

InfoLink

A Community Newsletter of the Graduate School of Library and Information Science

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Oh, Canada: Myths and Facts about our Northern Neighbors

by Katharine Dunn, Dean's Editorial Fellow

The 21st winter Olympics began February 12 and around Vancouver, British Columbia, a stunning Canadian city surrounded by water and mountains. The Olympics, as always, promise come-from-behind wins, spectacular triumphs and heartbreaks, and broken records. But what else can the world's best athletes and their fans expect from their fortnight in Canada? You may know Canadians as purveyors of sardonic, satirical humor; hockey legends; Celine Dion; universal gay marriage; high taxes; cheap higher education (thank you, high taxes); and peace. But who are Canadians, really? In this issue, we delve into Canadian identity through the eyes of a couple of Canadians in GSLIS, and on page 3 we explore some of the differences between libraries and librarians in the two countries.

On my wall hangs a framed cartoon from the *New Yorker* in which a man and woman sit across from each other in a bar, with cocktails on a small table between them. The man rests one hand on his companion's, points to her with the other, and says, "You seem familiar yet somehow strange — are you by any chance Canadian?" The cartoon, which ran in the magazine early in the last decade, made me laugh out loud when I first read it. As a native Nova Scotian living in Boston, I was gleeful to see my countrymen singled out by my favorite publication. But the reason I clipped it and placed it in a matted frame was that the cartoon, so deceptively simple, illustrates larger truths about us Canadians.

On the one hand, we seem familiar to Americans because we are in many ways indistinguishable. We look like them; we dress like them, often in American brands; and we (English Canadians) talk much like them. How I've longed for a plummy accent like that of our British brethren across the pond! Then we in Canada might be seen as exotic, übercharming, or enviable. As it is, we sometimes say "out" like "oat" and punctuate statements (not just questions) with "eh." For this we are laughed and poked at (by the TV show "South Park," among others), as a teenager and his friends might do to a skinny, younger sibling. That we could be mistaken for Americans may explain why many of us resort to calling out the Canadians we see on television and in movies. I am a well known perpetrator of this. When a Canadian actor, no matter the size of his role, appears on screen in an American production, I feel pride combined with a nervous hope that he will hold his own with the Yankees around him. In a stage whisper I will say, "That's Callum Rennie. He's Canadian, you know." It is annoying, but I just can't help myself.

On the other hand, as the cartoon points out, we Canadians are strange, and we are different. Many of us, particularly those on leave from Canada, feel proud and protective of our differences even if Americans and others can't see them — perhaps especially because they can't see them. But what are those differences? The cartoon implies they aren't really worth exploring. (The man says "strange," after all, not "intriguing.") And really, why should Americans care? If I may grossly generalize for a moment: Americans' *Americanness* — their love of "freedom," their success in so many fields, their confidence bordering on arrogance, their steely view that they live in the best country in the world, as though it's a competition — means they sometimes wear blinders when it comes to other countries. From a Canadian perspective, when Americans peer across our shared border they see either versions of themselves or jokes to be made.

Like all countries, Canada is far from uniform. Its size alone precludes this. Canada is the second-largest country in the world in terms of land mass, with a population one-tenth that of the

United States. This leaves a lot of room per capita to fill with mythologizing about each other, for better or worse. So in lovely Vancouver you might, as I have, meet people who believe the inhabitants of small-but-cosmopolitan Halifax, Nova Scotia, dwell in cramped fishing shacks along the harbor. (We do not.) When west coasters speak of life "back east," they mean Ontario (in the middle) and are quite happy to pretend that Quebec and the four less-wealthy Atlantic provinces don't exist. In Nova Scotia, you'll find moderate to heavy disdain for

the nation's consumerist capital, Toronto, whose residents, the myth goes, think they're the center of more than just the country. (Since actually spending time in Toronto, I've been pleasantly surprised to discover that the city is more progressive and diverse than almost anywhere else I've been.) Alberta is known as the Texas of Canada, filled with cowboys, oilmen, and right-wingers. And Quebec — well, Quebec's story is all too real. The province has tried twice in my lifetime to break up with us and become its own sovereign nation.

Canada is simply too big for most of us to know it well from sea to sea. I recently asked GSLIS professor Candy Schwartz, a Canadian from Montreal, whether she sought out library faculty jobs in Halifax, two provinces over, the year she applied to Simmons. "Halifax was the Maritimes," she said. "I'd never been there."

