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## It's All About the Relationships—In Serials, in FRBR, in Life: An Interview with Olivia M. A. Madison

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# It's All About the Relationships—In Serials, in FRBR, in Life: An Interview with Olivia M. A. Madison

## **Abstract**

Olivia M. A. Madison talks about her roles in the library profession and how her career developed along with them, most importantly the unanticipated relationships connecting the elements of her career. She discusses the influence of serials work on her career, her cataloging experiences, the early days of OCLC, her work in CC:DA, her adventures at IFLA, the development of FRBR, the future of bibliographic control, and her development as a librarian at Iowa State University.

## **Keywords**

Olivia M. A. Madison, Iowa State University, serials cataloging, OCLC, Committee on Cataloging: Description and Access, International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions, Functional Requirements for Bibliographic Records, Library of Congress Working Group on the Future of Bibliographic Control

## **Disciplines**

Library and Information Science

## **Comments**

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**An Interview with Olivia M. A. Madison**

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**ABSTRACT:** Olivia M. A. Madison talks about her roles in the library profession and how her career developed along with them, most importantly the unanticipated relationships connecting the elements of her career. She discusses the influence of serials work on her career, her cataloging experiences, the early days of OCLC, her work in CC:DA, her adventures at IFLA, the development of FRBR, the future of bibliographic control, and her development as a librarian at Iowa State University.

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Lori Kappmeyer interviewed Olivia Madison on August 8, 2008.

**It's All about the Relationships—in Serials, in FRBR, in Life:  
An Interview with Olivia M. A. Madison**

**[INSERT MADISON PHOTO HERE]**

PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND: Olivia M. A. Madison has been Dean of the Library at Iowa State University since July 1998, after serving in numerous positions at Iowa State, including the Associate Director for Public Services & Collections and Head of the Cataloging Department. Most recently she served as co-chair of the Library of Congress Working Group on the Future of Bibliographic Control. She was the elected president of the American Library Association's Association of Library Collections and Technical Services (ALCTS) for 2002/03 and chaired the planning committee for the ALCTS 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration in 2007. She also chaired the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions' Section on Cataloguing in 1993-1995, and the IFLA Study Group on Functional Requirements for Bibliographic Records during 1991-1993 and 1995-1997. Before becoming involved in IFLA, Ms. Madison was 1984-1985 chair of the Committee on Cataloging: Description and Access, within the American Library Association.

Dean Madison began her career as a cataloger at the Iowa State University Library in 1975 after receiving her M.A. in library science from the University of Missouri. During her graduate work she had an internship in the Bibliographic Search Department at the ISU Library. At Iowa State she rose through the ranks from monographs cataloger to OCLC systems specialist, head of the Serials Cataloging Section, head of the Monographs Department, head of the Cataloging Department, and Associate Director for

Public Services & Collections. Ms. Madison holds the academic rank of professor, and during 1990-1991, she served as the elected president of the ISU Faculty Senate. As she will describe in her interview, she never expected that someday she would be the Dean of the Library or have the many major service roles she has had in the library profession.

This interviewer has worked with Olivia Madison for over thirty years, and was first supervised by her in 1979 when Ms. Madison was head of the Serials Cataloging Section.

***LOK: Olivia, you have served in many major library roles both nationally and internationally, and your career has been very focused as you rose through the ranks to become Dean of the Library at Iowa State University. You were a history major in college, and this interview will cover aspects of your history. How did you decide to become a librarian, and what other careers did you consider?***

Well, I suppose, somewhat typically for librarians, my interest in librarianship went back to my childhood love of books. I was an avid reader as a child, and in the public library in Ames, Iowa, where I grew up, I was usually in the next section above my age level . As the librarian at Ames Public once told me, “You’re reading beyond your years, little Miss Arnbal.” I loved reading at all times, whether reading on Saturday mornings, during road trips, or secret late night reading—reading was always a passion for me. The early books I read were often histories and novels.

Actually, last weekend I found myself sorting through four large boxes containing my childhood book collection. It seemed like a time warp, browsing through these old books reflecting back to when I was 12 to 22 years old – they became a window to my past.

They brought back many memories of my father building me a bookcase for them and the inside cover annotations of dates and occasions reminding me when I received or bought them. Authors ranged from Leo Tolstoy to A.E. Houseman, Josephine Tey, Joseph Conrad, James Michener, Thomas Hardy, Thomas Costain, Helen MacInnes and even Ian Fleming (with a complete James Bond collection). Obviously, my literary interests ranged from traditional literature through pop culture.

