Founded in 1966 at Florida State University by Louis Shores, the quarterly Journal of Library History moved to the University of Texas at Austin in 1976 and continues to be published by the University of Texas Press. It was renamed Libraries & Culture in 1988. While there has been some continuity in the Florida and Texas years, during the former period the journal seemed linked more to the library profession, whereas during the Texas years it has been linked more to the literary humanities and the history professions. It presently strives to be an interdisciplinary journal that explores the significance of collections of recorded knowledge--their creation, organization, preservation, and utilization--in the context of cultural and social history, unlimited as to time and place. The history of this unique journal is intertwined with the evolution of library history in the last third of the twentieth century. (Contains 24 endnotes.) (Author/MES)
An Odyssey in Scholarly Library History: JLH / L&C at 35

Donald G. Davis, Jr.
Graduate School of Library and Information Science
University of Texas at Austin
Austin, Texas, USA

Abstract

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

Paper

The idea for a journal devoted to library history came in a meeting of the American Library Association's (ALA) American Library History Round Table (ALHRT). That is the way Louis Shores, the founding editor, remembered it. In a 1974 memorial for his friend and colleague Wayne Shirley, Shores recalled events from decades before-events that would lead to the formation of three pivotal institutions for the study of library history in the United States.
First, Shores remembered how at the 1946 ALA Convention he had joined with Shirley in discussing with President Carl Milam the possibility of a greater role for library history in the ALA. The result of the conversations held by the trio of library leaders was the formation of a Round Table for all those interested in discussing and supporting library history. At the 1947 annual meeting of the ALA, the American Library History Round Table gained official recognition. Both Shirley and Shores continued to support the fledgling ALHRT for two decades, the former as chairman, the latter as secretary. For fifty years, the Round Table has provided an institutional home in which those interested in the field of library history can gather together once or twice a year to read papers and, in general, to assess the state of the field.

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

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

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

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

The Journal at Florida State University (1966-1976)

Louis Shores, the individual so influential in the formation of a journal of library history, was a person of wide-ranging interests and talents. Ideas on reference works and service, the educational role of encyclopedias, the library-college concept, media, and library history all jostled for preeminence in his fertile and protean thought. It was history, however—a philosophy of history essentially Hegelian and mystical—that formed the core of his deepest thought and sustained him throughout a professional career in librarianship spanning more than fifty years.
After succeeding in founding the first two ventures earlier in his career at FSU, Shores began to make plans for the journal in the mid-1960s. Despite his avowed love of library history, there is no indication that he harbored any grandiose conceptions of its academic status. In his estimation, the subfield of library history, though rarely exposed to open derision, was in reality the neglected child of the library science family. After the founding of the journal, Shores referred to this benign neglect when recalling "... the previously neglected areas of library history, philosophy, and comparative librarianship." That neglect, he implied, was longstanding, but in its current manifestation was traceable to a quixotic quest for novelty and change begun in the 1950s and 60s by many American library leaders. In that trendy cultural milieu, the stolid writings of the historians "... have found no outlet in professional journals that for the most part are committed to the current scene." In all likelihood, Shores believed that the broader and longer perspective engendered by a journal of library history would act as a voice of reason in the midst of the cacophony of the change agents. Furthermore, the journal would assume a practical role, by providing a convenient place for publishing some of the better papers originally read at the Round Table meetings.

Based upon his extensive previous experience in journal publication, Shores estimated that three hundred subscribers were needed in order to sustain the new journal. When a comprehensive campaign for subscribers finally raised the required number, he gave the approval to proceed. The inaugural issue of The Journal of Library History, Philosophy and Comparative Librarianship was published by the library school in January 1966. Links with the past were maintained when Wayne Shirley, Shores's friend and colleague, sent congratulations from the American Library History Roundtable of the ALA. A new journal had been born.

The editorial and advisory boards for the new journal were impressive. Shores had gathered a cadre of local collegial volunteers around him. In addition to the editorial assistance, a second category, the "Faculty Publications Board," listed three chairmen. These individuals acted as referees for the articles submitted to the journal. A third category was the "International Advisory Board," listing eighteen advisors from five continents and the United Nations.

The new journal published by the FSU team came off the press in an 88-page, saddle-stitched binding format, sporting a light green cover with the stylized logo "JLH" on it. The cover of the first issue gave the name, The Journal of Library History. The title page, however, provided a fuller title: The Journal of Library History, Philosophy and Comparative Librarianship, but with the additional words of the expanded version in a smaller size type. When the title of the journal was given in the text, most writers used the short title—but others used the expanded version. Much to the consternation of catalogers, there was always some degree of ambiguity in the exact name of the Journal.

