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## Law Librarianship: A Forum

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Law  
Library

**Lights**

VOLUME 35, NUMBER 5

MAY/JUNE 1992

A CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF LAW LIBRARIES

**LAW  
LIBRARIANSHIP:  
A FORUM**

**LAW LIBRARIANSHIP** is a profession that has a proud history and a bright future, yet it is not without its problems and concerns. For this issue of *Law Library Lights*, we have gathered together a number of luminaries in the field and asked them a number of questions related to the most important issues facing our community. The participants are:

**BOB BERRING** is currently the Director of the Law Library and Professor of Law at the University of California School of Law in Berkeley. Bob was President of the American Association of Law Libraries from 1985-1986.

**MARK ESTES** is the Librarian at Holme Roberts & Owen in Denver, Colorado. Mark is currently serving as the Vice-President of AALL, and will serve as President beginning in July of this year.

**PENNY HAZELTON** is a Professor of Law and the Law Librarian at the University of Washington in Seattle. Penny served as President of AALL from 1990-1991.

**KATHIE PRICE** has been the Law Librarian of Congress since August of 1990. Before serving in this position, she was Acting Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs and Executive Officer for Academic Affairs Office at the University of Minnesota.

**JOANNE ZICH** is currently the Vice-President, President-Elect of the Law Librarians' Society of Washington, D.C. She is the Government Documents Librarian at the American University Law Library.

**A. PROFESSIONAL IMAGE**

*Librarianship is an undervalued profession. Part of the evidence of this is the low salaries. How do we rectify this?*

**BERRING:** There can be no doubt that librarianship has traditionally been an undervalued profession. Part of this undervaluing results from the fact that we were traditionally a "women's profession," suffered the expected discrimination and hence we have been undercompensated and accorded less status. While some significant gains have been made in this area, much remains to be done. There is no simple answer for rectifying it. I do think that librarians in general and law librarians in particular must become far more active in putting forward a political agenda. While our service orientation is one of our proudest heritages, we must learn to recognize the fact that we are the "good guys," and that it is okay for us to wield whatever political leverage and power we can. We have been humble and willing to serve for too long.

**HAZELTON:** First we have to know what the salaries are! Despite the surveys we do, there is no information which gives us accurate salary pictures. The survey at the AALL Annual Meeting last summer was an attempt to get some more broad-based information. We need to refine this process and gather useful, timely data. Second, we need to compare our salaries with other library sectors. Third, we need to stop trying to hire at the lowest possible salary. Many of us set salaries or recommend salaries. We, law librarians, must make this happen. We must influence the salary-

*continued on page 3*

## FROM THE PRESIDENT

by Sharon Kissel  
Shea & Gardner

**BEING THE LLSDC PRESIDENT** for the past year has been a very rewarding experience for me. The strength and vitality of our organization is only a reflection of the time and enthusiasm that so many others contribute to our numerous activities. I want to thank all of the officers and members of the Executive Board - Janice Anderson, Elmo Dattalo, Rachel Jones, Charlie Knuth, Judy Manion, Kate Martin, Sabrina Pacifici, Minnie Sue Ripy and Joanne Zich - for their help and support throughout the year. Special recognition goes to the outgoing officers and Board members - Janice, Charlie, Minnie Sue, Sabrina and Kate - for their dedication and commitment to the Society, and to Michael Saint-Onge, as Editor of *Lights*, for patiently waiting for my column at every deadline.

The committee chairs this year did a marvelous job of keeping the Society going full steam. Special praise goes to: Pat Tobin for making all of the arrangements for our meetings (as well as for her own wedding!); Jane Towell for reviewing and analyzing LLSDC's expenditures last year to help prepare a budget this year; to Maria Behrens for coordinating consulting services to groups seeking help in organizing their libraries; Martha Klein for bringing the video project to the