So it was interesting that you asked me for this interview with a question about “Why librarianship?” I immediately thought back on how I loved books and how I organized and cared for them. Also, I worked in my school libraries during junior high and high school, and both librarians encouraged me to consider librarianship as a career. In college, however, my interest gravitated towards history, particularly English medieval history – not surprising given that most of the historical novels in my personal collection reflected this interest. Even immediately after college, I still did not consider going into library science as I wanted to pursue graduate work in medieval history at the University of York in England. However, finances and British politics related to international students attending British universities stood in my way. I then decided to be more practical, given the overabundance of highly educated historians. My memories of librarianship led me to reconsider the advice I had received many years before.

I ended up having lunch for career guidance with a local librarian through a friend of mine at Iowa State. The librarian was Arlene Taylor, who worked in the Cataloging Department at the Iowa State University Library. Over lunch she talked about librarianship, cataloging and technical services, and she really piqued my interest, again, about “Why not libraries?” This had been a recurring question through my life, and at

this point, it seemed right. Using the ALA-accredited list of library schools, I applied to several graduate schools in the Midwest. I ultimately chose the University of Missouri given its archival/rare books program, and my interests at the time.

***LOK: How did you become interested in cataloging?***

Well, to begin with I was interested in tying my interest in history with my library career in an academic setting. Not long after graduation, the Iowa State University Library advertised for a history-law-political science monographs cataloger – it sounded perfect. When I was offered the position, I thought I was in heaven. Later I had the opportunity to head the Serials Cataloging Section, which led to a different cataloging focus in terms of description, classification and subject analysis. The broad range of materials involved in serials probably fit my broad personal interests as much as being a monographs cataloger had fit my subject interests.

***LOK: What were some of your pre-professional jobs working in a library, and what were your career goals when you first became a librarian? Did you ever think you might someday become the dean of the Iowa State University Library when you were just starting out?***

During my graduate school days, I had a great opportunity to work as a summer intern in the Bibliographic Search Department at the ISU Library. I'm not exactly sure why I was given that internship, but I remember coming to the library and talking to the head of personnel about a potential intern position, and he said, "Why don't you work in the Bibliographic Search Department?" That is when I learned the mysteries of the *National Union Catalog* and the *British Museum Catalog*. I verified orders using these catalogs. The job seemed like detective work as I made connections through tracking down citations

and verifying correct authors or corporate bodies. My internship opened doors for me and reinforced my earlier conversation with Arlene Taylor about opportunities in academic librarianship. When I first started my monographs cataloging position, I believed I had the absolute perfect job and was off on a great career. To answer your specific question regarding interest in higher administration in my early career, no. As I considered administrative promotions over time, it was more about assisting with management needs at key moments in time rather than a step in a career path.

***LOK: Would you mind if I asked what year it was that you started working here?***

I started working at Iowa State in 1975, over thirty years ago. It was a different time then; one fun part of working as a professional cataloger was revising filing in the card catalog.

***LOK: And that was fun?***

I *loved* it! Beyond enjoying working with the filing staff, I quickly began interacting with catalog users. Since it was clear that I was working at the library, students and faculty would approach me and ask questions – in other words, revising filing turned into the potential for one-on-one public service. Questions were usually basic and dealt with the LC classification system or finding specific journals in the stacks or the periodical room. However, in some cases, our patrons took the opportunity to let me know that we didn't quite get it right in our cataloging records. I was continually amazed at the depth of cataloging knowledge of some faculty members and students. With the advent of our online catalog, one of my regrets was the loss of the one-on-one public contact we catalogers had that allowed us to see how people used the catalog.

***LOK: Much of your professional service has arisen from your experience in cataloging.***

***What cataloging positions did you have?***

I have had five different positions related to cataloging at Iowa State. As I mentioned earlier, I first worked as a monographs cataloger for a little over four years. In that position, I also assumed another assignment, the OCLC systems specialist. In those days, when libraries first started using OCLC, they often appointed a cataloging librarian to help organize new workflows for copy cataloging and provide needed documentation. While OCLC was rapidly emerging into a national cataloging tool, their early documentation wasn't comprehensive or detailed enough for many libraries. This was a position that led me to understand the broader technical services environment and the exciting world of networked cataloging.

