



# “Correct Me If I’m Wrong”

*The quarterly bulletin of the Global  
Community of Mission Information Workers*

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## **Librarians and Archivists** *by Joan Spanne*

When I learned about CMIW, and read my first issue of *Correct Me if I’m Wrong*, I found my people in ministry, not because I am a researcher, but because this group appreciates how libraries and archives serve what researchers need and use in their investigating, analyzing, synthesizing and presenting.

Now you can find everything you need via Google (or chatGPT), right? Information services (open or subscription) have replaced reference books. (I led one such service, called ProgressBible, for several years.) I find a fair bit of what I need that way, too, so my statement above was not totally sarcastic. Libraries and archives are there on the web along with so much more. So what do librarians and archivists contribute to the world of information that might be valuable to mission information workers?

As much as there is on the web to be found with search engines, not all of the history of missions is there. Librarians and archivists act as guides delving deeper into the riches of their collections. Some might view SIL with a “missions lens” narrowly defining its mission as relating primarily to Bible translation. SIL International says of itself: “We are a global, faith-based nonprofit that works with local communities around the world to develop language solutions that expand possibilities for a better life.” This continues the three-fold vision of SIL’s founder, William Cameron Townsend: (1) to strengthen the indigenous church through translation into local languages (2) using linguistic research into these complex and beautiful languages to understand how to fully articulate the scriptures, and (3) incarnationally share this gospel through socially uplifting work in literacy, education, and community development.<sup>1</sup>

Through our 90 years of work, SIL has made a lot of things, researching and co-creating resources with these communities. The SIL Archives gather these artifacts of work alongside records relating how the work has been conducted over the decades, the pathway through the past giving context to where we stand today.

Resources have ongoing usefulness shedding light on a community’s past, the trajectory of their language, the impact on the community of activities intended for its benefit. SIL’s Language and Culture Archives makes available such resources for their designed uses, but also for uses that go beyond their original purpose.

A “new” use could involve a revival of the original use, such as a community retrieving all the past works in and about their language in order to begin their own language revitalization effort. This effort is not simply utilitarian: It speaks to the core of their identity.



At the Manila 2013 SIL Archiving conference, with staff from SIL’s international Language and Culture Archives department, as well as staff from Papua New Guinea, Philippines, and elsewhere in Asia involved in archiving, publishing, and training.

Sometimes the connection is personal, such as when the Archives retrieved a recording for a young man living far away from his ethnic homeland, who discovered that the recorded voice reading Scripture was that of his grandfather.

Librarians and archivists preserve, organize, and categorize resources for research, as well. I am all about this “metadata” that enriches records and resources. These aid in interpreting and synthesizing diverse threads into assessments of the impacts of ministry in a society. Recently the SIL Archives served a sociologist examining the community impacts of specific efforts--the three pillars noted above--over decades across whole nations, demonstrating how the gospel of Jesus Christ has taken root, become established, and transformed communities.

And who doesn't enjoy looking at historical photos, connecting them to the history of communities and organizations, showing how far all have come?

Thanks to my colleagues in SIL's Language and Culture Archives, and Historical Archives, for their ideas and encouragement for this article and the blessing of serving together in mission information work.

1 Aldridge, Boone and Gary Simons. 2018. “Kenneth Pike and the making of Wycliffe Bible Translators and SIL International.” *Christianity Today* (<https://www.christianitytoday.com/history/2018/february/kenneth-pike-sil-wycliffe.html> accessed 2024-03-25)

(Another more comprehensive work is *A Threefold Purpose: Rediscovering the Heart of SIL*, by Boone, Gary, and M. Paul Lewis, at <https://leanpub.com/athreefoldpurpose> but I opted for the shorter work as being more accessible in terms of length for CMIW readers.)

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## **State of the Great Commission** *by Matthew Niermann (edited)*

The heart of the Lausanne movement is to accelerate Global Mission together, and this is achieved by connecting influencers and ideas for global mission. In 2024, the 4th Lausanne Congress will be held in Seoul, Korea, where the mission of the Lausanne Movement will be seen in full form.



In the January 2023 edition of the CMIW bulletin, Matthew Niermann described some aspects of the conference preparations. He shared that the Lausanne Movement was producing a State of the Great Commission Report (SoGC) aimed to bring together the best global data and key strategic thinkers to identify the greatest gaps and opportunities for the Great Commission's fulfillment. The SoGC became available to the public on April 23, 2024.

It will be presented as the guiding document for the Lausanne Movement's global congress. The 500+-page report, translated into 7 languages, sets forth key questions and trends shaping the world and the Great Commission. To produce the report, Lausanne led a multi-year global listening process which included over 50 global listening calls, hosted a literature review scholarly team, identified and recruited 150 global contributing authors, and produced over 100 pages of original graphics. It aims to 1) capture the current state and trajectory of the Great Commission across a wide spectrum of indicators; 2) explore the key questions and factors that will shape our world and the Great Commission between now and 2050; 3) discern how these global considerations are, and will be, played out at the regional level.

Be among the first to read and digest this extensive work. The report website can be found here: <https://lausanne.org/state-of-the-great-commission>

## See You There!

Save the Date!



Meeting of Information Workers at Lausanne 4 in Korea

If you are attending the 4th Lausanne Congress in Seoul in September, please save the date for a meeting of Information Workers sponsored by the Lausanne Research and Strategic Information Network and CMIW. The meeting will be held just after lunch on **Monday, September 23**. The venue will be announced at the Congress. See you there!

Look for registration information for this session closer to the Congress.

