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"Librarians Navigating Change" Oral History Project, UC Berkeley

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“Librarians Navigating Change” Oral History Project

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Ann Glusker

Interviewed on May 15, 2026

By Jianye He

--For more information about this project, and the oral history method in general, please consult the Project Overview Document at the URL provided above.

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00:00:00 Jianye

This is Jianye He interviewing Ann Glusker on May 15, 2026, for the “Librarians Navigating Change” Oral History Project. This is a remote interview. Jianye is in Berkeley, California, and Ann is in Seattle, Washington.

Ann, would you please share with us your education background, and how you decided to become a librarian?

00:00:32 Ann

Thank you for asking! It’s a very long, winding path. So, apologies to anyone reading this, but I have done a lot of things before being a librarian. But they all contribute to being a librarian, which is, like, the best part about it in a way.

So, I started out as an English major. And, like so many English majors, I had no idea what I wanted to do with my life. So I managed to find a job teaching English in Japan. So I went to Japan for 2 years, which was, you know, it’s a great thing when you’re just coming out of college. I worked on a telephone crisis line, an English language telephone crisis line. And that made me think, “I really like helping people. I am gonna go back and get a master’s in social work.”

So, I went back. I’m from Philadelphia; I went to the University of Pennsylvania and got a master’s in social work. And I did that for quite some time. But I come from a family with, like, my parents both have PhDs, my grandmother was physician... I mean, I come from a family where you get a lot of school. And...I was working at the University of Pennsylvania. And I got free courses. So, of course, I had to take the free courses! And I was, weirdly, studying city planning because they were giving me the most credit for the stuff I had done before, not because I deeply loved city planning. That’s great, but...

I took a course in demography, and I just thought, “Where has this been all my life? This is the most fascinating subject!” Fascinating! And I wrote a paper, and I got an A+! And it just felt like the word from God was that I was meant to be demographer. So it changed everything. That one course changed everything!

00:02:27 Jianye

Wow!

00:02:29 Ann

And I just fell in love! I just felt like, oh, its people ...but, its patterns, it’s a little bit mathematic, but not too much [laughs], it just was like everything’s slotted together. It was so orderly. I just loved it!

And all those things I just said are true of librarianship too. So, how interesting, but, anyway...so, I ended up coming to Seattle to do a graduate degree in Demography, which actually at the University of Washington, is Sociology. They did not have a [separate] Demography department like Penn did [and like Berkeley does].

So I came to do that. And then, they wanted me to take a lot of theory courses. And I am not really a theory person. I really like applied...I want to be doing the thing, I don't want to be thinking about the thing. I mean, I can think about things, but I just really like applying things where you are, like, hands-on.

So, the University of Washington, where I was studying, has a really good School of Public Health, and I started getting, like, looking at those courses. "Haha! Look at the courses in the School of Public Health. Those look interesting!" So I ended up, on the way to my PhD in Sociology, getting a master's in public health. So, I was definitely collecting degrees. I am quite embarrassed by that, but...

00:04:01 Jianye

No, that was extraordinary to me!

00:04:04 Ann

Oh, well! So, I had this public health degree, [a] PhD in Sociology, and I had a background in social work. And I was lucky there, because I found the job as an epidemiologist at the [local] Public Health Department, answering data requests.

So, for any of you who are reading this...it's weird, I shouldn't be saying this, like, "who are reading this" as if anybody is reading it! But... what I am about to describe about my job at the Health Department is going to sound just like a librarian.

So, the job that I got was to take data requests from the public. And at the time, it was 2000. So there wasn't, like now, where there are data sets online, reports online. If people wanted to know how many kids were born in King County, which is where Seattle is, you really kind of had to call the Health Department. So school districts would call us, because they were trying to plan their enrollment. But we [also] got calls, like "My wife is getting a pacemaker put in, I want to know all the hospital ratings in the area." My best one was, I had this woman who wanted to know about teen pregnancies in King County, because she was applying for a grant to take a bunch of teen girls to Disneyland. And she thought that you could make an argument that if you take the teen girls to Disneyland, it will reduce their pregnancy rates. It's just kind of adorable!

But anyway, all these super, super interesting questions. And sometimes I had to do data analysis to answer the questions, but sometimes it was just like researching the questions, and I loved it! Loved, loved, loved! And interestingly, everyone else in my office hated it. So they were so glad that I was the one that had to deal with the public, that had to, like, actually talk to people and listen to them, and extract their true questions, because, of course, as we know as librarians, the first question they ask is not their real question.

00:06:11 Jianye

Yes.

00:06:13 Ann

Right? So, they were so glad to have me do that. And then... I just... I don't know, things kind of shifted, and I started thinking "How can I do this all the time?" I mean, I am interested in data analysis. I can do it. I was coding, I was analyzing big data sets and stuff. But I didn't love it, I loved the data requests. And I knew how much I loved it.

So I started thinking about how to do more of that. And then I went to dinner at a friend's house, and someone gave me the librarian test. So the librarian test is, when you go to a movie, and then you come home, do you look up everything that you ever heard about that phenomenon? Like, if you see "Shackleton", that movie that was out about the explorer in the Antarctic, do you then go home and read everything you can find about Shackleton? I said, "Of course! Everybody does that!" But they said, "No, you are a librarian. Go to library school!" So, my poor husband, I had to [say, "I'm going back] to school!"

And that is the answer. I went to library school without really ever having worked in libraries, which I think is not okay. But it's where I was at the time. I think people have dreams about what libraries are like and librarians are like, that aren't really the real thing, but that's okay. It turned out okay.

00:07:41 Jianye

Thank you, Ann! That's very interesting story!

Before you became an academic research librarian at University of Washington in 2016, you had worked at a medical library and a public library. How did you feel differently about working at different libraries?

00:08:02 Ann

Thank you for that question, too. It's one of my favorite questions.

The settings are very, very different. And I think it's unusual for one person to have worked in so many settings. And the reason is that the job market in Seattle is very, very tight. So we have a very good library school. Lots of people—and it's a nice place to live—so people year after year, there are more and more librarians aiming for the same few jobs. So I was very conscious when I was in library school to try to get internships and experiences and coursework, that... I could walk into a medical library and say, "I am ready to start working for you." I could walk into a public library and say, "I am ready to start working for you." And then [the] University of Washington, "I am ready to start working for you."

But, you know, I just learned such different things at each place, and I...one thing I love about being at Berkeley is I use all of it! So when I was a medical librarian, my users were physicians, nurses, and other healthcare providers. I learned how to do really good medically-focused searching for professional needs. I helped manage...I had someone else that was working on it too, but I helped manage the collections, so I got a sense of, like, how physicians and science-based folks use their collections. So I learned a lot of stuff there.

Then I moved to the public library, because I was about to lose my job because they were doing budget cuts. So, I had done internships and stuff at the public library. The public library was so, so different. I was at the Central Library helping people. It was called the Business, Science, and Technology Department. That was... so much of my social work skills were used there. Very, very different. But also learning about how public libraries provide service. I've used that at Berkeley so much.

