

How About a Book?

Scott Wales, Librarian, Sheppard Mullin Richter & Hampton LLP, swales@sheppardmullin.com

*Outside of a dog, a book is man's best friend.
Inside of a dog, it's too dark to read.*

—Groucho Marx

Summer time and the livin' is easy... or so the story usually goes. We in the law firm world know differently. Summer time can still be a time to hone our teaching skills and, hopefully, in the process learn a thing or two.

Actually, I enjoy the summer, as I am sure many of you do. I like to help the summer associates learn and become accustomed to life in the "real world," so to speak. Often they receive some of the more esoteric topics to research. Sometimes, it looks like it is just a way of testing them, but they take the work seriously and want to impress the firm. I consider assisting them in that to be a large part of my job.

My debate this summer, and I open this question to all, is how much do we want to teach? How many databases do we introduce them to? Not too long ago, the only options were Lexis and Westlaw, and the primary focus of training was how not to run up a large bill. Now there are so many other, often highly specialized databases. Do you want to try to teach these or is that just information overload?

A short list of additional databases that the summer associates may not have been exposed to could include CCH Intelliconnect, SECNet, and Westlaw Business. There are also the databases available through Bloomberg and BNA. The problem is not that the summers will not understand and be able to navigate the databases. They are very capable of doing that. The

problem is introducing them to research areas, both legal and non-legal, that they are not familiar with and are likely to forget as soon as they are taught. Do you wait until they get a first assignment to introduce them to the world of 10Ks and 8Ks? What is a bid protest? FARs and DFARS? Here's what I think. Give them an introduction to the basics, namely Lexis and Westlaw. In our firm we also have Loislaw which I think is a also great resource for summers.

General Research References

I have an old fashioned suggestion for starting summer associates on their first more complicated assignments, especially in areas that they were not exposed to in law school. How about a book? More especially, a Nutshell? They are easy to hold. They don't cost too much. And they have good introductory chapters that outline the history and important concepts in the various areas of law, making them a wonderful starting point for legal research.

Another great starting point is Aspen's *Specialized Legal Research*. Years ago, a rather senior partner expressed his feelings about the computerized legal research. It seemed to him that the younger associates were immediately hopping on line to look for cases without a, let's say, philosophical understanding of the issue at hand. He suggested pointing them to *AmJur*. I suggest having them look at *Specialized Legal Research*. I have used this for many years. Edited by Penny A. Hazelton, it has chapters by many knowledgeable authors. Be careful about loaning your desk copy; you might not get it back.

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FROM THE EDITOR

So Long, and Thanks...

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Welcome to the Summer issue of *Law Library Lights*. The theme of this issue is what we do over the summer. I wanted to consider whether summer really is a slow time for law librarians, or whether it has become just another part of a busy year, with its own distinct set of tasks and challenges.

Summer has always been a busy time for law firm and government librarians, who welcome classes of summer associates and interns who are often working in an unfamiliar area of law and have little “real world” legal research experience. And of course, summer is traditionally the time to attend conferences and maybe try to fit in a bit of vacation.

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Deadline for Submissions

If you would like to write for *Lights*, contact **Ripple L. Weistling** at rweistling@wcl.american.edu. For information regarding submission deadlines and issue themes, visit the LLSDC Web site at www.llsdc.org.

Law Library Lights is published quarterly by the Law Librarians' Society of Washington, D.C., Inc. 20009, ISSN 0546-2483.

Beginning with Vol. 50, #1 (Fall 2006), *Law Library Lights* is now published in PDF format on the LLSDC Web site: www.llsdc.org. Notification of availability of each new issue will be sent to the LLSDC listserv. If you would like to receive individual e-mail notification when new issues are published, please send an e-mail to **Ripple L. Weistling** at rweistling@wcl.american.edu.

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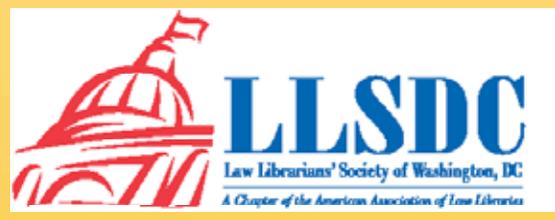
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As you know, I am an academic librarian. While the summer is theoretically a quiet time for us, when most of the students and faculty are on break, it seems that my summers have been getting busier every year. Summer is the time that our library trains new research assistants and law journal staff. We support students taking summer classes, faculty working on intensive summer research projects, and host an increasing number of summer programs, not to mention the time spent preparing for the arrival of new students and faculty in the fall and the catching up on projects we've all put off during the academic year in the hope that we'll somehow have more time for them over the summer.

