

Richard Saunders

Editor's Note

I think we have all had enough of COVID stress to be quite tired of the demands it enforces on our work and social spaces. I've lost acquaintances to it—no friends or colleagues yet, thankfully. Being isolated for the past year has provided some quiet time for reflection and for reevaluation. One of the things I've realized is how much I take “normal” for granted.

The lifeblood of a scholarly journal is change. Submissions come in, board members rotate on and off, reviewers become active and inactive, the readership shifts generationally as new faces enter the field and older ones retire. All of this happens more or less regularly and quite beyond control. Change is part of the rhythm of existence. However, there is always one aspect of change that plagues an editor: staff turnover. When an editor settles on a good staff, they begin hoping that change slows to a crawl or disappears altogether. It never does, but one can hope. Unfortunately, life and careers tend to change also, bringing new challenges and colleagues within the scope of our grasp. No matter how we might crave stability, we humans and our careers are similarly organic, with all the limitations and frustrations that implies.

For the second time during my tenure as editor, *RBM* will lose one of its greatest assets, Reviews editor Dr. Jennifer Sheehan. A former editor of the journal herself, Jen returned to the staff a year ago and has since been my sounding board for ideas. Not only that, she carried the weighty task for expanding the number of reviews the journal publishes annually on its new digital portal (<https://rbm.acrl.org/index.php/rbm/pages/view/reviews>). Readers owe her a debt of gratitude for her service. As she steps down next summer to refocus her time and attention budgets, I cannot do less than thank her publicly and bid her well.

Dr. Sheehan's departure leaves a vacancy to be filled in the journal's staffing and leadership. As you read this issue, you may notice the call for applicants in the pages. Please give it some thought. Professional journals function on the contributive action of volunteers. We need you, whether you are retired and looking for a project, or young and eager for a new opportunity. I'm happy to answer queries for folks who think they might be interested in the position; my email address can be found on the masthead of the journal.

Now, in making that encouragement, I must point out that the American Library Association is serious about its leadership and management better reflecting the demographics of the membership. To open opportunities requires initiative and commitment. In that light, volunteers from beyond the cultural mainstream are sorely needed. I empathize with those who are already burdened by service opportunities within your institutions. At the same time, the discipline needs your views and participation in its publications as well. If you are unable to volunteer as Reviews editor, consider volunteering as a reviewer or as a peer reviewer. Societies are strongest when people of different viewpoints, backgrounds, values, and experiences contribute the voices meaningfully. If it is impractical for you to take on another obligation, then please direct friends and colleagues of your acquaintance to the announcement.

And I'll restate a general admonition from a recent issue—please take a few minutes to improve your skills and knowledge, encouraging others in your professional circle to do the same. The URL to the journal's OJS front end is <http://rbm.acrl.org>. See what you can find—and think about what you might add.

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Applications/Nominations Invited for RBM Reviews Editor

Applications and nominations are invited for the position of Reviews Editor for ACRL's peer-reviewed journal in special collections librarianship, *RBM: A Journal of Rare Books, Manuscripts, and Cultural Heritage*. The reviews editor has charge of the reviews published in the journal's biennial issues and online reviews portal to ensure the journal provides qualified opinions of new publications and other scholarly resources relevant to academic librarians and archivists specifically involved in rare books, manuscripts, and cultural heritage.

Responsibilities include receiving and soliciting material for review, making assignments to qualified reviewers, collating reviews to meet print production schedules, and providing reviews for regular publication in the online reviews portal between print issues.

The Reviews Editor is a voting member of the RBM Editorial Board. They work closely with the journal editor, members of the Editorial Board, and ACRL production staff. The appointment as Reviews Editor is a three-year term; applicants must be members of ALA and ACRL.

A nominal honorarium may be available for this position, pending final review of the RBM editorial budget.

Desired qualifications include:

- professional experience in academic libraries;
- experience as a reviewer for an academic journal;
- ability to identify, prioritize, and distribute materials for review in the journal;
- ability to maintain and organize a widely scattered and diverse team of qualified reviewers;
- ability to manage the flow of materials from publishers to reviewers to production staff;
- excellent communication skills;
- ability to meet, and hold others to, deadlines; and
- familiarity with trends in cultural heritage institutions, higher education, and library and information science publishing.

Applications and nominations must include a statement of qualifications addressing the areas noted above and include a current CV. Application documents should be sent to RBM Senior Production Editor, Dawn Mueller at dmueller@ala.org.

Application reviews begin November 1, 2021. Finalists will be interviewed online in late 2021 or early 2022. The position is open until a suitable candidate is proposed to ACRL. Appointment to the position is made by the ACRL Publications Coordinating Committee (PCC) upon the recommendation of the RBM Editorial Board. At appointment, the Reviews Editor will fill the time remaining in the current appointment cycle (two years). They may serve a successive three-year term and thereafter remain eligible for reappointment.