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Top Five Reasons to Be the *Alki* Editor

by Julie Miller



Julie Miller

5. The *Alki* editor is by definition a member of the core constituency—“writers and editors of scholarly books and journals”—of the *Chicago Manual of Style*, adept at the placement of commas before the conjunctions of compound sentences and after items in a series (see Section 6.18 through 6.56 of the 15th edition). Not sure whether a pronoun agrees with its antecedent? Section 5.35 has the answer. Unclear about the capitalization of a position title? Section 8.21 covers it.

I find it comforting to know that, as long as I have that bright orange book on my shelf, I don't have to remember all the rules of usage—I can just look them up. (I acknowledge that only an English-major geek would rank this reason in the top five. Guilty as charged.)

4. The *Alki* editor has carte blanche to attend various gatherings of the Washington library community, from formal to funky. To develop an interesting issue of *Alki*, the editor has to find a pool of contributors as varied and interesting as the WLA membership—what a great opportunity to meet people who share a passion for libraries! As *Alki* editor, I have attended WLA Board retreats (and many meetings), WALE and WLA annual conferences, various library programs and events (Big Read, Get Lit!), and Friends' meetings, in person and online. At each one, I have gathered ideas for *Alki* issue themes and articles, and I handed out many business cards. It's very gratifying to approach a presenter after a great conference session and to say, “I edit *Alki*, the journal of the Washington Library Association. Are you interested in submitting an article?”

3. Okay, it's just cool to say, “I edit *Alki*, the journal of the Washington Library Association.”

2. As *Alki* editor, a lot of people have your back. First, the *Alki* Editorial Committee is phenomenal. They come from public, academic, and special libraries, representing urban and rural communities. Some are new to library work and bring a fresh perspective to the issues of the day; others bring long experience and a well developed network of contacts in the Washington library

community. They help the editor to identify the issues and trends of interest to the WLA membership. The WLA Board is equally committed to making the journal as strong as it can be. They recognize that *Alki* is a “value-added” benefit of membership, and they are tireless (albeit sometimes tardy) contributors to the journal.

My first issue as *Alki* editor was also the first issue produced in collaboration with MCA staff, and they have been tremendously supportive. Tammy Reniche, director of design and publications at MCA, is a layout and design savant; she makes it possible for the editor to focus on the content, rather than the mechanics of putting together an issue. (In short, she makes the editor look good.)

“ Let me now sing the praises of the columnists, those regular contributors who, issue after issue, delight the readers (and therefore the editor) with prose of wit and style. ”

Let me now sing the praises of the columnists, those regular contributors who, issue after issue, delight the readers (and therefore the editor) with prose of wit and style. While I am saddened to report that Angelina Benedetti is taking a break from “Solinus,” you'll find David Wright in his usual spot, and Kate Laughlin serves up an appetizing preview of the PNLA/WLA joint conference in “The Learning Curve.”

1. The *Alki* editor has the rare privilege of giving voice to the association—the ultimate channel of communication for WLA. When I began my term as *Alki* editor two years ago, I knew very few members of the Washington library community outside of academic libraries. Through *Alki*, I am now connected. At its best, the journal embodies a conversation among the WLA membership, and it has been a joy to join into the conversation.

Bo Kinney will be leading the conversation with the next issue of *Alki*. Bo works in Special Collections at Seattle Public Library, and he recently served as chair of the Reference Interest Group of WLA. As a member of the *Alki* Editorial Committee, Bo has been a regular contributor. He's a fine writer and will be a fine editor as well. 📖

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