And then moving to the University of Washington, of course, was more similar to Berkeley, but I was doing outreach for the National Library of Medicine, so there was another set of challenges. I think a lot of it is just walking into job interviews and saying, "I can start from day one doing exactly what you need me to do."

00:10:30 Jianye

Wow! How did you decide to move from Seattle to Berkeley?

00:10:37 Ann

Oh, that's a good question too!

When the job listing came [out] for this job that I'm in now, the title at that time was Librarian for Sociology, Demography and Quantitative Research. And, I looked at that job listing, and I just felt like, "Someone has seen into my deepest soul, and they wrote a job listing exactly for me."

00:11:07 Jianye

The best fit!

00:11:09 Ann

Yes! And my husband looked at it, and he said, "Oh my God, you are going to Berkeley!" I said that "Wait, wait, wait, it's just a job listing. It's not...I didn't get the job." He is like, "You are...no, no, you're gonna get this job! You are gonna go!" I mean, it was just kind of, felt kind of mystical. Which I mean, I was 60 years old at that time. So, I mean, because I started library school at age 46, so I was 60 years old when I was looking at this job listing.

I was not looking to move. I was not even really looking for a job. But it was too perfect! And also, you know, I have family in the Bay Area, my dad went to Berkeley, my aunt, my cousin, I have a lot of people who'd gone to Berkeley. And Berkeley is very appealing, in terms of, like the Free Speech Movement and the social justice focus, and the quirkiness. I loved the quirkiness, like the innovation, and like... where else do you have parking spots for Nobel Prize winners? I just think that's kind of hilarious!

Then I also do want to sort of say for the record that it was so hard taking that job, personally. Because my husband was self-employed. The reason that I did all these different library jobs was that we had to stay in Seattle because he's self-employed, you can't move cities. You have to find work in the city that you are in.

00:12:30 Jianye

Oh, I didn't know the policy.

00:12:33 Ann

No, no, no, I mean, it's not so much a policy, thank you for saying that, it's more that... he can't pick up his business and move it to another city.

00:12:43 Jianye

I see.

00:12:45 Ann

So I... I had to stay in Seattle. So, [when I started at Berkeley] we were doing long distance.

00:12:50 Jianye

It was hard!

00:12:52 Ann

So, we...it was so, so hard, Jianye. It was like...ugh...

00:12:57 Jianye

I could understand!

00:12:59 Ann

People would be like, "I'm having a really important party next weekend, fly back to Seattle to come to my party!" I was like, "Oh my God!" [laughs] I flew back to Seattle 17 times the first year that I was there [in Berkeley].

00:13:15 Jianye

Oh my God!

00:13:17 Ann

It was so hard, but, but... I'm here to say, it was totally worth it. Totally worth it!

00:13:23 Jianye

That's a connection that I didn't know. Thank you so much, Ann.

00:13:26 Ann

Yeah.

00:13:28 Jianye

When you think back to your first days as a librarian, and what you are doing now, what do you think are the changes that come to your mind? And what are the specific changes to UC Berkeley Libraries?

00:13:43 Ann

That's, wow, I see it's... I asked you this question [when I interviewed you for the project].

00:13:45 Jianye

Yes.

00:13:47 Ann

...it's kind of a hard question, and I actually am working very hard to not answer based on the oral history interviews I did. But to answer from my own [sense], like, I kind of tried to clear my mind.

I think the first change that really has just made me question everything about academic libraries is that, historically, for many academic libraries, including the University of Washington, UC Berkeley, there has been this liaison model, where you hire a librarian that knows something about a subject, so that when your department full of faculty members wants certain books, or wants support for classes, or students want to know what the best resource is for a certain academic area, the librarian knows that, they are not just looking it up. They know it from their own background, and experience, and interest, and skill. I just sort of...I love that model!

And I feel like I existed in that model in its purest form for about a year. Because I got to Berkeley, and then one year later there was COVID. But, I felt so great that it mattered that I had a background in Sociology and Demography. And that I could, like, have conversations with faculty members that were informed. And I... sometimes surprising to them, like, "How do you know this stuff?" "Well, look at my dissertation, that's how I know this stuff."

00:15:17 Jianye

You were so knowledgeable!

00:15:20 Ann

Well, I mean, I had studied it for years and years and years. And... it is, you know, it's just too expensive [now] to have that much staff... to have individual people with knowledge in different areas. It used to be that you could cover everything, and now, little by little, that's not becoming the case. So that's, to me, is a huge thing. So, moving over from..."I am the Sociology Librarian", to, "I am a Social Sciences Librarian", to, "I am the Librarian for Research Methods", which is also part of my job, you know. You are getting more functional rather than liaison. So that's kind of, to me, the biggest, hardest change.

I think watching the collections become so electronic is kind of a hard thing to see. I think it is different for you, because I know when we had our interview, you talked about how your collection at the East Asian Library is still quite print-based. But certainly the buying I do, I mean, we were told to do e [electronic version] if we can—and pretty much everything I want to buy is—I can buy as an e-book. But it's happened so fast!

That's the other thing is that, when I started as a medical librarian, I started at a library where they had gotten rid of all their print. And they were known in Seattle for having gotten rid of all their print. They were known as, like...sort of, people would just open their eyes wide, "Did

you hear? They have no print!” I mean, they did have some print...they kept a few old journals that nobody else had. But mostly, everything was online. It was so cutting edge, so crazy! But you know, within literally 10 years, tops...

00:17:14 Jianye
I do remember!

00:17:16 Ann
Yeah, that's a very... it's a common thing in medical libraries.

00:17:19 Jianye
You remember, Ann, when you just came, you invited me and our Japanese Librarian Toshie Marra to go to the Demography Library?

00:17:28 Ann
Yes!

00:17:30 Jianye
You were... remember, you were handling the print collection?

00:17:32 Ann
Yes, yes! I mean that was all print. So just for the transcript for the interview, as I mentioned, Berkeley had a very, very well-known and highly respected Demography Department, and they had been collecting, themselves, on the side, this huge collection of stuff for many, many years, not cataloged or connected to the University Library. And they had to move buildings, and so they had...they called me and said, “Could you come next week and look at our 4,000 volumes of stuff and see if you want any of it?”

But, even 10 years earlier, I would have wanted so much more of it. Because a lot of it was like, government reports. I am like, “okay, those are all online”...or other texts that, like, maybe were so old, I didn't think anybody would use them. The newer ones were all online. So it was a very, very different thing, right? Thank you for remembering that.

00:18:33 Jianye
Yeah. The books we picked up actually are very valuable too. I mean, because the early data from East Asia mostly were not available, you know, in the e-format. So those books are still very valuable to our collection. So thank you, Ann!

00:18:48 Ann
Oh, my goodness! Thank you, because it just really hurt my heart to see how many were gonna get thrown away. But, well...I mean we tried to help them find a place to donate them, but I don't know what happened.

Anyway...and then the third thing is just...and I don't...again, Jianye, maybe your world is different, but certainly in my world, we...the reference questions that we get now are much more difficult and complex. Because people can look stuff up...by themselves more, online,

you know, on Google and on AI. And I will say something about AI later, but it makes me so nervous that people are using it as a reliable source of information.

00:19:34 Jianye
Me too!