exciting stage of filming; Rachel Jones for handling corporate support; Jeanne Korman for producing our most recent edition of *COUNSEL*, and for working hard to produce an even better edition next year; Margaret Heath for her extraordinary efforts in publishing the membership directory; Carol Tropea for directing our education programs that have been enormously successful; Katie Entringer for helping to match those seeking jobs with those libraries that have job openings; Linda Corbelli for representing LLSDC at the Second Northeast Regional Law Library Conference; Charlotte White for coordinating the Society's involvement in the Joint Spring Workshop, and for being archivist; Victoria Kahn for energizing new members and keeping track of old ones; Elaine Finch for actively promoting the Society through numerous public relations efforts; Rosalind Kelman for overseeing and coordinating the Society's various publications; and to Nancy Taft Wynn for administering our scholarships and grants program. To these committee chairs, and to all the committee members, goes a big THANK YOU for the countless hours that they have worked.

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setters in our own institutions. Like it or not, salaries are a measure of worth. We cannot expect to bring new librarians into our profession unless we offer decent salaries. A starting salary in 1992 of under \$30,000 for a double-degree librarian (this is what I am familiar with) is appalling.

**PRICE:** Law librarians would command higher salaries if the work they do was perceived as more crucial to the institutional mission. Too many librarians convey a "humble servant" image rather than demanding that their assistance in the research mission be acknowledged. Our interest in service causes us to sell ourselves too cheaply, e.g., taking on teaching legal research assignments without commensurate pay and status adjustments.

**ZICH:** Librarians have long talked of being part of the information age and of participating in the information revolution. If we do in fact bring to the market place the skills to make our rhetoric reality, in my view we can expect issues of image and low salaries to change — for both men and women. But don't forget that as long as librarians are willing to work for less, employers will be happy to pay them less. We must be willing to be aggressive in negotiating for higher salaries and we must not shrink from self-promotion.

**ESTES:** Questions about professional image and low salaries form parts of the whole question, sort of the "zen of law librarianship." Low image means lower salaries, low salaries means lower image - a vicious cycle. Breaking out of this cycle requires: First, that all law librarians improve their own self image and recognize the image that each of us projects reflects on the profession as a whole. If you don't like being a law librarian, please leave now. Improving self-image needs much more discussion. SLA [Special Libraries Association] has even formed a Task Force on Image. Second, AALL and chapter continuing education programs must emphasize MBA-type skills. With these skills we can effectively describe and measure the benefit to our employers of what we do. Third, develop standards for law libraries and law librarians. Fourth, directors have to fight to raise salaries of other librarians on their staff. Fifth, the AALL and each of the chapters must work to create jobs and publicize the benefits of a professional law librarian.

*How do we correct the further dilemma that*

*female librarians make less than males in similar positions?*

**PRICE:** In order to command equal salaries, women must be willing to relocate and to accept the responsibility and time commitments that administrators assume, often falsely, that men will make. To make long term adjustments, men and women must agree not to interview where women are not included in applicant pools.

**HAZELTON:** Again, we can only affect the disparity between men and women by having hard data. Once we show this is true, we must work to correct that disparity in our own institutions. This is one place that it should be relatively easy to make some head-way.

*What can we do to promote the real image of law librarians?*

**ZICH:** I have long been impatient with the image issue in librarianship. If we are secure in our professional skills and confident of the contributions we make and if we are willing to let the wider world know how much we do, perhaps we can finally let go of the image issue and move on to more substantive matters.

**PRICE:** There are short term p.r. fixes, such as ads, VCR campaigns, etc., but the long term solution is to attract the best and the brightest, train them to be competent, and publicize their successes.

**BERRING:** I think that the law library community should be much more dynamic and aggressive about putting forward its point. I think we should invest our time and energy in developing spokespeople who can represent us before the information establishment in Washington, D.C. and in the media. We must cultivate forceful leaders. This calls for a different, more professional self-image. Without it, I think time will pass us by.