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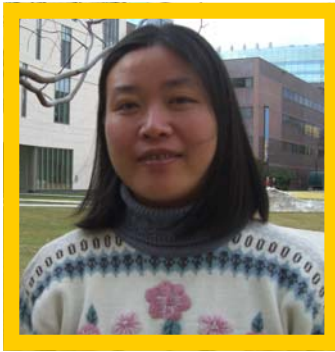


Mary Bennett and Kimberly Hula

Last June, GSLIS was awarded a three-year, \$455,000 grant from the government-run Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). In partnership with other universities and cultural institutions, GSLIS will use the grant to build a curriculum that prepares students to manage digital resources in museums, libraries, and archives. The program will provide classes and internships and will be supported by a digital curriculum laboratory, a virtual teaching and learning environment equipped with content management systems, digital repository software, and search tools.

As part of the grant, two assistants were hired to work on the project. Mary Bennett, who began in December, is the part-time technology assistant for the digital curriculum lab. Bennett has a master's degree in computer science from UMass, Boston, and more than seven years experience as a computer consultant and software engineer. She will provide technology support to faculty and students when the grant-supported classes begin next fall. Kimberly Hula, the project assistant on the grant, is a GSLIS student in the dual archives and history program who moved to Boston from Chicago via Missouri, Japan, and Colorado. She began working on the project in September. InfoLink writer Katharine Dunn sat down with Bennett and Hula to learn more about them.

Mary Bennett



The classes associated with the IMLS grant haven't started yet. What are your job duties now?
I'm familiarizing myself with the software, installing servers, and letting faculty take a look at the applications to see how they fit into their curriculum. The software is all open source — we don't need enterprise versions because open source ones are well tested. But they may not fit exactly into our curriculum, so we may need to make changes to them. We may want to add new features.

What appealed to you about this job?

It's interesting that I can use my programming skills to help people learn. I also like to learn software and I like to make changes to it.

Have you worked with any of the software before?

One of the software programs called Alfresco is for document management. I've worked with it before, using it for Fox Broadcasting. They used Alfresco for their shows.

How did they use it?

For their website. It was my last job before I came to Simmons. Our company consulted for them. I did "The Simpsons," "Family Guy," "The Osbornes." What you see on the website for Fox for the TV show are sections with show information, descriptions, biographies of each actor. I took content and worked with it: I created templates from Alfresco and then the templates transformed the files into html. So what you see on the web is the html version. Fox did the design, we did the transformation.

I often think of programmers as solitary workers, alone in front of a computer. Do you ever find programming to be lonely work?
I always have to interact with people. And here [at Simmons], I'm on a team with four or five other people. As programmers we have to do everything: write the program, talk to the user, get feedback, and debug. I'm always talking to the end user, so I don't feel lonely because interaction is an everyday thing. I understand software from the code point of view, but I also need to know how to use it to understand what the user wants. That means I work behind the scene and in front of it with people.

You grew up in China. How did you end up in Boston?

I married my husband and he came over here for work.

Did you have digital archiving or library experience before coming to Simmons?

I have some library experience, volunteering at my daughter's elementary school library with shelving.

Kimberly Hula



What is your job for the project?

I primarily assist [project director] Martha Mahard, doing administrative tasks, writing the press release for the grant, and doing research as to how to best draft and establish case studies of the partner museums and archives that will be used by students. I'm also Grand Central Station for our eight partner affiliates. I've been working with them to procure information or establish site visits.

Did you have library or archives experience before coming here?

Not really. While abroad [teaching English in Japan] I decided I wanted to do libraries because I realized that I not only wanted to work with information dissemination but I was interested in the technical elements of the field.

In Japan, their libraries are super primitive. I found that there's not much reference. You really have to know what you're looking for, and people don't really defer to the library. Also, there are so many rich and fantastic folklore stories in Japan, and they're not written or preserved anywhere. So that broke my heart. Everything is oral. I thought, Oh maybe I'll save the day and write everything down.

What appealed to you about moving to Japan?

I've always been enamored of Japanese culture. There seems to be a lot of attention to scholastic discipline and a reverence for knowledge. I found the Japanese to be overworked and self-deprecating, so I kind of fit in.

Are you overworked and self-deprecating?

Yes, mostly. Everybody there is really humble. It was beautiful.

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Oh, Canada: Myths and Facts (cont.)

