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Editor's Note

THIS ISSUE OF *RBM* presents articles that offer a “special collections and archives perspective” on several themes permeating the larger library world.

Matthew C. Reynolds surveys the state of bibliographic instruction in Association of Research Libraries’ special collections libraries. The importance of instruction in the unique environments we inhabit deserves attention and reflection, particularly since we are sometimes disconnected from efforts in our larger organizations.

Todd Fell takes “hidden collections” initiatives into the map room with an examination of the challenges and rewards of exposing map collections. Projects like the one he discusses offer potential solutions to end our long neglect of these formats. This is well worth the effort, not only because maps and geographic information in our collections are such rich resources, but because they are also so vulnerable.

Lynne M. Thomas’ case study of “embedding” curators in specific literary communities takes the concept of a classroom-embedded librarian, often discussed in the larger library literature, to new levels. Working within a community allows archivists and curators not only to build unparalleled collections, but to find new and exciting ways to integrate those resources into the larger work of the library.

Finally, Shan Sutton tackles one of the most engrossing debates in the archival literature of the past decade: the proper balance between “product” and “process.” His examination of the interplay of MPLP processing and digitization focuses on a project that strives to achieve this balance, but his observations apply to all areas of our endeavors.

These articles include details such as MARC coding and digitization specifications, but I believe we need not fear being “too technical.” In the changing landscape of how cultural heritage collections accomplish our mission, even if we ourselves will not be experts at new kinds of “tech,” knowing the jargon, and the implications, needs to be part of our competencies as special collections professionals. If we cannot participate in the discussion about how our work gets done, we lose our voice at the table.