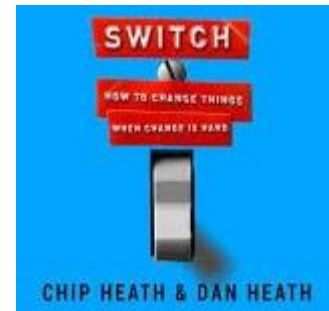
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### MIW Training Corner

#### Switch: How to Change Things When Change Is Hard.

Imagine your company uses over 400 kinds of gloves. And imagine that some of the gloves cost you \$3.22 a pair, while an identical pair costs \$10.55 from a different vendor. How would you get the message across that the company needs a smarter purchasing approach?

Jon Stegner chose not to use a typical boardroom presentation with charts and graphs. Instead, he brought in gloves and piled them on the table for all to see. And he got immediate results!



Instead of appealing to the Rider, Jon appealed to the Elephant. The Elephant and Rider is a concept borrowed from Jonathan Haidt, author of The Happiness Hypothesis. Brothers Dan and Heath Chip use this concept throughout their book, *Switch: How to Change Things When Change Is Hard*. The Elephant represents emotional response to challenges and the Rider represents the rational response to the same challenges.

The Chip brothers add another important element: the Path, representing the situation. They use several anecdotes to show that finding effective solutions to challenges requires influencing the key element or mix of elements.

*Switch* is an intriguing read whose concepts can probably be well utilized to help us communicate and effect change better than if we continuously appeal to only the Elephant or only the Rider. And more than we tend to believe, we can probably change the Path as well.

<https://www.amazon.com/Switch-Change-Things-When-Hard/dp/0385528752>

## CMIW Conference

The Community of Mission Information Workers announces its **third virtual conference** for the first week of June 2024. The purpose of the conference is to accelerate the development of mission information and the mission information community. The conference is sponsored by the Community of Mission Information Workers (CMIW), Lausanne Research & Strategic Information Network and Harvest Information Standards (HIS).

The link to register for **CMIWvCon2024** is

<https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZ0lf-mpqj0vGdNUEscEXDHhvdNSzqhCNdON>

Materials and updates will be made available leading up to the conference. For more information [miwvcon@gmail.com](mailto:miwvcon@gmail.com)

Videos of the last two conferences are available on the YouTube Channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/@cmiwglobal/playlists>

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### ***Special Profile: Joan Spanne***

#### **1) [CMIW] Please tell us about yourself and your family.**

I grew up in a home and church environment in which Christ was honored as Savior and Lord. My parents were very involved in its missions department. The church sent out at its peak more than 100 individuals/couples/families to various kinds of long-term ministries overseas and locally (alongside numerous short term ministries). I have never married; I have two older brothers who both have children, and we are quite close. My housemate is like a sister to me and also works in the same overall ministry, though in a very different role from mine. We encourage each other in life and in work. My mother lives near me in assisted living and we are blessed to still have her with us at age 96.



#### **2) [CMIW] What is your current ministry?**

I have worked through Wycliffe Bible Translators with SIL International since 1994 in various roles connected with libraries, archives, information management and standards management. Currently I combine three of these in roles in both the Language and Culture Archives and SIL's Corporate Research Office. I am part of the team that oversees SIL's archival repository, housing a collection of more than 96,000 records that are roughly divided in half between (1) published works (for general audiences, and vernacular works for specific communities: scripture, literacy, health, community development, etc.), and (2) unpublished works (manuscripts, field notes, data sets, internal reports, drafts, etc.) I support internal research in SIL about the effectiveness of its work in language development and scripture engagement, mostly through delving into the Archives to discern what our 90 year history of productivity can illuminate about long term impact.

#### **3) [CMIW] What are the contributions you have made to world missions that have brought you the greatest satisfaction?**

The satisfaction and joy in my work comes from helping people find and/or accomplish what they need. Where my work has made the greatest difference to the most people is probably in two areas: establishing the Archives (2000) and seeing it move into its first true archival repository

(2011), and in between these jobs, managing the first release of the ISO 639-3 standard for language identification (2007-2010).

4) [CMIW] **What dreams do you have for your next ten years of ministry?**

My focus is mostly on the next two years, as a member of the Repository Administration Team, seeing the repository transition to a completely new platform that is better equipped to serve the long term preservation goals of SIL and extend services to improve the ease of archiving and the accessibility of resources.

5) [CMIW] **Is there some way you'd be willing to help the CMIW community?**

I have been active in CMIW most in assisting people to understand the structure and use of standards that identify languages and language varieties. I work alongside our excellent current ISO 639-3 Registrar to support users, both technical systems users and individuals who just want to accurately identify a language related to their work and products.

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### **Information From the Word**

*by the Krafts*

*"That night the king (Xerxes) could not sleep, and he had a servant read him the records of what had happened since he had been king." (Esther 6:1)*

The course of Jewish history pivoted with the reading of these royal records. We turn to history to understand our origins, to recognize trends, to comfort us on sleepless nights. Has the work of an historian, organized and preserved for you by a librarian, ever brought you a unique blessing? Have you ever expressed your gratitude to God that some history (your organization's, your family's, your own) has been preserved?

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### **Note**

CMIW bulletins include links to important websites related to the bulletin content. The CMIW Editorial Team is vigilant about security concerns. While most hyperlinks are spelled out, extremely long links are embedded in the text. We encourage readers to always examine embedded links before clicking as a habit of secure electronic reading.

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### **Final Details:**

- With the help of God this bulletin is now produced quarterly in English, Portuguese and Spanish.
- The Editorial Team comprises Duane Frasier, Jennifer Poling, Larry Kraft, Rodrigo Tinoco and Stephanie Kraft.
- Please send any comments, suggestions or ideas to us at [info@globalcmiw.org](mailto:info@globalcmiw.org).
- Back issues can be found at [www.globalcmiw.org/cmiwbulletin](http://www.globalcmiw.org/cmiwbulletin).