Perhaps because everyone is so busy this summer, this issue will be a short one. Scott

Wales shares some of his favorite print resources for helping summer associates come to terms with their first research assignments. Charlotte Osborn-Bensaada reports on the Joint Spring Workshop, which focused on strategic planning, Tracy Woodard checks in from Mozambique, where she is teaching with the Peace Corps.

Roger Skalbeck offers an ode to mobile gaming, and Dawn Bohls reviews *Library: An Unquiet History*, finding it an interesting summer read but far from satisfying as a definitive history of libraries.

This is also my last issue as editor, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of you for your participation and support. You have helped to make this a wonderful experience. Please welcome the new editorial team, Jill Smith and Melanie Oberlin. As always, if you would like to be part of *Lights*, please let them know. **LLL**

How About a Book? *continued from page 1*

If you are looking for a reference more focused on research, you could start with Morris and Cohen's *Legal Research in a Nutshell*. It has a good introductory chapter that outlines sources of law, forms of legal information, and legal language. I also like Kent Olson's *Principles of Legal Research*. Both are well written and concise, and it couldn't hurt to offer a copy of either to a summer associate or new legal assistant as a basic reference, before moving on to more specialized works.

Legislative history is an area where summer associates often have little prior research experience. When they come to you with a request for the legislative history of some law, tell them to stop. First find out if they remember "I'm Just a Bill" from *Schoolhouse Rock*. I remember hearing that some firms actually show that to incoming summer associates. It is very funny and memorable, and I find it useful for a summer associate to review the legislative process before asking for a legislative history. Ask if they remember that cartoon, and then hand them one the books discussed above and point to the relevant chapters.

Specialized Topic Areas

While *Securities Regulation in a Nutshell* may not be summer beach reading, it is a well-presented overview of the securities acts. There

is a lot for summer associates to learn between the 10Ks and the 10Qs, but there is light at the end of the regulatory tunnel. Teach them a little bit before they are introduced to their Uncle EDGAR.

Government Contracts in a Nutshell may never be read poolside, but it provides an informative explanation of the federal acquisitions system. You may also want to point out West's *Fundamentals of Government Contracting* by Jay E. Grenig. This is another potential source for that summer who has never given a thought to such topics as "terminations for convenience" or "the False Claims Act."

Ah, environmental law. Not to be begun without a strong drink. Just kidding. As the chapter by Nathan Block in *Specialized Legal Research* points out, there are literally *hundreds* of EPA databases, many available at no cost. But it might be a good idea to start with explanatory information about the sources of law, as well as some knowledge of chemistry.

The work of firm librarians has truly become more complicated. It is no longer just managing a collection of reported case (if it ever was). We are also an important link for summer associates between the world of law school and the world of law firms. We need to help them understand that while our collections are much smaller than the law school library, we are very active

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in managing a wide variety of resources. They understand that while our collections are much smaller than the law school library, we are very active in managing a wide variety of resources.

Summertime is a time for soda and pretzels and beer as the old Nat King Cole song goes. Summer associates will surely get their fill of these goodies over the summer. Let's try to include a little knowledge in the diet as well. A good book never hurt anyone, unless you drop it on your foot ... **LLL**

AALL NEWS

Get a Free Year of AALL Membership with Nonmember Annual Meeting Registration

AALL is continuing to offer nonmembers a complimentary one-year membership when they register for the AALL Annual Meeting and Conference, held July 23 – 26 in Philadelphia. The membership includes:

- Career resources, such as the online AALL Career Center and continuing education to help you learn new skills to advance in your career;
- Access to specialized information created just for law librarians, such as the *AALL Biennial Salary Survey* and the AALL Price Index for Legal Publications;
- Subscriptions to the monthly magazine, *AALL Spectrum*, and quarterly journal, *Law Library Journal*, to help you keep up on the latest trends in law librarianship;
- The opportunity to network and connect with other law librarians from across the country who share similar interests and are facing the same challenges; and
- Discounted rates on all AALL products and services, such as publications, webinars, and online job postings.