As the OCLC systems specialist, I was responsible for overseeing the use of OCLC for cataloging as well as interlibrary loan, acquisitions, and public services. So it was a position that brought me in touch with faculty and staff throughout the library. OCLC dramatically changed cataloging workflows and how materials moved through technical services; this position gave me a challenging opportunity to understand the total technical services workflow. It also provided me opportunities to work with public services librarians, meet external colleagues, and make regional and national cataloging impacts.

Libraries started using OCLC typically through a network; they didn't sign a contract independently with OCLC, rather they signed contracts with regional networks. A group of library directors in Missouri and Iowa decided to create the Midwest Regional Library

Network (MIDLNET) to serve as a regional broker for OCLC services. While most of the libraries were in Missouri, there were several Iowa libraries. Iowa State and University of Missouri—Columbia were the two largest libraries in MIDLNET. Working with MIDLNET provided me my first external professional practice service. I quickly became involved with the MIDLNET users' group by helping plan users' meetings and serving on its advisory board. I also gave presentations on how Iowa State used OCLC as part of an extensive sharing of information and procedures. It was through MIDLNET that I became involved with OCLC by serving as a network representative on the OCLC Advisory Committee on Cataloging for eight years.

In the end, both positions served as rich building blocks for my subsequent positions as head of Serials Cataloging, head of the Monographs Department, and lastly, the head of the Cataloging Department.

***LOK: Readers of The Serials Librarian will be interested to know that you were the head of the Serials Cataloging Section. How would you say your work with serials helped you in later aspects of your career?***

A major difference between monograph and serials cataloging for me was the need to appreciate and understand the entire serials workflow from acquisitions through cataloging and then binding. To be an effective head of Serials Cataloging, I found that I needed to work as part of an administrative team and build relationships with the staff in the other units. Also, because serials were integral to reference services, I needed greater contact with the Reference Department. Many of my ties with acquisitions and public services that I had developed through my OCLC work helped me in serials cataloging. I also expanded

my understanding of technology beyond OCLC as I was responsible for the production of the computer-produced serials catalog.

Culturally, I discovered that the Serials Cataloging Section was a tight-knit and collegial team, an environment derived from the nature of its work. It was a group of faculty and staff who worked closely together, and who would revise and subsequently change each other's cataloging and holdings records when titles changed or split, corporate bodies changed, subscriptions ceased, etc. The result is that for any given title, there is a respectful community of ownership. To this day, I have a close affinity to my colleagues who were in the section at that time. I responded positively to this team-based environment, and I grew as a cataloger with a much broader understanding of bibliographic control and matured as an administrator within a complex work environment.

***LOK: During the early years of your career, you began participating in professional organizations. How did your involvement in the ALA and IFLA begin?***

I had an unexpected opportunity in my early days as a cataloger when the assistant director for technical services, Kaye Gapen, who also happened to chair the Cataloging Section of the Resources & Technical Services Division (RTSD), asked me if I might be interested in an appointment in the ALA's RTSD Section of Cataloging. I said, "Oh, sure," not really knowing what it might entail. Incredibly I was appointed to CC:DA (the Committee on Cataloging: Description and Access). That opportunity and appointment built the foundation of much I subsequently accomplished in the area of cataloging. It didn't take long for me to understand what a prestigious appointment it was. Since then,

I have had opportunities to work closely with many of my former CC:DA colleagues. Most recently I served with Janet Swan Hill, a CC:DA colleague, on the Library of Congress Task Force on the Future of Bibliographic Control. It's amazing how professional relationships continue to build and expand through service activities.

***LOK: What were some of the memorable things about being a member and later chair of CC:DA in the early 1980s?***

During my tenure, the Joint Steering Committee was in the process of revising the *Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules* (Second Edition), and it represented a major focus of activity. As I recall, the most significant changes from the 1978 edition dealt with machine readable data files (referred to as computer files in the 1988 edition) and music. Both areas were challenging and new to me. Little did I realize then what enormous impact computer files would later have on serials. I personally concluded that if you are able to achieve consensus on resolving descriptive and/or assess issues relating to serials, music, and computer files, virtually all issues could be resolved.

