
Technical Services

Brinna Michael, Cornell University Library, Chair

MEMBERS PRESENT

- Brinna Michael, Cornell University Library, Chair (outgoing)
- Bro. Andrew Kosmowski, North American Center for Marianist Studies, Chair (incoming)
- Leslie Engelson, Murray State University
- Heather Hicks, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary
- Christa Strickler, University of Notre Dame
- Christina Torbert, University of Mississippi
- Armin Siedlecki, Pitts Theology Library, Emory University
- Margaret Ballard, Dallas Theological Seminary
- Ashley Peyton, Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary Library
- Sheryl Nichin-Keith, North Park University
- Jessica Mahn, Pitts Theology Library, Emory University
- Field, William Booth College, London

MEMBERS ABSENT

- Michael Bradford, Wayne State University, CC:DA Liaison

AGENDA

- 1) Steering Committee Updates and Reminders
 - a) Reminder of current Steering Committee members, including incoming and outgoing membership
 - b) Call for nominations (self or otherwise) to fill vacancies
- 2) TCB and Liaison Reports
 - a) Round Robin Reports (see below)
- 3) Atla Board Check-In with Leslie Engelson
 - a) Other (see below)
- 4) Open Discussion

YEAR IN REVIEW

TSIG has had a quiet year. *TCB* welcomed a new Editor-in-Chief, Andy Sulavik, and Editor, Tim Hasin. There will be turnover on the Steering Committee after the Atla Annual Conference. Brinna Michael will be stepping down as Chair and off the Steering Committee, and Bro. Andrew Kosmowski will be taking on the role of Chair. Christa Strickler will step down from the Steering Committee. A call for volunteers to join the Steering Committee was put forward at the business meeting. If you are interested in joining, please email Bro. Andrew at kosmowskia1@udayton.edu.

ROUND ROBIN REPORTS

CC:DA: Report written by Michael Bradford to be delivered via listserv.

Atla PCC Funnels: No report, there is currently no one in the PCC Coordinator role. Questions about the PCC Funnels can be submitted via the Contact Us form on the Atla website.

TCB: Technical Services in Religion & Theology: Brinna Michael reported that it has been an exciting and challenging year for *TCB*. First, the editorial board experienced some turnover. Christa Strickler stepped down as Editor-in-Chief and Anna Appleman finished her term as Editor. Andy Sulavik, the Technology and Collections Services Librarian at Manatee County Public Library, joined the editorial board as the new Editor-in-Chief, and Tim Hasin, Head of Technical Services at Molloy University, joined as Editor. Barnaby Hughes has continued as the Atla Open Press coordinator.

OTHER

Leslie Engleson addressed the group in her role as a Board member, asking for feedback and insight concerning the Atla core values—namely if they still resonate with members or if they feel out of scope or irrelevant. The current values are:

- Excellence in library collections and services
- Widest possible access to relevant information and

ideas

- Hospitality, inclusion, and diversity
- Collegiality and collaboration
- Creativity, innovation, and transformation

One member expressed interest in defining (or redefining) what Atla considers a “theological librarian,” as many members do not necessarily work in institutions that support the formation of ministers, but are still linked to the work of theology and religion. Additionally, this member would like to see direct reference to religion and theology in the core values. Another member noted that it would be nice to see something about the development of the membership in the core values, specifically development of the skills needed to enable and support the other values. Leslie noted that the professional development of the membership is listed as one of the organizational ends for Atla but acknowledged that many members are not aware of or know how to access these documents (core values, organizational ends, mission statement). A third member noted that it would be helpful if the core values were a little more specific/focused rather than broad. At this point, Leslie invited members to reach out to her directly (leslie.engelson@gmail.com) if they had additional thoughts and noted that she would be taking the input provided in this meeting (and any additional ones that follow) to the Board meeting in October.

During open discussion at the business meeting, members raised several points of discussion, summarized below.

Leslie Engleson posed the question: is anyone thinking about incorporating AI into their cataloging and/or technical services workflows? Leslie’s library uses ExLibris’ Alma and she has used the built-in AI feature in the metadata editor. She concluded that it is not worth the effort of providing information to the AI and doing heavy editing on the resulting record(s). Leslie has also tried using ChatGPT to format content notes and has found little success there.

