

# AALL Spectrum

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**On the cover:**

*Students approach the circulation desk at the new College of William & Mary Wolf Law Library.*



## Redefining the Rules of the Game

by Mark E. Estes, [mark.estes@hro.com](mailto:mark.estes@hro.com)

As I reviewed the submissions for *Spectrum's* Annual Architecture Series, I remembered a Christmas present from long ago—a large box of Tinkertoys. It included detailed instructions for building various objects. The plans for a skyscraper or radio tower caught my attention because it was eight feet tall and used all of the parts. The next morning I awoke early, before the rest of the house, and began work on the tower. I had to use the kitchen stool to reach above five feet. Then, as I prepared to top it off, I realized it was too tall—while the house had eight foot ceilings, the living room had wall to wall carpet and a pad, so it wasn't eight feet clear. Carefully I slid my project across the carpet to the hardwood floor in the hallway and added the last piece of the plan.

A couple of hours later the adults got up for coffee to find this tall structure obstructing their path to the kitchen. I think they reached the kitchen in good humor—or at least I didn't have to dismantle my tower immediately.

Later that day we played some new games: Life, Go to the Head of the Class, dominos, checkers, Chinese checkers, chess, Clue, Monopoly, Risk, Scrabble, and oh so many more. I learned to read the rules of the games because one of my uncles had a reputation for changing the rules to improve his position in the game. So, I grasped the object of the game—win by reaching some place first, accumulating the most properties or countries, scoring the most points, etc.

I checked out chess books from the library, studied Scrabble dictionaries, relished in defeating opposing armies and conquering countries in Risk. I thrilled in the game, the competition, and lost all track of time—once, to the point of playing Slap-Jack with a high school cheerleader and her mother well past one in the morning. Only the phone ringing—my mother calling—interrupted the game.

Later, when I began playing games with our daughter and her friends, my first inclination was still seriously competitive. Somehow though I grasped that such a cut-throat approach didn't endear me to the girls. I faced a dilemma: the rules said the object of the game was to win and defined winning in a particular way. But they didn't say I couldn't redefine how I defined winning (after all, my uncle earlier developed his own rules). My new objective was to play so that the girls won most of the time *and* didn't suspect me of letting them win.

Law librarians should be skilled professionals who know how to construct solutions to information problems—from figuring out when high tide was to incorporating books and current and unknown future technology in an inviting physical or virtual place for library users. Such individuals know the rules of Ranganathan, AACR2, reference interviewing, and learning styles, but they also know when to redefine those rules—and do so—to meet the specific circumstances in their libraries.

In the Architecture Series articles you'll learn how librarians built spaces for their libraries (pages 13-23). Lauren Collins and Elizabeth Yates exemplify redefining the rules as they explore the dynamics of multiple generations in the workplace (page 24). Cindy Spohr reminds us of the importance of building relationships for sustainable marketing success (page 10). Lee Peoples and Valerie Railey highlight some new features/functions in the Members Only Section of AALLNET and how those changes help redefine the rules of self-promotion (page 28). Finally, to entice, encourage, and energize you to plan some vacation around the AALL Annual Meeting, Jennifer Dalglish and Linda Falken tantalize with possible Oregon activities (page 30). ■