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Lest you think we are a nation of curmudgeons, let me share some of the Canadian traits, true and exaggerated, that we feel proud of. Though most of us live in cities, Canadians have deep and emotional ties to the country's vast, open space: its mountains, plains, lakes, and trees. We tend to treat our surroundings well; Halifax, for example, has had curbside compost pickup for more than a decade. We prefer keeping peace to waging war, and we love to tout the fact that there is no right to bear arms on Canadian soil. Canada officially values diversity. In 1988, our parliament passed the world's first multiculturalism law that protects and promotes different ethnicities, religions, and languages. At the same time, Canada continually fights to keep from sinking beneath America's hegemony. One way the government does this is by requiring radio and television broadcasters to air a minimum amount of "Cancon," or Canadian content programming, an act I applaud but one that showcases our insecurity. As the government agency responsible for broadcasting has written, "We need to remind ourselves that we are a unique people and a unique country."

Schwartz, who has lived in Boston since 1980, cites Canadians' core belief in sharing the wealth as a major difference between the United States and Canada and one of the reasons she plans to retire up north. "I don't like to bite the hand that feeds me, but it's very important to maintain my Canadian citizenship," she says, in part because of Canada's social welfare system. Though not without its problems, it puts such things as healthcare and education under government care rather than subject to market whims. This means Canadians get year-long maternity leaves, basic healthcare coverage no matter their employment status, and subsidized university education that costs students about 20 percent the tuition rates of private U.S. colleges like Simmons.

But the Canadian government is far from perfect: Our prime minister recently shut down parliament for the second time in a year; in January, about 27,000 people turned out in cities across the country to protest the government's "abuse of power" with signs that read things like "democracy is dead."

Still, Canada has a lot going for it. So why leave? In Schwartz's case, it was relatively straightforward: She wanted a job on the east coast within close range of Montreal, and she liked that Boston is a walkable city with reliable public transportation. (She doesn't drive.) In moving south, Schwartz has found a lot of friends, comparatively cheap clothes and flights to Europe, and more opportunities for innovation. She is happy here. But she is Canadian, and her national pride comes out in small but important-to-her ways. She has stitched a maple leaf to her backpack (something every good Canadian does). And in 30 years of living in the States, she has refused to relinquish Canadian spelling like "colour," and "centre." "That's one thing I can do that retains my Canadianness," she says.

As for me, the reasons I moved here are perhaps more complicated, which is to say that I haven't quite figured them out. It has something to do with suffocating in my (small-but-cosmopolitan) hometown, and with wanting to see first-hand

inside the country whose culture and politics infiltrated the first two decades of my life in Nova Scotia. In 2007, after nearly 10 years in the United States, I became a citizen. I miss Canada, but I (probably) plan on staying here. Besides, mythologizing my home and native land is more fun when I'm not living in it.

Libraries North & South of the Border

Stephen Abram is almost always on the road. For the past seven years, as vice president of innovation for the integrated library system vendor SirsiDynix, Abram has traveled up to 25 days a month from his home base in Toronto to libraries, nonprofits, and businesses around Canada, the United States, and the rest of the world. He will continue to travel in his new job as vice president of strategic partnerships and markets for Gale Cengage Learning, the company best known as a publisher of directories and databases. Abram's 30 years of library experience, which includes stints as president of the Special Libraries Association, the Canadian Library Association, and the Ontario Library Association, means he's seen first hand some of the differences between Canadian and American libraries and librarianship. Over hot chocolate and samosas in a small cafe near his home in Toronto, Abram shared some of his views on the subject. "I think there's probably a 70% overlap, where [Americans and Canadians are] just identical," he says. "But there's also probably a 70% overlap between millennials and boomers in their Internet behavior. And so you say, gee, there's a huge difference too." Herewith, some of the differences:



Canadian public libraries are largely funded by their provincial government. In the U.S., according to the ALA, more than 80% of American public libraries' funding comes from local taxes. The real estate market crash, which led to a nationwide recession, has meant that as city coffers dry up libraries have been forced to cut hours or close far more than their Canadian counterparts. "We didn't have the subprime mortgages mess and the following foreclosure and property tax crisis" to the extent they existed in the U.S., says Abram. University libraries are also funded differently: In Canada, virtually all universities are public and supported by tuition and federal and provincial government funds; in the United States, there are many private universities that rely heavily on endowments and investments whose value has in many cases substantially dropped along with the market.