CC:DA became an extraordinary service and leadership opportunity – I served as its secretary, and during my last year as its chair. My CC:DA role also resulted in being an invited instructor at four ALCTS-sponsored AACR2 Revised Institutes and numerous AACR2 Revised regional workshops; and authoring two chapters in the ALA publication *AACR2 Revised: Origins, Content and Future* (one chapter serving as a summary of changes and the another chapter covering general provisions, books, manuscripts and serials). My CC:DA work also exposed me to the world of international standards, specifically the emerging *International Standards for Bibliographic Descriptions* from

IFLA, which were forwarded to CC:DA for comment. The result of my work with the ISBD reviews was my growing awareness of cataloging activities that went beyond the United States and the Anglo-American cataloging community as well as the lasting international impact of the Paris Principles of 1961.

***LOK: How did you move from national service in ALA to international service in IFLA?***

Following my CC:DA service and chairship, I was asked by an ALCTS colleague if I would consider being nominated for election by ALA to the IFLA Section on Cataloguing. Needless to say, I agreed to the nomination as it would be an extraordinary honor and new opportunity. Fortunately I was elected by the IFLA Section to serve on its standing committee, and through this service, I broadened my international understanding of other libraries, other cultures, and exciting alternative perspectives on cataloging. I learned to appreciate the importance of the ISBDs and UNIMARC to the international community, and how you might bridge and enrich different cataloging rules through sharing information, description, and authority files. Outside of my work with the Functional Requirements of Bibliographic Records Study Group, being elected chair of the Standing Committee for the Section on Cataloguing and thereby serving on the Coordinating Board for the Council on Bibliographic Control were significant opportunities to further the goals of international bibliographic control and build strong international relationships.

***LOK: You were the chair of the IFLA Study Group on the Functional Requirements of Bibliographic Records (FRBR), so you participated in its beginnings. How did FRBR originate and develop into what it is today?***

As way of background to the concept of IFLA study groups, the Standing Committee on Cataloguing typically identifies, through any number of processes, issues or topics that need to be studied. Committee members then volunteer to participate, and the committee chair appoints a review or study group to work on a given issue. My first IFLA review group focused on issues related to the form and structure of corporate names. In terms of the FRBR study, it was just one of those incidental opportunities that at the time I had little concept of how important the study would become. At the outset, I was interested in the study, as described by the Nancy John (the standing committee chair) because of its user-based focus. The impetus for the FRBR study emerged out of active interests of the Conference Directors of National Libraries (CDNL), IFLA Core Programme for Universal Bibliographic Control and International MARC (UBCIM), and the IFLA Section on Cataloguing to explore new standards for bibliographic control and international cooperative cataloging opportunities. Using the outcomes of a UBCIM-sponsored conference held in Stockholm in August 1990 and a CDNL draft terms of reference (both calling for a comprehensive study on bibliographic control), in August 1991 (at the Moscow conference), the IFLA Division of Bibliographic Control appointed a study group under the leadership of the Standing Committee of the Section on Cataloguing. Briefly, the proposed outcomes would be a delineation of the functions of the bibliographic record (in all formats and based on user needs), and a proposed basic level of cataloging functionality for national libraries. The ultimate goal would be a set of standards that would facilitate the sharing of bibliographic records across national boundaries, with a goal to reduce costs.

At each of the meetings of three divisional standing committees, the respective chairs called for volunteers. Nancy John, the cataloging committee chair, called for volunteers, and I volunteered. At the time, I had just finished working on the corporate name project and was ready for something new. In addition to Section on Cataloguing members (Suzanne Jouguelet (France), Nancy John, and me), John Byrum was appointed from the Section on Bibliography and Dorothy McGarry from the Section on Classification and Indexing. Not long afterwards, other committee members were appointed and numerous commentators volunteered. Nancy John and I both served as study group chairs – I served twice.

At the beginning, I don't believe any of us fully grasped the scope of the task we had volunteered for, and it quickly became clear that the work would go well beyond one year. Because of the extensive nature of the study, the Standing Committee of the Division of Bibliography decided to hire expert consultants to develop an analytical approach as to how we would examine what users needed within our bibliographic control processes. In the end, the study formally lasted six years – through the end of my membership on the Section on Cataloguing. Because it lasted so long, some committee members, consultants and commentators went off, and others joined the study.

As to the process, the study group broke up into separate groups working on different formats once we determined the specific user functions (i.e., find, identify, select and acquire). My background in serials was helpful, and I led the process to define the uses and prioritize the functional requirements for serials. I was excited about using the serials cataloging expertise within my library to help give feedback on what should be the highest priorities. That prioritization of function ultimately led to what became the key

functional requirements for bibliographic description. Following the unanimous acceptance of the final report by the Section on Cataloguing and the Division of Bibliographic Control, I had the distinct honor of presenting the study and proposals as they related to the national libraries and their bibliographic description requirements at a 1998 CDNL meeting held in Copenhagen, where it too was approved unanimously.

