Technical Services Section interviews…

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Q: How long have you been involved with "technical services"?

A: When I started my career in librarianship, I worked at a very small library where I did a little of everything: reference and instruction, collection development, book processing and repair, serials management, and cataloging. My job title, however, did not reflect the amount of "technical services" work that I actually did. Since 2008, I have worked at Saint Cloud State University in the Collections workgroup as the "Collection Management Librarian." The bulk of my workload involves collection development, ebook/ereader research, and handling copyright/fair use/performance rights issues for the resources housed in the library—all of which requires collaboration with many different people.

Q: How have you adapted to changes in technology that affect your work?

A: I take deep breaths and don't get caught up in the media hype of how all the cool kids are embracing every new gadget, blog, and open source resource. If there is a low-cost, simple tool that will make my work or the work of my staff easier, I will look into that one. In regard to the evolution of media formats (print books to ebooks in particular), this is a work in progress. I lead a committee in my library that studies ebooks and mobile devices. Before we invest time and money in resources, we are surveying students and faculty in order to determine their preferences and level of awareness of ebooks and ereaders. Based on preliminary survey results, it looks like we will need to offer some kind of training to students and faculty to introduce them to ebooks and ereading devices no matter what we invest in. I don't rush into anything without a thorough evaluation of what changes in technology could mean for my staff, colleagues in other workgroups, faculty, and students.

Q: What type of assistance or support has MLA provided in order to deal with these changes?

A: The annual MLA conference always schedules a lot of great sessions for people involved in technical services. We could always use a few more workshops and webinars throughout the year, though. As MLA runs primarily on volunteer labor, if anyone currently working in technical services would like to volunteer to create an MLA-sponsored forum to share their expertise, please feel free to contact the MLA TSS leadership.

Q: What is the most exciting library-related project you are working on right now?

A: I just finished writing a conference paper with my research colleague Plamen Miltenoff to determine whether or not academic libraries are embracing etextbooks at the same rate as the students they serve. We surveyed librarians from English-speaking countries and countries where English is the language of higher education to find out whether or not their libraries invest in textbooks at all, whether or not they have started to invest in etextbooks, and how much it costs them. This will be one of the pioneering papers on this topic and we will be presenting it at the Qualitative and Quantitative Methods in Libraries International Conference in Limerick, Ireland, this May. I am sure that this project will generate discussion and future investigation. I am also editing a book called *Queers Online: LGBT Digital Practices in Libraries, Archives, and Museums.* Librarians, archivists, and curators from the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia, Canada, and the Netherlands have submitted chapter proposals for this book. It's the first book to specifically address the digitization of LGBT library resources and services.

Q: If you could run your own library, what would be in it?

A: I would run a library for inner-city youth that combined realia, print books, and resources to be accessed on tablets. There would be a variety of different spaces in the library: group work space, social space, community meeting space, nap space, and media-watching/playing space. There would be computer lab space for students enrolled in online high school or GED completion programs. There would be a community garden in the library, as well as an aquarium, and a service animal that could provide support for anxious library visitors. I also would do my best to hire employees and volunteers from that same neighborhood to show the youth that yes, spending time in a library is recognized by the adults that they look up to as a respectable use of their time.