**HAZELTON:** I have always had a very positive image of our profession. That is, I think that as a whole we do super work. I was very distressed, however, after talking to some law professors in January at the AALS meeting in San Antonio. Several from different institutions indicated that they do not use their librarians much at all. Now these are faculty I have known for a long time, and they all write a lot. After some close questioning, I came away with several concerns. They all had bad experiences with law librarians. They did not get the information they wanted or, worse,

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— BERRING

they got inaccurate or incomplete information. I was shocked. Now I realize that the faculty member may have been at fault as well in not making a clear request or not following up to try to get the right answer. However, whatever the cause, the perception was there that law librarians did not do a good job. This changes the situation for me. It is one thing to battle just getting the word out about our capabilities - BUT WE HAVE TO DELIVER THE GOODS, TOO! Maybe we should spend more time to follow up requests and try to ensure that our users get what they want. Perhaps faculty expectations are unrealistic, but whose fault is that?

## B. ADDITIONAL ROLES

*Many librarians are already taking on additional roles, such as teaching legal research, firm conflicts checking, and records management.*

*Are these proper areas for law librarians to operate in?*

**HAZELTON:** I think law librarians have to do what will give them visibility and credibility in their institution. Who's better qualified to teach legal research? But we have to do a good job! I am sorry to see talented librarians move out of the library and into other management positions. However, good library management skills are the same skills that are often valued in other positions in an institution. And frankly, we have to remember that these moves are often the only way to make more money or to move up in an organization.

**ZICH:** As information professionals, it is not only appropriate but essential that librarians expand their roles into the areas mentioned. We must recognize, however, the importance of insisting on adequate resources to effectively assume these new opportunities. Sometimes it is possible to do more with less, but not very often.

**PRICE:** The attraction of law librarianship is that practitioners can design their own jobs to suit their personal strengths and the needs of the employing institutions. "Proper" cannot be defined for all cases. Instead, emphasis should be on mutually agreed upon growth opportunities and the avoidance of exploitation of librarians.

**ESTES:** Additional roles for librarians outside the traditional library are appropriate wherever the professional skills of managing information or con-

ducting research exist. This is not to suggest that librarians should accept additional responsibilities without additional resources. Stretching to take advantage of an opportunity that should yield benefits differs subtly from an imposed burden.

**BERRING:** I think librarians would be very ill-advised to try to restrict their functions to what might be considered "proper areas." I think that we have to move aggressively into whatever areas are developing. It becomes crucial for law librarians to adapt to the changing marketplace. It seems to me that life in corporate law firms is becoming nasty and brutish, and that means that we will have to be more aggressive if we are to survive and prosper. If teaching legal research, checking on firm conflicts of interest and records management are areas that need servicing, our library skills will serve us well to move into them. Standing on existing "turf" and refusing to budge is insane. No one is going to help us move up the ladder. We have to be aggressive about doing this. Part of that is seeing the new potentials and moving to them.

## C. EDUCATION AND TRAINING

*Given the fact that library schools are becoming an endangered species, and that our field is becoming dependent upon computer technology, what professional education is necessary for law librarians?*

**PRICE:** Law librarians still need a good liberal arts education and specialized training in such fields as law, languages, management, and/or computer sciences. At LC we are probably less insistent upon MLS degrees and more concerned with general education and experience. I'd rather have a bright generalist who can take technical and MLS course on the job rather than a narrowly trained MLS. After the library school closed at Minnesota, our people took MIS, Public Policy, and law degrees, depending upon their interests and the positions in which they were interested.

**BERRING:** I continue to believe that the best possible training for a law librarian is a solid grounding in the MLIS degree. The better library schools are surviving because they are training their students in database management, and information theory. I think that these are the skills that will best equip librarians for the future.

**ZICH:** I feel very strongly that professional education must reflect the realities of today's

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workplace. If librarians are to become true information professionals, the library educators must take a hard look at the curriculum. If library schools fail to equip their graduates with the skills needed to compete effectively today, students will look elsewhere. And it seems to me, much would be lost. Despite the importance of technology, traditional librarianship with its emphasis on seeing the whole, not just the pieces, is worth fighting to save. But unless library education changes, our profession really will be left behind. It is my hope the MLS degree will evolve so we librarians do not need to seek MIS's and MBA's. Education for librarianship should include both modern management skills and information technology.

**ESTES:** Librarians need additional business skills - in measuring, marketing, communication and negotiation. If information is truly important, we should be able to articulate why it is important, and its value.