Christa Strickler noted that her institution has a subscription to Google’s Gemini, which has some data privacy measures built in, enabling her to test a broader range of possible uses. She notes that one of the most successful uses she has found is to give Gemini some of the more complicated cataloging manuals and request a more readable version of the text. The results have been helpful in

synthesizing what would otherwise be extremely complicated documentation. Christa has also tried using AI to help develop subject heading ideas for streaming videos, particularly the ones for which she has less subject expertise. She generally provides the video summary and uses the results to start looking for subject headings that a subject matter expert would know.

Ashley Peyton mentioned using ChatGPT to prompt subject and/or classification ideas for particularly difficult books, always with a “human check component” to the process. Ashley has also used AI to help develop training schedules.

Someone recommended looking at the IFLA¹ and PCC² documents regarding practical and ethical use of AI. Heather Hicks also asked specifically about the ProQuest Ebook Central AI tool.

Heather asked about AI use in discovery layers. Christina shared that at her institution they have chosen to disable the AI tools in many of the ProQuest/Clarivate/ExLibris/EBSCO databases following discussion of their actual helpfulness, whether they interfere or assist the search process. Christina also mentioned that these conversations in the library are happening at the same time as broader discussions of AI as a possible teaching tool vs. cheating tool on campus.

Heather shared that her institution, alongside the Mobius Consortium, is going to try to enable the EBSCO AI on their main discovery layer. It was suggested that this test might make for a good TCB article.

Christa asked if anyone had electronic resources topics they might want to do or see a conference presentation or webinar about. Bro. Andrew shared an idea that came up in the Catholic denominational session about gathering information about eResource distributors for non-English language materials, mentioning a French distributor who might be of interest to some folks. Bro. Andrew also suggested maybe starting a list of resources and distributors to share amongst the IG or perhaps making semi-regular calls on the listserv for distributor recommendations.

Christa asked for clarification on subject coverage of distributors, citing that Harrassowitz is an example of a fairly comprehensive German distributor, but they might not be a good distributor for

theology/religion materials. Bro. Andrew clarified that he was curious about eResource distributors specifically in the sense of helping to fill gaps that limits on physical material spending have forced. Leslie posed the possibility of working with the Collection Evaluation and Development IG on an article, list of resources, or conference presentation on this issue.

Field expressed interest in hearing more about other institutions' eResource policies (access and otherwise) and how those policies might affect acquisition of eResources. Brinna noted that this might be another topic that could benefit from a community sourced resource list.

Bro. Andrew noted an article by Deirdre Sullivan³ focused on Catholic subject headings and wondered where to publish an expanded or more general theology/religion subject heading retrospective. Brinna suggested that TCB is a good forum for publishing non-peer reviewed and less classically "academic" pieces, particularly those grounded in practice. Leslie suggested that if the scope of the project were to be expanded, Atla Open Press Books might be a good partner. Brinna added that it would be possible to do an edited volume or a special themed issue of TCB.

Christa recommended getting involved with, or looking more at the documentation of, PCC NACO/SACO programs. Brinna noted that since there is no longer a PCC Coordinator for Atla, this would be a good opportunity for someone to step up and fill that role in order to support folks who are interested in doing NACO training in particular. Brinna noted that this could be yet another opportunity to create a community resource document, and suggested looking for training videos by Paul Frank of PCC.

ENDNOTES

- 1 M. Cox, Andrew and Maria De Brasdefer. 2025. "IFLA AI Entry Point to Libraries and AI." *International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA)*. <https://repository.ifla.org/handle/20.500.14598/4034>.
- 2 "DRAFT: PCC Guiding Principles for Use of AI and Machine Learning Technologies in Cataloging and Metadata Work." 2025. *Program for Cooperative Cataloging (PCC)*. <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1UIDqZGU-1gVfRmWb-UKRhZRUY-Syr1SdrU6qSA2f-80/edit?tab=t.0>: This link directs to a draft version of these guidelines which was distributed in May 2025 with a deadline for feedback by August 1, 2025. For an updated version of the document, see the PCC website (<https://www.loc.gov/aba/pcc/>).
- 3 Sullivan, Deirdre. 2024. "Our Precious Heritage': Catholic Subject Headings and the Assertion of Worldview through Cataloging." *Cataloging & Classification Quarterly* 62 (6-8): 603-29. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01639374.2024.2415551>.