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Being Earnest With Collections: A Look Back at the First Charleston Seminar

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to Oxford are warmly invited to come in and find out more about this work in progress. Resplendent on the wall of the Blackwell Hall they will see the newly conserved 16th-century Sheldon Tapestry Map of Worcestershire, flanked by interactive screens that provide a behind-the-scenes view of the library's work.

But any visitor should start with a visit to *Marks of Genius*, the first exhibition to be mounted in the Blackwell Hall.⁶ They will discover exceptional treasures formerly hidden from sight: **Shakespeare's First Folio**, an original draft of **Mary Shelley's Frankenstein**, the 1455 **Gutenberg Bible**, the dust cover of *The Hobbit* designed by **Tolkien**, and The Gloucester Magna Carta, dating from 1217; the library holds nearly a quarter of the world's original 13th-century manuscripts of the Magna Carta. Presiding at the opening of the exhibition, **Sir David Attenborough** acclaimed the **Weston Library** as "a place where knowledge is preserved and shared from one generation to

the next." And he appeared as much at home exploring here as he is in the undergrowth of the natural world.

Sharing the platform with **Sir David** was the celebrated physicist **Stephen Hawking**. Oxford, he told the invited audience, is in his blood. It was his birthplace, his parent's workplace, and where he studied as an undergraduate. He returned to pay a stunning tribute:

"The works featured in the Bodleian Libraries' Marks of Genius exhibition truly are the product of genius, be it Einstein, Newton, or Shakespeare...I hope that thousands of people, young and old, will visit the exhibition and be inspired to develop ideas of their own, to experiment, try out new ways of thinking, and share their ideas with others.... Who knows, perhaps the Bodleian's exhibition will stimulate the next Euclid, Newton, or Dorothy Hodgkin to put down their ideas on paper or pixels and make new Marks of Genius."

Will the erstwhile skateboarders, who used to demonstrate their prowess on the steps of the **New Bodleian** before they were barred, hang

up their skateboards and accept **Stephen Hawking's** challenge? Perhaps many Jude the Obscure will come into the light of the Blackwell Hall and avail themselves of an Oxford Education for free. They have license. Eight hundred years ago, in a meadow beside the Thames, **King John** put his seal on the Magna Carta — a document seen as the foundation of liberty. **Thomas Carlyle** claimed a book education as a right

for all men: "What we become depends on what we read...The greatest university of all is a collection of books." Seen through a 21st-century lens, the **Weston Library** makes a grand contribution to this "Outreach." It is indeed a "republic of letters" for all. It would "greatly content" **Bodleian's** founder, **Sir Thomas Bodley**.

Postscript

Ten days later, despite volatile Spring weather and toddlers on ride-on tricycles, the Blackwell Hall has become the place to see and be seen: smiling surprised tourists, mums with buggies, patient carers, grandparents explaining the treasures in the exhibition halls, flat-white-sipping writers and readers and busy business people rushing in to buy a mouth-watering sandwich or wicked cake, even an ex-Vice Chancellor and **Sir Basil Blackwell's** ninety-one-year-old daughter were spotted. The Tate Modern had better watch out — it has a formidable rival. There's no disguising the fact that Oxford's **Weston Library** has become the latest people's palace! 🐘

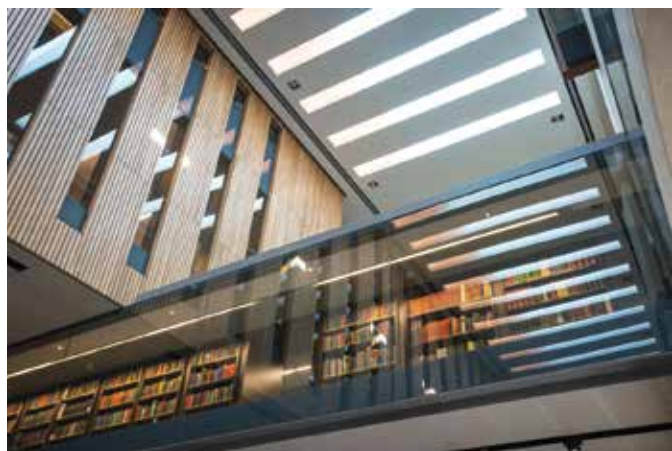


Photo by John Cairns. Copyright Bodleian Libraries, University of Oxford.