**HAZELTON:** I still think the best education you can give a hopeful law librarian is a basic graduate education in library and information science. Though I know others disagree with me, I think it helps to take courses specifically in law librarianship. This is especially true if the student has no experience in working in a law library. However, the truth is that having a wide variety of possibilities is more likely to suit more students. I have exceptionally talented reference librarians, one of whom had no classes in law librarianship and no previous experience in law libraries, and another who was working in a law firm library while going to library school and took no special courses in law librarianship. The one area I would really emphasize in library education is technology, including meaningful exposure to a wide variety of databases, electronic mail, automated library systems, and new electronic products of all kinds. You cannot know too much here. Increasingly every phase of law librarianship requires extensive knowledge of computer applications.

*Which degrees are crucial for law library practitioners? MLS? JD? MIS? MBA?*

**PRICE:** "Crucial" degrees vary with the position and the librarian.

**HAZELTON:** Any and all degrees. I think it depends a little on what the student comes to library school with in terms of experience and background. What's good for the profession? A mix. When I was at the Supreme Court, one of

its real strengths was that the research librarians had a variety of backgrounds. Some JD and MLS; some MLS only. This mix gave us ultimate flexibility in responding to the broad range of questions asked of us. We have since diversified our staff here at the University of Washington. I still think that the MLS has to be required. The other degrees are a matter of personal choice.

**BERRING:** We undersell ourselves if we think that the only way to succeed is to get an MBA or an MIS degree. Yes, some will need JDs. As the market for lawyers begins to shrivel, I think we'll see a migration of attorneys to library schools wanting careers in law librarianship. This will change the market and it may be that people wanting lifelong serious careers in law librarianship will have to give more thought to the JD.

*What specific additional training should law librarians receive?*

**HAZELTON:** Anything dealing with technology and management. Both are areas often weak in library school curriculum. Take courses outside the library school in the business school or in the computing department. Work while in school to apply some of the theoretical learning in a practical environment. The internship program I run in conjunction with the law librarianship program here at the University of Washington is highly successful and the students love it. Go to as many educational institutes, meetings and workshops as you can.

**PRICE:** The modern law librarian should be an articulate speaker and writer with a basic knowledge of bibliography, budgets, personnel practices, time management, and ethics.

*Should there be mandatory CLE for law librarians? If so, in what subjects?*

**ESTES:** Professionals recognize the importance of continuing education so they don't need mandatory continuing education. However, there may be some benefit to establishing a continuing education credit board through AALL.

**PRICE:** Mandatory CLE is generally more profitable for providers than participants. To be meaningful, CLE should be voluntary and addressed to the individual's expressed needs.

**HAZELTON:** I don't think I believe in mandatory CE for law librarians. Our chapters and national

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professional organizations do wonderful jobs of providing a wide variety of interesting, informative, and timely programs. We can only spare so much time and money to be educated. Adding an administrative structure to the process seems like a waste of good resources to me. I'd rather we offer more programs.

**ZICH:** Of course we need continuing education (but not, in my view, mandatory CLE); we can talk about virtual reality, virtual libraries, LAN's and WAN's; we can use all the buzz words, but unless we really understand how to apply the technology, we're just kidding ourselves. I don't mean we must become hands-on technicians (although there's nothing wrong with that), but we must be sophisticated in our understanding of the possibilities of technology. And we must be ready to take advantage of change.

*What responsibility do current professionals bear for keeping library schools viable? Teaching? Recruiting?*

**HAZELTON:** I think we had better keep informed and active in our roles vis-a-vis the library schools. There will be no MLS graduates for us to hire from

if we let all these schools close without a peep. We should be teaching courses in these schools, encouraging our colleagues to get their PhD and teach in full-time positions, actively recruiting students from these programs, and so on. This is not an option. We have to be actively involved here.

**ZICH:** Practitioners must be willing to work with library schools. AALL's Committee on Recruitment is, in fact, asking for just such a commitment from all chapters. I hope the Society will take a leadership role in working with the local library schools.

**PRICE:** Library schools may be victims of the restructuring of higher education. Law librarians have a responsibility for helping appropriate candidates to design appropriate programs to meet their own goals and the needs of the profession for information professionals. This is a one-to-one hand tailoring process.

