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Lost in Austin — A Tribute to My Friend

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Over the past several years, and with gathering frequency it seems, we lose another friend or colleague and we remember them with tributes, scholarships, and memorials of one kind or another. Sometimes those special colleagues, and all are special in some way, have lived long, productive lives and their contributions have been duly noted and they have been celebrated publicly. Then there are the unexpected and untimely deaths of friends and colleagues still in their prime, still working, still contributing even when suffering from critical, fatal illnesses. I hope that within some private circles, those nearest to them found a way to express fondness and appreciation for them at every possible level. To celebrate in a public way those special people while they are still with us is difficult and somehow inappropriate. You don't print someone's obituary while he is alive. And when someone is seriously ill, your main concern is that she regains her health.

A close friend of mine for more than thirty years retired this June. His health is good and I hope that recent changes have given him a new lease on life. He has had an outstanding career and has made lasting contributions to the profession but generally in a quiet, unassuming, behind-the-scenes way. He has much to be proud of and we have many reasons to be proud of him. I want to remember him in a public way while he is hale

and hearty and getting accustomed to the freedom of retirement that he has worked so hard for and earned so deservedly.

I first met him in 1973 when I began my professional career as head of the Gifts & Exchange Division of the **Stanford University Libraries**. My division was part of the Acquisitions Department and so was his Order Division of which he was head.

We had both worked at the **Bancroft Library**, he as a beginning librarian, I as a library assistant and graduate student at **UC Berkeley**, so we had that in common, but what drew us together was that ineffable something that is essential for a true friendship and a true mentor/protégé relationship. I am proud to number myself among his protégés and proud to acknowledge my debt to him.

I really don't recall how we began taking coffee and lunch breaks together but it probably stemmed from the technical services meetings that were held and that involved all unit heads. And I was new and I needed guidance. He took me under his wing and we talked shop, mostly, as often as we got together and I was able to learn



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Some will doubtless complain that this is simply a snob factor. Only the hoity-toity bother to do such things anyway. This is just a report indicating that people are no longer elitist, we'll be told. This charge may well be true but it is the contention here that libraries are, for better or for worse, considered an "elitist" activity. Furthermore there is now evidence that this decline in reading and in cultural activities in general is affecting other areas. A new report from Great Britain reveals what many have long thought: children are less academically able than they used to be, especially in math skills and scientific knowledge. The report indicates that UK 11-12 year olds are now on average two or three years behind where that same age group was only 15 years ago. Does anyone need to be reminded that 15 years ago neither this country, nor the UK was routinely generating many would-be math or science geniuses? To say the picture is a bleak one is an understatement.

But the picture is bleaker still. New reports indicate that while young girls may be lagging in the hard sciences, young boys are behind in nearly every subject. A national hand-wringing has occurred over the lack of young women

entering the hard sciences. Deafening silence over the state of young boys, save for those arguing against the report at all. In a 100-plus page report examining academic progress by gender, we find young boys are 50% more likely than girls to repeat elementary grades, more than one-third more likely to drop out of high school, and twice as likely as girls to be identified with a learning disability. In only ten years — 1992-2002, girls have outperformed their male counterparts in reading and writing by a widening and disheartening margin. By the time they reach high school, assuming they do, they are far less likely to be considered "college material" than females. It's too early to say what the problem is precisely, but some early studies indicate that it may well have something to do with too much time in front of the television, too much time on the Internet, and too much time with video games and iPods.

So, what has this to do with libraries? I would say everything. If you aren't looking over your shoulder (and aren't one or two years from retirement) it may serve you well to think more seriously about the unintended consequences of our rush to all things digital. 🌱

Author's Note: This column is part of a chapter from a forthcoming book. — MH

a lot about library acquisitions and the importance of the bibliographic tools and records that we used. I also learned about selection tools and the importance of involvement in the **American Library Association** and its **Resources and Technical Services Division — RTSD** (now **ALCTS**). He had already published a couple of articles (**David Weber** and **Allen Veaner** also encourage professional activities and writing by support and by demonstration).

Soon after my arrival at **Stanford**, the **Richard Abel Company** closed its doors and **Stanford**, with a healthy acquisitions budget, had many outstanding orders. I was able to watch, up close and personal, how to respond to a crisis in a calm, thoughtful way. Our department head, **Ralph Hansen**, was unflappable and cool under fire and so was my mentor.

We got along personally and socially, exchanging dinners at each other's homes. He got me involved in the Freshman Advisory Program at **Stanford** and introduced me to booksellers who called on him at the time — **Fred Gullette**, **Don Coombs**, **Aaron Sati**, and **Phil Fecteau**. **Fred Gullette** also became a mentor of sorts when I became head of acquisitions at another western school and he would call on me and talk about publishers and prices among other things.

