

## Up Front

## A New Vision for Library Leadership

**N**o one would argue that libraries are undergoing profound change. The tectonic shift from print to electronic forms of information and communication in recent years has had an impact on every aspect of library work and every person connected with it. It is redefining the very nature of what libraries are and what they do.

Information consumers want and need access to library collections from their offices, homes, and cafes, and many have never even set foot in a library building. Information technology is

changing what and how librarians catalog, index, and archive knowledge, and how they deliver services. The rapidly changing ways of storing, accessing, and using information require time, money, and other library resources for regular upgrades of equipment and software and reorganization of systems. They also require changes in the way that information operations are staffed and organized and the ways that individuals expect and need to be motivated and guided. Librarians are additionally confronted with emerging and complex issues of ethics and law related to such issues as intellectual property rights, accountability, right to privacy, and freedom of access.

Librarians have been swept into a jet stream of change resulting from the explosion of information technology and the rapidly changing demographics of its users. Keeping pace with such change, and harnessing it successfully, requires enormous energy, dedication, flexibility, and vision. Managing and leading during a time of such robust change is what a new program at Simmons College GSLIS is all about.

## Meeting the leadership challenge

Though it's sometimes said that leaders are born, not made, many exceptional library leaders believe that these skills can indeed be learned, particularly in the context of focused mentoring and real-world work experiences. They also believe that stronger research into the unique issues of leadership in information environments is essential to the future of the profession. This

spring, with a three-year grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services, Simmons College is rolling out a new \$1.5 million doctoral concentration focused on managerial leadership in the information professions (MLIP).\*

The MLIP concentration is being coordinated by Peter Hernon and Candy Schwartz, senior faculty at GSLIS who are nationally recognized for their contributions to the field. They are working closely with a board of advisors made up of leaders of major professional organizations, such as the American Library Association,

the Association of College and Research Libraries, and the Association of Research Libraries.

The program aims to attract LIS professionals who already have attained a middle to senior level in their career and are poised to make lasting contributions to the field

— for example, directors, deputy directors, and department heads from academic/research libraries, large urban public libraries, and other significant information organizations.

The curriculum and assessments of student outcomes are based on a set of leadership competencies adapted from a model developed through extensive research by the National Center for Healthcare Leadership. Students will seek to demonstrate growth and mastery in 25 different areas in three domains: transformation, accomplishment, and people (see sidebar, Page 3).

## Creating new knowledge for an unpredictable future

At first glance, this concentration appears to resemble well-known leadership institutes such as the Snowbird Leadership Institute and the Frye Leadership Institute. *Continued on Page 3*

## First Cohort of MLIP Students



Tracie D. Hall  
American Library Association



Patricia Kreitz  
Stanford University



Joan Ruelle  
Hollins University



David Seaman  
Digital Library Federation



Felton Thomas, Jr.  
Las Vegas-Clark County Library District

**“Simmons’s new Ph.D. focus on managerial leadership in the information professions will be an invaluable contribution to the profession of librarianship in that it will fill a longstanding educational need and will provide a cadre of library leaders for the future.”**

**Michael Gorman, American Library Association President, 05-06**

**Congratulations to Dr. Ching-chih Chen for winning the Frederick G. Kilgour Award for Research in Library and Information Technology for 2006! For more information, please see [www.simmons.edu/gslis](http://www.simmons.edu/gslis).**

## Snapshot Mark Phillipson

*“I’m always going to be a bridge person — bridging libraries and technology and the classroom.”*

Mark Phillipson graduated from GSLIS this year as an Association of Research Libraries Academy Fellow. In April he was hired by Columbia University to fill a new position as faculty and library services specialist at the Center for New Media Teaching and Learning. Phillipson earned his B.A. and Ph.D. degrees in English at Columbia University and the University of California Berkeley. Before coming to Simmons, he worked for Excite@Home and was visiting assistant professor in the English Department at Bowdoin College in Maine. Last summer, his use of wikis (communal Web sites) to teach poetry was the subject of a feature article in *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (“Romantic Poetry Meets 21<sup>st</sup>-Century Technology,” July 15, 2005).

**Q:** You developed wikis for teaching your poetry classes at Bowdoin College, which *The Chronicle of Higher Education* referred to as “cutting edge.” Could you explain?