#### **D. ETHICS**

*Ethics is becoming an increasingly important concern in legal and political arenas. How important is it to have a code of ethics for law librarians?*

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**ZICH:** I do think a code of ethics is important, but the process of developing such a code is perhaps as important as the final document. It forces us to focus on issues; to think about the gray areas; to play out the "what if..." scenarios. So not only is a code important, but it must be a document that we are willing to use and to change. Relationships with vendors, with donors, with outside clientele are all important but perhaps the most difficult ethical issues for law librarians revolve around obtaining and sharing information without breaching patron and client confidentiality.

**PRICE:** Having chaired the ethics committee, I believe in the importance of ethical values for law librarians, but I've come to be less concerned that we have a code separate from those governing the law and library professions.

**ESTES:** Annually, publishers and information vendors should disclose the names of librarians on their advisory boards. Normally, law librarians behave consistently with the standards of ALA and ABA. Nonetheless, we do face some unique situations that might be covered by a code of ethics for law librarians. Further, one of the criteria for a professional group is its own code of ethics.

**HAZELTON:** I am somewhat ambivalent about a code of ethics for law librarians. I guess I would like to naively think that we didn't need such a document. I think we need to be educated about the ethical issues in our profession, such as giving legal advice and so on. I don't feel strongly about the need for a code.

#### **E. MINORITY RECRUITMENT**

*As a recent Law Library Lights article noted, law librarianship seems to be unable to attract and retain a sizable number of minority individuals.*

*How do we encourage more minority involvement in the profession? Into leadership roles?*

**HAZELTON:** I think this is a very important question. A lot of our problem is related to the poor image of librarianship. Since I do not think this is something that law librarians can do alone, we should work with other library groups in this area. Most people come to law librarianship after they make a decision to go to library school. I think we have to start in high schools and colleges. Two other places we can look at are library

schools, although they have a very low enrollment of minorities, and our non-library trained staff. If there are minorities who have an interest in professional education, we should be encouraging them. Also, with the legal job market as tight as it is, we should be looking among minority practitioners and minority law students for good talent. The problem here is the image of a lawyer versus the image of a librarian. I think we need to convince ourselves and the world that librarianship is power - power to manipulate and control information. If we could do this successfully, people would be clamoring to get into librarianship.

**ESTES:** Raising salaries and image would help attract and keep minority members. Individually, we as law librarians should encourage likely candidates to consider law librarianship over other careers - even though the money may not be as good. Law librarianship has many rewards besides large salaries.

**ZICH:** I asked a friend about encouraging minority involvement in librarianship. He responded with two words — more money. And he's absolutely right; we must offer competitive salaries to make librarianship a serious career option.

**PRICE:** The recruiting of minorities must begin in junior high. Law librarians are in a good position to be involved in "street law" programs aimed at that age group. Once students are in law schools, reference librarians have a "last chance" at recruiting, since they are in the best position to be supportive of minority students. We need to make opportunities available for minorities on all committees, provide scholarships for annual meeting attendance and encourage chapter participation.

*What concrete suggestions do you have for minorities already in law library positions?*

**ESTES:** Be active in the chapter and in AALL. At AALL, attend committee meetings - even if you are not a member. Speak up at the AALL business meetings. Work with Rhea Ballard to expand the AALL mentoring program, or create your own mentors. Just call someone, and ask if you can talk.

**PRICE:** Get involved. Recognize that your unique viewpoint needs to be heard.

**HAZELTON:** Do GREAT work. Aim high. Network and participate in professional organizations.

**ZICH:** I have a standard advice speech for any col-

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VALUABLE  
RESOURCE WE  
PROVIDE,  
INFORMATION."**

— ZICH

league who asks: stay current, become active in professional associations, network with your colleagues, and never forget how important laughter is!

