ACRL in Chicago: Forecasting the future

Highlights of ACRL programs at ALA's 1995 Annual Conference

ACRL members had the opportunity to enjoy sunny weather, "Taste of Chicago," and the beautiful lakefront as they attended ALA's 114th Annual Conference. Total conference attendance was 24,653 members, exhibitors, and guests, including 13,290 paid registrants—which exceeds the previous high paid attendance of 13,063 set in San Francisco in 1992. The conference offered ACRL members an exciting array of topics covering the future of library services, electronic publishing, a look at Africa, distance education, and resources for Western Europe. Below are highlights of some of the programs. (*Ed. note:* Thanks to the many members who summarized programs for *C&RL News* so that we could bring you this report.)

The Life of the Mind in the 21st Century

Marshall Keys welcomed an audience that filled a ballroom to the joint ACRL/LITA President's Program at the ALA Annual Conference. Three speakers from outside the library field shared with the audience how they relate differently now to libraries and library technology. Although each discussed changing technology as a driving motivation for our changing environment, the speakers focussed on human relationships as being crucial in adapting new technology to what we do.

Cultural anthropologist Jennifer James reiterated much of what she addressed at the ACRL Seventh National Conference in March. "When people can't find their way in the new world, they cling to the old. No generation in history has been asked to make a change of this magnitude within their own lifespan. If you tear down something you built, you are forced to look at it and admit it has some problems." In order to determine the new models for dealing with a new world, "you need a new mind," and "you must give up the old myths." Miniaturization, multitasking, and consciousness will be the keys to navigating the future. Technology will perform the low-level skills, so that people can "save the brain" for higher-level strategic thinking and problem-solving skills.

Michael Joyce (Vassar College) is active in the development of hypertext in fiction and in the teaching of writing. He is interested in the "new path" between the class and the library. New issues for writers and librarians include how to archive and collect hypertext materials that include constant interaction and revision by readers. Joyce believes that "what must be preserved is the heterogeneity of materials." It is human interaction that brings meaning to the material, regardless of its format. "I change and am changed by what others make. We are not our collection, but our collecting. The value in what we are collecting is not as much embodied in what it is, as in how we found it and why we keep it. Our mistaking tells us a little about who we are and who others expect us to be. It is not the substance of what we say, but its expression and its construction that com-

> **"It is not the substance of what we say, but its expression and its construction that communicates."**

municates." In the process, the boundary between reader and author is fading, and libraries are becoming "virtual spaces," as well as physical spaces.

Greg Farrington, dean of the School of Engineering at the University of Pennsylvania, is not so sure we need a new mind for living successfully in a changing world, as much as we need to be open to change. He emphasized that librarians must

"pay attention to the role you serve, not the means by which you serve the role." Faculty must consider not how they find it comfortable to teach, but how their students best learn what faculty teach. Because technology now allows information to be everywhere instantly, it is dramatically changing who students are and how faculty teach. Students don't have to be physically at the university to be a part of it. The library can be everywhere, all the time. Class discussion can continue outside class, through the week on a listserv, raising ambiguity as to when class really ends and when one has to be participating to be part of the class. "If we see ourselves as sorting and validating and ultimately interacting within a human sense, and inspiring and connecting and dealing with all these marvelous things that define humans as humans and education as education, then we are going to have a role and a mission for a long time." Technology makes us want to be more human, to connect personally with each other. The university will continue to be defined by its human community, a virtual community as well as a real community.—*Helen Spalding, University of Missouri-Kansas City*

Fran Graf of *Choice* (left) reviews the database offered by SilverPlatter at the ALA Conference.

