few transcendent themes in the life of the *Journal* to which one can point.

One can point, first of all, to the way that it has striven for *continuity*. The *Journal*—both at Tallahassee and Austin—has manifested a continuing interest in the rich and variegated history of libraries. Though other, more popular topics have arisen during that time, they have not diverted the *Journal* from its specific goal of enriching our understandings of library history. Significantly, this enrichment has been pursued not by rejecting the research of the past but by a conscious desire to build upon it. Somewhat surprisingly, this striving for continuity has emerged with a concurrent appreciation of the need for *change*. To a greater degree, library historians see the need to analyze current topics in library and information science from historical perspectives and, in the process, demonstrate history's relevance. Attempts by library historians to distance our craft from the wider world of librarianship have been counterproductive. One can point as well to the theme of a growth in *contextuality*—an ever-increasing appreciation of the library as a cultural

and social institution and the desire to link this study with better established areas of historical research. A final transcendent theme is the *collaboration* that has evolved among the institutional components established for study and research in library history. The ALA Library History Round Table, the Library History Seminars, and the *Journal* have each mutually strengthened the other two. Exploring ways to make this collaboration even more fruitful and perhaps devising new institutional components can only benefit the entire field. The building up of that field—the field of library history—has been the whole role of *JLH/L&C*. Together they have sought to advance the scholarship of library history.

When one considers the striking work that has been accomplished by “historians of the book” over the past three decades, one can see similar and perhaps even greater opportunities for the “historians of the library.” The opportunity exists for library historians to provide a clearer picture of the rich and complex ways in which the library interacts with the intellectual, cultural, and social elements of its society. *Libraries & Culture* will continue to lead, nurture, and promote this endeavor.

## Notes

A draft copy of this article was sent to the following individuals: Drs. Edward A. Goedeken, O. Lee Shiflett, John Mark Tucker, Robert V. Williams, and Martha Jane K. Zachert. Andrew B. Wethheimer, doctoral student at the University of Wisconsin–Madison, also supplied assistance. Their comments, provided with great insight, grace, and dispatch, are very much appreciated and have made this a better article than it would have been without them.

1. Louis Shores, “Wayne Shirley: In Memoriam,” *Journal of Library History* 9, no. 4 (1974): 291–92. Wayne Shirley (1900–73) was librarian and dean of the Library School at Pratt Institute from 1938 to 1955. Louis Shores (1904–81) was dean of the Library School at Florida State University from 1946 to 1967.

2. In 1978 the American Library History Round Table (ALHRT) removed “American” from its name, becoming simply the Library History Round Table (LHRT).

3. Shores, “Wayne Shirley,” 292. According to Shores, he expressed the desire to have a journal for the field at the initial meeting of the ALHRT: “At that very first meeting, I expressed the hope that we could one day publish a journal” (*Quiet World: A Librarian’s Crusade for Destiny* [Hamden, Conn.: Shoe String Press, 1975], 232).

4. Thirty-four volumes of the *Journal* have been published between 1966 and 1999. Until volume 22 (1987), it retained the title *Journal of Library History (Philosophy and Comparative Librarianship)*. Beginning with volume 23 (1988), it has been published under the title *Libraries & Culture* with the descriptive subtitle “a journal of library history.” The brief title, *Journal*, is used throughout this paper to refer to the publication both before and after the name change.

5. Shores, “Wayne Shirley,” 292.

6. Lee Shiflett, s.v. “Shores, Louis,” in *Supplement to the Dictionary of American Library Biography*, ed. Wayne A. Wiegand (Englewood, Colo.: Libraries Unlimited, 1990), 128.