Much of the early discussion on FRBR focused on core descriptive cataloging requirements for national libraries, and how those requirements might relate to varying cataloging codes and the IFLA ISBDs. Part of what we did through CC:DA with the Library of Congress, was to reexamine our core descriptive and access requirements for each format, vis-à-vis the FRBR requirements. The result of these reviews actually involved very few changes in our AACR2-based national cataloging standards.

It's fascinating and gratifying to see the growth of FRBR beyond proposing core descriptive elements to examining the fundamentals of how we might build holistic relationships, using cataloging records, for a broad range of materials (regardless of format or genre) across online bibliographic tools. In other words, we have gone from the practical applications to realizing practical approaches for how our users might expand their expectations for working within our online library systems using tools such as federated searching across various domains, including online catalogs and indexing databases.

Now we talk about whether a catalog or system is "FRBRized." I'm amazed at how it has even become a verb, although it's a peculiar word. As time has passed, I have written a fair bit and given a number of papers related to FRBR – in the United States and largely

in Europe. Clearly, while it was the basis of much of my personal scholarship, my participation in FRBR development has also helped me play a role tying FRBR to other national discussions, most recently with the Library of Congress Task Force on the Future of Bibliographic Control. So, it was an amazing ride with FRBR; one can never plan these opportunities.

***LOK: No, and yet it all seems to have hung together as a continuous process.***

It's been fantastic. Understanding and appreciating the need for building relationships within the bibliographic world has played an important role in how we collectively move forward and as we make decisions, locally, nationally and internationally.

***LOK: What kind of future do you see for library catalogs?***

There are many cataloging colleagues who worry that we are losing or reducing the role of the catalog as we create tools that search across online catalogs and other domains (e.g., commercial indexes and other kinds of databases we might have). I disagree. First of all, by doing so, we are creating more comprehensive access for our users. Moreover, who better than catalogers to build bridges for holistic sets of resources that make sense to users. If we can apply that to a larger framework, how enriched we are. I believe that the catalog will always be core to how our users search to meet their information needs. The other two points I would like to underscore is not to forget the essential role of corporate and governmental entities and, as I mentioned before, the need for us to strongly participate in creating standards for new search result features that our users may find valuable.

***LOK: I know that you had many exciting experiences at ALA and IFLA, besides going to meetings, so could you talk about some of the things you did there?***

I'll talk about my top three in terms of IFLA. You can never discount your first IFLA conference, because that's the one where you're faced with everything. However, in those days, IFLA was a smaller conference than it is now.

***LOK: When was your first IFLA conference?***

My first IFLA conference was in Paris, August 1988 – such “hard duty!” The home country or the home city typically has a major reception/event associated with the conference; for Paris, that event was held in the Louvre, in I. M. Pei's new entrance/addition. This was probably *the* most elegant of all the receptions I experienced in my IFLA career. I remember the glow of the light coming through the central and adjacent glass pyramids, as we entered and left the vast courtyard. The reception was held in the public areas as you first entered the Louvre so there was a fair bit of space. There were four (I believe) buffet tables of food representing various regions of France, an incredible array. I didn't bring a long formal dress, and my husband didn't bring a tuxedo, but we would have been in place if we had. However, all attendees were elegantly dressed, and it might as well have been a major international political event. The one conference I didn't attend was in Beijing, China, due to a personal conflict, and I sincerely regret missing it. Returning IFLA colleagues said that probably only in China would major traffic be stopped so IFLA participants could get from one venue to the next on time. Incredible organization!

Attending IFLA in Moscow in 1991 when the attempted Soviet coup d'état occurred, remains an event that will always be in my psyche. The meetings and the places where people stayed were flung out throughout Moscow. I happened to stay in a hotel with a colleague of mine that was close to the main conference venue. The first couple days I was there were before the coup, and it was business as usual. But on Monday, August 19, the coup was announced over state radio and virtually everything shut down , including evening curfews. Over the weekend, typical taxis going from my hotel to Red Square cost between 50 cents to \$1. By the way, I was told at the time, that a comfortable Russian income was \$40-50 a month. On Monday afternoon, a taxi driver charged me \$5 to go to Red Square – during the drive he drove outside the city center through a rural suburb area and then back again into the city. Clearly he didn't want to drive through central streets. When I needed to return to my hotel, the price had increased to \$10.