Africa at the Field Museum: Perspectives on the permanent Africa exhibit

This program, organized by the African, Asian, and Middle Eastern Section and cosponsored by the Afro-American Librarians Section and the International Relations Committee, consisted of two parts: 1) talks by two Field Museum staff persons closely associated with the new exhibit, and 2) an opportunity to view the exhibit. In November 1993 the Field Museum of Natural History opened its new permanent Africa exhibit. The exhibit has drawn international attention because of its new approaches to presenting Africa as a continent of great variety and dynamic populations. The opening was preceded by five years of planning which included community involvement. The first speaker, Carolyn Blackman, head of the museum's Education Department, gave a brief history of the Field Museum, which was established in 1893 and recently has embarked on the redesign of many exhibits to combine both the human and environmental elements. She then spoke primarily about the goal of the exhibit to reflect what the community wanted to know and needed to learn about Africa. Over ten public forums were held in the Chicago area to give the community a chance to express its opinions. The second speaker was Maureen Ransom, a member of the Africa Exhibit's Development Team. She described the different components of the exhibit and talked about the outreach program that links the exhibit to the community through public libraries and schools. In preparation for this exhibit many African people were asked their opinion of how items and displays should be presented to best recreate a feel for Africa. Many Americans, both of African and non-African descent, were asked questions to uncover stereotypes which this exhibit could eliminate. She also described building of the Africa Resource Center, a small library of African studies materials at the end of the exhibit that allows viewers to pause on their way out to follow up on questions raised as a result of viewing the exhibit. This exhibit is colorful and interactive. It stimulates all of the senses in its teaching efforts, including the sense of taste, which is addressed by the distribution of an African recipe to be sampled at another time.— *Cynthia Coccaro, University of Akron, and David Easterbrook, Northwestern University*

Publishing the social text

Recent trends in scholarly publishing and their ramifications for academic librarians were the topics of "Publishing the Social Text: Issues in Sociology and Anthropology Publication and Reviewing," sponsored by the Anthropology and Sociology Section. Representatives of both university and commercial scholarly presses (Judith McCulloh, University of Illinois Press, and Don Reisman, Lynne Rienner Publishers) dis-

cussed the types of manuscripts they sought and outlined current economic constraints in the publishing industry. Publishers, including university presses, must expect to at least recover the cost of publishing a manuscript, and can no longer absorb the costs of publishing a work on a narrow topic lacking broad appeal, or expect the bigger sellers to carry those with smaller sales. Publishers increasingly search for topics that are of interest to a number of disciplines, perhaps with the potential of being adopted as a class text. The effect of the increasing percentage of rejected manuscripts on the tenure process was noted. The former pattern of publishing the reworked dissertation, typically detailing ethnographic field work, as the first rite of passage in becoming a successful academic anthropologist is less frequently seen.

George Marcus (Rice University) noted the demand to publish theoretical, "cutting-edge" ethnographies, "ones that address the concerns of new interdisciplinary arenas" and also the rise of interdisciplinary journals. Edward Laumann (University of Chicago) described his foray into the world of trade publishing, and the accompanying media blitz, with the recent publication of *Sex in America* by Little, Brown (1994). David Henige (University of Wisconsin-Madison) commented and directed the ensuing discussion. A bibliography of readings on publishing in sociology and anthropology was handed out and is available on request via e-mail to e-sutton@ux1.cso.uiuc.edu).—*Ellen Sutton, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign*

Technology and changing communication

In "Run Ragged by Riches! Technology and Changing Communications for the Library," cosponsored by the College Libraries Section and the University Libraries Section, Nina Davis-Millis and Tom Owens (both Massachusetts Institute of Technology) presented a dual paper emphasizing librarian and systems people's views on "confronting the other" in the good sense, to enhance better communication between the two "cultures." Davis-Millis outlined the differences and similarities between librarians and "techies." She discussed the theme of "technostress," which she defined as not just fear of technology, but "the pressure of working with technology and its rapid change," and noted that computer center people experience this as well. She emphasized the need to rid ourselves of the "us vs. they mentality" and the need to make "collaboration a key concept."

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ULS busy at ALA in Chicago

The following are highlights of the University Libraries Section's activities during the 1995 ALA Annual Conference:

• As a result of action by several members of the Undergraduate Librarians Discussion Group, a new ACRL Discussion Group on Electronic Reserves has been formed and had its first meeting in Chicago.

• The Undergraduate Librarians Discussion Group continues to increase its potential membership as Wayne State and Columbia Universities are moving ahead on separate undergraduate facilities. The University of Wisconsin has mandated that all 5,000 freshmen receive library instruction; a two-pronged approach of a one-hour class session, plus an interactive multimedia module will be piloted in fall 1995.

• ULS is planning to make use of the ACRL-FRM bulletin board to share information with the university library community. ULS activity announcements, solicitation of reactions to planning, and question/answer postings are planned for a pilot project. Watch for more information and, in the meantime, ULS members are encouraged to sign up for the ACRL-FRM.

• The Librarians in Higher Education Discussion Group heard presentations from two library leaders in a session entitled "Building Campus Power Bases." Jean Loup (University of Michigan) and John Meador (University of Mississippi) talked about lessons they had learned in dealing with faculty and the wider university environment. These two presentations led to lively discussion. Loup described her experience as chair of the faculty at Michigan, noting that librarians are experienced committee members. Understanding of parliamentary procedure and of effective committee processes gives librarians credibility, authority, and a sense of structure. The library benefits from librarians being an active part of the university community in tangible ways leading to improved financial support, and in intangible ways leading to increased respect for librarians as a vital part of the academic community.

