# Ask a Librarian: The Role of Librarians in the Music Information Retrieval Community

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# ISMIR at the beginning:
# Music IR Research Communities

- Computer science and information retrieval
- Audio engineering and digital signal processing
- Musicology and music theory
- Library science
- Cognitive science
- Psychology
- Philosophy
- Law

# ISMIR 2000-2005:
# Where were the librarians?

- Overviews of digital library projects
- Standards for digital image capture of musical scores
- Metadata

# MLA and IAML 2000-2005: Librarians and their research presentations

**Table 1. Distribution of major topics identified in MLA and IAML conferences and publications 2000-2005**

| Topics | Descriptions | MLA Annual Meetings | Notes | IAML Conferences | *Fontes artis musicae* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Music history and literature | Research in the historical and cultural aspects of music including repertoire | 17% | 8% | 9% | 8% |
| Print collections | Descriptions of print collections and historical printing and publishing methodologies | 18% | 41% | 24% | 49% |
| Reference and user education | Questions users ask; how we teach users to find information; usability of standard music databases | 16% | 12% | 13% | 0 |
| Digital libraries | Descriptions of digital libraries, digital collections, and digital preservation | 9% | 5% | 15% | 0 |
| Cataloging and metadata | Various schemas for organizing information | 10% | 5% | 7% | 0 |
| Copyright | How does copyright affect our ability to create and provide access to digital collections? | 1% | 1% | 4% | 0 |
| Librarianship | Professional and methodological issues related to music librarianship | 18% | 25% | 19% | 40% |
| Other | Miscellaneous topics | 11% | 3% | 9% | 3% |
| **Total percentages** | | **100%** | **100%** | **100%** | **100%** |

# Librarians and ISMIR beyond 2006

## Opportunities for Dialogue

# Music History and Literature

- Identification of core repertoire
- Different approaches to analysis based on musical styles
- Musical notation and its interpretation across cultures and historical periods
- Tools to automate musical analysis, classification, transcription, and theme extraction

# Print Collections

- Books, manuscripts, printed musical scores

- Sound and video recordings

- Unique and special collections (some without copyright restrictions)

- Challenge of transforming physical collections into true digital collections that can be searched, manipulated and read

# Reference and User Education

- Enhanced searching capabilities
- More sophisticated document retrieval
- Audio retrieval-by-example
- Audio matching
- Improved cross-database searching
- Personalized user interfaces
- Automatic extraction of metadata

# Digital libraries

- Making collections available online

- Putting discovered material to use

- Vision for new, groundbreaking systems

- Implementing experimental services in new environments

# Cataloging and metadata

- Metadata-based retrieval co-existing with content-based retrieval

- Existing expertise in description and user access

- Free sharing of data

- Value of and need for automated methods

# Copyright

- MIR and library communities face common copyright challenges
- Impacts both research and production systems
- Good work currently in both communities

# Where are we?

- The time is ripe for more collaboration

- MIR community continues to expand to incorporate more perspectives

- Librarians increasingly embracing automated methods and advanced tools

- Will further both research and the development of production systems

# Continuing the conversation

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