#### **F. BUDGET CRUNCH**

*The current economic situation has resulted in difficult times in all types of law libraries.*

*What effect will the economy have on our role as law librarians? Convention goes?*

**ZICH:** The January/February 1992 issue of *Light* "Surviving Hard Times in the Library" offers both practical and philosophical advice (and a little laughter, too) for coping in difficult financial times. If you missed it the first time around, it's worth looking at now. I hope that we will emerge from this difficult period with new strengths and not too many scars. It is clear that the immediate - and let us hope they are short term - effects are harsh. Not only have we had to cut book budgets and continuing education budgets, but we've lost positions. Jobs have disappeared. The silver lining is that we have been forced to rethink how we do things. We are doing much differently and better; we are not doing some things at all; and, more than ever, we are getting by with a little help from our friends. Even as we "right-size" and change traditional ways of doing business, we must continue to educate our management about the real costs of this valuable resource we provide, information.

**BERRING:** I think the budget crunch is going to have a profound effect on the library world. As I mentioned earlier, in the law firm sector, I think life is becoming much tougher with a corporate environment descending in what had been a collegial professional area. I think we'll see much more cost centering, much more accounting, and much more attention to the bottom line in all areas of service.

**PRICE:** In travel this year, I have observed that law libraries in Canada and Australia have already been hard hit by recession. I believe we'll have more pressure on our services at the Library of Congress. Our travel funds have always been meager. Other institutions will join us in sending only their most committed librarians, who are willing to fund their own participation, to conventions.

**HAZELTON:** The economy will continue to affect our role as law librarians. Public relations, mar-

keting and image become even more important in a tight economy. Access to quick, reliable information is even more essential when the bottom line is in jeopardy. We need to be more visible. We need to show we are paying attention to the bottom line or budget we have. Business cannot continue as is. How many of us remind our users of the costs of the information they have just requested be delivered within the hour? I know we are a service profession, but that does not mean that we can ignore our fiscal responsibilities. It is essential that we attend as many educational programs as possible. If the economy affects convention attendance, I think it is a problem we create and exacerbate. I know it is better to have all your expenses paid to attend professional meetings, but maybe if we showed we were willing to pay some of our own way, our institutions would continue to provide some support and administrative leave. How many of us have gotten something through a contact we made at a professional meeting. Do you tell your users about this? Times are tough, but there are some things we can do. Let's do them!

*Are fees for services the answer? Subscription libraries? Just making do with less?*

**PRICE:** At LC we hope that fees will allow us to provide new and improved services to the public. Congress has placed LC on notice that we may expect flat budgets into the future.

**HAZELTON:** I do not think that fees for services are the answer. I think we need to completely review our collections and use of resources. Think of new standards and norms. Do you really have to have a collection of your state materials on every floor of your library? What if someone said that you would never get more library space. How would you respond? How would you make do? I have never done budget projections for a 5 to 10 year period because I am certain the numbers would scare me. If we don't make do with less, can we take what we have and use it better? One of the most challenging and scary things about the 1990's is that we have to reshape the framework. All the old policies and standards must be reviewed in today's environment. I think we can succeed, but it will be stressful. And I think our libraries and users will be better for the effort. The best piece of advice I have heard about facilities planning is to make your space as flexible as possible and know that you will constantly be reconfiguring it.

**BERRING:** For academic law librarians, I see some



real changes in line. I see fee for service as dominating the marketplace in the very near future. On the Berkley campus we see services curtailed when they can't "pay for themselves." That did not use to be one of our major concerns in academia. Now it is one. I think we'll see more of this as time passes. This naturally will make the rich get richer and the poor get poorer, but I don't see any alternative in the short term.

### G. TECHNOLOGY

*Many libraries are experimenting with cutting-edge imaging technologies while others have barely unwrapped their first computer.*

*In the near future, how will technology change the law library?*

**BERRING:** I am quite convinced that we are truly in the midst of a paradigm shift in the way libraries are put together. Although I know some people do not agree with me, I am convinced that within the next ten years we will be largely winnowing out our subscriptions to printed material. Barring worldwide economic depression, the spread of electronic research into the graduating law student population will only continue to grow. There is no need to build these giant warehouses that hold paper which is deteriorating on the shelf when we can make the same information available over a phone line for anyone with a modem.