Meador focused on ways the university library can improve its position as *the* information provider on campus. He advocated collaboration with entities such as the bookstore and central printing on campus, and with vendors and information providers off campus. The library can also collaborate with faculty to create multimedia. The library needs to be aggressive in positioning itself so that chances of being bypassed by direct marketing of vendors to faculty does not diminish support for the library. Meador believes that librarians are moving ahead rapidly in terms of use and understanding of technology, and there is danger in alienating a more conservative faculty.

One way in which the library can establish itself as the campus information provider is to become the site licenser for software on campus. Economy of scale also offers benefit to the university as the library can negotiate the best deals with vendors. Libraries may want to expand their hours so, as students and faculty avail themselves of new information forms such as the Internet, the library is open and available to help enhance and support the new information. In closing, Meador noted that the library was there for the university when information was largely in print and it will be there when information is in electronic form.—*Sharon Walbridge, Washington State University, ULS* C&RL News *liaison*

She noted that "by working together, we build a common language and a shared purpose."

Tom Owens echoed many of Davis-Millis's points from the systems person's viewpoint. He stressed the importance for computer operators and designers to develop a "good data model which, like a flow chart, removes ambiguity from discussions between user and programmer." Owens supported Davis-Millis's points about communication, and stated that the "most troublesome confrontation with the other is likely to be in reporting problems." He said librarians need to be as specific as possible when reporting, and suggested several things to facilitate this: 1) don't panic, 2) check obvious things, 3) report well and with detail, and 4) know that you have the right to have the problem explained to you.

Connie Dowell (Connecticut College) presented a multimedia presentation replete with music and car crashes. Dowell spoke about how much libraries have changed since many of us became librarians, most notably in the proliferation of technology. She noted contributing factors in what she termed "technoangst": 1) the information explosion, with its need for enhanced ways to access data; 2) our education; some of us were taught to want to "hold on to physical copies" and now have to sometimes be content sometimes with "online resources which reside at some distant location"; 3) the virtual work environment; and 4) the press, technohype, and the public's expectations.

Dowell concluded by offering factors leading to "technocomfort." These included, 1) information specialists becoming more valued, 2) libraries and computer centers will likely merge, and 3) greater recognition that content is more important than technology.

Michael Kathman (St. John's University) reacted to the speakers. He agreed with Davis-Millis and Owen's description of the different cultures and the need for communication, but warned that all issues are specific to your own institution, and that there is always the need for "mutual respect and a sense of humor." He disagreed with Dowell's prediction that the merger of libraries and computer centers is "inevitable and desirable." He also suggested that, "in smaller institutions, the need for directors with technical expertise" is becoming more important.—*Sharon Britton, Hamilton College*

Facilitating humanist-librarian collaboration

Ways in which the librarian can best assist literary research were the focus of "The Humanist and the Librarian: Creating a Collaborative Partnership," presented by ACRL's new English and American Literature Section (EALS). Panelist Stephen E. Wiberley Jr. (University of Illinois at Chicago) defined the major types of humanities scholarship (bibliography, critical editing, historical studies, formal criticism, and

theory) and outlined ways in which librarians can/cannot assist research in each mode.

J. Paul Hunter (University of Chicago) suggested that the renewed focus on historical questions, with its concomitant deep interest in specific texts and their historical grounding, and the movement toward cultural studies often require research beyond the scholar's field and makes the humanist dependent on those with knowledge of other disciplines and their bibliographies. The library and librarian are logical sources for texts, historical artifacts, and references for further study.

Forging collaborative arrangements with faculty requires effort on the part of librarians; Marcia Pankake (University of Minnesota) shared many of her strategies. Librarians must study scholars and their output to learn their methodologies and needs. Librarians should

Micheline Jedrey and Connie Dowell enjoy the College Libraries Section's reception celebrating the 15th anniversary of CLIP Notes.

consider becoming part of the interview process for new faculty, sending annual reports on library changes and new collections, and meeting each faculty member at least once a year to discuss research needs.—*Michaelyn Burnette, University of California, Berkeley*

Library support for distance learners

The Education and Behavioral Sciences Section's program, "Distance Education in the 21st Century: Removing Campus Walls," featured panelists Sharon M. Edge (University of Louisville) and Steven F. Schomburg (University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign). Edge described a case study of a program administered by the School of Education, University of Louisville (UL). Two librarians of the UL Library devel-

oped reference services, document delivery services, and information literacy instruction to facilitate five televised and highly interactive courses. Delivery of library materials/resources by mail, fax, or computer contributed importantly to the program's success. Edge discussed other aspects of the program which include staffing requirements, equipment, processing procedures, and turnaround time. It is believed that the project helped to position the library for the future and that students were assisted in acquiring information skills for their personal continuing education.