00:19:36 Ann
Because... it's got a lot of limitations still in that area. But people find answers to their questions and feel good about the answers. And so, we have to do so much more work to convince them to come see us.

You did ask about Berkeley changes, and I think the impact of the budget is where I have to start with that one. My job is twice as big as when I started at Berkeley. So it was Sociology, Demography, Quantitative Research. And now, it's Sociology, Demography, Psychology, School of Social Welfare, and Research Methods. So I am supporting quantitative and qualitative research, and other research methods, like evidence synthesis.

00:20:23 Jianye
So many responsibilities!

00:20:24 Ann
Yes, it's... it got really big! I think it's okay to say, I have announced it, I am about to retire. And they can't, you know, I don't think that one new person could take on that whole scope. You know, when it grows and you are adding it little by little, and you know how to juggle, you can do it, but I don't...

00:20:51 Jianye
I don't think so either, because you have your very unique and very extraordinary background. You know, your education was thorough. And there are so many different layers and different aspects of the data, you know? And your experience as both, you know, the researcher and librarian. I don't know they can find someone who'd have your competency. I really don't think so!

00:21:14 Ann
Oh, thank you! It's nice of you to say. I mean, I think they could find someone with different competencies, but not, I think, who could just walk in and handle that many different things easily. I am not saying it is impossible, but anyway, the decline in staff, and not just librarians, staff too. So everything is being done with fewer people. I mean it's kind of really alarming.

We've had to close libraries, that's another thing. We've had to cut a lot of very important content. And it's...that's challenging, because I think the rest of the UC system counts on Berkeley to have it. You know, they are kind of counting on Berkeley and UCLA to have these important resources. And if we are starting to...have to let really important things go, there starts being questions about the future.

And then I did...I feel like I am speaking really quickly.—I don't mean to, but I have these notes which are helping me put my thoughts together! I did write down one more thing, which is actually, in a way, a good change, which is that I've noticed, and I don't know if you see this too in your world. But...the Bay Area is so expensive of a place to live in.

00:22:32 Jianye

Yes.

00:22:34 Ann

And it's really hard to attract people to Berkeley jobs, and in fact, I have seen job searches fail at Berkeley, because people applied, you know, the way that I applied with just joy, and rapture and excitement about the job, and then they look at, like, what it would take to live, and they just say, "I can't do it. I can't live there!" So I do think that it means that we are hiring earlier career people, and I actually really like that! Because I do feel like, yes, an earlier career person may not be coming in with the same, you know, 5 to 10 to 15 years of experience, so there's more, kind of, ramp-up time. But I really feel so powerfully that what we are supposed to be doing is supporting early career people. And also, they are coming in, many of them, like, a year or two after library school. And they are like, "Well, so-and-so does it this way, and this other institution does it this way", and I was like, "Wow, you know, I have been sitting at Berkeley all this time, did not realize all this stuff was happening out there. Very good that they're bringing in the new knowledge." So that's a good change, I think.

00:23:45 Jianye

Yeah, actually, that speaks to my own experience, right, Ann? You know, I came here when I only had about one year experience working as a subject librarian. But I was very lucky, because after I came to Berkeley, I had several very experienced mentors that helped me. Without those hands-on experiences, I don't think I could have survived very well at the beginning.

On the other hand, as you said, you know, the younger generation joined Berkeley, it's true that we also brought some fresh energy, because when you just came here, you were fresh out of library school. You did have some good ideas and something you already learned. But again, I said that the transitional period is very important. You know, how the younger ones came to Berkeley and how to adapt to this environment, learn from the peers, learn from their mentors. I think that's critical. So, that's why I said, you know, I hope you could help the next one who replace your job. But, maybe it's not possible!

00:24:51 Ann

Well, I mean, I am happy to, but I don't know what they're gonna do. It's interesting, because we are right in the middle of strategic planning, and so, directions may change, who knows.

The other thing just to, sort of say about that...this is kind of off the topic of your questions, but that whole thing about adjusting to Berkeley is... Like, we just hired someone in the Social Sciences Division, she is fantastic! She comes from a fairly large university, but not that large, and people have come to us from much smaller universities. [Either way, when I watch her, I

remember adjusting is hard!] Berkeley is so complicated. It is so complicated. And at the end of the 15 oral history interviews, Jianye, the acronym list, it's six and a half pages long! Whenever someone said an acronym, I would write down the acronym that they said and the explanation, in case anybody wanted to know what the thing was. Six and a half pages of acronyms!

00:25:48 Jianye

Yeah, I believe many people probably don't know them, or even for us. I have been here for 20 years, maybe some acronyms I still didn't know.

00:25:56 Ann

It was incredible! And Jim Church, our Economics Librarian, says to everyone, "Oh, don't worry for the first 5 years. It takes 5 years to adjust to Berkeley, don't worry! "

00:26:08 Jianye

That's true!

00:26:10 Ann

He'd even say, "How long have you been here?" I'd say, "4 years." He's like, "Oh, you're not at 5 years yet." [Jianye laughs] so it's like...yeah, it's really complicated.

00:26:16 Jianye

Yeah, thank you, Ann!

You already mentioned a little bit, but I want to ask more about how you think, you know, what changes do you particularly like or dislike? And what do you think of the impact of COVID-19 and AI to the library?

00:26:34 Ann

Right, I love that question! I mean, it's a hard question, but... I mean, I think the "dislike" I've already said is the loss of the liaison model. [But] I don't see that there is a choice. I mean, if the budgets keep getting cut, you know, you just can't infinitely hire so that each department has their own person. I do kind of wish that the faculty knew what they were losing, because I think they are really used to...they are really spoiled. I mean it's like, really good service to have someone that has expertise in your area. But they have their own pressures, I know. And, they are not gonna get us more money, so I am, you know, I am not...that's not a dig at the faculty, but I do think that there's gonna be some sadness when the services decline.

I do like that tech has gotten so much better, like, I feel like we switched over to UC Library Search, and at first, it was glitchy, and we didn't understand it. And it was like, "Oh, please give me the old system." But as I've gotten more used to it, and it's gotten better, and some of the tools that are incorporated into it have really, really kind of fixed some of the problems, it just feels much more powerful. And I think that's true in a lot of things, that the tools are just getting better, the tech is getting better.

I also have to say that it has helped me a lot, personally—and I don't want to get into all the details, but—to be able to do remote work. And a lot of people do two days a week at home, most do one day at home. I am speaking about librarians, there are different things [related to] that for staff jobs, which is a whole another discussion. But for librarians, the remote work certainly has changed a lot of things. It's interesting, because when I am on campus, the whole point, like, you're on campus is that you're kind of available to students. Often, they want to Zoom. So I say to them, "You know, come see me in person", like, I love seeing them, "Come see me!" They are like, "It's really hard for me. I have to get from point A to point B on campus, and it's a 15-minute walk, and it's really far!" and "I can Zoom from this room." They kind of really want to Zoom. I think sometimes, they don't want to spend half an hour with a little old lady librarian, I can't blame them. [Laughs] But even...there is, like this shift. It has...there are things that have not returned to the way they were before COVID.