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

The "Articles" section, though, was the centerpiece of the quarterly journal. Over the 11 volumes (44 issues) at FSU, there were a total of about 165 articles, though admittedly a few of the articles were simply brief informational pieces. The articles dealt with all of the varied aspects of the field, including books, libraries, librarianship, printing, library education and a number of other areas. All periods of history were dealt with, including ancient and medieval. A striking number of overview articles on libraries and librarianship in an international context (Colombia, Thailand, Pakistan, West Germany, India-Pakistan, Johannesburg, Jamaica, Pretoria, National Diet Library of Japan, etc.) were included.
The authors of the articles expressed an appreciation for viewing libraries within their surrounding cultures. Even with this view, however, the stress was strongly on the library as an institution of society and decidedly less stress was placed upon the connections or nexus between the culture and the library.

John David Marshall was the editor of "JLH Bookshelf," which reviewed about 200 books during the eleven years of the Journal at FSU. Each issue featured some four or five current works in the field of library history that were selected for review. Some of the reviews were rather lengthy, two pages or more in length, though a few were cited with only a brief descriptive paragraph provided.

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

Each of the departmental editors used his column to make personal editorial comments in an open and forthright manner. The result was both a bane and a blessing. On the one hand, the columns could manifest a personal, direct, and human quality, useful in drawing together supporters of the field; on the other hand, the columns could be used by some to perpetuate the stereotype that library history was insufficiently scholarly. In addition, the juxtaposition of editorial departments and scholarly articles in such close proximity gave the Journal a mixed quality that was sometimes jarring. Given the status of library history in the profession during the mid-1960s, the editorial board saw this approach as the best possible way to reach the broadest constituency.

Louis Shores was undoubtedly the primary personality behind the new journal during its tenure at FSU and continued to be listed as editor emeritus. Shores's successor as dean of the Library School was Harold Goldstein, who had come from a professorship at the University of Illinois. He held the position of editor of the Journal throughout the remainder of its days at FSU. By all accounts, Goldstein carried out his duties with professional skill and knowledge, with "a management style that got things done with dispatch." In its tone and format, the Journal under Goldstein continued in the path laid out by Shores.

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

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

Despite all these efforts, the financial position of the Journal declined steadily, becoming critical by the mid-1970s. With regret, the decision was made to find a new home for the Journal. During the early part of 1976, letters were written to other departments of library science. Included in these potential sites were the University of Texas at Austin, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and in all likelihood, the University of Illinois. It is also persistently rumored that a prominent commercial journal publisher was eager to take over the new responsibilities. Out of this flurry of activity, a new candidate for sponsorship of the Journal emerged as a likely successor. It was the University of Texas at Austin.

**The Journal at the University of Texas at Austin (1976-)**

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

The first was a potential new editor, author of this paper, who assumed his teaching duties at the UT-Austin Library School beginning in 1971. The new professor arrived with an appreciation of history and a solid background in its study. When, some five years later, the possibility of moving the Journal to UT-Austin surfaced, this young professor leaped at the new opportunity. The second critical figure was the dean of the Library School, C. Glenn Sparks who agreed to the new arrangement. The third critical individual was Philip D. Jones, who had recently assumed the position of director of the UT Press. Having recently arrived from the lush journal-publishing fields at the University of Chicago, Jones was in an expansive mode of operation as he entered upon his new duties at UT-Austin. Therefore, when the proposition for a new journal was broached, the Press director accepted the opportunity with some degree of alacrity. The importance of this ownership and support on the part of the UT Press can scarcely be overestimated. As the owner of the journal, the Press was responsible for all financial obligations, for copy editing, design, marketing, and bookkeeping. Editing responsibilities would be undertaken by the Library School.

It was during the transition year of 1976 that the editor began thinking about possible changes for the Journal. Taking for his example the redoubtable Library Quarterly and its editor, Boyd Rayward, the new editor envisioned a thoroughly objective and scholarly periodical—one that would place it within a broader conceptualization of the role of libraries within history. He was seeking a wider focus for the field of library history, in which the interpenetration of social, cultural, and intellectual history with libraries would be stressed. Once his thoughts had solidified and actually were implemented, they would result in the appearance of a number of changes in the Journal.