**ZICH:** Even in the short term it's hard to predict where changing information technology may take us. Years ago I told young law firm librarians to insist that management provide them with an assistant to handle the filing and the phones. Today my advice is to ask for a contract with a filing service and then insist on a pc with a 9600 baud modem and good communications software. Position yourself to learn about technological change; then use as much as you can.

**ESTES:** Technology expands the breadth of skills needed by law librarians. We will provide information faster, from a wider range of sources, on a wider array of topics customized for the individual requester. Sometimes synthesized, sometimes simply reformatted.

**PRICE:** [At LC,] we hope to be at the forefront of technology as a producer and user of technology. We are designing an imaging pilot, installing a LAN, and have just brought up 6 foreign law databases. Technology figures heavily in our

future plans.

**HAZELTON:** Technology will change law libraries in every way - and in ways we cannot even predict. Let's just say libraries will be different! We will be able to do more, our users will want more, and we will have to be sophisticated in our access and use of information. Librarians will do more evaluation of information and we will have to train ourselves to do this effectively. Users will not be satisfied with too much information. The most significant change in academic law libraries will be that we will move from ownership to access. We will have to learn how to be indispensable to the former library user who no longer has to come to the library. What role will we play then?

*How should we prepare ourselves for those changes?*

**HAZELTON:** We must accept that our environment will change - probably at a pace that outstrips our ability to cope. Each of us should be honest about our ability to cope with change and find ways to relieve the stress this is bound to cause. Librarianship has changed significantly just in the last ten years. More, More, More! Talk about change with your staff and colleagues. Try to have change happen in smaller chunks. Sometimes it seems to me that technology is driving us - and it should be the other way around. Learn as much as you can about technology now and where it is headed.

**PRICE:** We're providing formal training and lots of hand-holding.

**BERRING:** I think we must prepare ourselves for the changes by recognizing that we will have to be marketers of our services, not curators of our collections. We will have to learn to market ourselves as managers of information.

**ESTES:** Preparing for these changes requires staying current in new technological developments and in sociological developments. Technology and information change people and organizations. We as law librarians must lead the discussion and the planning for information integration. Information integration will put networks and CD-ROMS deep into each law library. The user will not know where information is stored - only that the librarian provided the right information at the right time in the right format - and maybe even at the right price.

**"EACH OF US SHOULD BE HONEST ABOUT OUR ABILITY TO COPE WITH CHANGE AND FIND WAYS TO RELIEVE THE STRESS THIS IS BOUND TO CAUSE."**

— HAZELTON



**How far will CD-ROMs and networks reach into the average law library?**

**ZICH:** I have a love-hate relationship with CD-ROMs. But vendors love them. It's a very efficient and cost-effective way to deliver information, and there can be real cost savings to a library in using fixed-cost CD searching instead of expensive online searching. It is a technology suitable for all libraries, but has particular advantages for smaller ones. Expect CD-ROM to be around for a long time (even though there is some concern about how long the disks will physically last.)

**BERRING:** I think the average law library will be deeply penetrated by these technological changes. As to CD-ROMs and networks, as well as imaging, I think they're all on the right track, especially imaging. Still, I don't think we've seen the technology that will dominate the marketplace. I think it is being built in someone's garage right now.

**PRICE:** Not far very fast. Until recently some law schools did not even have access to LEXIS and WESTLAW!

**HAZELTON:** I don't know. CD-ROM technolo-

gy has not caught on in the legal profession, but its use is growing. It is very popular in academic and public libraries. I think the success of CD-ROM in the law will be directly related to whether or not the small practitioner will get low cost access to online legal information. We have a state bar sponsored free online database which contains Washington materials. WESTLAW and LEXIS have recognized the potential market for the smaller firm and have changed some of their pricing structures as a result. The success of CD-ROM will also depend in large measure on the ability to put the technology on networks and/or the stack disc players. Also, I think we need to get a lot more characters on a disk. Just look at the West tax library! Also, the search protocol needs to be standardized or we need standard front-ends.