7. Important source materials for the study of the *Journal* are the individual issues of the journal, as well as the archival material located at the Center for American History, University of Texas at Austin, and in the office files of the *Libraries & Culture* office. Other material can be gleaned from a review essay by Laurel Grotzinger in *Library and Information Science Annual* 3 (1987): 203–5. Important overviews can be found in Hermina G. B. Anghelescu and Elizabeth A. Dupuis, eds., *Libraries & Culture: Twenty-five-Year Cumulative Index, Volumes 1–25, 1966–1990* (Austin: Graduate School of Library and Information Science, UT-Austin, 1995) and in the review of the same work by John Richardson, Jr., in *Library Quarterly* 67, no. 1 (January 1997): 87–88. For biographical information, see the relevant entries in Bohdan S. Wynar, ed., *Dictionary of American Library Biography (DALB)* (Littleton, Colo.: Libraries Unlimited, 1978). It contains over three hundred biographical sketches of prominent American library leaders deceased as of June 1976. Among the sketches, John David Marshall has contributed one on William Wayne Shirley (1900–1973). For material on Louis Shores, one can examine with great profit the biographical sketch by Lee Shiflett in Wayne A. Wiegand, ed., *Supplement to the Dictionary of American Library Biography* (Englewood, Colo.: Libraries Unlimited, 1990). The *Supplement* contains fifty-one biographical sketches not contained in the original *DALB* and extends the coverage date to June 1987. See also the full-length work by Shiflett, *Louis Shores: Defining Educational Librarianship* (Lanham, Md.: Scarecrow Press, 1996). Louis Shores's autobiography, *Quiet World*, is an illuminating account of his entire professional life and contains a chapter on his views on historiography and the beginning of the *Journal* (224–36).

8. Louis Shores, *Origins of the American College Library, 1638–1800* (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1934).

9. Shores, *Quiet World*, 224.

10. *Ibid.*, 230.

11. Shores considered the Round Table, seminars, *Journal*, and visual-oral history as the “four tangibles of my Library History Crusade” (Shores, *Quiet World*, 236).

12. Shores, “Epitome,” *Journal of Library History* 2, no. 1 (1967): 4.

13. Shores, *Journal of Library History* 1, no. 1 (1966): 5. This view is also the theme of the chapter on library history in his autobiography, *Quiet World*, esp. 231, 236.

14. In Shores's memorial to Wayne Shirley, Shores lauded most of all Shirley's “courageous commitment to constants in an age of perpetual celebration of change.” Shores returned to that theme in his peroration: “Much as death seems to enforce change, the memory of Wayne Shirley reinforces faith in the constants of the eternal verities” (“Wayne Shirley,” 291–92).

15. Shores, *Quiet World*, 234.

16. Shirley, *Journal of Library History* 1, no. 1 (1966): 33.

17. The editorial assistance listed for the first issue included the following: associate editors: Richard A. Bartlett and Martha Jane K. Zachert; department editors: Miles M. Jackson and John David Marshall; consulting editors: John E. Clemons and N. Orwin Rush; administrative assistant: Marguerite Sellars.

18. Shiflett, *Louis Shores*, 215. In personal correspondence, Shiflett relates that “she almost singlehandedly held the journal together” (correspondence with Donald G. Davis, Jr., dated 21 January 1999).

19. Shores expressed disappointment over the format and printing of the first issue. “We had taken the lowest bid. It came from a small printing establishment with limited resources, and among other things, a font of type without italics.

Volume one, number one looks amateurish. We shifted to another type style in issue two, and to another printer later" (*Quiet World*, 234).

20. Shores used the expanded version in vol. 9, no. 4, p. 292.

21. Frank Woodford, "Second Thoughts on Writing Library History," *Journal of Library History* 1, no. 1 (1966): 41.

22. Robert V. Williams, "The Journal of Library History, Philosophy and . . . ; An Informal Report on an Informal Self-Study," *Journal of Library History, Philosophy, and Comparative Librarianship* 8, nos. 3-4 (1973): 110-12.

23. Martha Jane K. Zachert, "Sources," *Journal of Library History* 3, no. 3 (1968): 266.

24. Shores, "Epitome," 4.

25. In October of that year Shores fell and broke his hip; his mobility was impaired thereafter.

26. Shiflett notes the dropping of Shores's name as editor emeritus in the *Supplement to the Dictionary of American Library Biography*, 129. See also the correspondence from Shores to Davis dated 14 August 1977, requesting the listing of his name on the masthead for the sake of "continuity with the past." In a letter to Shores dated 12 September 1977, Davis did not allude to this request but did promise to "share your letter with the editorial board at its next meeting." There is no record of any action in this matter, but Shores's request was not granted.

