

below the noise floor of the analog master. In other words, the chances of losing any part of the intended information-bearing signal during digital-to-analog transfer is extremely remote. On the other hand, during the analog-to-analog transfer process, sonic information is added to the original signal in the form of tape hiss, obscuring potentially information-bearing frequencies. Professor Pohlmann also points out in his book *Principles of Digital Audio* (Indianapolis: Howard W. Sams & Co., 1985, p. 179) that "with analog storage, there is no opportunity for error protection processing: if the recorded signal is disrupted or distorted, then the signal is irrevocably damaged. With digital storage, the nature of binary data lends itself to recovery in the event of damage."

To those who might find these technicalities arcane, consider this example: Imagine making fifty duplicate generations of a source tape—tape one the master for tape two, two for three, and so on—by an analog process. The last tape would of course sound terrible compared to the original tape. Using RDAT, the last tape would be absolutely indistinguishable from the first. The ability of DAT to be cloned adds a measure of security to the APS project. Should it become necessary at some point in the future to duplicate the collection again, no signal will be lost at all.

Of course other sound archives were consulted in the initial stages of this project, including the Library of Congress. In fact, much thought was given to having LC's specialists do the entire job, but this course was reluctantly abandoned for the reasons given in the article. A tour of LC's audio conservation area was particularly informative and helped to identify some of the equipment that would be required to undertake the project.

That RDAT is an unconventional approach to audio conservation is undeniable. In this respect, it is not surprising that this part of the APS project is inconsistent with the recommendations of ARSC (of which we are well aware). However, we are satisfied that the process is reversible, and that the risks have been minimized. We do not agree that because a preservation technique is new and therefore unconventional, it is inappropriate. Much thought and research about the options available convinced us that the risks in adopting RDAT were worth taking.

The APS project was conceived as a medium-range solution that will keep our options open for the future. Most importantly, systematic and positive action has been taken that will facilitate access and stem the decay of the Library's audio collections.—*Martin L. Levitt, American Philosophical Society Library, Philadelphia, PA.* ■■

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## ACRL executive summary

### *Professional development*

The final reporting for the NEH Humanities Workshop Project was prepared and submitted to the National Endowment for the Humanities. The new project, for historically black colleges and universities, moved along with applications from participants coming in at month's end.

### *Enhancing library service capability*

The ACRL office continued to provide advisory services and free distribution of standards.

### *Advocacy and liaison*

Bill Moffett will develop this theme for his presidential year.

A fourth draft of the *Accreditation Manual*, by Pat Sacks and Sara Lou Whildin, has been sent to ALA Publishing.

### *Research and publication*

A special design will mark the issues in the Fiftieth Anniversary year of *College & Research Libraries*, beginning in January. Look for the gold covers, discreetly marked "1939-1989."

Arthuree Wright agreed to chair the Research Committee and is eager to settle on a clearer mission for the Committee by the 1989 Annual Conference in Dallas. At Midwinter, the Committee discussed the work of the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Library Programs in the area of research, Charles Martell's "Research Perspective" editorial in *C&RL*, and possible new directions for themselves.

JoAn Segal visited the *Choice* offices, which have been recently automated. *Choice* will host an awards ceremony in honor of the publication of *Books for College Libraries*, 3d ed., and the automation of their magazine's production. The first tape version of *Books for College Libraries* has been sold.

### *Strategic management directions*

The major activity of the month was preparing the 1990 Operating Plan and Budget. Staff also brainstormed on work reorganization, hoping to improve both the quality of service and worklife at ACRL.—*JoAn S. Segal.* ■■

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