So you asked about COVID, I do feel that it moved us so strongly to remote work. And that has pluses and minuses. I do think there's going to be another pandemic. And so, it's set up a lot of processes for how we handle different emergency things, like the other day, there was the thing where Canvas went down. Do you know that online learning system?

00:30:06 Jianye

No.

00:30:08 Ann

Okay, so see, that's so interesting, because I think maybe in your world that it's not used as much. 'Cause if your collection is more print-based, but in the Sociology world, everything is on bCourses. So if you've heard people talk about bCourses, it's like, that's support...

00:30:26 Jianye

Oh, I know bCourses! Sorry, yeah, I know bCourses. Yeah.

00:30:27 Ann

Yeah, sorry, so I should have made that clear. So, you know, [bCourses], Berkeley Courses...when that went down, worldwide 9,000 universities... It was a hacker attack.

There's a lot of stuff in place, and I thought "They [the administration] know how to organize people from COVID." There's a lot that they learned during COVID about how to do workarounds quickly. And there was, I thought, a lot less chaos and panic than there would have been before COVID. There still was chaos and panic. But not in some of the same ways that you saw at the beginning of COVID. So I thought that's kind of an interesting thing.

But I'm so much more worried about AI. And a lot of the people that I interviewed that were retiring were like, "I am so glad I'm retiring before I have to deal with AI." And I have tried to really get up to speed on AI, and I use it. I think not in as devoted a way as students and faculty do now. But it just worries me, because there's gonna be big problems, because people are not realizing that it is illegal for them to be uploading licensed resources from the library. I mean, we can tell them until [we] are blue in the face. But they're gonna be feeding in articles and

getting AI to summarize them, and then AI's gonna ingest those articles. It's not okay. I mean, Berkeley could lose its access to those paid resources, because...

I don't know what the publishers are gonna do, because every single university is the same. It's not just Berkeley. You know, everybody is ingesting their stuff, like, that does copyright mean anymore? So it's just, you know, I don't want to go on and on about AI, but the other thing that sort of kills me as a librarian is that it's not a search engine. So people say, "Oh, I put it into Gemini, and I have the answer to this question", or "I put it into Copilot and I have the answer there", and "I put it into ChatGPT, I have the answer to this question". And I am thinking, "You probably do. It's very good. But how do you know? You might not." And how do you know? So...but it's so addictive!

And I feel so sorry for the students, because I feel like, even the ones that would like to not use ChatGPT, they see their friends doing it. And everybody is competing for good grades, like, I don't know what choice I would make if I was in college now. I don't know. It's just really, really a confusing landscape.

00:33:13 Jianye

That's why I think a librarian's guidance to the students, or outreach service, is very important. You know, I'm...this year I'm in the Undergraduate Library Prize Committee, and I found several people—students—mentioning your help, Ann! And you know, the students really talked about how originally, as you said, you know, they tried to get answers from Google search or other things. But you approach them, tell them how to use datasets, and how to do analysis, and methodology things. I think those are very important. They really appreciate you! I really saw your name, Ann, there.

So I think that's why I think it's very important. AI is really problematic to us too, I mean. Other than that, actually, I think you probably also enjoy your collaboration with your peers.

00:34:01 Ann

I do! I really do. I'm an extrovert.

00:34:04 Jianye

You published an article about the morale, right? ...the librarians' morale. Can you talk about that?

00:34:12 Ann

Yes, yes, I can talk about that. And, actually, it's interesting, because I was going to talk about it later, but this is actually a great time.

So a colleague... there's four of us from Berkeley on the team that did this study. And the question was, there's all of these articles about the morale of librarians. Because like everybody else, librarians want to study their own world. Why are there no articles about library staff? So, by library staff, meaning, sometimes they do have an MLIS, a master's in library and information science, but often it's people doing things, like circulation services, systems work,

acquisitions, like...sometimes cataloging, there's a lot of things that go into a library, and it's not necessarily librarians doing them. And our idea was that, if people were low in a hierarchy, so they had very little autonomy over their job, the morale will be lower. That was kind of the working hypothesis.

And when we started interviewing people nationwide, and... it just kind of blew it out of the water. There's so...no, no, it wasn't just where they were in the hierarchy, so many other things contributed to problems with morale, and [to] good morale. A lot of it had to do with your manager. A lot of it had to do with organizational policies.

And then came COVID. So it really could not have been timely. We were interviewing people in May of 2020, which was like, in a way, we were sort of like, "This is so weird!" Because they are not at their...nobody was at their jobs, not one person! You know, their libraries were closed, all of them. May, it was just like, a month and a half into the pandemic.

00:36:10 Jianye
Yeah, I remember.

00:36:11 Ann
But they thought they were going back. Mostly they thought, like, at the end of...we'll be back by the end of the summer. So to them, it was kind of just like a weird little interview. So we caught the pre-COVID world at the last minute. But we know, since, that probably...they were not treated well, the people that were in institutions that already were not supporting them, probably made them be on the front lines, seeing students, and librarians who's hiding in their offices. I mean there's a lot of things that play into this. But anyway, it's been a very highly read article, like, a lot of people have read it, a lot of people cited it. Personally, I just think it's so weird, because why hasn't anyone else taken off on it and done more research on it? It's still kind of the only thing out there about the morale of library staff. I don't get that!

But that... I can't answer the question. I don't know.

00:37:15 Jianye
Yeah, but the article was quite influential.

00:37:18 Ann
I guess. I think it just... it's one of those serendipitous things that it's the right thing at the right time.

00:37:25 Jianye
Yeah... Ann, you are appraised as "a tireless advocate for data literacy", who "supports quantitative and qualitative research methods, [and] evidence synthesis research". Could you share how you handle the changes so well as a subject librarian for Sociology, Demography, Psychology, Social Welfare, and the Research Methods?

00:37:51 Ann

I have to laugh! Oh my goodness, my title. I can't even tell people my title anymore. [Jianye laugh]

00:37:56 Jianye

I know it's too long.

00:37:58 Ann

I know. I mean, I love this question too, because it's kind of what I was trying to get at when I was doing the oral history project. It's like, "How do you handle change or create change for yourself?" I never really ask people that question, so thank you for asking. Because it's like, "How you create change for yourself?"

And I've really had to handle a lot of change, because the Qualitative Research Librarian left, so I had to sort of take that on. Luckily, I was doing the morale study and learning about qualitative research. Various other people left. I have in my notes, since coming to Berkeley, I have taken on two new academic departments or schools, but I've also been the interim for two more. So, I came in with my Sociology and Demography, and I've had to do basically 4 more departments or full schools, the schools [being] School of Social Welfare, School of Public Policy. And then I've learned all these research methods. So I've had to learn qualitative research, I've learned oral history methods, I have learned evidence synthesis methods, in order to do the research methods part of my job.

