Editorial

The past year has been one that I never could have predicted. As I entered what I thought was my final year as *LRTS* Editor, I was diagnosed with a debilitating neurological condition that required me to miss three months of work. I also missed the 2019 ALA Annual Conference in Washington, DC, since I was hospitalized during the week of the conference. I continued to edit papers and correspond with authors during that time. Fortunately, I had just one author withdraw a paper because I could not promise the turnaround time on her paper for which she had hoped. I am indebted to Brooke Morris-Chott, ALCTS's communications program officer, and Tim Clifford, manager, ALA Productions Services, for their support during a challenging time.

I returned to work mid-September 2019. When things seemed to be calming down, the COVID-19 situation erupted. My colleagues in Central Technical Services at Rutgers University Libraries and I had to mobilize and develop a contingency plan in anticipation that we would be working from home, which, during normal operations, is a rare occurrence. Some of my staff had never been given the chance to work from home and others struggled with technology such as setting up a VPN or editing shared documents. Daily check-ins with my staff differed by employees. One of my staff initially called me daily (sometimes more than once). It was usually when she had questions or needed assistance, but there were also times when she needed that contact with another person. Other employees adapted very quickly and preferred to send me progress reports and questions via email. The managers in my department and I continued to hold our bi-weekly meetings via WebEx. If our administration had doubts that technical services could function effectively and be productive while telecommuting, they were quickly dispelled. I am very proud of my colleagues and what we have accomplished during New Jersey's stay at home order. Much of our cataloging workflow already included e-resources and streaming media. Like many other institutions, we have embarked on major database clean up and enhancement projects, and this is reflected in a quote by my Rutgers colleague Melissa De Fino, "Catalogers everywhere have always had data projects that had to be kept on the back burner since the focus was on making new materials available. Now is the time to work on those back burner projects! Like the canals of Venice, when this is over, our library databases will be cleaner than they've ever been!"

The COVID-19 pandemic has changed so many aspects of our lives and work. While much of the focus related to libraries during the pandemic has been on public facing services such as virtual reference and chat, discovery, checkouts, and the shift to acquiring more electronic formats, technical services has provided the necessary infrastructure support to enable these services. My statement in no way is downplaying the importance of the work provided by those who work directly with the public. They have been tireless advocates for serving the needs of our user communities during this crisis. In terms of technical services, preservation and digitization of materials has made it possible for users to access materials that are available through services such as HathiTrust's Emergency Temporary Access Services or via institutional repositories. Switching to a DDA or PDA enables libraries to acquire resources and make them available to their users, regardless of their location. Cataloging, particularly for e-resources,

can be provided without interruption, granted that catalogers have access to the necessary tools and resources.

Other changes have occurred during the pandemic. ALCTS, LITA, and LLAMA members voted to accept Core. If you are unaware of Core, it represents a new division that draws on the collective expertise of the former three divisions. Due to the impending implementation of Core, I was asked to serve an additional year as *LRTS* editor. Elyssa Gould, the *LRTS* book review editor, will also serve an additional year. I look forward to leading *LRTS* into our new organization.

In closing, I would like to highlight the contents of this issue:

- A column from ALCTS President Jennifer Bowen on the transition from ALCTS to Core.
- Keren Dali and Leah K. Brochu approached me about the idea for their paper "The Right to Listen: A Not So Simple Matter of Audiobooks," which they described as being written at the intersection of public and technical services. Their paper is a little different from the types of papers published in *LRTS* and proposes a conceptual and theoretical foundation of advocacy for integrating audiobooks into library collections and programs. They discuss equal status for audiobooks and their wider acceptance through considerations of diversity and privilege.
- In "Redesigning Technical Services for the Twenty-First Century: A Case Study from the University of Alabama Libraries," Michael A. Arthur and Millie L. Jackson detail a workflow analysis that was initiated over a decade ago. Their paper recounts lessons learned and examines how changes that were implemented impacted their library and collection development and management philosophies.
- Todd Quinn's paper "Less is More: A Case Study of Consolidating Two Database A–Z Lists for Better Staff and User Experiences" describes the consolidation and migration of the University of New Mexico's University Libraries' two database A–Z lists.
- And for your professional reading, book reviews courtesy of my colleague Elyssa Gould.