It was during my second year at **Stanford** that the **Watergate** hearings began and it became obvious that we were on different sides of the political spectrum, but when we discussed the pros and cons of **Richard Milhous Nixon**, we did so as friends and respected our conflicting opinions. He recently made it pointedly clear to me that with years and wisdom to consider his original political leanings, he now finds himself very discouraged by the direction of the United States and has not voted for a Republican for the last five elections.

He also encouraged me to attend the **ALA Annual Conference** and **Midwinter Meeting**. The first one that I attended was in 1975 in San Francisco. He and I commuted for several days running. That was the beginning of many years of joint participation in many **RTSD** activities and vendor hospitality suites. We roomed together, too, for many years, along with a third roommate to make ends meet. I think that one of them actually roomed with us twice. One of them quit going to **ALA** completely after being exposed to more single malt Scotch whiskey than he could handle. He was a reference librarian and had never been drinking with **Jamie Galbreath** before and never went again.

I will miss seeing my friend at conferences but I won't forget him or his contributions. If I had my druthers, he would be recognized by **ALCTS** for his contributions and he would have a chance to say a few words, but I won't forget him and would like to highlight his career while there are still a few of us left who remember

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him but who may have forgotten or have never known of some of his achievements.

His first award was a Council on Library Resources Fellowship in 1977 to study library materials budget management at major university libraries. He was also the recipient of a **Martinus Nijhoff International Studies Grant** to study European book prices. And in 1989, he won the **Resources Section (ALCTS)/Blackwell North America Scholarship Award** for the best article in acquisitions or collection management (a term that he coined and was the first to use in a publication), again on library materials prices. He generously donated the monetary proceeds to the **University of Rhode Island Graduate School of Library and Information Science**. Most of us would have been happy with this group of achievements but they are just part of a remarkable *curriculum vitae*.

In addition to his scholarly work, he served on more than 30 professional association committees, most of which were part of the **American Library Association**. He chaired many of those committees, most notably, the **Library Materials Price Index Committee** and was chairperson of the **RTSD Resources Section** in its heyday.

He also served the profession as the President of **ACRL New England**, Chair of the **International Relations Round Table of ALA**,

and Chair of the **Resources Section of the Association for Library Collections and Technical Services of ALA**, and as member of the **IFLA Standing Committees on Statistics** where he made substantial contributions. He also chaired and served on numerous committees such as the **ALA Awards Committee**, the **Nijhoff Awards Jury**, the **IRRT Program Committee**, etc.

He has also been active as a scholar serving as co-editor and editor of *Advances in Librarianship (Elsevier)* for six years. He has published at least 50 articles on the topics of Collection Management (one author credits him for defining and using this term for the first time in the *ALA Yearbook*), Electronic Resources, Costs of Library Materials, and Scholarly Communications. His article on the US College Book Price Index will appear in *Choice* in June 2006, and another article on the "Management of Electronic Resources: an international perspective" will appear this year in "Electronic Documents in Libraries" a monograph published by the **Russian National Library**.

He has spoken at many national and international meetings of **ALA**, **IFLA**, and **ACRL**. During the past three years, he was invited to speak to faculty and students at such diverse places as Rostock, Germany, St. Petersburg, Russia, Westchester, NY, and Fairbanks, Alaska. He has also been a guest lecturer at the **University of Rhode Island Graduate School of Library and Information Studies**.

Without doubt, he writes some of the best prose in our field and is meticulous in his re-

search. One of my fond memories of him at **Stanford** was his energy and constant movement. I do not remember ever seeing him at his desk although he would make frequent stops at it to pick up something or drop something off. The key, though, was his productivity and he got things done.

Stay busy, be productive, think about what you are doing, become engaged in the profession, share your ideas through your presentations and writings, give tirelessly of yourself, and have fun, too. We can only strive to emulate those we admire until we find our own way of doing things and our own niche but we do need to learn all we can from them and emulate them to the best of our abilities. I don't think that my valued colleague, trusted mentor, and dear friend will ever run out of energy. He may be older than I am but he still runs professional circles around me even in retirement and isn't that great?

Thank you, **Frederick C. Lynden** for all those great years. I wish you the happiest, longest retirement possible. You are in St. Petersburg, Russia as I write this, with your lovely wife **Irina** to translate the menu as you enjoy good food, good drink, good company, and good memories.

While in New Orleans for the **ALA Annual Conference**, I found myself breaking bread with colleagues who know and remember **Fred**. His spirit was with us as we lifted our glasses in his honor. You may be gone but you are not forgotten. 