27. Personal correspondence of Martha Jane K. Zachert to Donald G. Davis, Jr., undated [January 1999].

28. See the observations of Michael Harris: "Library history remains by and large, like the Library History Round Table, a playground for amateurs" ("Two Years Work in American Library History, 1969-1970," *Journal of Library History* 7, no. 1 [1972]: 45). In an editorial, Ron Blazek also expresses strong reservations about the state of research in library history and adds what appears to be an irresolvable division over what actually constitutes a credible piece of research. Some historians advocate the use of a hypothesis while others do not. See *Journal of Library History* 8, no. 2 (1973): 50-52.

29. See editor Goldstein's comments in "From the Editor: Take Five," *Journal of Library History* 5, no. 1 (1970): 3. There he contemplates "a series of state bibliographies of library history which will encompass all fifty units of this country." This project is discussed in the "Historiography and Sources" chapter of Donald G. Davis, Jr., and John Mark Tucker, *American Library History: A Comprehensive Guide to the Literature* (Santa Barbara, Calif.: ABC-CLIO, 1989), 5. The states include Alaska (1972), California (1976), Connecticut (1972), Florida (1970), Hawaii (1970), Illinois (1976), Minnesota (1973), Mississippi (1973), New York (1971), North Carolina (1971), Ohio (1972), South Carolina (1973), Virginia (1971), and Wisconsin (1976).

30. Shiflett, *Louis Shores*, 215.

31. Letter of Louis Shores to Donald G. Davis, Jr., dated 26 February 1978, in the administrative correspondence file located at the *Libraries & Culture* office at FSU. See also the comments of Shiflett, *Louis Shores*, 214.

32. This subscription price of \$10 per year in 1966 should be seen in the context of an average annual salary for entry-level librarians of perhaps \$5,000. In January 1966 the quarterly journals *Library Quarterly* and *Library Trends* both had subscription rates of \$6 per year.

33. *Journal of Library History* 10, no. 1 (1975).

34. Letter of Donald G. Davis, Jr., to Louis Shores dated 15 March 1978. Davis comments: "We have begun to attract advertisers back again as you can see from the three paid full-page ads in the Fall 1977 issue."

35. Donald G. Davis, Jr., *The Association of American Library Schools, 1915–1968: An Analytical History* (Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Press, 1974).

36. Library History Seminars: Library History Seminar VI, “Libraries & Culture” (Austin, Tex.), *Journal of Library History* 16, no. 1 (1981) and 16, no. 2 (1981); Library History Seminar VII, “Libraries, Books & Culture” (Chapel Hill, N.C.), *Journal of Library History* 21, no. 1 (1986) and 21, no. 2 (1986); Library History Seminar VIII, “Reading & Libraries” (Bloomington, Ind.), *Journal of Library History* 26, no. 1 (1991) and 26, no. 2 (1991); Library History Seminar IX, “Libraries & Philanthropy” (Tuscaloosa, Ala.), *Journal of Library History* 31, no. 1 (1996) and 31, no. 2 (1996).

Other special issues: “Women in Library History: Liberating Our Past,” *Journal of Library History* 18, no. 4 (1983); “Library and Information Science in France: A 1983 Overview,” *Journal of Library History* 19, no. 1 (1984); “Library and Information Science: Historical Perspectives,” *Journal of Library History* 20, no. 2 (1985); “Libraries at Times of Cultural Change” (Proceedings of an International Seminar . . . Organized by the Library History Group of the [British] Library Association and the Round Table on Library History of the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions), *Libraries & Culture* 24, no. 1 (1989); “Library History Research in the International Context” (Proceedings of an International Symposium . . . Organized by the Wolfenbütteler Arbeitskreis für Bibliotheksgeschichte and the Round Table on Library History of the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions), *Libraries & Culture* 25, no. 1 (1990); “Libraries and Librarianship in Italy,” *Libraries & Culture* 25, no. 3 (1990); “The History of Reading and Libraries in the Nordic Countries” (Proceedings of an International Seminar . . . Organized by the Round Table on Library History and the Round Table on Research in Reading of the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions), *Libraries & Culture* 28, no. 1 (1993); “The Public Library Inquiry: Reminiscences, Reflections, and Research” (A Collection of Papers from the Library History Round Table . . . Dedicated to Professor Alice I. Bryan), *Libraries & Culture* 29, no. 1 (1994); “The History of Reading and Libraries in the United States and Russia” (Proceedings of an International Conference . . . Organized by the IFLA Roundtables on Library History and Research in Reading), *Libraries & Culture* 33, no. 1 (1998); “Orientalist Libraries and Orientalism” (Proceedings of an International Workshop . . . Organized by the Round Table on Library History of the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions and the Department of Library Science, University of Istanbul), *Libraries & Culture* 33, no. 3 (1998).