Endnotes

1. These themes are explored further in a new book by **Rita Ricketts**, *Scholars, Poets and Radicals*, Bodleian Library, Oxford, 2015.
2. **Sir David Attenborough** described the **Weston Library** as "a temple to the book" at the opening of the exhibition: *Marks of Genius*, 20.3.15.
3. See **Richard Ovenden's** preface to *Scholars, Poets and Radicals*, **Rita Ricketts**, Bodleian Library, 2015.
4. **Reg Little**, *Oxford Times*, 19.3.2015.
5. The Bodleian Collection of books published by **Blackwell's**, from 1879, with associated papers, provided a small contribution generously donated by **Wiley Blackwell**.
6. A supporting array of books is beautifully displayed next door to the **Weston Library** in the Norrington Room of **Blackwell's** bookshop.



Being Earnest with Collections — A Look Back at the First Charleston Seminar

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Column Editor's Note: *Being Earnest with Collections* is a column dedicated to addressing how librarians are transforming the way users identify and make use of information in the digital age. In this and future issues the focus will be on finding efficiencies and developing best practices for collection development in the 21st-century library. The search is on for specific takeaways from libraries focused on exploring new modes of information delivery while also working to establish effective purchasing models. Meeting the information needs of library users in an ever-changing digital environment is difficult. Librarians are facing a delicate situation trying to balance the needs of users while being impacted by a host of conflicting interests. Finding answers to questions about the future of collection development was the focus of the first **Charleston Seminar** held during the **Charleston Conference** in 2014. This first edition of *Being Earnest with Collections* provides a look back at this special event that was the closing act for the **2014 Charleston Conference**. — MA

Being Earnest with our Collections: Determining Key Challenges and Best Practices was the title for the first **Charleston Seminar**. The seminar replaced the traditional **Rump Session** with a goal of having speakers with provocative ideas address key challenges in collection development. The speakers delivered with insightful discussions on the future of sustainable eBook models, alternative purchasing models for serials, and the challenges facing libraries as the industry moves from legacy to cloud-based systems.

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The idea of this innovative session began with a discussion between **Katina Strauch** and **Michael Arthur** at the **2013 Charleston Conference**. The session replaced the traditional Saturday afternoon **Rump Session** with a new and innovative way to address key challenges facing collection management.

The **2014 Charleston Seminar** was kicked off by two notable speakers with one of the hottest topics when **Michael Levine-Clark** and **Rebecca Seger** presented on the conflicting issues surrounding eBook models. In *Ebooks: Key Challenges, Future Possibilities*, the presenters identified five key challenges.

- Developing sustainable models that are flexible and predictable
- Preservation of content
- Resource sharing
- Course adoption
- Future of the monograph

Michael and **Rebecca** outlined key concepts for each of the five challenges and discussed future possibilities for addressing the challenges. Notable suggestions include libraries helping to make DDA sustainable for publishers by paying a small per-title DDA fee that gets passed on to the publisher, adding back in a small amount of predictable revenue. The recommendation for a DDA fee varies from current models in that the funds would go directly to publishers to help offset losses from the reduction in overall book sales. Currently DDA includes fees for value-added services by aggregators with little if any of this funding going to publishers. This results in a reluctance by publishers to support high-impact, low-use titles. The concern is that some publishers will pass on publishing academic monographs if they have to rely only on revenue from DDA. The fee could offset the costs of profiling, record loads, archiving, and browsing. Models could be based on book type, age of the content, and sales projections. Libraries and users are not well served if the academic monograph does not remain viable. The presenters were asked to address key challenges with eBook models. While there is no data available to support the necessity of DDA fees, it seems logical that publishers are going to move away from publishing certain types of monographs if STLs continue to impact overall sales.

The challenge for librarians and publishers is to develop sustainable models that will support important academic publications that may not have a broad market. It was stressed that ILL is a means to an end. ILL is more costly and less efficient than short-term loans, so librarians and publishers should work together to develop ways in which content can be provided faster to users without the intermediary step of going through the lending-delivery process. Models that provide for low-cost, immediate access to content, and that may include DDA fees if necessary to offset the reductions in sales, may help libraries and publishers in the long run. Currently publishers are losing money when print books are moved from one library to another through ILL. This is a slow process for the user. Low-cost models for providing immediate access to the

user would provide the publisher with some revenue. This, along with DDA fees, may help offset the reduction in overall monograph purchases.