Annual Meeting registration opens in mid-February. Watch the AALL Web site in January for an announcement. Be to take advantage of this special offer for nonmembers. **LLL**

LLSDC NEWS

The Legislative-SIS held their Spring Business Meeting on May 26, 2011 at the offices of Drinker, Biddle and Reath, LLP. The meeting was hosted by current Section President, Samantha Mendell, and featured a presentation by Rick McKinney entitled "The Authority of Statutes Placed in Section Notes of the United States Code." Program notes have been added to the Legislative Sourcebook and can be found at this link: <http://www.llsdc.org/attachments/wysiwyg/544/USC-Notes.pdf>

Elections were then held and Sue Ann Orsini of Fried, Frank, Harris, Shriver & Jacobson, LLP was elected as VP/President Elect. The Legislative-SIS hopes to hold more programs over the course of the year. **LLL**

Farewell

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Spring passes and one remembers one's innocence. Summer passes and one remembers one's exuberance. Autumn passes and one remembers one's reverence. Winter passes and one remembers one's perseverance. —Yoko Ono, "Season of Glass"



Yoko Ono's musing on the seasons of life has inspired me to reflect on the journey of my term as LLSDC president. Many people have asked me what this year has been like: Was it a lot of work? Did it take up a lot of time? Would I do it again?

This time last year, I was innocent of the challenges to come. Or maybe just a little naive. Despite serving on the board as vice-president for the prior year, the responsibilities of president were more daunting than expected. It wasn't so much the amount of work, but rather the amount of personal responsibility that wore on me. There are many wonderful volunteers in this organization that do most of the work and make things happen. But as leader, I was constantly worrying about whether things were getting done and whether the Society was meeting the needs of its members.

Once the initial panic subsided, I embraced my role with enthusiasm and exuberance. I was full of ideas for improving LLSDC and the experiences of its members. But soon I was caught up in the daily details of running the organization and some of that exuberance fell away. I decided to focus on only a few ideas: weeding our archives, streamlining the board's processes by increasing our use of online technology to communicate and archive our decisions, and putting on a couple of new programs. I had some success with each of these goals, but believe that I could have done more.

About mid-way through the past year, I had to reclaim my enthusiasm to persevere through the rest of my term. Leading an organization comprised entirely of volunteers poses some unique challenges. I had to balance the needs of the organization against the work and life responsibilities of the volunteers. We are all doing more with less and having time to devote to volunteerism is difficult. The old saying that "many hands make light work" is never more true than in an all-volunteer organization. I hope that more of our members will be inspired to give a little bit, to ease the burden of the few members who already give so much of themselves.

Finally, I am humbled that I've been given the opportunity to lead this revered organization. Among the thirty-one chapters of AALL, LLSDC is one of the largest and most active. I am grateful to the 2010-2011 Board members for their assistance. I am also grateful to the many SIS presidents, committee chairs, and focus group chairs, and to all of the other volunteers for working so hard to make this year a success. Finally, I am appreciative of the members who gave me a chance to serve. Thank you all.

Find Your Value in Strategic Planning: *A Report from the 2011 Joint Spring Workshop*

Charlotte Osborn-Bensaada, Legislative Librarian, cosbornbensaada@thompsoncoburn.com

Most of us have not gone untouched by the consequences of the “Great Recession.” We are now facing a “new normal” of smaller staffs, reduced budgets and the refrain “do more with less.” However, this does not have to be a grim new reality; it is an opportunity to build a new strategic vision. The Joint Spring Workshop held on April 29, 2011 entitled Strategic Planning Moving Your Library Forward provided nuts, bolts, and inspiration of how to build a strategic plan for your library.

Starting Point

DeEtta Jones, of DeEtta Jones and Associates, spoke about the process of facilitating a strategic plan to leverage the aspirational qualities and opportunities available within an organization. According to Ms. Jones, organizations that are struggling with change or facing an alternate future often begin planning in state a “distress” or negative draining energy. Effective process instead takes steps to promote “euess” or positive beneficial energy that motivates. Euess is created by: 1) understanding and embracing the values that underpin your organization; 2) building an aspirational vision based on those values; and 3) translating those values into vision and mission statements. These statements provide the foundation for your goals and how you measure their value. Values, according to Ms. Jones, shape and determine the preferences that will define your organization’s vision statement. Vision is about aspiration: focusing on “What we do well, rather than what we need to fix.” Moving from your vision statement to your mission statement is about translating those aspirations into a defined purpose.