“Wikis weren’t prevalent when I was teaching at Bowdoin. But they seemed like a great way to get students interacting on a project; better than discussion boards, which tend to be kind of linear and can spin out into unconnected threads.

My students have always clamored for group projects, and wikis provide that. They also encourage interaction and originality. With wikis, a teacher gives up a certain amount of control, and students get more control.

At first this made some students nervous. They were completely at ease in an electronic environment outside of class – text messaging, downloading music, emailing and so forth – but when they came to an English class, they weren’t expecting to post their work in a communal environment.

You can imagine that in a situation where anybody can edit anything, there were some challenges with grading. I had to rethink some of my teaching, just as the students had to learn how to write on a wiki. And there was always the worry that everything would crash, and then where would we be? So, my motto became, “Back Up Everything.”

### What made you decide to go into library work?

It was very exciting using the wikis, but I increasingly saw that we needed stable resources. I needed well-edited texts to post on my class websites, so students could study and manipulate them. I didn’t want to always worry about copyright violations whenever they wanted to upload photos – I wanted them to fish from legal ponds. And I wanted them to use quality materials in their work. I was constantly trying to raise their awareness about what is trustworthy on the Web and what isn’t.

And that’s what libraries do, isn’t it? They build thoughtfully assembled, managed collections that are the foundations of study. But although the educational technology office was actually located in the same building as the library [at Bowdoin], the two didn’t have much to do with each other. The ed techs were unaware of the deep resources in the library, and the librarians were looking for new ways to deliver services.

### You had an unusual childhood, didn’t you? Growing up in Boulder [Colorado] and also spending five years in grade school in Italy. How did being bi-continental influence you?

My dad is a professor of physics at the University of Colorado, and we spent five years going back and forth, mainly to Italy [for his work]. I guess it expanded my frame of reference. I became aware of differences in cultures early on.

### What did you want to be when you grew up?

A magician, later a writer, then a teacher. Now all three.

### What person most influenced you growing up?

My mother’s father, who was a forest ranger in Idaho. He taught me the botany, the taxonomy of that landscape.

### Who has influenced you most as an adult?

Edward Said, the literary critic. I was very lucky to be able to worm my way into his class, “Exiles and Intellectuals,” [at Columbia University]. He talked about being both inside and outside a text as a writer, and he connected that with being in exile.

That class really spoke to me, having spent a lot of time overseas as a kid. Later at Berkeley, I drew on Said’s work when I wrote my dissertation on Byron and his self-imposed exile in Italy.

### What was a highlight of your year at GSLIS?

Candy Schwartz’s course in digital libraries. I mean, she just plunged us headlong into using open-source software to create a digital library, and up until the last day of class, we weren’t sure it was really going to fly. We were on the experimental edge, doing something that was brand new. And it worked.

### What are you looking forward to in your new job?

Columbia University is one of the few academic technology groups that has significant experience with applying interactive tools like wikis to college teaching. And, best of all, the Center for New Media Teaching and Learning is a division of Columbia’s libraries, so there’s this great chance to integrate the tools they’re building with library resources.

I’m always going to be a bridge person — bridging libraries and technology and the classroom. I want to think about how to rework the relationship of an academic library to the community it serves, so it can deliver resources in a more personal and more accessible way. And I want to continue teaching literature with the tools I’m developing, because I think that’s what keeps you real and honest. I love Romanticism and literature, of course, but I want to promote new ways of teaching the humanities. I want to know how historians, for example, naturally use digital environments, and how the library can better support them.

We’re going through a shake-up of the terms of writing, publication, and study that is profound, and it’s really very, very exciting. I feel privileged to be alive and working in this time.

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# Library Leadership

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These programs last only a brief time, however, while the Simmons curriculum is more substantial. It is a sustained academic program (approximately three years) of formal original research into managerial leadership, culminating in a dissertation and the award of an advanced degree. In addition to innovative curriculum content, the structure is unusually flexible, enabling candidates to continue working while pursuing their degree. Each term of coursework is begun in person with a three- to five-day session either at Simmons or other locations in the country.

The remainder of each course is completed through online instruction and guided independent study. Faculty innovation is also a hallmark of this program. Each course is team-taught by traditional LIS faculty members partnered with professors of practice — high-level directors in the field of LIS who educate and mentor the candidates both in and out of the classroom.