But what we were all to do? All the IFLA events had been planned, and do you continue them, or not? National delegations met to discuss what to do. At night, with the curfew, street lights were shut off, and subways, if operating, were quiet. Also, during this time, Muscovites used the subway trains to post notices on car windows to spread the word of what was happening throughout the city. The conference certainly held experiences I'll never forget, including watching armed tanks drive down city streets. Soldiers and citizens prepared to battle on the streets of Moscow. I was fortunate that many Scandinavian IFLA colleagues were also staying in my hotel. In particular, many of the Finns understood Russian, and they had shortwave radios, so they could keep track of what was going on from the outside. The attendees who were staying in the Dag Hammarskjöld Center, where

the main conference was held, had televisions with CNN so they knew far more than many of us what was being said by the international press.

On Tuesday, I wanted to get to the conference headquarters because I was giving a paper for a colleague. A couple of delegates suggested, given that our bus had not arrived, to walk to the headquarters along the river, which we did. As we made our way, we discovered barricades along our path. Dauntless, we made my way across the Russian barricades, and none of us knew what we actually were heading into. As I climbed over one barricade, a very young man who was manning it, helped me walk over it (in my pumps no less). In the U.S. press, articles referred to these barricades as if they were of military construction. Actually they were made up of old washing machines, refrigerators, trolley cars, clothes line posts, etc. – anything substantial they could pull together – so they were hardly what we would think of as military barricades.

Getting back to my story, we walked around and through barricades past the White House (the Russian Parliament building). This government building, relatively close to my hotel, was where Boris Yeltsin stayed while he led the defiance of the coup. I finally arrived at the Dag Hammarskjöld Conference center and gave the paper. It was in a friend's hotel room in the adjoining hotel when I saw CNN coverage, and only then did I realize the enormity of the situation. Leaving the conference center later that afternoon, I found the whole atmosphere along the river bank to be almost festive. Russian families were picnicking on my route between my hotel and the conference center and listening to various speakers and music. However, the atmosphere masked what was really happening. I found out when I returned home later in the week that late Tuesday air force pilots had been ordered by the coup leaders to bomb the White House thereby killing the

Russian leadership, including Yeltsin, and all the supporters gathered around the White House. As I understand it, three different pilots refused the order, one after another. Had the bombing occurred, my hotel probably would have been bombed as well. Even so, on Tuesday night, three young men were killed just around the corner from my hotel while trying to keep a column of tanks from entering the area to destroy the White House.

Late Wednesday, August 23, I left Moscow and flew to Copenhagen and stayed overnight in Copenhagen with relatives. On that same day, the revolting members of the Soviet government (who opposed Mikhail Gorbachev) realized their attempt to take over the government had failed and they fled the city. The Soviet Union had collapsed while IFLA was held in Moscow! Certainly in Copenhagen and then in the United States, I was faced with the enormity of clashing realities.

The third IFLA conference I remember the most was the one held in Cuba. It was a unique experience, and one that also remains vivid in my memory, but for different reasons than the first two. Unlike U.S. citizens, all other IFLA participants could go to Cuba legally. So my travel to Cuba required specific approval from the U.S. government -- for me, my application was based on my educational role in the conference. However, drama arose because the conference took place during a several-week incident, a power play between the governments of Cuba and the United States. Shortly before the conference, with worsening economic conditions developing in Cuba largely due to the loss of Soviet investment dollars, Fidel Castro declared an open migration policy, and a new boat lift began. Over the period, over 30,000 Cubans left on simple sea vessels -- often just using wooden rafts -- the fleeing Cubans became known as rafters. From my hotel room, I could see families saying goodbye to their loved ones and friends as they

set off. For the U.S. librarians, it was a serious international issue as the federal government and some state governments refused to permit their respective employees go to Cuba.

For those of us who attended, I am certain we will always remember a special conference, both historically and culturally. It was a conference where we met impressive Cuban colleagues whom I certainly would never have met otherwise. It was also the IFLA conference where we held the first major public session on FRBR, so you can understand how important it was for me to go to Havana. For FRBR, we received positive international feedback, and the vetting was essential to our iterative process. It was also in Havana that I drank my first Mojito (a Cuban highball) and real Cuban rum – although I did pass on the Cuban cigar.