Once you have established your vision and mission statement, a strategy evolves. This strategy forms the goals and attendant performance measurements and targets. Ms. Jones stressed that this is often a tripping point for many in their design of a strategic plan. Goals within any plan should be limited to no more than 3-5 in number and should reflect

the whole entity, not balkanized departments. Even more importantly goals cannot just be a list; they are only strategic if you have determined what you are “not” going to do. Once you have designed your goals, measuring how they will be accomplished becomes the next challenge. According to Ms. Jones this is a strategic decision point in that you should not “just count stuff” but should measure in terms of what constitutes “value” within your organization.

In addition to the structure of a strategic plan, several other considerations are important to the development and subsequent implementation of a strategic plan. Plan development cannot include everybody but should involve a high-level of input. However, the final decision maker should be clear from the beginning. When implementing a plan understanding must come before all other factors. According to Ms. Jones, without understanding it is difficult to get support or enthusiasm for a plan. Finally most memorably, Ms. Jones left with the caveat that “culture eats strategy for lunch.”

Making Your Goals Count

Raynna Bowlby, of Library Management Consulting, guided the audience through writing goals that enable an organization to measure what it wants to accomplish. Ms. Bowlby stressed to her audience that measurement is not optional or nice but an essential element of a strategic plan. It is through measurable results that we establish value for our parent organizations and enable departments to know that they have succeeded. Ms. Bowlby pointed to measurement systems such as the Balanced Scorecard, samples of which are widely available. According to Ms. Bowlby, the most successful goals will include: what is measured, units of measurement, desired result and, if appropriate, targets. Ms. Bowlby broke these down into the acronym S.M.A.R.T: Specific, Measurable,

Most of us have not gone untouched by the consequences of the “Great Recession.” We are now facing a “new normal” of smaller staffs, reduced budgets and the refrain “do more with less.” However, this does not have to be a grim new reality; it is an opportunity to build a new strategic vision.

Achievable, Realistic and Relevant, and Time-bound.

Strategic Planning in Action

Barbara Ferry of National Geographic Society confronted a number of issues when she was named director of their library. She was stepping into the shoes of a long-standing, popular former director, and she simultaneously lost nearly a third of her staff as her parent organization struggled during the 2008 recession. A recipe for distress, but she and her organization were able to move toward euccess by engaging in building what Ms. Ferry called the library's "preferable future." They started out with two questions that are worth asking whatever type of organization you work within: "What makes us unique in the Society?" and "What do we do better than anyone else that will be valuable in the future?" To answer these questions they implemented seven steps that enabled them to have sufficient insight into themselves and their parent organization as they formed their strategic plan. The seven steps were:

- Reviewed the National Geographic Society's goals;
- Listened for shifts in the Society's culture and priorities ;
- Reviewed library literature and attended conferences (Ms. Ferry noted that she did not just attend library conferences but sought wider opportunities such as a course in Future Studies by Peter Bishop);
- Brainstormed with library staff about what should we be doing in 5 or 10 years
- Examined trends in libraries usage;
- Took into account library staff skills and listened to what the staff wanted to do to develop their careers; and
- Gave permission to "let the past go" to write a new future.

Because the National Geographic Library plan was future focused, some of its goals focused on leveraging this period of flux for their parent organization to develop and change. In particular, they set a goal to develop "New Service Models" by responding to changes in the National Geographic Society's culture, structure, and geography. Since the implementation of their plan, they have developed an internal blog that is now part of

National Geographic's public blog, developed an internal trends blog, partnered with the sales team to market Society products directly to the school library market and developed a proposal for a Library Commons that would expand rather than contract library space.

While it is not necessary to start a strategic plan while your organization is facing challenges, doing so does focus the process. Like Ms. Ferry, Pherabe Kolbe of the Smithsonian Institution embarked on the development of a strategic plan at a time of leadership change, Congressional investigation, and budget cut-backs. The Smithsonian had not previously developed a strategic plan, and this plan was viewed as the "first ever Smithsonian-wide conversation about its future." Given the size of the Smithsonian, this took two consulting firms and a twenty-two member steering committee of internal and external subject matter experts. It resulted in a thirty-six page plan entitled "Inspiring Generations through Knowledge and Discovery."