I just feel kind of lucky that... Well, I'm a geek—I love taking courses and learning new stuff. I'm a geek about research. That helps too. But I feel like I've been pretty much supported, so I think there's a lot of settings where if you said to your boss, "okay, somebody needs to be doing evidence synthesis"... There's a lot of it in the medical world. Berkeley doesn't have a medical school, but we have public health, we have optometry. That librarian was doing a lot of that work, but it was almost too much [volume] for him, and the evidence synthesis work was [also] coming into the social sciences, so it was very appropriate for me to do it, but [also] it was an investment for Berkeley, for me to go to the training, and then to figure out how much support I could be offering people. I mean, it's sort of, when you're on the cutting edge of...not cutting edge, but when you're on the edge, and have very little staff bandwidth and very little money, to say, "Yes, Ann, you go learn that thing. We should have someone that knows how to do that thing." And I just feel like, that was really lucky.

I wish we had more professional development money. There's lots of conferences I'd love to go to that we can't go to, like, what's the most important conference... basically, like, I went to the Oral History Association Conference when I was first working on the oral history [project]. It was in Cincinnati. I used my... all of my two years professional development money to go to that conference. So you have to make those choices.

And that's another thing about COVID, is that so much more is online now. So there's a very important and wonderful social sciences data-related organization called IASSIST [International Association for Social Science Information Service and Technology], and their

conference is online this year. Quite reasonable. So that kind of opens up opportunities too, like, the world is changing, as we need it to.

I think professional networking is just another really important thing, right? It's like being on the listservs and contributing to the listservs, and trying to do collaborative projects, reading other people's papers and seeing what's out there, and I've kind of done all those things. Let me just see...

00:41:39 Jianye

I think you said the same concern of us, like, we all want to have our continual professional development. But we didn't get enough support, you know, both budgetary and maybe personnel support, right? We always try to learn...I mean, especially you are taking so many responsibilities. Each field needs you to get more, you know, like, opportunities to learn, to present, right? Yeah, that's our common concern. Thank you, Ann...to say that!

00:42:09 Ann

Yes, so just quickly to say, because I was talking mostly about research methods, but certainly, when I was an interim librarian for certain departments, I didn't feel like I had to get as up to speed. When I was given the School of Social Welfare, not as an interim, but as a regular assignment, that was not that bad, because I have a master's in social work. But Psychology was a big challenge. So, because I do not have a background in Psychology, and it's a complicated subject, and the literature and the collection, like, I really had to do quite a bit of reading.

And there's a great listserv from the American Library Association, the [Education] and Behavioral Sciences Section, I think it's called, [within] ACRL [Association of College and Research Libraries]. I'm on that listserv. There's recommended reading lists, but you know, you have to do a lot of work to get up to speed if you have some very new area. And you just have to kind of do that as part of your job.

00:43:10 Jianye

You are doing great!

00:43:12 Ann

Oh, thank you! You too!

00:43:13 Jianye

Thank you, Ann!

So, were there times that you thought about leaving librarianship or Berkeley, and why?

00:43:24 Ann

That's... that was so funny, because in the other oral histories that I did, people, like...there were, actually, people who asked me not to talk about that question. So, of course I didn't, but it's a, you know, that's a tough question.

I have never thought of leaving being a librarian. And I want to just say a little word right here about...Have you ever heard of this term, Jianye, “vocational awe”, A-W-E, “vocational awe”?

00:43:56 Jianye

A-W-E, awe, I know, but I don't know the “vocational awe”.

00:43:57 Ann

Yeah, so it's an article by Fobazi Ettarh. After this, I will send you the link.

00:44:02 Jianye

Oh, thank you!

00:44:05 Ann

And it's the sense that...and maybe this happens to you too. When you meet people and you say that you're a librarian, it's always a positive reaction. So they're always like, “Oh, a librarian!” And then they'll say something like, “I loved my librarian when I was in grade school. She was so great!” And I'm just thinking, like, I can't think of a more different job than my job, than being a grade school librarian. But okay, that's fine.

But it's very positively regarded. And then there's people like me. When I was moving into librarianship from public health, who, like, thought, “I'm gonna work in libraries!” I knew I wasn't going to be reading books all day. I did know that much. But I didn't really understand. I really thought that I would be, like, answering really cool questions all day, and just researching questions for people all day, which would be fine with me. And of course, the reality is quite different.

So “vocational awe” is the... sort of, like, thinking of libraries as, like, sacred spaces, and the work of a librarian as a higher calling. When actually, there's lots of challenges to this job, and libraries can be quite dysfunctional, and what we're trying to do as librarians and as libraries is really hard to accomplish, and the world is changing, and blah blah blah.

Anyway, I've said that, but I still kind of have vocational awe, like, I still kind of feel like it's amazing to be a librarian. I love being a librarian. I feel like I finally...in all of my career wanderings found the perfect job for me. So, no, I never thought about leaving being a librarian.

Unlike many of you, though, I've only done it for 20 years, so it's not like I've gotten tired of it yet, you know. But—I have thought of leaving Berkeley. There are times that I've thought of leaving Berkeley, just cause Berkeley can be a hard place. I mean, the more work gets piled on you, and you just...I think this is true of you too, and I won't...I don't know, and I'm not asking you. But it's so absorbing. So, I'm thinking about Berkeley all the time. I'm thinking about my work all the time. I'm checking my work email a zillion times a day. I never stop thinking about it on vacation. I mean, I know that people are like, “Oh, you have to have boundaries, and you have to turn off the work!” But I don't find it easy to do. The work is coming, like, if you take a

week-long vacation, you have to work twice as much the week before, and twice as much the week after, because the flow of work is so huge and so complicated.

I see you're nodding your head. It's huge...[and] Jianye is nodding her head!

00:47:12 Jianye

Yes.

00:47:13 Ann

Because you can't... if you stop, you are kind of...it's really hard to get back.

So, I had a surgery last summer, and I took 2 weeks of leave for the surgery, which was what they told me to do. I started looking at emails after the first week, because... and I had hundreds, hundreds of emails. Because I just thought, okay, I'm feeling better, I don't want to have, like, thousands [at] the week after. So it's sort of like, there's that... I was never really seriously thinking of leaving.

But it was just kind of like...I don't know, is this sustainable? And I'm kind of old, and I'm kind of tired, and like, is this sustainable? Like, those questions. But during COVID, I seriously thought of leaving, because remember my husband and I had been long distance for a year? And long story short, we worked it out that he could come live with me in Berkeley during COVID, because his work started to be able to be an online service. So he shifted his entire career and job to being online, and then he came and lived with me in Berkeley.

But in the early days of COVID, and those times were so scary.

00:48:30 Jianye

Yes.

00:48:32 Ann

And so, you know, I'd been in Berkeley for one year. I'd been in Seattle for 25 years. My husband was there, my house was there, my cats were still there for some of it. I just felt like, what am I doing here? I want to be home. This is scary. I want to be home. I want to go back to Seattle. So that was, I think, the point where I wavered the most. I think if it had been easier to go back to Seattle, just a little bit easier, I would have done it. And then, right as we were going to be... I don't know if you remember, there was a point where they said, I feel like it was, like, October? I think it was October of 2020, where they're like, we're going to be remote for a whole another academic year, pretty much...

00:49:20 Jianye

Yes.

00:49:22 Ann

We had just [snap!] signed a lease for someone to rent our house.

00:49:25 Jianye
Oh...

00:49:27 Ann
No, it's okay. It's okay. It was... I think Berkeley was a much better place to do COVID than Seattle.