Schomburg's forecast of distance education in the 21st century envisions librarians' employing the latest and most advanced technologies. He cautioned, however, that it is uncertain how the human condition will be affected. He sees "smart products" forming the basis of the technology set.

Schomburg limited his discussion of "distance education" to formally organized courses administered by an accredited college or university. Additionally, teachers and students are linked and interact by means of some type of telecommunications or network technology. He forecasts that two types of technology—synchronous (real time) and asynchronous (anytime, anyplace)—will be mixed in the next century. Trends, he noted, include an enormous export market of coursework and increased numbers of "entrepreneur" librarians. Among other challenges, he recommends that librarians seek and join those creating *new* learning

Cultural anthropologist Jennifer James addressed the crowd at the ACRL/LITA President's Program.

environments.—*Marilyn A. Hicks, University of Wisconsin-Madison*

Academic and public libraries cooperate

"Can This Marriage Be Saved? Academic and Public Librarians Working Together to Support Extended-Campus Students," sponsored by ACRL's Extended Campus Library Services Section, explored why academic and public libraries need to cooperatively serve college students taking distance education courses. A panel addressed the program theme by proposing specific models and partnerships.

Susan Potter (Regis University) provided a background for the program by referring to a survey that found 80% of all off-campus Regis students use local libraries to complete college assignments.

The first speaker, Julie Todaro (Austin Community College), focused on the types of relationships libraries must forge and that a "50/50" partnership benefiting both parties is essential. Memorandums are the most common form of written agreements and are easier to update legally than a formal contract. Librarians must "bring the function to the fore" by discussing the "product" (services) up front.

Andrew Scrimgeour (Regis University) likened different agreements to marriages: traditional (most formal, least common); of convenience; postmodern; and orphan (least formal, most common). Orphan marriages are where "baskets of babies (college students) are abandoned at the public libraries' circulation desks." College students have the fundamental right to their institutions' resources and partnerships must be founded on mutual respect.

Thomas Moran (Moline Public Library) questioned the marriage theme by noting that public libraries serve the educational needs of their communities, yet college students are often "skipped over" in favor of adult learners. Public libraries' historical roots are in supporting higher education and librarians should serve whoever comes in the door.—*Rob Morrison, Utah State University*

The future role of libraries

In lieu of a regular program, the Law and Political Science Section celebrated its 20th anniversary with a breakfast sponsored by Congressional Quarterly, Inc. The keynote speaker was Neil Skene, *CQ* editor and publisher. A central theme in his remarks, pep-

pered with humorous asides on Washington politics, was that the era of the information intermediary is not over, and, indeed, that the need is greater than ever for intermediaries who can help make sense of the flood of information inundating the end user. Information companies like Congressional Quarterly, he asserted, will survive and prosper not by flooding the end user with more information, but by presenting information fairly and accurately. He noted that

Over 5,500 librarians requested exhibits-only passes to check out the latest products and services displayed at the ALA Annual Conference in June.

libraries will most likely survive and prosper by following a similar course, and that journalists and librarians share a high calling in this regard.

Skene also made the formal announcement of the Marta Lange/CQ Award, a new $1,000 annual award recognizing distinction in law and political science librarianship.—*Ron Heckart, University of California, Berkeley*

Preserving the record of science and technology

In the Science and Technology Section's program, "Preserving the Record of Science and Technology: A Call to Action," Helen Samuels (MIT) introduced science librarians to "documentation strategies" that focus on a functional analysis of an organization to categorize documents and set priorities and levels of selection and preservation.

Joan Warnow-Bluett (American Institute of Physics) talked about the role of the center in maintaining a catalog of locations and contents of archival collections, collecting oral histories, setting guidelines for selection of archival materials, and matching documents to appropriate institutions.