The most important take-away of Ms. Kolbe's presentation was that development of the strategic plan is actually only the beginning of the process. Once the Smithsonian had developed "Grand Challenges" and "priorities" it had to then develop an implementation plan that affected all facets of its organizations. Success required it to focus on its structure: what it does, how it does it, how to make it possible and, importantly, how to let people know (inside and out) that the organization was changing. Ms. Kolbe noted that the Smithsonian is still struggling to establish metrics that allow it to measure the value of the change it is undergoing.

When I embarked on writing this article I sent an informal survey to the LLSDC list serve asking how many members had a strategic plan. I received only two responses, one from a law firm and one from a university law library. It is safe to say strategic planning has not been a priority for most law libraries. Rather than viewing them with dread, law libraries should see them as an opportunity. If you are interested there are many guides and books for developing a strategic plan. Google "Strategic Plan" and "library" and a number of samples mostly from academic and public libraries can be found. Amazon will provide a number of books available for strategic planning or see my

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They started out with two questions that are worth asking whatever type of organization you work within: "What makes us unique in the Society?" and "What do we do better than anyone else that will be valuable in the future?"

Finding Your Value in Strategic Planning

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want to know more below. Most importantly, think of strategic planning as the opportunity for finding your “Preferred Future.”

Want to Know More?

Inspiring Generations through Knowledge and Discovery Strategic Plan of the Smithsonian Institution

http://www.si.edu/content/pdf/about/si_strategic_plan_2010-2015.pdf

National Geographic Library Entries from National Geographic Daily News:

<http://newswatch.nationalgeographic.com/category/dispatches-from-the-stacks/>

NG Revisited

http://blogs.ngm.com/blog_central/ng-revisited/

NG Dispatches from the Stacks (Proof of Concept that is now part of the official society News Dispatches.)

<http://ngslis.wordpress.com/>

Recommended Resources

Robert S. Kaplan, Strategic Performance Measurement and Management in Non-profit Organizations, *Nonprofit Management and Leadership*, Spring 2001, at 353-370.

Robert S. Kaplan & David Norton, *The Balanced Scorecard* (1996).

Joseph Matthews, *Scorecards for Results: A Guide for Developing a Library Balanced Scorecard* (2008).

Joseph Matthews, *Strategic Planning and Management for Managers* (2005).

Donald E. Riggs, *Strategic Planning for Library Managers* (1984). **LLL**

A Charming Developing Village in Mozambique

Tracy Woodard, Peace Corps Volunteer, pesttea@msn.com

As you know, I am a librarian. I earned a Master's degree in Library Science from the Catholic University of America and a Bachelor's degree in English from Rhode Island College. I have worked in academic law libraries for ten years and joined the Peace Corps in Mozambique almost a year ago.

Mozambique was colonized by Portugal from the 15th century to 1975. Soon after independence, Mozambique became embroiled in a civil war between the newly established Mozambican government and a rebel faction. The civil war ended in 1992, leaving the country devastated as the result of thirty years of war. Today it is common to see broken buildings, broken roads, a disheveled economy, but miraculously an intact culture: severely impoverished but vibrant due to the courage of the people.

I live in a charming developing village in a northern province in Mozambique. We live without plumbing, a sewage system, garbage removal, standardized building codes, or a stable energy system. However, one of the lessons I have learned in the Peace Corps is that it is possible to live in basic comfort, without the luxuries of a modern culture and still be productive. To be sure it is certainly the 21st century, and one day I hope Mozambique will meet us here.

In spite of everything it doesn't have, my little village in the north does have a lot. We have a new hospital, schools for the children, a police station, a bank, an internet café, a bakery, three delicious restaurants, two open air whole foods markets, approximately five stores where you can buy household items, and an electronics store. My village is developing because we have energy, street lights on the main road, two cell phone towers, and access to BBC News by radio.

The village is also in the process of rebuilding the main road. Men and women work on the road, even though there is no clear sign that the people are hired by the local government

or that they work for a construction company. Instead, they are working in their own clothes, the women in capalana skirts made from local cloth, without drills or tow trucks, just people with hoes in their hands working outside together. They are digging up the road with their hoes and replacing it with seven to ten inch long flat rocks, rebuilding the road with their bare hands. The result of their hard labor will be a safer road for trucks carrying food and replenishing store merchandise. Motorcycles, the occasional car, bicycles, and pedestrians will also be able to get down the street more easily when the road is repaired. My village is developing because of these advancements in the community.