The funding disparities affect other issues, like broadband penetration. In Canada a government-funded program established in 1995 has paid to expand Internet access to remote and rural communities like native reserves or towns in the far north. Today, says Abram, "Canada is the most densely connected country in the world through social networking," in part because broadband access is prevalent. (He says, however, that Canadian mobile data rates are too high.) The United States has fewer broadband subscribers than in Canada and relies far more on charitable organizations like the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, which recently announced an additional \$3.4 million in grants for Internet access in libraries in five states, including Massachusetts.



Another distinction Abram has observed between libraries in the two countries is "the influence of religious dogma on [American] library strategies," he says, particularly in the South.

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Folks on the Move

Gerry Benoit, **Lisa Hussey**, and doctoral students **Peishan Bartley**, **Abdulateef Khairi**, and **Falah Rashid** presented two posters at the American Society for Information Science & Technology annual meeting, in Vancouver, BC. The posters were "Iraq's Digital Library Dilemma: OpenSource Digital Objects Repository Architecture, Tools, and Interfaces" and the other was "Digital Object Repurposing: Seven Case Studies from the Publishing and Information Industries." A small .pdf version will be linked to Benoit's homepage, web.simmons.edu/~benoit. In addition, Benoit moderated a panel on Bioinformatics Education in LIS Programs.

Dean Michèle Cloonan and **Prof. Daniel Joudrey** each gave talks at the Cataloging Classification Section Forum (CCS) at the mid-winter ALA Conference in January. Dr. Cloonan's paper was titled, "Problems and Opportunities in Cataloging Research and Pedagogy." Dr. Joudrey's paper was titled "The Effect of Controlled Vocabulary on Keyword Searching." The Forum was devoted to discussion about cataloging research and examples of current research.

Additionally, **Dean Cloonan** has just had published the following: 1) "Libraries, Archives, and the Pursuit of Access," a chapter in the book *The Impact of 911 on the Media, Arts, and Entertainment* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009). 2) "Preserving Records of Enduring Value," in *Currents of Archival Thinking* (Santa Barbara, CA: Libraries Unlimited, 2010). 3) "Conservation and Preservation of Library and Archival Materials," in the *Encyclopedia of Library and Information Sciences* (CRC Press, 2009-2010).

GSLIS CE program manager **Kris Liberman** '87LS became president of SLA Boston on January 1, 2010.

Martha Mahard presented a paper that she prepared in conjunction with **Ross Harvey**, **Terry Plum**, and **Jeannette Bastian** at the ALISE conference on Wednesday, January 13. The paper was entitled "Building a Virtual Archives and Preservation Curriculum Laboratory at Simmons College: a Case Study in Collaborative Construction." It describes the team's progress on a project funded by grants from IMLS, NHPRC, and the Pottruck Technology Resource Center.

GSLIS students **Myrna Morales** and **Derek Mosley** were selected by the Association of Research Libraries (ARL) to participate in the 2009-11 Initiative to Recruit a Diverse Workforce as ARL Diversity Scholars <http://www.arl.org/news/pr/diversityscholarso9.shtml>. The initiative offers funding to students from underrepresented groups to support their MLIS education. The program is funded by the Institute of Museum and Library Services <http://www.imls.gov> and by voluntary contributions from fifty-two ARL member libraries.

GSLIS Prof. Rong Tang's paper entitled "Mental Models of Federated Searching: Qualitative Analysis and Coding of Drawings by Librarians and Students" was accepted for presentation in the Qualitative and Quantitative Methods in Libraries International Conference (QQL 2010). The conference will take place in Chania in Crete, Greece on May 25-28, 2010. Tang has also received a contract award from Harvard

Center for Biomedical Informatics (CBMI) to be a usability consultant to the redesign of the Harvard Catalyst Website (<http://catalyst.harvard.edu>). This is an ongoing collaboration effort between Simmons GSLIS Usability Lab and Harvard Catalyst.

Got news? Please send it to us at infolink@simmons.edu.

For information about upcoming events at GSLIS, visit:
<http://www.simmons.edu/gslis/news/calendar/lis.php>.

Congratulations to...

Linda Braun is now the first, and only, three-time recipient of the WISE Consortium Faculty of the Year Award for Excellence in Online Education.

Prof. Maggie Bush will receive the Distinguished Service Award from the Association for Library Service to Children (ALSC) at the ALA Annual Conference this summer. The award honors an individual member of ALSC who has made significant contributions to and an impact on, library service to children and/or ALSC.

