2-1-2001

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Boston College Law School

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2/1/01--Two of Boston College Law School's Reference Librarians, Joan Shear and John Nann, have created a professional development workshop aimed at bringing a "hands on" approach to the law library reference department. The workshop, called "Legal Reference Services," was profiled in the December 2000 edition of the AALL Spectrum.

The first part of the article in the Spectrum focuses on what is considered the "centerpiece" of the librarians' workshop, a play by Shear titled "Same Time, Next Library." In a lighthearted attempt to illustrate the trials and tribulations in the search for information, the play follows a reference librarian and a patron through a number of different settings, including a library, law school, and a judge's chambers.

The intent of the whole workshop, Nann says in the article, is learning by doing. "It has to be interesting," he says. "It has to be fun. We use group exercises, individual exercises, role-playing, and games."

The two librarians are also intently focused upon making each workshop work for that particular audience, whether new librarians or experienced veterans. They make it a point to bring in a number of other instructors as well, so that attendees can get a range of opinions and outlooks, and they encourage everyone involved to express their own opinions.

The workshop will be presented next at the John Marshall Law School in May.