My village is also charming because of the natural beauty of the landscape: the mountains, the trees, vegetation, the beach-sand dirt, and the old Portuguese homes. But most importantly the people make the village charming.

Vamos Comer

It is common to get invited to eat dinner with neighbors. My neighbors invite me to eat with them by saying: Vamos comer. One of my favorite Mozambican dishes is matapa amendwein com arroz. It is delicious.

Matapa is a dark green leaf vegetable, something close to spinach in appearance. Amendwein is peanuts. Matapa amendwein is made with a dark green leaf, finely ground peanuts, tomatoes, onions and spices. The rice is cooked in coconut milk, which is made from scratch and begins with opening a fresh coconut and pouring out the juice. We usually drink the juice from the rim of the fruit: delicious. After the matapa pot has cooked it is placed over the coconut flavored rice and onto your plate, a healthy mouthwatering meal. Vamos comer!

On one occasion my neighbor pulled peanuts straight out the ground and offered

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One of the many great things about the United States is our Constitution, our laws, law enforcement, and our good leadership. Help and change do not always go hand in hand. I hope that I am helping the community I live in by teaching English at the secondary school. Volunteers work very hard and we do our very best.

A Charming Developing Village in Mozambique

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me some. There is an open garden next to our houses where she grows peanuts, piri piri, and matapa corn. She also has two papaiya trees. I ate fresh peanuts with my neighbors, dirt from the ground still on the roots. The peanuts were very fresh and so delicious. I thanked her for her kindness.

Another neighbor, Senhora G is a stay at home mother. She is married to a lawyer and they have seven children at home. She cares for the children and keeps the house in order. The children attend the primary and secondary schools. Senhora G is 25 years old and studies at the primary school at night. After the sun sets and we have turned on our porch lights, you can find Senhora G multitasking, preparing dinner outside with her oldest girls (none of us has an indoor kitchen), and doing homework between breaks. She is a good woman to know and a very kind neighbor.

Futbol

It seems like most people enjoy futbol, or soccer, in the village. Little children, my high school aged students, and the teachers at the secondary school all have soccer teams. They play in the field next to the secondary school where I teach English.

The young children in primary school use the field too. Their ball is made from plastic bags balled up tight and tied together inside another bag. The ball is round, and when the children kick it, it flies and rolls. It does just about everything an ordinary soccer ball is supposed to do. Through the air and to the ground, the plastic bag ball rolls to the goal, and when it does you can hear the children call out: Goal!

The older students and the teachers use a traditionally made soccer ball. Most mornings before school students are in the field playing soccer. Futbol is an international sport embraced by the people in my village.

Lessons Learned

There are clues that the Women's Movement swam past the shores of Mozambique and kept right on going by. However, the politics of race, identity, and economics has reached the shore. Like anywhere assumptions, rightly or wrongly, can be based on first glance and limited

information. One of the many great things about the United States is our Constitution, our laws, law enforcement, and our good leadership. Help and change do not always go hand in hand. I hope that I am helping the community I live in by teaching English at the secondary school. Volunteers work very hard and we do our very best. In my personal opinion, without an encompassing paradigm shift, large-scale change slumbers but certainly can take place on an individual level. Teaching a different way of studying or good health practices is not done because one culture is wrong. Instead borrowing the good from both cultures is a positive exchange that I am certain can be done between one open mind and another. I like to think that these small changes impact the lives of the people, the community, the village, and the country as a whole.

The culture of Mozambique has a lot to offer. The landscape is beautiful and peaceful with its white sand beaches and mountains. At night you can see the constellations, marble black skies and dazzling white stars shine with a brilliant design that can be seen in the calm nights in my charming village, my Peace Corps home, in Mozambique. **LLL**

Dawn Bohls, Reference Librarian, Bingham McCutchen LLP, dawn.bohls@bingham.com

Battles, Matthew. **Library: An Unquiet History** (New York: W.W. Norton, 2003)

