This year’s issue of *Tidskrift för ABM* includes five texts; two articles, two travelogues and one reflection note. In the call for papers that went out this spring, the editorial board did not ask for submissions within a certain theme or topic. Nevertheless, as the present issue came together, we could see two themes emerge among the texts. The first one regards the physical preconditions for preserving and making information available, and the relations between digital and physical form.

In their article “Books & Bricks: media technologies in library design” Katharina de Burger and Elin Olsson write about how media technologies affect library designs and the material expression of library buildings. They study two different libraries – one city library and one university library – and show that a great number of actors influenced the design of both institutions. By considering media technologies as actors according to actor-network-theory (ANT), they put focus on the complexity of the library due to its diverse functions. Different types of media demands different physical environments to function, which, in a multimedia environment and harsh economic reality, puts strain on the question of what the library’s core function is.

For the writing of her master’s thesis, Camilla Lyckblad went to New York to visit the New York Public Library’s famous picture collection, founded in 1915 and holding over 12,000 subject headings. In her travelogue, “Hands off the Picture Collection?” she recounts the criticism that arose amongst both users and librarians when the library wanted to archive the collection and hence remove the possibility to browse the pictures. Lyckblad highlights the impact that physical contact with the material has on the ways one use it, putting special emphasis on the role of serendipity.

The second travelogue, Ina-Maria Jansson’s “Digital humaniora i drömmande spirors stad: Rapport från en sommarkurs” is a report from the Oxford School in the Digital Humanities of 2022. It is a vivid description on
new digital techniques in an old cultural and architectural setting, and it provides a taste of the historical atmosphere on the streets of Oxford, as well as reflections on the future of digital humanities.

The second theme circles around the human need to arrange the past and the present to understand it, and our different techniques to do so. In their article, Emma Andersson and Madelene Widholm discuss if and how the occurrence of commercial actors providing DNA-services affect the role that archival institutions play for genealogists. They see three possible futures, where the archives will either lose their relevance as sources for genealogy, or in different capacities actively approach the new technique.

In his note “Människans beroende av att samla och kopiera”, Daniel Lundin contemplates on the significance of memory institutions in the development of humankind. With starting point in evolutionary biologist Mark Pagel’s thesis that our success as a race is not primarily due to our intelligence and ingenuity, but to our ability to collect, copy and appraise ideas that are already out there.

We hope that this issue’s diversity in both format, research fields and topics will offer interesting insights for every reader, whether one has domicile in the Archives, Libraries or Museums, and provides an example of the potential synergies that lies within the ALM-field. The editorial board, consisting of Isto Huvila, Ulrika Kjellman, Zanna Friberg and myself, would like to thank the external reviewers that have read and commented on the submissions. Finally yet importantly, we wish you all a good read!

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