



2-28-2021

## From the President

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### BYU ScholarsArchive Citation

Kim, Hana (2021) "From the President," *Journal of East Asian Libraries*: Vol. 2021 : No. 172 , Article 2.  
Available at: <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/jeal/vol2021/iss172/2>

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## **From the President**

Happy Lunar New Year of the Ox! While 2021 may not be starting any easier than 2020 ended, the new year does feel like a potentially more hopeful one.

I would first like to give a very big THANK YOU to all of our Executive Board, committee, and task force members who have kept CEAL moving forward throughout the chaos we experienced in 2020.

## **Virtual 2021 CEAL Annual Meeting**

The CEAL Executive Board, committees, task forces, and program organizers have been busy developing the annual meeting program for the CEAL community. This year, CEAL has made the difficult decision to hold the 2021 CEAL Annual Meeting virtually (from March 16 to 19, 2021) due to the serious health risks and travel restrictions caused by COVID-19.

Last fall, the CEAL Executive Board discussed and approved the two-year overarching CEAL 2020-2022 theme and the CEAL 2021 plenary program that I put forth in my role as CEAL President.

The theme of the CEAL Annual Meeting this and next year is “Beyond the Traditional.” The COVID-19 pandemic has brought into sharp relief how library area studies are unevenly prepared to deal with the problems of the future. The new operational and budgetary landscape has promoted concerns in every area of the profession. “Beyond the Traditional” refers to how conventional practices and print materials are useful tools that now require innovative approaches. How are hiring freezes and budget cuts affecting collection development and maintenance? How can institutions circulate knowledge via non-traditional means? How have library professionals’ roles and responsibilities shifted during the pandemic, and how will they continue to evolve? And how are institutions sharing their expertise to cope with this “new normal”? These are among the questions that the CEAL community is responsible for exploring. We believe that two principles should inform further exploration: 1) that collaboration among libraries and their professional associations, organizations, and institutions is paramount to the continued circulation, access, and development of knowledge; and 2) that collections remain diverse so as to cater to the unique needs of the East Asian Studies community.

Based on the theme, on March 18, the plenary sessions will feature the Presidential Plenary, “Responding to Crisis: Perspectives and Strategies.” The study of how academic libraries have responded to the COVID-19 pandemic opens up avenues of inquiry for perspectives and strategies to be shared across disciplines. Building bridges between East Asian libraries will be a key feature of how knowledge can be disseminated in the future.

This session will allow the CEAL community to discuss solutions on how to overcome crises and what can be done to minimize their effects. The panel will have three keynote talks: “Radical Collaboration: A Strategy for Advancing Scholarship in the Age of Perpetual Crisis” by Greg Eow, President, Center for Research Libraries; “Learning from Disruption: Developing the Academic Research Library through Economic and Social Distress” by Damon E. Jaggars, Vice Provost & Dean of University Libraries, The Ohio State University; and “Resource Sharing in the Times of COVID-19 and after” by Peter Bae, Assistant University Librarian for Scholarly Collections Services, Princeton University Library & Member, IFLA Document Delivery & Resource Sharing Standing Committee. Following the keynote talks, I will lead a panel discussion as CEAL President to take the CEAL community’s questions.

The CEAL Executive Board members, committees, task forces, and program organizers have prepared their programs in line with the above theme to generate engaging discussions and explore innovative solutions together. The 2021 CEAL Annual Meeting will bring us together (even when we are apart). Rich pre-conference programs (March 16-17), including the Leadership Institute that was postponed from last year and inspiring committee sessions (March 18-19), await you. The schedule for the CEAL 2021 Annual Meeting can be found on the CEAL Homepage ([www.eastasianlib.org](http://www.eastasianlib.org)). I look forward to welcoming you all to the Annual Meeting virtually in March!

### **2021 CEAL Election**

One highlight of the Annual Meeting is the announcement of CEAL election results. I want to thank all those who agreed to run in the 2021 elections for the positions of Secretary, Treasurer, and Member-at-Large. I hope all CEAL members will take the opportunity to vote. Special thanks go to the 2021 CEAL Election Committee (Chair: Hong Cheng) for their hard and excellent work in handling the nominations and preparing the ballots. I would also like to thank the Library Technology Committee (Chair: Tang Li), Membership Committee (Chair: Xiang Li), CEAL Secretary (Yao Chen), and Treasurer (Tomoko Bialock) for their great teamwork in preparing and implementing the election.

### **New Task Forces and Reappointment of Appointed Committee Chairs**

To support CEAL’s objectives and interests as well as organizational sustainability, the following two task forces have recently been established:

- 1) [Task Force on Creating CEAL Sponsorship and Fundraising Guidelines and Best Practices](#): CEAL, as a professional library organization, often develops programs for the CEAL community by working in cooperation with corporations such as vendors and/or government entities. However, in 2020, the CEAL Executive Board was asked to review a vendor’s proposal requesting that CEAL become a co-sponsor of a vendor-initiated

program. During the discussion, it was found that there were no clear CEAL guidelines to apply to the proposal. Upon the CEAL president consulting with the AAS, we were informed that CEAL or its committees or task forces agreeing to join a vendor-initiated program as a co-organizer or co-sponsor would be considered a conflict of interest. To develop clear documentation and guidelines for CEAL regarding this matter, with the support of the Executive Board, in November 2020, I appointed the Task Force on Creating CEAL Sponsorship and Fundraising Guidelines and Best Practices. This Task Force is led by Tomoko Bialock, current CEAL Treasurer.

2) [Task Force for the 2022 CEAL Distinguished Service Award](#): To implement the recommendations of the Task Force on Establishing a CEAL Distinguished Service Award (2018-2020), and to prepare the process for the second CEAL Distinguished Service Award, which will be awarded at the 2022 Annual Meeting, the Task Force for the 2022 CEAL Distinguished Service Award was established in January 2021. This Task Force is chaired by Zhijia Shen, Past President of CEAL.

In March of this year, the terms of office of the Chair of the CEAL Statistics Committee, Vickie Doll, and the Chair of the CEAL Publications Committee, Charles Fosselman, are coming to an end. CEAL has benefited greatly from their invaluable contributions and efforts during the past three years. In light of their willingness to continuously serve CEAL and for their superb service, our Executive Board has approved my reappointment of both of them to another term (2021-2024). I look forward to their continued service and leadership.

My sincere thanks to the chairs and members of the newly appointed task forces and reappointed committees for their dedication to the CEAL community.

### **JEAL Current Issue**

In our Spring issue, we have a peer-reviewed article on documenting and mapping COVID-19 responses by CEAL libraries and a detailed report on the Japanese-Language Manga Magazine Survey 2020. This spring issue is also the CEAL statistics issue. As far as we know, CEAL is the only group of area studies librarians in North America that has annually compiled such detailed statistics. I think you will agree that the CEAL statistics in each February issue of the *Journal of East Asian Libraries* (JEAL) are one of its highlights. The CEAL statistics are one of the most important resources to view the history and trends in our CEAL community members' collections. The [Statistics Database](#) made available on CEAL's website (<https://www.eastasianlib.org>) and the statistical information presented in JEAL are the results of many efforts on the part of our CEAL membership. I want to take this opportunity to recognize the painstaking dedication of Vickie Doll, Chair of the Statistics Committee, and her Statistics Committee members.

In closing, I would like to thank you, each and every CEAL member, for your many contributions and your inspiring examples to our community. I wish you a safe, healthy and successful 2021.

Hana Kim  
Your CEAL President