Every once in a while, I like to get outside my little law-firm-library box and get a big picture feel for the “library” in the world. To that end, I opted to read and review a historical survey entitled *Library: An Unquiet History*. This book was written by Matthew Battles, who worked as coordinating editor of the *Harvard Library Review* for a number of years. The first sentence of the book made me laugh, reminding me of my two-year stint as a university cataloger: “When I first went to work in Harvard’s Widener Library, I immediately made my first mistake: I tried to read the books” [p. 3]. As a cataloger, you are faced with all (or at least many) of the new books coming into your library, and it is so tempting to just starting skimming through them to find out what they are about. Sometimes you start getting engrossed in a section in the middle of a book and you have to tear yourself out of it because, after all, you are not getting paid to READ the books, just to get a cataloging record into the system. It is a very disjointed, disorienting experience to just get little snippets of lots of different books that way; you know there is so much more out there and you will never be able to even attempt to absorb it all. I liked Battles’ phrase “compulsive vertigo” to explain the phenomenon.

I think that “compulsive vertigo” is also a good description of the overall problem with this book. It is a lot of little snippets that never really manage to gel into a coherent whole. To a large extent, this lack of cohesiveness is purportedly intentional:

My method in the pages that follow mirrors that of Eugene Gant: I pick up a volume—perhaps it’s Gibbon’s *Decline and Fall*—and something I read there leads to the lyrics of the of Callimachus or the letters of Seneca. Keeping a finger stuck among those pages, I follow a trail that leads from Cassiodorus to Francis Bacon, from

Caliph Omar to Jonathan Swift and John Stuart Mill. I drop one passage to follow another, threading my way among ranges of books, lost among the shelves. [p. 20]

One may choose to accept Battles’ explanation of his deliberately haphazard methodology at face value, although I am inclined to judge him more harshly as a sloppy writer with a lazy editor. Still, for all its tendency to meander off onto tangents of questionable relevance, *Library: An Unquiet History* is a quick read, often interesting, just as often infuriating, and occasionally fascinating. The sixth chapter, “Knowledge on Fire,” particularly embodies all of these contradictory elements. The chapter begins with the over-broad declaration that “If the nineteenth century was about the building of libraries, the twentieth was about their destruction” [p. 156]. Without a doubt, many libraries—some of them quite significant—were destroyed by German troops and other attackers, but hardly in such great numbers to justify calling the twentieth century an unabated era of library destruction.

That assertion is followed shortly thereafter by the even stranger non sequitur that “It may not be too much to say that the sudden disembodiment of the book in the late twentieth century—as text disappeared first into the grainy obfuscations of microfilm and eventually into the pixilated ether of the Internet—began with crude renewals of violence against the book in the First and Second World Wars” [p. 156]. Battles never does bother to offer any support for this idea or explain it further, and I am not creative enough to be able to figure out what his point is.

These two quotations are examples of the infuriating aspects of Battles’ book, but the chapter “Knowledge on Fire” also includes several moving anecdotes about the significance of libraries for imperiled cultures and peoples. Especially memorable is Battles’ account of the Jewish library at the Vilna ghetto in Poland.

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Every once in a while, I like to get outside my little law-firm-library box and get a big picture feel for the “library” in the world. To that end, I opted to read and review a historical survey entitled *Library: An Unquiet History*.

Book Review *continued from page 11*

In October 1942, the librarian Herman Kruk prepared a careful report documenting the library's first year, reporting that 4,700 patrons had visited the library. By December 1942, 100,000 books had been loaned. In October 1943, Kruk himself was deported, and the following year, he was killed. The semblance of civilization that the library provided was transitory and, ultimately, illusory.

As a history of libraries, “unquiet” or otherwise, *Library: An Unquiet History* fails all tests for scholarly respectability. The basic structure of the book, although essentially laid out chronologically, does not follow a central thesis. Battles says he is looking for “points of transformation, those moments where readers, authors, and librarians question the meaning of the library itself,” but at best, maybe one of these categories of stakeholders is considered at any particular

time. Chapter four, “The Battle of the Books,” spends more time randomly discoursing on Jonathan Swift’s well-known tale of that name than it does carefully discussing the evolution of libraries during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Rather than coolly analyzing and recognizing the different types of libraries that may exist within a civilization of a particular era, Battles chooses random persons, stories, and individual libraries as exemplars of their time. His approach is biased at best and misleading at worst.

