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GLIS 709 Revisited

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GLIS 709 Revisited

Fall 1992 was my final semester at the Queens College Graduate School of Library and Information Studies – so it was time to take GLIS 709, "Research and Bibliographic Methods." There were rumors about how difficult it was, but all I knew for sure was that it would require a *big* research project. I was fortunate to already have a topic that I was interested in – Holocaust denial literature in public libraries – and quickly became part of a group that was willing to work hard *and* work together. Under the guidance of Dr. Marianne Cooper, we implemented our survey of public librarians in Nassau County and finished our project during that semester, allowing me to graduate in February 1993. The project was eventually published in a slightly revised version in 1995.

While not ordinarily a glutton for punishment, I had long thought about revisiting that same topic to see if opinions had changed, and twenty years seemed like as good a time as any. I even ran the idea past Dr. Cooper at her retirement party in 2011, and she liked my idea – she could not recall anyone else ever going back and re-doing their 709 project during her time at the GSLIS. Since the original survey was done in Fall 1992, I wanted the follow-up survey to be done in Fall 2012. In preparation for that, I made preliminary contact with friends in the Nassau Library System to see if they'd be able to post a link to the survey on their listserv when the time came, and the answer was encouraging. Knowing that I would need to devote a considerable amount of time to catching up on the literature, securing IRB approval, revising the survey, implementing the survey, analyzing the data, comparing the data to the data from twenty years ago, and then writing it up for submission to a journal, I applied for a one-year sabbatical (Fellowship Leave) for Fall 2012/Spring 2013. Unfortunately, my request was denied – but since I felt it was "now or never," or at least if not *now* it would have to wait for a twenty-five year follow-up, I then requested a five-week Professional Reassignment in the Libraries leave (Article 25.4 of the contract), which was granted. That allowed me to go through the requisite online IRB training, revise the survey, learn how to use the survey software that is built into the York website's content management system, and finally implement the survey. Needless to say, quite a bit of this was done on my own time, too.

Although Hurricane Sandy interfered with the survey implementation, I felt there was enough data from the Fall 2012 respondents to compare with those from Fall 1992. But, again, I needed time away from my regular duties to complete my project – and I didn't want to wait too long before returning to it. This time, I requested a *half*-year sabbatical for Fall 2013 so that I could sort through the data, compare it with 1992, write it up and hopefully get it published. This time, perhaps with some divine intervention, my request was granted, and I was able to work on the project from August 1, 2013 until I returned to work for the first day of the Spring 2014 semester. The anonymous peer reviewers made some very constructive suggestions and criticisms, and the editor also worked with me to produce a finished article that I believe was much stronger than the one that I had originally submitted. The finished article, "Holocaust Denial Literature Twenty Years Later: A Follow-Up Investigation of Public Librarians' Attitudes Regarding Acquisition and Access," is scheduled to be published in late May/early June in *Judaica Librarianship*. It was twenty years in the making.

John Drobnicki (York)