Samuel Demas (Cornell University) spoke about some of the obstacles to sci/tech preservation including the misconception that scientists are not interested in older materials and

that scientists often refer to older publications in order to replicate studies or for inspiration; that those most often involved in archival activities are from the humanities and often don't have the interest or inclination to work with scientists and their records; fragmentation of the record—documentation of a research project is held by many offices and organizations from the federal granting agency to the principal investigator to the workbench scientist; lack of coherent advocacy among scientists, scientific societies, science librarians, archivists and preservation librarians, and national agencies; and lack of targeted funds. He called upon the library and archival communities to organize around disciplines and build upon the methodologies developed from existing preservation projects.—*Jill Newby, Weber State University*

Librarians adapt to changes in Russian publishing

One speaker at the Slavic and East European Section's program, "Librarians Riding the Bear: Keeping Pace with Russian Publishing," compared the acquisition of Russian materials to crisis management. Nonetheless, all of the program's presenters agreed that the current chaotic situation is preferable to the past, when the publishing industry was stable but stagnant.

June Pachuta Farris (University of Chicago) pointed out that it is difficult for academic publishers in Russia to remain solvent. Academic publications are issued in small tirages and, consequently, orders for these items must be placed quickly.

John Bushnell (Northwestern University and co-owner of Russian Press Service, Inc.) explained that a reason for the scarcity of academic works is that Russian readers are demanding genres—for example, pulp fiction and religious works—which have not been available since the 1920s. In addition, the bookstore system has collapsed and been replaced by wholesalers and street peddlers who have no interest in offering a wide variety of titles and maintaining stock. Still, Bushnell believes the Russian publishing industry is healthy; fewer books are published, but the quality of the material is better.

Yelena Mushtyats (Far Eastern State Technical University in Vladivostok) squelched this optimistic theme, noting that even positive changes can be painful. Mushtyats explained that previously her library was not allowed to collect foreign materials; now these items are not prohibited, they are simply not affordable. The library must rely on gifts to maintain its foreign collection.

Ared Misirliyan (McGill University) prompted discussion by asking how librarians as a group could assist Russian libraries.—*Julie Swann, University of Nebraska-Lincoln*

The human face of change

Concentrating on "people" over "process," the University Libraries Section and College Libraries Section presented a program entitled "But What About Me? The Human Face of Organizational Change," featuring Rebecca Martin (University of Vermont), Kriza Jennings (ARL), Hannelore Rader (Cleveland State University), and Rita Scherrei (UCLA).

In her keynote address, Martin noted that change is a way of life for librarians regardless of their years of experience, and that more is coming than we can anticipate. According to Rosabeth Moss Kanter, we need to respond to change, harness it and create it. Martin counseled "where there are obstacles, build bridges around them." She warned that actions intended to produce understanding and trust often produce just the opposite. Martin advised middle managers to communicate difficult issues up the line, avoid budget games, and be aware that people often do not behave reasonably even when it is in their own best interests. Knowledge workers need a team orientation, interdisciplinary thinking, role complexity, and looser lines of authority. New roles and new demands require new skills, added work, changed expectations, and transformed career paths. You need to develop new skills, be creative, know your strengths and weaknesses, take risks and stretch. As Mario Andretti said, "if you feel everything is under control, you are not going fast enough."

In a lively presentation, Jennings talked about maintaining the commitment to diversity in a downsizing world. Diversity is not just race and ethnicity—the goal is a climate where everyone is welcomed, valued, and respected. If there is a concern for users, diversity can help libraries better serve them. Diversity should not be an "extra," it should be integral. It should be a part of the mission, values, and philosophy of the library, written into the library's goals, expectations, and pursuit of excellence.

Rader offered some practical advice for downsizing in a union environment. In collective bargaining, try to address future needs in the contract (outsourcing is an example) and include some degree of flexibility in the contract. Contract negotiations can be used as an opportunity to educate the players—open communication regarding information and planning is needed. She stressed the need to be humane in implementing change.

Scherrei shared results of a series of 25 interviews she conducted with University of California librarians whose positions had been impacted by organizational change. Most of these librarians were in mid-career, in their forties, were women, and were white. Those who experienced the loss of management or supervisory responsibilities felt disillusioned and expressed decreased loyalty to the institution. Those who had been displaced and moved horizontally from one subject or one specialization to another felt that their past experience had been devalued. Many looked at early retirement and displayed decreasing outside professional activity. Scherrei had this advice for managers: share the overall vision with those to be affected; involve the library director in communication; provide counseling, acknowledge stress; and understand that those affected feel powerless and uncertain. A kinder, more consultative process is needed.—*Sharon Walbridge, Washington State University* ■