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Editorial: Journeys and Pathways: A Different Road

Connie Foster

Of journeys and paths, of past and future, of changes and opportunities—I must indulge in a bit of reflection with my final editorial and announce the exciting future leadership for *Serials Review* as it extends into its 37th year.

When Cindy Hepfer appointed me to the Editorial Board of *Serials Review* in 1995, I welcomed and was really honored and thrilled by this opportunity for professional service under her outstanding and far-reaching leadership. The role was a perfect outlet for my love of words, my purist bent in all things grammatical, including adherence to the “orange” *Chicago Manual of Style*, and the position was a natural fit for my M.A. in English which came before the MLS. I never envisioned being an editor; however, the timing seemed right when Cindy stepped aside during 2001 after fifteen years and many changes in publishers and practices.

When volume 37 (2011) concludes, so will my ten years as editor. Timing (again) and opportunity coincided to invite Maria Collins, Associate Head of Acquisitions, North Carolina State University, and contributor and column co-editor of “Electronic Journal Forum,” to assume this leadership role and for me to focus on other initiatives. I have long been impressed with Maria’s enthusiasm, intelligence, work ethic, and responsiveness. She will bring a combination of new ideas and analysis of existing framework to see what the future holds for *Serials Review*. Beverley Geer will provide astute guidance and hold tight the reins as Associate Editor in charge of our very popular and highly cited columns. Cindy envisioned the columns, this position and

knew the ideal person; Beverley's continued leadership across the editorial pathways will remain a tremendous value to us all.

Speaking of Cindy, she always remains vigilant for ideas and opportunities for *Serials Review*.

Most recently, in her position as a CONSER member, she observed that the OCLC bibliographic record for *Serials Review* could use additional subject headings for the print and electronic versions, changes that would at least better reflect the expanded and changing scope of *Serials Review*. While most libraries will not overlay the modified master record in their existing catalogs, the WorldCat record will indicate the nature and scope of *Serials Review*. (If you care to overlay your records, see #1562672 *SR* print, #43609560 *SR* online.) Thanks, Cindy!

So many subtle and obvious changes have occurred over the past ten years. Subtle would be changes in publishing editors (the person to whom I report), the one who oversees the Social Sciences journals for Elsevier. First, Tony Seward and I met in London, England, after a UKSG conference in 2001, and worked out details for my appointment. Tony retired a few years after and Chris Pringle, Tony Roche, and now Vicki Wetherell have formed my link to Elsevier's Oxford offices and to those midwinter board meetings at the American Library Association venues. Each person has been special in very different ways, and I thank them all.

From manila envelopes and floppy disks in the summer of 2001 to compulsory online submissions, reviews, and editing in 2005, the online editorial processes (EES) have significantly expedited and eased all aspects of putting together an issue from electronic submissions to peer review to decision and final transmission to production.

One aspect of editing and the review process that has amazed me is an author's willingness to accept, incorporate, or respond to well-intended critiques. At times I would send off comments and request not only peer review revisions but add my own and think that I would get an email saying: "You've got to be kidding me." Never happened. I never had anyone refuse to consider and, in most cases, willingly incorporate suggested changes to create a much stronger and credible manuscript than first envisioned. So, I thank all authors for their commitment to the process and learning how to become better writers.

Some other markers include the following:

- Elsevier digitized all volumes of *Serials Review*. I especially thank Julie Gammon, University of Akron, for donating their library's copies of volume 1-6 so that this project could be completed.
- Our editorial board meetings have moved from those ALA Midwinter Sunday morning breakfasts led by Cindy to early pre-8 a.m., non-conflict Monday breakfasts to a sane 4:00 p.m. agenda on Saturdays.
- Another milestone that Beverley and I kept on the front burner for Chris, Tony, and Vicki was the goal of being indexed by ISI and included in ERIC. Even with various search and discovery points available today that were not so readily accessible in the 1990s, being picked up by these publications indicated, at the very least, an established frequency of publication that we have tried to maintain.
- Extending to the international audience, three "regional" editors cover exciting areas of the globe and also contribute content of their own from India, Italy, and Chile. In this current issue, Isabel Bernal describes Spain's Digital.CSIC repository and research

initiatives. Claudia Cuevas introduced us to Chile, its people and culture. Dr. S.

Venkadesan from the Indian Institute of Science completes the current global contacts.

- Some of you may remember the changeover from Pergamon Press to the Elsevier “tree” in 2003 and from Elsevier Science to just Elsevier following the acquisition of Harcourt General in 2001. *SR* and the other library science journals now carry branding consistent with the nearly 2,000 Elsevier journals in all disciplines, even including the most recent (and not my favorite) reduction in font size with the first issue of 2010.

So many people have written, edited, peer reviewed, and come to Board meetings over these ten years, and the majority of the Editorial Board and the Column Editors remain willing to continue. I will miss being on the receiving end of their dedication and commitment, but I will maintain connections in other ways and that’s a promise! I thank each of you past and present for your service. And to Maria, enjoy your journey. You’ve got great traveling companions and, as you embark, take along Robert Frost, who expressed this whole process ever so simply in “The Road Not Taken”¹:

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
And sorry I could not travel both
And be one traveler, long I stood
And looked down one as far as I could
To where it bent in the undergrowth.

Then took the other, as just as fair,
And having perhaps the better claim,
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;

Though as for that the passing there
Had worn them really about the same.

And both that morning equally lay
In leaves no step had trodden black.
Oh, I kept the first for another day!
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,
I doubted if I should ever come back.

I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence:
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I--
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.

¹ *Early Frost: The First Three Books*, ed. by Jeffrey Meyers (Hopewell, NJ: Ecco Press, 1996), 130.