Richard W. Clement

EDITOR'S NOTE

MANY *RBM* READERS WILL remember David Levy's plenary talk at the RBMS Preconference in Toronto in 2003, "What a Vacuous Way to Spend So Many Years! Reflections on Materials and Materiality in a Digital Age." In addition, many will know his excellent book, *Scrolling Forward: Making Sense of Documents in the Digital Age* (Arcade, 2001). Levy's perspective is unusual and compelling because he combines two disparate backgrounds that yield very interesting insights. He is well known as a pioneering research scientist from the Xerox Palo Alto Research Center, but before PARC, and just after finishing a PhD at Stanford, he studied book binding and calligraphy at the Roehampton Institute in England. He knows his way around books, as only someone who has created them physically can. I am very pleased to include his thoughtful and contemplative piece on scholarship and the digital age.

The subject of education for special collections librarianship is very timely, and will be the focus of *RBM*'s next issue which will be comprised of selected articles from the RBMS Preconference in St. Louis this last summer. Susan Stekel Rippley's article on education, and in particular, her own personal observations on entering the profession, serves as a bridge to the Spring 2006 issue of *RBM*. Preservation assessment for rare book collections is the focus of Mary Ellen Starmer's, Sara Hyder's, and Aimée Leverette's groundbreaking piece, which provides us with a template for assessment and comparative data for the first time.

Regular readers of *RBM* will know of my continued interest in special collections librarianship around the world. As I travel in various countries, I always try to meet and engage our professional colleagues and occasionally get them to contribute to *RBM*. One such colleague is Alberto Loza from Peru. I had the good fortune to visit Peru under the auspices of the Fulbright Program in the summer of 2004. At that time I met Alberto at the University of San Marcos in Lima, and I have had the pleasure of hosting him at the University of Kansas. I asked him to do a piece on the special collections at San Marcos and on what it is like to be a special collections librarian in Lima. I am particularly pleased to include his article in this issue.

In a continuing series, Dan Slive has once again produced an exceptional interview with a major figure in the profession upon his retirement. Dan's interview with Norman Fiering of the John Carter Brown Library is a fine contribution to *RBM*.

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