Moving from legacy to cloud-based systems requires thorough planning and adept implementation. The challenges in moving to a cloud-based system were emphasized by two dynamic speakers at the **2014 Charleston Seminar**. **Jill Grogg** and **Robert McDonald** gave the audience a chance to step outside the normal issues faced in collection development when they introduced key challenges for the next step in library automation with *Transitioning from Legacy Systems to Cloud Infrastructure*. **Robert** began with an environmental scan of the impact of cloud-based systems. 94% of businesses report cloud usage. \$47B was spent in 2013 on cloud services, and that is estimated to increase to \$107B by 2017.

There are many options for libraries through a number of products including Alma, Intota, Sierra, and Quali Ole. It is important for libraries to spend ample time before a migration to gather information about the systems, including a determination of how functions carried out in legacy systems will be handled as well as ensuring that any current interfacing to other systems within the institution will be manageable. Any change in LMS should also involve a plan for exit strategy. Will the new system be easy to migrate when the time comes? All systems will eventually need to be replaced. Planning for a move to a cloud-based system can be very costly and require a major outlay in human resources. Does the library have the expertise to manage the migration? What about the daily management of the system after the migration? What guarantees does the library have from the vendor regarding support after the sale?

Jill stressed self-reflection and a thorough understanding of communication during the process of a shift from legacy to next gen systems. Understanding the ways in which people communicate, negotiate, and handle change is critical. The time spent addressing these factors and preparing for the uncertainty of staff members will pay off in the long run with a more successful migration.

Facing unsustainable subscription increases has been a challenge for libraries for many years. Many libraries face nearly annual cuts to subscriptions and reductions in monograph expenditures. Some libraries purchase few if any monographs in order to maintain costly subscriptions. Addressing the concerns many librarians have regarding the future of subscription models and particularly the Big Deal, **Jonathan Harwell** and **Jim Bunnelle** provided the audience with insights in their *Lightning Round: Alternative Serial Distribution Models for Libraries*.

The speakers stressed that the current subscription model as the primary approach to serial acquisitions (supplemented by ILL & PPV) is unsustainable for library budgets, and thus for publishers. Libraries need flexible alternatives, such as demand-driven acquisitions and perpetual purchasing of serial content that is similar to that available for monographs. With support from serial vendors and publishers, libraries can leverage discovery layers to add serial content to library collections on the fly, based on usage. Libraries need increased

granularity for purchasing article-level content at the point of need. This should be available within discovery layers. Publishers should consider just-in-time purchasing with pricing tied to usage or even the type of usage.

The **2014 Charleston Seminar** was capped off when **Rick Anderson** delivered *Depth Perception in Academic Libraries: A Two-Dimensional Model*. **Rick** never disappoints, and in this session he was both thoughtful and insightful as he stressed that the librarian has a fundamental duty to advance both the mission of the library and of its host institution. Librarians may, at times, find themselves at odds with the mission of the library or the institution. Librarians need to understand the mission of the institution and the library, and be aware of the degree to which their own beliefs and goals are in harmony with those of the institutions they serve. They can then move toward ensuring that their individual goals and activities will help further the missions of the larger institutions they serve.

One question that emerged from the audience discussion was the degree to which a middle ground exists between accepting the institutional mission and rejecting it — couldn't a librarian who disagrees deeply with aspects of the institutional mission work to change it? **Rick** suggested that this is not only possible but desirable — but that, ultimately, each institution is going to decide what its mission and directions will be, and those who work for the institution will then have to decide whether or not they can continue to support those directions in good conscience.

As with any new endeavor, the **2014 Charleston Seminar** had some growing pains. There should have been more time allotted for Q&A and development of specific steps to be taken to address the recommendations made by the outstanding presenters. Future plans may include breakout sessions or opportunities for moderated discussions following each presentation.

Throughout the event, questions from the audience focused on the assumptions being made by the presenters. In most cases the presenters were coming from the view that library budgets (serials and monographs) are being reduced and that new models have to be found that allow the library to provide content at time of need and to move away from the package (article or book) and focus on providing content at a price point acceptable to the libraries while also ensuring the publishers can continue to produce relevant content. Some in the audience expressed that not all libraries are dealing with declining budgets or may not feel the need to move in drastically new directions. 🌿

*Future editions of the **Being Earnest with Collections** column will feature new and innovative ways in which librarians are meeting the information needs of users while managing the many competing issues they face. Plans are in place now, and ideas and potential speakers are being sought, for the **2015 Charleston Seminar**. If you or someone you know is interested in featuring a new idea or best practice that helps address collection development in the 21st-century library please contact **Michael Arthur** at <michael.arthur@ucf.edu>.*

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