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

Other changes were more substantial. The new editor jettisoned the departmental format in an attempt to attain the academic tone he was seeking. The role of the editor was placed more in the background than it had been previously, yet at the same time thoroughly involved in every phase of decision-making and production. His plan was to structure the journal in three sections: Articles, Notes and Essays, and Book Reviews. With the first and last sections self-evident, the Notes and Essays section would provide brief essays not meeting the length standards for articles. Second, he enlarged the book reviewing section, both in quantity and in scope of coverage. Thus, 1,270 book reviews have been published in the Journal while at UT-Austin, an average of 13.8 reviews per issue, compared to the earlier 4.5 reviews per issue at FSU. Third, he instituted a policy of publishing periodic thematic issues, in which all or
most articles were devoted to a particular topic.

A change in the name of the Journal, adopted somewhat later in 1988, was more apparent than real.19 Beginning with volume 23, the new title became Libraries & Culture with the descriptive subtitle, "a journal of library history." This change did not indicate a shift from the original purpose of the Journal, but rather a "broadening recognition" of the role of libraries within culture. Thus Libraries & Culture began describing itself as "an interdisciplinary journal that explores the significance of collections of recorded knowledge-their creation, organization, preservation, and utilization-in the context of cultural and social history, unlimited as to time or place."20

The broader conception envisioned by the editor clearly is demonstrated in the approximately 430 articles published in the Journal since 1977. The international perspective of the Journal of Library History is confirmed and expanded with numerous articles on international topics with an emphasis on their history and not current events.21 In addition, all types of cultural and intellectual history related to libraries and their influence are regularly present.22 The same stability and continuity seen in the day-to-day editorial work is evident as well in the editorial board of the Journal at UT-Austin. Even with the inevitable changes in the board during the last two decades, continuity has been maintained, providing a secure foundation for the entire enterprise. Moreover, the board has become increasingly interdisciplinary, mirroring the interests of the Journal. Currently, the board is comprised of eight members, all of whom are at the University of Texas at Austin. Three of the members are in library and information science education, one is a librarian, and there is one each from the departments of Art and Art History, English, French and Italian, and History.

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

On the institutional level, the Journal has instituted new relationships with other associations-both outside and within the field of library history. One example of this external outreach was the decision to join the Conference of Historical Journals, an association of scholarly history journals. For institutional linkages more directly related to the field of library history, there have been a number of notable developments. Beginning about 1978, the Journal appeared to become a conduit in which its broader conception of history flowed into both the ALHRT and the Library History Seminars. The first indication of this broader conception on the part of the Round Table became evident when the word "American" was dropped from the official name. At the same time, the name change also appeared to signal a greater interest in the international aspects of library history.

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

A further institutional development within the field was the decision to publish material from the Library History Seminars in the Journal of Library History. Beginning with Library History Seminar VI (1980)-the first Seminar for the UT-Austin Journal-the seminar proceedings appeared as two oversized issues of the Journal prior to separate publication in indexed clothbound volumes. This practice indicates the rich intermixing among the Round Table, the Library History Seminars, and the Journal.23 With the return to these three tangibles
of library history the story has come around full circle.

**Conclusion**

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

One can point, first of all, to the way that it has striven for *continuity*. The *Journal*-both at Tallahassee and Austin-has manifested a continuing interest in the rich and variegated history of libraries. Though other more popular topics have arisen during that time, they have not diverted the *Journal* from its specific goal of enriching our understandings of library history. Significantly, this enrichment has not been pursued by rejecting the research of the past, but out of a conscious desire to build upon it. Somewhat surprisingly, this striving for continuity, has emerged with a concurrent appreciation of the need for *change*. To a greater degree, library historians see the need to analyze current topics in library and information science from historical perspectives, and in the process, demonstrate history’s relevance. Attempts by library historians to distance our craft from the wider world of librarianship have been counterproductive. One can point as well to the theme of a growth in *contextuality*-an ever-increasing appreciation of the library as a cultural and social institution and, the desire to link this study with better established areas of historical research. A final transcendent theme is the *collaboration* that has evolved among the institutional components established for study and research in library history. The ALA Library History Round Table, the Library History Seminars, and the *Journal* have each mutually strengthened the other two. Exploring ways to make this collaboration even more fruitful, and perhaps devising new institutional components, can only benefit the entire field. The building up of that field—the field of library history—has been the whole role of *JLH/L&C*. Together they have sought to advance the scholarship of library history—an odyssey of intellectual history in our profession.