In the end, can I say that I would recommend this book? I have to conclude that I’m not sure. *Library: An Unquiet History* is a strange, defective little work. I hope it is clear from my review that you should not read it as any sort of definitive history of libraries. But if you are interested in taking a wacky, wild roller coaster of a ride into “compulsive vertigo,” fasten your seat belt and go for it! Isn’t that what summer is for? **LLL**

An Ode to Mobile Gaming

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In the spirit of the summer theme for this issue, this Tech Talk column covers a popular free-time activity: mobile gaming. In lieu of reviews or recommendations, I cover around twenty popular games in verse:

An Ode to Mobile Gaming

Downloadable apps on a mobile platform
available in your pocket any time of the day

That way neither Jill nor Jack need suffer nor toil
by spending free time with all work and no play

If text games are an area where you like to dabble,
Try words you can cross¹, scramble², find³, hang⁴, plus scrabble⁵

There's also Wordfeud⁶ and Wordsmith⁷, the list never ends,
Also Word-Drop⁸, and of course Words with Friends⁹

For physics reactions, choose a bubble¹⁰, oil¹¹ or goo¹².
Start cutting ropes¹³, tilt tiny wings¹⁴ or Jump Doodles¹⁵ too

For mindless fun, slice Fruit¹⁶ at your first chance,
or decide that you like killing zombies with plants¹⁷

At the top of the charts in my game list directory
Are those upset aviary thrown on a parabolic trajectory¹⁸

If you're confused with the meaning of these obscure words,
It's none other than Angry Birds¹⁹, Angry Birds²⁰, Angry Birds²¹,
Angry Birds²², Angry Birds²³, Angry Birds²⁴, Angry Birds²⁵ [...]

References

¹ Shortyz Crosswords [Android] <https://market.android.com/details?id=com.totsp.crossword.shortyz>

² Word Scramble Challenge by Zynga [iPhone] <http://itunes.apple.com/us/app/word-scramble-challenge-edition/id329756985?mt=8>

³ WordSearch Unlimited [iOS] <http://itunes.apple.com/us/app/wordsearch-unlimited-free/id306245714?mt=8>

⁴ Hanging with Friends from Zynga [iOS] <http://itunes.apple.com/us/app/hanging-with-friends/id440784937?mt=8>

⁵ Scrabble [iOS] <http://itunes.apple.com/us/app/hanging-with-friends/id440784937?mt=8>

⁶ Wordfeud [Android] <https://market.android.com/details?id=com.hbwares.wordfeud.full>

⁷ Wordsmith [Android] http://www.amazon.com/Second-Breakfast-Studios-Wordsmith-Free/dp/B004R6DMX0/ref=sr_1_2?ie=UTF8&s=mobile-apps&qid=1307632095&sr=1-2

⁸ Word-Drop [iPhone] <http://itunes.apple.com/us/app/word-drop/id406967589?mt=8>

⁹ Words with Friends HD [iOS] <http://itunes.apple.com/us/app/words-with-friends-hd/id364140796?mt=8>

¹⁰ Bubble Ball [Android and iOS] <http://www.naygames.com/>

continued on page 14

¹¹ Feed Me Oil [iOS] <http://itunes.apple.com/us/app/feed-me-oil/id422034547?mt=8>

¹² World of Goo [iOS] <http://itunes.apple.com/us/app/world-of-goo-hd/id401301276?mt=8>.

Read an interesting story about their iPad development, showing that some reviewers thought the game was too hard.
<http://2dboy.com/2011/02/08/ipad-launch/>

¹³ Cut the Rope [iOS] <http://itunes.apple.com/us/app/cut-the-rope/id380293530?mt=8>

¹⁴ Tiny Wings [iOS] <http://itunes.apple.com/us/app/tiny-wings/id417817520?mt=8>

¹⁵ Doodle Jump [iOS] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Doodle_Jump, called “insanely addictive” which it can be.

¹⁶ Fruit Ninja [iOS] <http://www.fruitninja.com/>

¹⁷ Plants v. Zombies [iOS] <http://www.popcap.com/games/pvz>

¹⁸ Tracing Those Angry Birds to the Dawn of Man <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748703779704576074222543274268.html>. An article from a *Wall Street Journal* blog arguing that the act of hurling projectiles along a parabolic trajectory can be traced from the dawn of man to the current Angry Birds phenomenon.

¹⁹⁻²⁵ Angry Birds is on just about every mobile gaming platform imaginable. It’s also available on the Barnes and Noble Nook, as a Chrome browser app, stuffed animals, and even a physical board game. [LLL](#)



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