Dean Michèle Cloonan is the 2010 recipient of the Paul Banks and Carolyn Harris Preservation Award. The award is given annually by the Association for Library Collections & Technical Services (a division of the American Library Association) recognizing the contribution of a outstanding professional preservation specialist who has been active in the field of preservation and/or conservation for library and/or archival materials.

Katharine Dunn has been selected as the winner of the Beta Phi Mu Scholarship. Katharine's application essay was chosen for her demonstrated commitment to service.

Laura Saunders won the Jean Tague-Sutcliffe Award for Doctoral Research at the 2010 ALISE conference. Saunders won for her poster entitled, "Information Literacy as a Student Learning Outcome."

GSLIS MLIP Professor of Practice/Adjunct Maureen Sullivan has been named the 2010 Academic/Research Librarian of the Year by the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL). The award will be conferred at the joint ACRL/LLAMA Awards Presentation at the 2010 ALA Annual Conference in Washington, D.C., in June 2010.

GSLIS alum Winston Tabb '72LS, Johns Hopkins Dean of University Libraries and Museums, was nominated by President Obama to be a member of the National Museum and Library Services Board. For more information visit: <http://blogs.jhunewsletter.com/?p=211>.

For more news and information visit InfoLink Online: <http://gslis.simmons.edu/infolink>.

CEC Career Corner: Resumes

Welcome to the CEC Career Corner. Our career topic this month is the resume. Your resume is a marketing tool and must be easy to read to make a positive first impression and convince the employer to contact you for an interview. To accomplish this it is essential that your resume has a consistent format, includes keywords and significant accomplishment statements which emphasize your skills and strong work traits.

Below is a poor quality resume for a Library Assistant position with suggestions for improvement. See the link with a sample "good quality" resume. To read the first Career Corner feature about cover letters, visit the October *InfoLink* at http://web.simmons.edu/~lislive/infolink/extra_cec_1009.htm.

John Smith
(Capitalize/Bold/Use 16pt Font for name)
11 Main Street
Boston, MA 01211
617/555-1234/partyguy1@gmail.com
(Choose a businesslike email address which includes your last name)

OBJECTIVE: I am seeking a position where my education and experiences will be utilized and I can gain more experience in the field of Library Science. (Omit- Cover letter states objective)

(Capitalize all headings)

Professional Experience: Simmons College, Boston, MA

(Place Dates in Right Margin)

9/09- present Student Library Assistant

(Use years only) * Provide customer service and answer patron's questions; check in and out books and other library materials; work with librarian on other special projects; shelved incoming periodicals plus newspapers and other materials; Use Html (correct: HTML), Dialog, various databases with supervision from Library Assistants and supervisors.

(Highlight accomplishments)

Commended by librarians for enthusiasm, professionalism and ability to learn new tasks quickly.

2003-07

Boston Public Schools, Boston, MA

(No abbreviations)

Teacher/5th gr. (No abbreviations)

Taught 5th grade students on all subjects. Met with parents for conferences

Helped with lunchtime supervision when necessary. Left job to return to grad school.

(With considerable professional experience, omit college jobs not related to your career goal)

June-Aug 2002

Camp Wilderness, Lee, MA

(Summer 2002)

Camp Councilor (Spelling error: Counselor)

Worked at summer camp; planned activities including swimming, water safety, hiking canoeing, arts/crafts, etc.

(Place Education above Experience)

Education: Simmons College, Boston, MA

Sept. 2008- Present (Omit)

Degree: Masters (Master) in Library and Information Sciences, anticipated May 2010

University of Boston, Boston, MA

Graduated (Omit) 2003

Bachelor's (Bachelor) of Arts in Education, 2003 (Place year here)

Skills/Interests/Hobbies: (Skills only)

Microsoft Word, M/S(no need to state again) Powerpoint (Spelling error: PowerPoint), Excel/Mac computers.

Trained in First aid

Enjoy going to concerts and to travel (Do not include)

References available upon request (Omit)

Contact the **Career Education Center** to schedule an appointment with a Career Coach, or visit during drop-in hours: Mon. & Tues., 3:00 – 4:30 p.m., and Wed. & Thur., 1:30 – 3:00 p.m. at One Palace Road, Suite 304. Contact the CEC at x2488 or careers@simmons.edu. Visit the CEC website: <http://simmons.edu/cec>.

Visit the **Career Resource Library** at One Palace Road, Suite P304. Set an appointment with a Career Resource Librarian at x2515.