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

**Notes**

1. The author wishes to thank his doctoral student, Jon Arvid Aho, who coauthored the more extensive essay on which this paper is based, "Advancing the Scholarship of Library History: The Role of JLH/L&C" that will appear in a forthcoming special issue of *Libraries & Culture* that commemorates the Fiftieth Anniversary of the American Library Association’s Library History Round Table. It contains exhaustive documentation.


3. In 1978 the American Library History Round Table (ALHRT) removed "American" from its name, becoming simply the Library History Round Table (LHRT).
4. Shores, "Wayne Shirley: In Memoriam," 292. According to Shores, he expressed the desire to have a journal for the field at the initial meeting of the ALHRT: "At that very first meeting, I expressed the hope that we could one day publish a journal." Shores, Quiet World: A Librarian's Crusade for Destiny (Hamden, Conn.: Shoe String Press, 1975), 232.

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


8. Important source materials for the study of the Journal are the individual issues of the journal, as well as the archival material located at the Center for American History, University of Texas at Austin, and in the office files of the Libraries & Culture office. Other material can be gleaned from a review essay by Laurel Grotzinger in Library and Information Science Annual 3 (1987): 203-205. Important overviews can be found in Libraries & Culture: Twenty-Five-Year Cumulative Index, Volumes 1-25, 1966-1990, edited by Hermina G. B. Angehelescu and Elizabeth A. Dupuis (Austin: Graduate School of Library and Information Science, UT-Austin, 1995) and in the review of the same work by John Richardson, Jr. in Library Quarterly 67 (1) (January 1997): 87-88. For biographical information, see the relevant entries in the Dictionary of American Library Biography (DALB) (Littleton, Colo.: Libraries Unlimited, 1978), edited by Bohdan S. Wynar. It contains over three hundred biographical sketches of prominent American library leaders deceased as of June 1976. Among the sketches, John David Marshall has a contribution on William Wayne Shirley (1900-1973). For material on Louis Shores, one can examine with great profit the biographical sketch by Lee Shiflett in the Supplement to the Dictionary of American Library Biography, ed. by Wayne A. Wiegand (Englewood, Colo.: Libraries Unlimited, 1990). The Supplement contains 51 biographical sketches not contained in the original DALB and extends the coverage date to June 1987. See also the full-length work by Shiflett, Louis Shores: Defining Educational Librarianship (Lanham, Md.: Scarecrow Press, 1996). Louis Shores' autobiography, Quiet World: A Librarian's Crusade for Destiny (Hamden, Conn.: Shoe String Press, 1975) is an illuminating account of his entire professional life and contains a chapter on his views on historiography and the beginning of the Journal (224-36).


10. Louis Shores, Journal of Library History, 1(1) (1966): 5. This view is also the theme of the chapter on library history in his autobiography, Quiet World, esp. 231 and 236.

11. In Shores's memoriam to Wayne Shirley, Shores lauded most of all Shirley's "courageous commitment to constants in an age of perpetual celebration of change." Shores returned to that theme in his peroration: "Much as death seems to enforce change, the memory of Wayne Shirley reinforces faith in the constants of the eternal verities." Journal of Library History, 9(4) (1974): 291-92.

12. Shores, Quiet World, 234.


14. Shores expressed disappointment over the format and printing of the first issue. "We had taken the lowest bid. It came from a small printing establishment with limited resources, and among other things, a font of type without italics. Volume one, number one looks amateurish.
We shifted to another type style in issue two, and to another printer later." Quiet World: A Librarian's Crusade, 234.

15. Shores used the expanded version in Vol. 9, no. 4, p. 292.

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


18. Letter of Louis Shores to Donald G. Davis, Jr. dated 26 February 1978 in the administrative correspondence file (FSU) located at the Libraries & Culture office. See also the comments of Lee Shiflett, Louis Shores: Defining Educational Librarianship, 214.

19. Davis discusses the impending change in the final issue of the journal under the old name, Journal of Library History 22(4) (1987).


22. Ibid.

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

NOTICE

REPRODUCTION BASIS

☑ This document is covered by a signed "Reproduction Release (Blanket) form (on file within the ERIC system), encompassing all or classes of documents from its source organization and, therefore, does not require a "Specific Document" Release form.

☐ This document is Federally-funded, or carries its own permission to reproduce, or is otherwise in the public domain and, therefore, may be reproduced by ERIC without a signed Reproduction Release form (either "Specific Document" or "Blanket").