Although I have mentioned three of my most memorable conferences, the other five held incredible memories and breathtaking cultural experiences. My other conference cities included Stockholm, New Delhi, Barcelona, Istanbul, and Copenhagen. I want to add that for host countries and cities, holding an IFLA conference is a matter of national pride, and I found that these conferences reflect the importance that governments place on the role of information in their societies. Moreover, IFLA provided me unique opportunities to meet highly respected librarians from all over the world; it was a distinct privilege to work with them on vital issues of importance to the international cataloging community.

***LOK: Back in Ames, you were advancing up the career ladder. Up until now in our conversation, you've been in Cataloging. So tell us how you went from being head of the Serials Cataloging Section to Dean of the Library.***

One of the steps leading to my deanship was becoming head of the Monographs Department, which resulted in returning to the world of monographs. Then four years later the two cataloging areas, monographs and serials, were merged to become the Cataloging Department, which I headed. I believe the library benefited from this merger given that both cataloging operations had efficiencies and cataloging knowledge that benefited from closer interaction.

At the same time I was Head of Cataloging, I continued my local involvement with university faculty governance. Following several elected positions, I was elected as the third president of the Iowa State University Faculty Senate. In overseeing such a complex governance organization, my past understanding of workflows and successfully getting people to come together to make decisions proved useful. Believe me, my experiences in chairing CC:DA, FRBR and the IFLA Standing Committee on Cataloging helped! Experiences in setting public agendas and ensuring appropriate documentation and progress reports are equally important for a campus faculty senate. Apparently, I handled it well enough since I was re-elected Senate president. However my second term was cut short due to my appointment as the Assistant Director for Public Services at Iowa State. I had decided to apply for the open position, in part because I believed that my senate experience in working with faculty across the university, my internal management experience and my external service accomplishments would be of value to the division and the library. In my current position, I have found having a

successful background in both technical services and public services has helped me immensely.

Looking back, every position I assumed over the years was done without considering the next position, much less that it would all lead to a deanship. Each position seemed right for me at the time, and each one proved to be challenging, enjoyable, and a learning experience. Also within each position, I worked hard to advance the unit as well as to advance the goals and work of the broader management team that I joined. In the end, what I learned as a monographs cataloger, as head of a serials cataloging section and as a cataloging department head still guides me today.

***LOK: Most recently you have been the co-chair of the Library of Congress Working Group on the Future of Bibliographic Control. What aspects of the future of bibliographic control are you particularly interested in seeing happen?***

That's a complex question. I think the one area of personal importance, which dates back to my interest in FRBR, is my interest in promoting the richness of an entire library collection or the broad bibliographic universe. Historically we have built access silos. Our catalogs have primarily included commercially purchased materials. For serials, we've created what I would call container cataloging records for the catalog — “container” in the sense the description is for the serial, not the individual volumes or issues. We have depended on the commercial industry, the National Library of Agriculture and the National Library of Medicine, to index the individual journal issues. Journal indexes, which have historically been searched independently of each other or in subject-based collective indexes, are another type of silo. We have also created valuable

unique search and access tools, like special collections finding aids or stand-alone format based catalogs, which are often separate silos. Within our digital systems, we often demand our users to go digitally place-to-place to use these tools as they look for what they want or need.

If I might go back to serials and indexes--one crucial lesson I learned (from teaching library instruction and being a student) is that the most difficult area for traditional access is journal literature, although research libraries often spend between 75-85% of their collections budgets on serials. Nationally within LibQUAL survey results, academic libraries, including Iowa State, generally have the lowest of the ratings for the response to "Do we have the journals you are seeking?" Often we do, but the respondents can't find what they are looking for. We must continue to simplify and identify different pathways for a variety of user tasks (e.g., verifying a citation is quite different than finding four articles to use for writing a sophomore term paper). For decades, we expected the user to go an index to find an article of interest; determine the journal title; go to the catalog to find out if we have the journal; find out if we have the specific issue containing the article and locate it; and finally, if successful, to wander off to a periodical room, the stacks, a branch library, a microform collection, or to the electronic journal to retrieve the issue. In our electronic libraries, we have made important strides in simplifying our access to journal literature (particularly with full text searching capabilities and citation linkages) but we still have a long way to go to break down the silos of catalogs and indexes.

