It seems fitting that after my morning’s glaring failed technological experience I then had to sit down and write my Editor’s Note for this technology-focused issue. An exploration of the human relationship with technology has dominated the reading stacks on my desk and bedside table for the past few weeks. It’s been an interesting exploration that has included such titles as Nicholas Carr’s The Glass Cage, John Markuff’s recent work, Machines of Loving Grace, and fellow law librarian Nicholas Stump’s soon to be published article, “Following New Lights: Critical Legal Research Strategies as a Spark for Law Reform in Appalachia,” on the non-neutrality of legal research search engines (SSRN abstract 2580256).

During my reading journey, I cheered when a robot was fired and replaced with a human employee, learned the difference between “artificial intelligence” and “intelligence augmentation,” and applauded Mr. Stump for writing on how the non-neutrality of search engines and the structuring of legal information can stifle innovative and creative solutions to legal problems. If all explorations require a revelation, mine would be that as much as I demand, appreciate, and depend on technology, I want to make sure that I have the skills to understand and exercise control over it, in both my professional and personal life.

The legal industry’s relationship to technology continues to evolve, and we explore both our relationship with technology and its evolution in this issue of AALL Spectrum. The articles reflect our professional push/pull relationship with technology as our authors explore how to better control search engines, move from print to electronic collections, understand our continuing romance with print journals, and, in the end, take a deep breath and embrace the innovations that will come, demanding that law librarians develop new skills to remain vital and relevant to the legal industry.

Our New Look
It seems appropriate that the debut of AALL Spectrum’s new look and format should correspond with an issue focused on understanding and managing our relationship with technology. As our profession continues to look forward and develop strategies for successfully taking on new challenges and opportunities, AALL Spectrum will likewise evolve and support these efforts.

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