Additional points for this resume:

- **Bold** and CAPITALIZE resume headings
- Use bulleted statements instead of paragraphs
- Begin statements with action words
- Use an easy to read font type such as Times New Roman or Arial in 11 or 12pt

Be sure to check out a sample of a more effective resume on the **InfoLink Online:** <http://web.simmons.edu/~lislive/infolink/>.

Libraries North & South of the Border (cont.)

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Though books are challenged and banned in both countries on counts of racism, too much sex and profanity, and violence, Abram says he's found that librarians in certain parts of the United States avoid conflict before it occurs by "mitigating their behaviors and strategies in the library." Whereas in the United States, obscenity and indecency are determined by gauging "community standards," in Canada "we have freedom of expression. Period," he says. That said, certain types of expression, such as hate speech, are illegal in Canada but protected in the U.S.



Though wary of generalizing, Abram says that libraries and librarians in Canada are "much more collaborative at a much higher level" than in the United States. For example, public, school, college and university, and special libraries across the province of Alberta have shared services and borrowing privileges since 1997. Nova Scotia launched a similar program in September called "Borrow Anywhere, Return Anywhere," in which residents of the province can use any of more than 100 public, university, or college libraries with one card. And Canadian universities have collaborated to secure multiyear funding for electronic databases. Abram says that a consortium in American libraries too often means a buying group rather than policy and infrastructure sharing. "There is an element of competition [in the United States]," he says.



On the other hand, he says, American librarians are more likely than Canadians to take risks. "I think they have a culture that rewards individual effort," he says. For example, Abram cites the 23 Things program started by North Carolina librarian Helene Blowers (now at the Columbus Metropolitan Library in Ohio), in which she encouraged library staff to learn 23 new things about the Internet and Web 2.0. Abram says the program has expanded to more than 70 countries since 2006. "In Canada, we do not have as much of an individual contributor model," he says. "So with us, the first thing we do is say, 'Let's get a committee together so I can share the blame or the risk.' Things take longer in Canada."

CE Workshops, March 2010

Special Three-Day Workshop — Digital Image Curation — March 11, 12, 13 <http://www.simmons.edu/gslis/careers/continuing-education/workshops/offsite.php>.

Online (asynchronous): Private Company Research, Secret Formula for Successful Searching, Wikis in Libraries, Winning Library Grants, Introduction to Virtual Worlds, Pop Culture in Libraries, Discovering Game, Career-Savvy Information Professional (\$85).

At Simmons: Video Tutorials (March 6), How Much Space Do You Really Need (March 20), Managing Social Media to Lead Digital Natives (March 20), Practical Tagging and Keyword Invention (March 20).

For more information and to see the full Fall/Winter schedule on the GSLIS CE website: <http://www.simmons.edu/gslis/careers/continuing-education/workshops/index.php>

Snapshot (cont.)

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The only problem is people don't often speak of their troubles; everything is really hushed. Everybody is grateful, everybody assumes responsibility. Teaching there, aside from some of the corporate elements, was a joy. I was called "Sensei," and it's the highest honor. It's equivalent to doctor. Sensei means "teacher," but in Japanese words like that mean so much more, so it gets lost in translation. So it's "high teacher" or "knowledge steward."

You were recently interviewed by, among others, the *Chicago Tribune* about the project you started, *The Year of 52 Adventures* (<http://yearof52adventures.wordpress.com/>). How did it begin?

It began a couple of years ago when I was in Japan. I had the opportunity to do some wild and crazy things. Most notably, I was going to jump off a 20-foot stone embankment into a river. I stood at the top for about an hour and 20 minutes, and I wasn't going to come down. I was terrified. And then I jumped. It helped me realize that there are opportunities I often pass up. I thought, wouldn't it be great if I started this year committing myself to an opportunity every day or something similar.

I launched the blog on December 13 to get it started to let people know the premise. Something happened that I didn't expect: Tons and tons of people signed on, and they all had lists, which was really endearing. I send out emails of encouragement to the group twice a week. I like to give virtual pats on the back.

What are some of the adventures you've had so far?

I jumped into Lake Michigan when it was 10 degrees for the Polar Bear Plunge. I read my poetry at a gallery in Cambridge. I took off my pants on the T [in celebration of the annual No Pants Subway Ride]. I went to see a psychic. She told me I'm never going to be happy until I reconcile with someone from the past. It was really unnerving.

Interviews by Katharine Dunn

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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 February issue is Friday, February 19, 2010.