00:49:32 Jianye
I'm glad you stayed.

00:49:34 Ann
Oh, thank you! I mean, I am too, but those crazy early COVID days... So that's not really Berkeley's fault. And of course, now I'm thinking of leaving Berkeley, because it is time to retire. Although it's very, very bittersweet... I don't know... I love my job, I love the people, I love...

00:49:56 Jianye
I definitely feel that passion, Ann. Really, I definitely!... What you just said all echoed with me, you know, I also travel... had to travel, because as Acquisition Librarian, I had to go to my field work to acquire books, and attending conferences, but whenever I came back, I was swamped with emails too, and I feel the burden. I think that has a psychological effect on us, actually. So, as you said, I also seldom take a vacation. It's really true! Um, only necessary.

00:50:27 Ann
Yeah, I mean, it's... there's people who have jobs like that in their life. And I think about Nancy Pelosi. I don't know why she's coming into my mind. You feel like you're doing this very important thing, and so you have to give up some of yourself.

00:50:43 Jianye
Always have to balance.

00:50:45 Ann
Yeah, I don't know. But how many times, Jianye, have we, have you and I been emailing about this? And it's, like, 11 PM, and I'm like...

00:50:52 Jianye
Yes, me too.

00:50:53 Ann
Why is she still emailing? Why am I still emailing? [They laugh.]

00:50:57 Jianye
Yes, I said that we are very similar in many ways, and that's why I can understand you very well.

Maybe next question is more difficult, Ann, but share whatever you can. What was the most controversial time during your career in the information world? Did you do anything to contribute or hinder the impact the time had?

00:51:23 Ann

Thank you. This is another...it was so interesting thinking about this question. And I also really appreciated that you trusted me to say if I had hindered anything. Because it's hard to admit sometimes.

So, I'm really sorry, because I feel like I'm talking about COVID, COVID, COVID, but it's been such an important--what do I want to say-- pivot point for me in my career, and personally, and I feel like it was a time of a lot of controversy in libraries, because we were not prepared.

So, I think moving forward, like, you could say AI is creating a lot of controversy, but the one that I know the best, because AI is kind of newer in my career, [is COVID]. So, and I know that you all really identify with this, Jianye. "How can we help our users if the library is closed? How?"

So I have a story... I do have a story, because I feel like I have...

00:52:26 Jianye

Sure, please share.

00:52:28 Ann

Maybe I have not... maybe I have not been telling enough stories. But I'm about to retire, so what are they gonna do?

So, I had this student, it was a doctoral student. And she had gotten trapped. And I use that word, because she really was trapped in a [foreign] country. She was doing her fieldwork for her dissertation. And she could not leave. They were not letting people leave. So she was sitting in a room in a [foreign] country, could not get Amazon, meaning, could not get books sent to her there. And she was trying to work on her dissertation.

00:53:09 Jianye

So terrifying!

00:53:11 Ann

It's terrifying. Terrifying, I mean. I think it was personally terrifying for her too. We could meet by Zoom, she had internet. So she needed this one particular book. She...that book, would unlock the next phase of her dissertation. And the library was closed. I could not get her that. And... she could not get mail, so I could not even mail her the book. So what we did, what I did is, I ordered the book. I was able to order the book, a used copy of the book for \$10 to my house. And I said to her, "This is my personal address. The book will be sitting out on my porch on this day at this time. I don't...I am not gonna ask any questions about what happens to the book." And her friend came and scanned the book and sent her a scan of the book, which is

completely illegal. And so I will not tell you the title of the book. Because I am sure the friend completely broke the law. But I would have done the same thing for my friend. I don't care, I'm a librarian, but I mean, this was...

00:54:27 Jianye

But it's a special situation.

00:54:29 Ann

What can you do? And so, the friend got her the book. And then, mysteriously, the book reappeared on my porch, with a box of cookies. So, but I mean, that was the kind of thing that you had to do, like, you just know that it's wrong, but you know that in the bigger picture, it's right.

00:54:45 Jianye

Yes.

00:54:47 Ann

And I think, that got repeated and repeated. Then the second... I'm looking at my notes, actually, because I had three things written out about the controversy piece, and the second one was...how can it be fair that staff have to work, and librarians got to stay home. So for that, the morale study was kind of the answer to that, which we just talked about.

And then, this was a weird one. The third thing that I wrote when I was thinking about this was, we didn't even understand, all of us, what was happening epidemiologically, like, what was safe and what was not safe. And so, I think, there were a lot of controversies, and it was so politicized, right?

00:55:29 Jianye

Yes.

00:55:31 Ann

...about whether libraries should open and how they should open. So here is another... I think kind of interesting story.

So, because I had a background in public health, and had been an epidemiologist in the Seattle/King County Public Health Department, so [a] large urban health department, but I also was a librarian, I did get asked by quite a few library people, like, "Well, what do you think? Because you actually have background in both things." And I eventually got called by... I won't say what agency, but it was a [government] agency that was looking for guidelines, like, literally, safety guidelines for reopening public libraries. And I had worked in public libraries. See, this is... it all connects.

So, they sent me the guidelines they were considering, and they just wanted me to cast my eye over them. And I cast my eye over them. And they were ridiculous. They were so... I just felt like you don't...have you been even reading the news? These guidelines are so not protective.

And I wrote back, and I said, “You all may not be quite as in touch with the fact that if you are a public librarian...when I was a public librarian in Seattle, I personally cleaned up every single bodily fluid except feces. I never did feces, but I did every other bodily fluid. I had to go with my biohazard gloves and clean it up. Housekeeping was somewhere else, or whatever. You are personally in touch with people's bodily fluids when you are a public librarian. Your guidelines are not gonna work.”

So, I mean, they didn't like it, but I just felt like the pressure for them to open was...I felt blinding them to the reality of what life was like in libraries, and what was safe for librarians. I mean, I don't know, I'm not health professional, but that was a whole other question.

00:57:52 Jianye

I do remember, Ann, you actually gave a presentation about the COVID-19 to all of us, that was very helpful. That, you know, that was really extraordinary, because most of us would even... was not aware of what's going on, you know? You are the first librarian, you know, the subject librarian gave us this kind of information session, you know, really very helpful, you know, even psychologically.

00:58:16 Ann

Oh, thank you, Jianye. I think, I mean, for me, it was not hard to do that presentation, because, like, I kept thinking, like, this is not...this does not reflect well on me, but at that time, I was like... “Wow, this would be such as exciting time to be an epidemiologist again, because epidemiologically, it's fascinating.”

But I will say that when they let us into our offices in summer of 2020, and everyone was like, “Should I take my plant home? Maybe I'll take one or two files.” I cleared my office out. I said, “We're not gonna be back anytime soon.” But no one did... no one was ready to hear that, but I just knew, “We won't be back soon.”

So, yeah, that was...and then by the way, Jianye, that presentation, I was asked to give it... so this was a presentation early on, and it was just kind of, like, COVID, what we know so far, what to watch out for—it was obsolete within a month. I got asked to give it a month later, and I had to basically change everything. The knowledge was expanding so quickly.

The other thing about COVID that was fascinating... sorry, I'm just, talk, talk, talk...