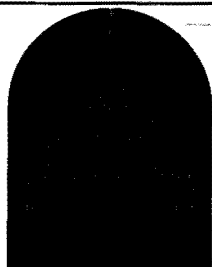
**H. VENDORS**

*Considering both the changing technology and the changing economic situation, what can we do to make vendors more responsive?*

**PRICE:** Create our own nonprofit consortia to compete or, in the alternative, design information products to joint venture with the commercial

**"I DON'T THINK WE'VE SEEN THE TECHNOLOGY THAT WILL DOMINATE THE MARKETPLACE. I THINK IT IS BEING BUILT IN SOMEONE'S GARAGE RIGHT NOW."**

— BERRING



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**"PROFESSIONAL  
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— PRICE

sector. The process of reevaluating products and cutting those which are duplicative and produced by nonresponsive vendors should be salutary.

**BERRING:** I think vendors are our salvation. LEXIS and WESTLAW have genuinely changed the way we think about research training in law schools. The focus that these profit-driven vendors can bring has markedly changed the expectations of our user populations. I think we have to ally ourselves with the vendors, work with them and try to control them as much as we can. But let's face facts, they have the power, they have the money, and we are going to be looking for leverage. It is stupid not to play with them, though. They're our only hope.

**ESTES:** We need to get *The CRIV Sheet* published more widely, in publications that lawyers read. Perhaps we should invest in the publicly held information vendors and seek to shape their policies that way. We also need to put teeth into the FTC guidelines and expand them to include non-legal books, even consumer book clubs.

**HAZELTON:** We need to keep telling vendors what we want and what our users want. At the same time, we need to realize that what we think we want may not be what we really want. I recall lobbying West and MDC hard for their putting the state statutes online. Once they did this, I found I can't use them like I thought I would be able to. I wanted to do a 50-state survey with the touch of a button. I hadn't really thought much about the problems of looking only at the words of the law themselves. With no controlled vocabulary, the statutes are a pit to search online. So while we should feel free to critique vendor products and services, let us remember to use good judgment and the expertise we have. I just wish the vendors would hire a few more librarians to work for them. We need to be reasonable with our demands, but shouldn't hesitate to retaliate with the only voice we really have - cancel or don't buy the darn thing. We must also respect the vendors' copyrights. We should be zealous guardians of their intellectual work.

*I. Now look into your crystal ball and describe law librarianship in the foreseeable future...*

**PRICE:** For the majority of librarians professional life in the foreseeable future will be very much the same as in the past with a little more belt tightening. For the few who are creative and concerned about a future in which libraries risk

becoming warehouses of little-used books, this will be a time of challenge as they seek to develop products, services, and delivery strategies which will keep the law library as the focal point of their institutions. They will be information activists who provide access to the mountain of information which envelops us, who teach patrons how to sort out the wheat from the chaff, and who devise flexible resource strategies. They will band together to provide services beyond the resources of single institutions.

**BERRING:** I think that we are going to see a continuing contraction in academic law library staff. I think that bibliographic integrity will be sacrificed for ease of information sharing, and that the original cataloging of the past will look like a dinosaur within ten years. I think we are going to see user-friendly, well-linked information systems spreading across the country. Look for more document delivery services and faster turn around times. God help us all.

**ESTES:** Law librarianship is an exciting profession. In the future, AALL and law librarians play a larger part in leadership roles at all levels shaping information policy. Librarians will sit in on client meetings, play an important role in marketing to clients, new attorneys, new judges, and new students. Law librarians will find new ways to cooperate - with other law libraries and with other organizational group - in times of increased competition for resources, clients, students, etc.

**ZICH:** I think we will increasingly be part of networks, that publications will increasingly be issued electronically — soon, we'll see many issued only electronically. We'll see more use of imaging technology. Things will get glitzier and, as this technology becomes commoner, it will get cheaper. I hope we will begin to see true collaboration between computer professionals and librarians. Document delivery will continue changing dramatically, but librarians will be needed more than ever. We will continue to guide our users through the rapidly changing fields (no pun intended) of information. ■

## LIGHTS DEADLINE

The next deadline for the September/October issue of *Law Library Lights* will be Wednesday, July 29, 1992.