37. Davis discusses the impending change in the final issue of the journal under the old name, *Journal of Library History* 22, no. 4 (1987).

38. John Richardson, Jr., review of *Libraries & Culture: Twenty-Five-Year Cumulative Index, Volumes 1–25, 1966–1990*, *Library Quarterly* (January 1997): 87–88. Also of importance are Jean-Pierre V. M. Hérubel and Edward A. Goedeken, “Journals Publishing American Library History: A Research Note,” *Libraries & Culture* 29, no. 2 (1994): 205–9, and Jean-Pierre V. M. Hérubel, “Authorship, Gender, and Institutional Affiliation in Library History: The Case of *Libraries & Culture*,” *Behavioral & Social Sciences Librarian* 11, no. 1 (1991): 49–54.

39. *Ibid.*

40. *Ibid.*

41. Associate editors: Robert L. Dawson, Department of French and Italian, UT-Austin; Alison K. Frazier, Department of History, UT-Austin; David B. Gracy

II, GSLIS, UT-Austin; Joan A. Holladay, Department of Art and Art History, UT-Austin; David Hunter, Fine Arts Library, UT-Austin; Robert S. Martin, SLIS, Texas Women's University; Francis L. Miksa, GSLIS, UT-Austin; Irene Owens, GSLIS, UT-Austin; Michael B. Winship, Department of English, UT-Austin. As a further indication of the interdisciplinary nature of the board, one can note that Davis himself received a courtesy appointment as professor in the Department of History in 1998.

Advisory board: Cheryl Knott Malone, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, representing the LHRT, ALA; John Y. Cole, Library of Congress; Phyllis Dain, Columbia University; D. W. Krummel, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign; Mary Niles Maack, University of California, Los Angeles; Peter F. McNally, McGill University; Wayne A. Wiegand, University of Wisconsin-Madison; Ian R. Willison, British Library.

42. The subscription rate in 1999 was \$30 per year for individuals and \$54 per year for institutions. The student rate was \$18 per year. Members of the ALA LHRT receive a 20 percent discount, paying \$24 per year.

43. The *Journal of American History* is a quarterly publication of the Organization of American Historians.

44. Mary Niles Maack, "Chronology of Events and Publications Relating to the International Dimensions of Library History." Prepared for the 50th Anniversary Celebration of the LHRT (1998).

45. The following list provides the author, the year(s) covered, followed by the volume and number of the *Journal of Library History*: Harris, 1967, 3, no. 4, 1968, 5, no. 2, 1969-70, 7, no. 1; Davis and Harris, 1971-73, 9, no. 4, 1974-75, 11, no. 4; Davis, 1976, 13, no. 2; Wiegand, 1977-78, 14, no. 3, 1979-80, 17, no. 3, 1981-82, 19, no. 3, 1983-84, 21, no. 4, 1985-86, 23, no. 3, 1987-88, 25, no. 4; Passet, 1989-90, 27, no. 4, 1991-92, 29, no. 4; Goedeken, 1993-95, 31, nos. 3-4, 1995-96, 33, no. 4.

46. It could also be noted that *Libraries & Culture* has solidified the long-standing arrangement of publishing works read at the LHRT. In addition, the journal publishes the winning essay in honor of Justin Winsor.

47. Donald G. Davis, Jr., "Ebla to the Electronic Dream: The Role of Historical Perspectives in Professional Education," *Journal of Education for Library and Information Science* 39, no. 3 (Summer 1998): 228-35. See also Margaret F. Stieg, *The Origin and Development of Scholarly Historical Periodicals* (University: University of Alabama Press, 1986).