00:59:26 Jianye

No, no, continue...

00:59:28 Ann

The other thing that was so fascinating is that it has made such a good example for me for later instruction. So, in sociology, I love this about sociologists... They want to research the latest thing. So they want to research social media, or they want to research impacts of AI, or they want to research...I'm trying to think of some other cutting edge, like, I don't know, fentanyl

use, or something that's, like, very, very cutting edge. And it's too new for there to be peer-reviewed journal [articles].

So they want to write a paper for their class, but the professor is saying you have to have 10 articles from peer-reviewed journals. And the publishing cycle is slow enough that it's too soon for there to be any peer-reviewed journal articles. And I just keep saying, it's like COVID, it's like COVID. At first, everybody wanted the peer-reviewed journal articles, but they weren't out yet. So there started to be, like, rapid review journals where people could get their stuff published. It wasn't a full peer review, but it was rapid review, it would get out faster.

We all started looking at, like, okay, what is the CDC saying? (We would not ask that now...) but you know, those kinds of, like, it's been a great way to sort of teach students, like, this is the life cycle of... a new thing happens, and when does it hit the academic publishing world? So, COVID has helped me in that way. [Laughs]

01:01:10 Jianye

This is unexpected result, right?

01:01:12 Ann

Yeah. Yeah, it was.

01:01:14 Jianye

...turned to a positive side.

01:01:15 Ann

Yeah, I mean, there's some silver linings to everything, but I mean, I wouldn't... If I could wish it away, that it had never happened. I would say, I wish it never would have happened, but anyway.

01:01:26 Jianye

Thank you, Ann. I mean, you have shared so much about your working experience, your passion, and now, I mean, you just talk about your planning...planned retirement. At this moment, I want to ask you, what do you feel is the most important idea or theme you'd like to pass on to future generations who will continue in the profession?

01:01:54 Ann

Thank you for asking that. So... I mean, I think we were talking a little bit about, like, the future of libraries, and I didn't actually have a very long answer to that, because I just sort of feel like libraries will still be there. We'll figure out a way to be there. Librarians are resilient. Librarians are really smart about changes coming. But it's interesting trying to think about what you would say to future generations if you know that in 20 years, the libraries are going to be unrecognizable. I mean, pretty much every single 20-year chunk of the history of libraries, like, they look completely different in 20 years. Our jobs look completely different.

One person I interviewed, his job became completely different 3 weeks after he started at Berkeley. So, it's kind of like, I don't know what you are gonna say to future generations...so, I will say that the colleagues that I interviewed pretty much all said to the future generations, "Find out what you love about libraries. And then do that as much as you can in your job."

I say a very different thing. I used to be in... back in my social work days, I worked as a career counselor at the University of Pennsylvania. And so I've always been very career-focused... not career-directed always, but career-focused. And I think I would say to future generations—and I think they know this much better than we know it, so they already kind of know, but—you're probably not going to be in your same job for very long. Either it's gonna change while you're at a particular institution, or you're gonna keep looking for different jobs. And, like I say, I think they already do this. But what it means is, you have to keep your eyes open [for] what is the next new thing.

So if you're a young person, you'd better be up to speed on AI and be ahead of the curve of what users are doing, so that your skills are prepared. When I see people who come in for job interviews now, the things they've prepared to talk about in their job interviews is very different than what we prepared for [when we were interviewing]. So it's exciting to see.

But you have to be on the cutting edge. If you know that there's a gap in your resume, if you have a vision of the next job... and I feel like, you should always have an idea in your head what the next job's gonna be—it's almost always wrong, but if you don't have the vision, you don't have the forward movement. So you should be thinking, like, "If I lost my job tomorrow, what would I do? Where would I go?" If you're missing some skill to get that next thing, get it now. Because you need to be walking into the job interview, "I'm ready to do your job." So fill your learning gaps. I always have an updated resume. Always have an updated resume! But also, have fun! I do think people should be having fun [laughs]. And not just like in their head all the time. It's very easy for librarians to get in their head...

I did want to just say one other quick thing, which I had had on some notes, and I realized that I missed, which is that, about the future of libraries, I do feel like, in some ways, things might end up coming full circle. Like, I think, that, our search skills have declined as librarians, because we're not having to do the level of searching that we used to. So, the medical librarians in the early days, when you had to call in to do the search. It was like a weird...it looked like a telephone, and you were calling into the National Library of Medicine, and searching PubMed, and it cost per minute. So they would do huge, complicated, complex searches that they had to get right the first time, because you didn't have money to sort of play around and switch up your searching. Those same skills are now being used in evidence synthesis and systematic review searches. It's the same skill of constructing a rigorous, very detailed, very comprehensive search. That is something that AI maybe can help you with, but it has to be you understanding the nature of searching and pulling in concepts that maybe AI would not be picking up on. I do feel like, for younger librarians, there's gonna start to be avenues that are more like old librarianship, that some things may be coming full circle. I just feel that.

01:07:03 Jianye

24

Yeah, I totally agree with what you said, Ann, and I really think you are the very good example, as a librarian, how important to be a lifelong learner. You really keep changing yourself, you know, keep learning, keep updating your skills, you know...

And, so, I think other than keeping up with the other changes, like the technology, you know, uh... trends, I also think, personally think, you know, how to keep our community is also very important. You know, if someday people think there's no... it's not necessary to keep a library there, that's a disaster. So how we keep our community here, you know, make them feel libraries welcome them to come. You know, I really have a panic whenever I see the decline of visitors of the library, I always have a panic.

01:07:52 Ann

Yeah, yeah. I mean, you're not alone, but we all have work to do. It's... I'm sure you have this too, Jianye, like, people will ask you a question. And then you say, "Oh, I would approach this this way, and look what I find if I approach it this way." And they're like, "(Gasp) I spent hours looking for that, how did you find that?"

01:08:16 Jianye

Yes, yes, yes, I like that one. That's the best compliment to me.

01:08:19 Ann

Right? So you sort of hope that you can kind of keep doing that magic, and people will be like, "Well, you know, if that person is, that librarian is smart and searches all day, every day, [they're] probably gonna be really good at it in a human way, not replaceable by AI."

01:08:40 Jianye

Exactly! You know, from those reflection papers for those students participating in the library prize contest, many students said again and again how important to get librarians' subject help, research methodology, and the hands-on experience. So I was very happy to see those.

01:09:00 Ann

That's fantastic. Because you don't know what you don't know.

01:09:03 Jianye

Yes.

01:09:05 Ann

You think... you think that you're doing okay. But we each have had so many people, right, Jianye, that where they, you know, you're showing them something, they're like, "Ah, I didn't know you could do that. Wait, wait, I wish I knew this before."

01:09:23 Jianye

Yeah, and then they will come back again. You know, that's how we were keeping, attracting our users.

01:09:26 Ann

Yes.

01:09:27 Jianye

Thank you so much, Ann! And now, I also am really curious to ask you another question.

01:09:35 Ann

Okay!

01:09:36 Jianye

You know, thank you so much for conducting this “Librarians Navigating Changes” oral history project. I think it's very meaningful. Could you talk about how you initiated this project? And what idea or message do you hope to convey through this project?