Beyond journal literature, another reason for supporting greater relationships between resources is to meet the real need for serendipity in searching. For example, I'll go back to one of my early favorite authors, Leo Tolstoy. A user might be interested in his work

found in cinema, in reviews, in translations, in abridgements versus the full-length originals; or the user may decide to expand the scope to a potential manuscript collection that relates to Tolstoy or to those who corresponded with Tolstoy—or all of that. We should not assume we understand what the user is interested in or might become interested in. However, the users may only want a copy of *War and Peace* and nothing else. We typically don't make all of these connections within our cataloging, but we could through strong relational support.

As we look to the future, we need to do a better job of taking advantage of all of our resources, and creating opportunities for users to build or not build relationships between them. We can do better than the major internet search engines because we have the licensed electronic resources coupled with our vast print collections. Working with library and information vendors, we can create tools that may lessen the noise and take users to core relationships. This vision has ramifications for expanded authority control, not less – including not just name and subject control but also for uniform titles that have been created so successfully for music and series.

The other issue, as I look at the future of bibliographic control, is taking greater advantage of work that's already been done by others in our bibliographic and partnering communities, whether it is using specialized indexing terms rather than maintaining parallel subject thesauri, accepting publisher-created descriptions for children's literature rather than creating new ones, or supporting user-based reviews. This also an issue that the LC Working Group dealt with extensively in its report (*On the Record*) to the Library of Congress.

***LOK: Some catalogers wonder whether there is a future for them. What advice would you give library school students about pursuing a career in cataloging?***

Is there a future for catalogers? Absolutely! The traits and perspectives that the next generation librarians will need are those found in our current cataloging traditions. They include abilities and interests in looking across and understanding relationships, efficiently describing and managing large scale collections, applying disciplinary understandings for needed subject analysis, and cataloging our hidden collections. I believe the LC Task Force report also envisions an exciting future for bibliographic control and our cataloging experts. It's an exciting time and future. I would invite the very best of our future librarians to go into cataloging, and to help us design our future bibliographic systems.

***LOK: How about your plans for the future?***

I hope that my work with the Library of Congress is not quite finished, and that there is still room to continue the kind of dialog that we had with LC, a major partner within the future of bibliographic control. In addition, I would like to extend this work to include major library management systems developments and vendors.

***LOK: Certainly you have had many fascinating experiences as a result of just being available at the right time, and then each one has led to something else, even more interesting. So I can't wait to find out what happens next!***

Well, I never dreamed I would be on the recent Library of Congress Working Group. Clearly, it was my cataloging-related experience with IFLA, FRBR, CC:DA as well as my scholarship that provided me the reputation to be recognized as a potential appointed member.

***LOK: And you were also president of ALCTS, and we didn't even cover that!***

No, we didn't! And I was chair of the planning committee for the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration of ALCTS! In some respects I have been fortunate to be present in key roles at opportune times – luck as some might call it. However, I believe in the old adage, luck is only what you make of it. In addition, one must be ready to recognize and make the most of one's opportunities, work hard and take calculated risks. For example, if I hadn't done well as the chair of CC:DA, then probably nobody would have thought to ask me to represent ALA and the United States on IFLA, etc..

***LOK: The opportunity combined with the ability. What advice would you give new librarians?***

My advice to new librarians, is to always to do the very best you can in whatever project you might be involved in. No matter how simple any given project might seem at the outset, you never know where it might lead or how you might be recognized and asked to be involved with another expanded project. Moreover, the skills and lessons you learn in working with others, you can always apply elsewhere. Whether it is observing what was done well or where an approach could be have improved upon, incorporate what you have learned and extend yourself. Treat every experience as a learning opportunity. The

professional and personal collaborations you build will last a lifetime, resulting in a network of colleagues to help you and your organizations in the future.

As I look back, I believe that I was a better president of ALCTS, because I had been chair of the Budget and Planning Committee for ALCTS, served on its Executive Board and participated in prior divisional strategic planning. I applied the same ALCTS strategic planning processes (developed by Brian Schottlaender) to the planning processes I helped create for the Greater Western Library Alliance when I chaired that group. I was a better Faculty Senate President, because of techniques and approaches learned as a librarian. In conclusion, always assume that you will apply what you have learned in your current jobs or service opportunities to professionally grow, assist your colleagues, and improve your organizations.

***LOK: That's wonderful advice. Well, thank you very much, Olivia!***