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People Profile: Antje Mays

Editor

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job preparation in practical fields such as acquisitions is generally left to impromptu learning on the job (Giles 2002, Gorman 2006). Skills needed for success in acquisitions librarianship include knowledge of business, accounting, automation, library systems, vendor relations, customer service to serve one's clientele, often other languages, and usually management. Rather than learning these areas in library school, librarians often learn them on the job and at workshops, or bring them from prior paraprofessional experience or previous career fields.

Recruiting and Placement

Skilled Acquisitions Librarians: Why and where are they going?

Acquisitions job lists abound, as evidenced by a search in Websites of library associations and library journals, professional listservs, and the *Chronicle of Higher Education*. Advertised positions often reflect increasing emphasis on electronic materials; positions for electronic resource and serials librarians comprise over half of listed positions examined. While electronic resources management is often a separate position, in lean times or in small libraries these duties are combined with the acquisitions librarian's overall duties. Often the work entails managing print acquisitions plus overseeing major technology and workflow redesigns. Acquisitions positions also reflect increasingly blurring lines between acquisitions and collection development, thus often marrying "the mechanics of purchasing" with the intellectual tenets of collection development and management.

What do hiring libraries look for? Stated requirements include knowledge of several areas or functions: business practices, software suites including spreadsheets and database programs, and library systems, in addition to the business of acquisitions. Preferred knowledge and experience include management, leadership (especially in large, complex, and/or multi-site organizations), accounting, vendor relations, negotiating license agreements, knowledge of scholarly publishing methods and trends, proficiency in other languages, understanding of international and specialized material sources, supervisory and organizational skills, complex problem-solving and decision-making skills, and a track record of professional development and service.

Many positions suffer from small candidate pools and reopened searches. Newly minted librarians interested in acquisitions rarely have the desired

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against the grain people profile

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Antje Mays

BORN & LIVED: Germany; lived in Georgia and South Carolina.

EARLY LIFE: Travelled extensively and learned early about music (classical Bossa Nova, and Latin jazz), art, antique books, great libraries, languages, and people from all over the world and their cultures. I also saw a lot of the East Bloc of the Cold War. Even as a child, it was impossible to miss the lack of basic freedoms behind the Iron Curtain. The two things that struck me the most: people living in constant fear, and the stifling censorship and general lack of real information. Perhaps this is why I consider access to meaningful information such an important building block of knowledge.

EDUCATION: MLIS, University of South Carolina. Currently working on my MBA.

FIRST JOB: Exporter/translator with an import/export firm.

PROFESSIONAL CAREER AND ACTIVITIES: Head of Monograph and AV Acquisitions at Winthrop University in Rock Hill SC. My favorite part includes curriculum analysis and working with colleagues who truly care about quality collection development. Research areas include the role of information and technology in society, education, economic development, human rights, globalization, and national security.

IN MY SPARE TIME I ENJOY: Painting, drawing, photography, digital media, music, scenic road trips, philosophical discussions with friends, volunteer work, and donating art to help raise funds for helping people in need and historic preservation.

FAVORITE BOOKS: My favorite author of all time is Leo Tolstoy. He had profound insight into human nature and what motivates people, and he was a great story-teller. Some books I've enjoyed more recently include *The World Is Flat* by Thomas Friedman, *The End Of Poverty And How We Can Make It Happen In Our Lifetime* by Jeffrey Sachs, and *El misterio del capital* by the Peruvian economist Hernando de Soto. My favorite light reading is about interior design and architecture, gardening, beautiful landscapes, and classic cars.

PET PEEVES/WHAT MAKES ME MAD: Incompetence, shoddy quality, lack of vision, "we've always done it that way".

PHILOSOPHY: Think outside the box.

MOST MEANINGFUL CAREER ACHIEVEMENT: Recently hosting an intern who was an undergraduate and very excited about her goal of going on to library school. I enjoy seeing love of books and knowledge live on. Another meaningful project was overseeing a one-year grant designed to bring language teaching tools for teaching Spanish to preschoolers in my university's laboratory school. It generated goodwill for the library in a roundabout way.

GOAL I HOPE TO ACHIEVE FIVE YEARS FROM NOW: Finish that MBA! Also, work more closely with linking information and education with human and economic development in the South and in tropical America.

HOW/WHERE DO I SEE THE INDUSTRY IN FIVE YEARS: Libraries will continue to evolve. To avoid the perception of diminished role in the information-knowledge equation, libraries are increasing their savvy in marketing their value to constituencies. Libraries will continue to mix print resources with high-tech information tools. Specialized libraries and research offices will move more toward specialized databases to save space and maximize access to more information. The tension between print and electronic resources will continue, and the reality of libraries' finite budget will bring more ideas about new electronic-access pricing models to the table. Print and electronic will be increasingly polarized: print will continue to be the preferred medium for traditional full-length books, "eBooks" are most likely to find niche applications for quick-look-up reference tools and course-pack-driven texts for computer-based distance education, the sciences will prefer the latest research online while the humanities retain more of their print roots. Multimedia teaching tools will break into college-level markets and thus gain more respectability for university-level contexts and viewed less as a children's medium. Some multimedia teaching applications are already in place as podcast lectures with multimedia enhancements. E-journals, aggregated databases, pricing issues, subscription and access models, and the tension between print and electronic media will continue to evolve. 🌱