01:09:55 Ann

Thank you, Jianye. Well, yeah, I've talked about this a lot, so I don't mean to have it sound like, you know, not spontaneous. But the two main things were, first of all, I had done this qualitative research. And I hated—and this is with the morale study—I hated that... people shared their hearts with me, and the interviews were beautiful, people were grieving. I mean, it was right at the beginning of COVID, and nobody knew quite what was going to happen. They thought they'd go back to work, but they weren't sure, and like, “What am I doing at home?” Beautiful interviews. But in qualitative studies, when you put them into the analysis program, then the transcripts never are seen. It just felt wrong.

And I learned about oral history, and I thought, “Oh, you interview people, and the interviews get shared. And it's collaborative with the person that you're interviewing. And there's actually a lot of social justice focus in oral history.” I just loved it! I loved it as a method. I loved everything about it. And then... Susan Edwards, my then-boss, who is one of the best librarians ever said, “What's your next project?” And the thing that came into my mind (snap!), I thought, “All I want to do is sit around with you and Margaret Phillips and Corliss Lee. And ask you questions about the old days.” That's all I could think of. And then I was like, “Oh, if I do oral history, that's exactly what I could do, ask them questions about the old days.” [laughs]

So that's kind of how it started. But I did... it's a really good thing that I took...did some training. So I got really good training from the UC Berkeley Oral History Center. They do an intro, and then they do advanced institute that's a week long. And I learned from them that you kind of have to have an organizing principle. I felt... what it became was, how do people...react to change, navigate change...What are their strategies? It came... I just feel like it came out really well. I just...I enjoyed it. I just had such a great time. But I do feel like, you know, the transcripts as a whole really say some things about the last 40 or so years of librarianship, and changes in libraries.

I think I said this before, but I...you asked me about messages. And I think the one that kept coming out over and over again is that people did not go into librarianship to read books. They generally loved books, but they didn't go into librarianship to read books—they went in to help

people. So it's always helping people, helping people. "How can I find this for you? How can I help advance your work? How can I help you?" So helpful! And also very resilient. Like, people were telling me these crazy stories about, like, Corliss said: at one point, there were 4 catalogs. It was a time of tech change, and she said something like, "It's really challenging when your own staff don't know how many catalogs you have." [laughs] I mean, but they just...they figured it out.

The other thing I just want to say is that it's very easy for younger generations to look at us older people with white hair and say, "That person is really out of touch. That person really does not connect with what's happening now." And, you know, to some extent that's true, but I think, to some extent, it's that that librarian has decided, "This is the point where I'm gonna stop learning new stuff every day."

I feel like... for me, AI...I've gotten into it enough that I feel like I'm competent. But I have not dived in the way I see people doing, because I don't expect that I'm going need to, and I'm just feeling like I'm moving to the next chapter of my life. I just don't want to invest in that way.

But I loved Margaret Phillips... [she] was saying that she had been on the desk at one point with an older librarian, and this is way back when, like, I think, the 1990s. And somebody came up to the desk and asked a question. And it involved a computer. And the librarian at the desk said, "Oh no, I don't touch computers." [laughs] And Margaret looked over, like, "Wait, wait! You have to touch the computer, you're a librarian!" But this person had decided they were done learning. They just were not gonna touch the computer, so...but in the [oral history] interview, Margaret said, "I understand them better now. Now that I'm near my own retirement, I understand them better."

So I just want to say to you younger people, "I know I sound like your mother, or your grandmother. Someday, you will understand."

01:14:57 Jianye

Exactly. I mean, to me, you know, and to many other librarians and peers, you know, you can tell how overwhelming the feedback about this project, Ann, right... you already received. I just feel, particularly, this is a very important project for saving the history of the library. People always enjoy forward-thinking. But I do think, at some point, particularly when we are standing at the crossroad, right?

We are not very sure what's the future will take us to. So we think here, what's happening already, and what we'll... we go toward, right? This is a very important moment. Otherwise, the history is lost. You know, as we said, many people even didn't know we have a time that we use the print slip for orders, things like that way, and appreciate what librarians like us, we have done. So, for the future people, future librarians, they would know what we have done here, to appreciate, to remember. So that's why I said that this is a very meaningful project to save the history. And thank you so much, Ann, to do that.

01:16:05 Ann

Thank you, Jianye.

01:16:07 Jianye

And because of your background with this qualitative research method, you know, I don't think many people can do that, so thank you so much, Ann.

So, let's move to a little bit lighter tone. I mean, do you have anything else to share? Like, for example, like, your post-retirement life plan, something like that?

01:16:27 Ann

Oh, well, okay. So first, I want to be sure to say how much I appreciate you doing this interview. This interview happened because when I was doing the presentation to the Berkeley community, that like... "Oh guess what? There's this new collection of oral histories!", someone in the audience, Sam Teplitzky, said, "Oh, are you going to be interviewed?" And I have to tell you, a wave of fear came over me, like "Oh, no, I don't want to be interviewed." [laughs] And it made me realize, like, that's what you all felt like when I asked you if you would be interviewed.

And I felt like, "I have to be interviewed now, because it's not right for me to have asked all of you and then say, 'Nooo, I don't want to myself.'" But it was very interesting thinking who to ask to do it, and then when I realized you are a trained oral history person, and I can... have felt that this entire interview, I have felt your training and your listening, and your thinking, I'm so grateful, so I just wanted to say that for the transcript.

And also, thank you for asking about my plans. I have sort of connected with the oral history community in Seattle, so I do hope to kind of keep doing oral histories here. I'm presenting about our oral history collection at the Oral History Association Conference in Portland [Oregon] in October.

01:17:53 Jianye

Oh, wonderful!

01:17:54 Ann

Yes, so that got accepted, so I'll... so this project will go on. Um, and I think, I'm thinking of...about doing library volunteering.

01:18:03 Jianye

Oh, that's nice!

01:18:05 Ann

Yeah. Well, I mean, we'll see. Everybody says don't put too many things in your calendar. So I'm gonna try not to, but, I'm sure it'll happen.

01:18:15 Jianye

But even you said so, Ann, I still didn't want you to go!

01:18:19 Ann

Oh, thank you, Jianye!

01:18:21 Jianye

Yeah, you don't know how important you are here.

01:18:25 Ann

Thank you so much. I mean, I don't want to go, but I do feel that... see, I feel like you're not old enough for this, but you do...like, and I didn't even realize I would ever feel this way, but I do feel like I'm 67... and, yeah, it's time for the next generation. It's just time. It's time for them to step into their peak years, and their fullness and...

01:18:50 Jianye

Yeah, we are all very open to providing more opportunities to our next-generation librarians, but someone like you really set a very good role model for them.

01:19:05 Ann

Oh, thank you. You too!

01:19:05 Jianye

I'm still young, I still have a lot to learn.

So, if you are okay, I will stop the recording now.

And thank you very much for inviting me to be the interviewer, Ann. It's truly a great pleasure to have this interview with you.

01:19:22 Ann

Oh, thank you, Jianye, yes, that's fine, and I'm so honored that you interviewed me. Thank you!