Unlike most LIS doctoral programs, this one is exclusively focused on managerial leadership in information environments, and candidates are encouraged to explore research opportunities in their own real-world library settings. Examples of managerial leadership research topics include:

- Importance of librarians as campus leaders in developing institutional partnerships for outcomes assessment (applicable to information literacy)
- Effectiveness of library leaders in shaping government information policies
- Gender issues in leadership effectiveness
- Leadership challenges in distributed digital environments
- Faculty and university administrators' perception of leadership among librarians

There is an ocean of research on leadership in the business world, but currently only a very small pool that addresses the unique contexts of library and information services. The MLIP program doesn't just seek to strengthen intellectual and interpersonal assets of individuals through student/professor collaboration; it simultaneously aims to create a body of research that will form the very foundation of the underdeveloped area of managerial leadership in information environments. Final student portfolios will include publishable cases, issue briefs, research and analytical papers, and dissertations. Similar to the Harvard Business School's Case Study program, the work produced by MLIP students is expected to be distributed widely and used by students, librarians, and administrators throughout the field to strengthen their organizations and their own skills, and to develop a new vision for, and practice of, leadership in the information professions.

Simmons GSLIS expects that this new focus on managerial leadership in the information professions in the Ph.D. program will produce both exceptional leaders and insightful original research that will significantly strengthen the future of librarianship. It is anticipated that as the program matures and expands, the leadership model that guides it (and provides a benchmark for assessing leadership abilities) will be adopted by other library and in-

formation science education programs. It is also expected that the model will be used directly by libraries and other information organizations as a tool for developing and measuring the progress of their own opportunities for demonstrating and encouraging exceptional leadership.

For more information, please see:  
<http://www.simmons.edu/gslis/phdmlip/>

*\*Before 2006, Simmons offered a Doctor of Arts (D.A.) degree focusing on library administration. Simmons now offers a Ph.D. program focusing on scholarly research, including the concentration in managerial leadership in the information professions.*

## Snapshot

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**Is this shake-up related to the fact that the Internet has democratized information more than ever before?**

Absolutely. It's interesting to compare our era to the Romantic Era, when a lot of people were energized by nonauthoritative, nontraditional ways of writing and connecting. There were correspondence societies, seditious pamphlets, new ways of bringing written work into poorer houses. But Samuel Taylor Coleridge wrote that because books could be published by any grubby publisher, they had become completely untrustworthy. Today, there are the same fears in relation to the Internet — even more so.

**You seem to have one foot in the Romantic Era and the other in the Technology Era.**

I guess that's because I'm both a traditionalist and an experimenter. For example, I went to Columbia as an undergraduate, a college that still ascribes to a traditional core curriculum, and I support that. I think that once we have a common point of reference, then we can think about difference. So, I like to root myself in the traditional, but then investigate what's changed and look at things in new ways.

**What are you passionate about outside of work?**

I guess I don't draw the distinction very clearly between work and non-work. I'm passionate about what I do. I'm passionate about writing. I love music — I love to play the piano. I swim everyday. I love walking, especially in New York, and lately around Harlem.

**What's a favorite quote?**

It's from *Don Juan* by Byron. Don Juan says, "Why, I'm posterity — and so are you." I think it's a very generous sentiment. At the heart of most great writing is a generosity, a spirit of releasing the writing out into the world and letting an unknown audience receive it as it will.

**Do you have an object that you particularly cherish?**

A big, beautiful, old mahogany desk I got at a fair in California. It used to belong to a newspaper editor. I liked the history of it, the fact that I could crawl under it during an earthquake, and that in case of a flood, it could float.

Interview by Victoria Thatcher

## May Events

**Monday, May 8, Connecticut Library Association Conference.** Stop by the GSLIS booth and say hello! For more information, visit <http://cla.uconn.edu/committees/confnce/confnce.html>. Mountainside, Wallingford, CT.

**Wednesday, May 10, NEDCC Workshop: Preservation of Scrapbooks.** This workshop is designed for staff members interested in preservation options for scrapbooks and will address conservation and reformatting issues that arise when dealing with these unique books. For more information on this workshop, visit <http://nedcc.org/spring/wkdesc.htm#3>. The cost of the workshop is \$140 and registration is required. To register, visit <http://nedcc.org/spring/wkreg.htm>. Northeast Document Conservation Center, 100 Brickstone Square, 4th floor, Andover, MA.

