

November 2004

People Profile: Nancy Slight-Gibney

Editor

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Recommended Citation

Editor (2004) "People Profile: Nancy Slight-Gibney," *Against the Grain*: Vol. 16: Iss. 5, Article 16.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.7771/2380-176X.4071>

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against the grain people profile

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Nancy Slight-Gibney

BORN & LIVED: Born, Whittier, California; lived most of my adult life in Eugene, Oregon.

EARLY LIFE: Suburban Los Angeles was great in the 1950's and 1960's. It took me a while, and several severe sunburns, to realize that beach life was not for me and that I would never, ever have a tan. The sun is much kinder to me here in Oregon, especially the "liquid sunshine".

FAMILY: My husband, siblings, and all my nieces and nephews are in the Northwest now. It makes for noisy and fun gatherings.

EDUCATION: BA and MA in anthropology from the **University of Oregon**. MILS from the **University of Michigan**.

FIRST JOB: My first job in a library was as a work-study student in the catalog department here at the **University of Oregon**. I did pre-catalog searching in the **National Union Catalog**.

PROFESSIONAL CAREER AND ACTIVITIES: I worked at the **UO** library as a staff member in the Acquisition Department for 10 years before attending library school at the **University of Michigan**. I was Head of Acquisitions for three years at **Santa Clara University** and then returned to the **UO**. I was Head of Acquisitions here for nine years before moving into my current position two years ago.

IN MY SPARE TIME I LIKE TO: Grow bonzai trees. My husband and I have about 50 trees.

FAVORITE BOOKS: Mysteries, T.C. Boyle, Tom Robbins, history of science.

PET PEEVES/WHAT MAKES ME MAD: Not much makes me mad. Mostly I get frustrated with myself when I file something away and then I can't find it!

PHILOSOPHY: Small actions have a big impact over time. Our everyday actions shape the world.

MOST MEANINGFUL CAREER ACHIEVEMENT: Helping to get the **Timberline Institute** up and running.

GOAL I HOPE TO ACHIEVE FIVE YEARS FROM NOW: Developing a systematic way of gathering and presenting data for key performance indicators for our library.

HOW/WHERE DO I SEE THE INDUSTRY IN FIVE YEARS: Budgets will remain flat or increase only very slowly. Purchasing decisions by libraries will continue to be very focused on meeting immediate needs. This will result in: 1) Growth of books-on-demand; 2) Increased use of pay-per-view for journal articles.

We will also see the gradual demise of print versions of journals. Libraries will still have a central roll in archiving the record of scholarship. In an increasingly digital environment, this will occur through institutional repositories.



A Budget Picture: from page 24

as the deficit had to be covered from somewhere else) or achieved a balanced budget by cutting around the edges: trimming the student wage budget, belt tightening for supplies and travel expenses, and/or moving expenses onto other fund lines. By the fall of 2003, it was clear that this was no longer going to be enough. We had

already used gift and endowment funds for purchasing all new equipment. We had already shifted almost all supply purchases to library income funds (i.e., revenue from fees and fines). A University instituted technology fee substantially supplemented the student wage budget. It was clear to the **UO Library Council** of department heads and library leaders that in order to achieve overall reductions, other sources of the **Libraries' General Fund** must be tapped.

From the time the **Libraries** stopped receiving targeted augmentations for collections, the C&A budget received the same proportionate increase or decrease as other budget categories. In other words, we decided not to protect collections when the library budget as a whole had to be cut. Some institutions have absorbed budget cuts entirely from salaries and wages. We chose not to go down that road. In past years, with largely flat funding, we were able to preserve our buying power for books by funding serials inflation with serials cancellations. This year we are looking at cutting approximately \$300,000 in serials as well as reducing monograph expenditures by roughly 10%, and making significant cuts to the binding budget. These decisions are not unique to the **UO**, they are being replicated all across the country. We can no longer hold the monographs budget harmless. We anticipate being able to meet the needs of researchers through the **Orbis Cascade Alliance** and the **Summit** union catalog, with holdings of over 22 million items and with patron-initiated borrowing. In practice, what this means is that selectors will take into consideration the overall holdings of the **Alliance** and will focus on being more selective in their decision-making.

Early in our **Library Council** budget discussions University Librarian **Deborah A. Carver** stated that we would not run a deficit, as administratively mandated. Also, we would not lay anyone off, a strongly held shared value of the library leaders, library staff, and indeed a value held throughout the university. Our greatest asset is our people. These two "givens" shaped our decision-making: balancing the budget without laying anyone off. There is nothing like an inescapable budget cut to illuminate what your values truly are.

This past year to accommodate the 3% cut, in addition to the previously noted reductions in C&A, we eliminated seven positions. We did this through attrition. Because of statewide cuts in pension benefits, many long-term employees realized a benefit by retiring sooner rather than later. Of fourteen positions that became vacant during the past year, six were due to early retirements. Seven of the vacancies were filled or are in the process of being filled. Seven positions were eliminated. Vacancies were assumed to result in the elimination of the position unless a strong case could be made that mission critical services could not be preserved in any other way. In some cases, labor was redirected to cover increasing service needs in another library area. Aggressive vacancy management, a state mandated wage freeze, and careful monitoring of every expense brought our budget into balance. In fiscal year 2005 we will likely have to trim another two or three positions through attrition. In addition, there will be further reductions in the number of student workers hired plus instituting other, smaller cost reductions.

Revenue Enhancement

The **Libraries** get substantial benefit from the Educational Technology Fee collected from all students based on the number of credit hours taken. This fee pays over \$100,000 annually in

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