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People Profile: Wm. Joseph Thomas

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on a number of publisher packages. We begin by checking the license for ownership and access provisions, and, if the license proves acceptable, we look up print holdings and check samples. What are we checking? First we verify that all volumes and issues we hold are available online. Next, we pull sample volumes from every title to review tables of contents, checking that all their articles are online before we start a side-by-side comparison of sample articles. We try to choose articles with images, tables, graphs, fold-outs, or other unusual features, to see how well they're rendered in the online archive. For most of our publishers and for most of their titles, this process has proven that the publisher package is adequate to replace our print. There have been a few titles that are incomplete online or that have scanning problems requiring us to keep the print. For these, we enter a note in our tracking documents and, if we have room, move the volumes from the general stacks to storage.

All in all, **Joyner Library** has found online archival publisher packages suitable for replacing print volumes. We have made the decision that the online format is a true substitution and we should treat it as such by removing print volumes whenever feasible. To help reassure ourselves and our faculty that this strategy remains compatible with our duty to preserve the scholarly record, **ECU** has agreed to participate in the Collaborative Journal Retention Program Agreement proposed by the **Association of Southeastern Research Libraries (ASERL)**.⁶ We are currently identifying titles we can contribute to this distributed print repository and following what titles other universities are contributing.

Print repositories are not a new phenomenon. They were described at the **Janus Conference** as one means to "ensure the coordinated, long-term maintenance" of the scholarly record by having libraries contribute print materials to shared facilities in order to reduce the cumulative shelving required and collective burdens of preservation.⁷ In the last few years, though, more libraries are working together as they recognize that "the interrelated problems of collection management and preservation are moving steadily to the community level from the local level."⁸ The Orbis Cascade Alliance first proposed a distributed print repository (DPR) in 2005 and recently uploaded its "Final DPR Title List."⁹ Recently, the **Pennsylvania Academic Library Consortium, Inc. (PALCI)** described its shared print repository project, which focuses on 52 titles published by the **American Chemical Society**, **American Institute of Physics**, and **American Physical Society**.¹⁰ Another of the better known repository agreements is the **Western Regional Storage Trust (WEST)**, which **Emily Stambaugh** describes as a network-level solution to help "preserve the scholarly record, provide access, when needed, and manage reallocation of space."¹¹ These projects demonstrate libraries' commitment

against the grain people profile

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Wm. Joseph Thomas

BORN AND LIVED: North Carolina, with a brief stint above the Mason-Dixon line.

EARLY LIFE: BA in Education at **UNC-Chapel Hill**, MA in English at **UNC Greensboro**, and MLS at **UNC-Chapel Hill**.

PROFESSIONAL CAREER AND ACTIVITIES: I started out as a reference and instruction librarian, then moved into collection development. After about a year as an electronic resources librarian, I became head of collection development here at **Joyner Library**.

FAMILY: Wife and two sons.

IN MY SPARE TIME: A two-month-old leaves no spare time!

FAVORITE BOOKS: Generally, I like thought-provoking books, including *Ceremony* by **Leslie Marmon Silko**, *Jude the Obscure* by **Thomas Hardy**, and *Mere Christianity* by **C.S. Lewis**.

PET PEEVES: When overthinking leads to inaction.

PHILOSOPHY: Yes, you really can build this airplane while you fly it.

HOW/WHERE DO I SEE THE INDUSTRY IN FIVE YEARS: Pre-selection of materials for patron-driven acquisitions will continue to be more important, and more difficult. The disparities between meeting professors' and students' research needs will continue to grow, straining library budgets and librarians' time even more. 🌱

to working together to preserve the scholarly record with a paper backup.

In the short term, print repositories do provide libraries with the option of deaccessioning many volumes from their little-used titles in exchange for committing to preserve other titles. Another level of reassurance that we can offer ourselves lies in directly addressing the issue of preserving electronic materials. *E-Journal Archiving Metes and Bounds*, a report published by the **Council on Library and Information Resources (CLIR)**, traces a dozen e-journal archiving initiatives and tracks their organizational issues, stakeholders and designated communities, content, access and triggers, technology, and resources.¹² While **Portico**, **CLOCKSS**, and **LOCKSS** are among the most widely known in the United States, there are other programs in which libraries can participate. Some libraries have been reluctant to join an electronic preservation initiative, but I would encourage all to do so. As the **CLIR** report persistently points out, libraries cannot afford to digitize and curate electronic copies on their own, especially given the attention they need to devote to local digital collections and materials deposited to their institutional repositories.

The library collections management planning I have discussed so far focuses on bound journals to the exclusion of books. There are a couple of reasons why this is the case. For one, scholarly monographs aren't as far along the electronic adoption continuum as

journals. Also, the time we spend making retention/preservation decisions yields more space for journals than books. The **OCLC** report *Cloud-sourcing Research Collections*, though, suggests that eventually libraries will be able to embark on these same steps with monographs that I suggest for journals.¹³ Already some regional groups are discussing shared storage of books, and publishers are beginning to deposit their eBooks to **Portico** and other online archival services.

What should librarians do next? For starters, they should lay out the elements of a print collection management plan, including the following three components. First, (continue to) buy online archival packages — including publisher packages — and weed from them. Second, join a regional shared print depository; and, third, join one or more other preservation initiatives if at all possible.

At **ECU**, we no longer hold the print copies of older volumes of *North American Review*, the journal I discussed at the start of this article. We have withdrawn these volumes after thoughtful efforts to evaluate the license for the archival online product replacing our print, to evaluate the online content and its display against the bound volumes, and to verify that a nearby university retains its print volumes. We are managing our print collection like we trust electronic preservation, and are learning to stop worrying. 🌱

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