**Thursday, May 11, NEDCC Workshop: Intermediate Book Repair.** This hands-on workshop is designed for library staff members with some experience in book repair and/or supervisors of book repair units for general collections. For more information on this workshop, visit <http://nedcc.org/spring/wkdesc.htm#4>. The cost of the workshop is \$140 and registration is required. To register, visit <http://nedcc.org/spring/wkreg.htm>. Northeast Document Conservation Center, 100 Brickstone Square, 4th floor, Andover, MA.

**Tuesday, May 16–Wednesday, May 17, Vermont Library Conference.** Sheraton Burlington Hotel and Conference Center, Burlington, VT. Stop by the GSLIS booth and say hello! For more information, visit <http://www.vermontlibraryconference.org/>.

**Through May 26, History of the Book Exhibit: Telegraphic Codes.** "Telegraphic Codes and Message Practice: A Selection from Harvard Library Holdings." This exhibit presents a variety of telegraphic code dictionaries, as well as coded telegrams and related materials, drawn from several library and archival collections at Harvard. Cabot Science Library, Harvard University, Cambridge MA.

**Through May 26, History of the Book Exhibit: Medieval & Renaissance Manuscripts.** "Recent Research on Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts." This exhibition highlights manuscripts which have been cited in scholarly literature in recent years and demonstrates the role of these diverse materials as primary resources in the study of art, literature, history, music, and theology of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. Houghton Library, Harvard University, Cambridge MA.

More information about these and other events can be found at <http://my.simmons.edu/gslis/resources/calendars/events.shtml>.

## Folks on the Move

In March, Professor **Ching-chih Chen** spoke at the headquarters of UNESCO in Paris to staff members of several UNESCO projects, including Memory of the World, Literacy, World Heritage, World Knowledge Portal, and Slave Route and Histories. She spoke on "Global Memory Net and Universal Access: Its Latest Development and Potential for International Collaboration and Education/Training."

## GSLIS Commencement, May 20

Students who will finish their degree requirements by May 2006 are invited to participate in the commencement ceremony on May 20, 2006. Students who will finish their degree requirements after May 2006 will be invited to the commencement ceremony in May 2007. This May, Simmons will celebrate its 101st commencement at the Bayside Expo Center in Boston. Tickets are not necessary to attend the commencement exercises. Directions to Bayside Expo Center are available at [www.baysideexpo.com](http://www.baysideexpo.com). Each graduate will be allotted 2 parking permits at the Bayside Expo Center lot. These permits will cost \$12 each, and will be payable at the Expo Center. Caps and gowns will be available for purchase from the Simmons College Bookstore beginning May 1st. Prices are yet to be determined. For commencement updates and complete information, please visit [www.simmons.edu/commencement](http://www.simmons.edu/commencement). Bayside Expo Center, Boston. 10:00 a.m. (graduates must report by 8:45 a.m.)

## The Little School Library That Could — 2006 Update

The David Farragut Elementary School was without a library or library teacher for five years when it formed a partnership with Simmons GSLIS in 2004. But now, after two years of book drives and volunteer work by students, staff, and alumnae/i, the school finally has a designated library space, a growing collection of books, and a part-time library teacher (Jennifer Reed '05LIS)

Last fall the partnership was joined by the Department of Children's Literature at Simmons and held its second annual book drive. The event collected 750 books, bringing the total number donated in the past two years to about 1,000. In March, during an Alternative Spring Break organized by GSLIS, the new books were catalogued and processed by 20 GSLIS staff and student volunteers working at the school's new library.

The Farragut Elementary School is located only a few blocks from Simmons in the Fenway and Mission Hill neighborhoods and serves a highly diverse population of 230 children from these neighborhoods as well as from Allston, Brighton, Dorchester, Roxbury, and the South End.

Report by Farragut School volunteer Brandy King ['03LIS]

## InfoLink

*InfoLink* is the monthly newsletter of the Graduate School of Library and Information Science at Simmons College. Its purpose is to provide school- and career-related information and to foster community among the many diverse people who make up the school.

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Copy deadline for the June/July issue is Monday, Friday, May 12, 2006.