

ACRL explores values in Washington, D.C.

Highlights of ACRL programs at the ALA Annual Conference, Part 1

A CRRL members made it through the sweltering heat of our nation's capital during the ALA's 117th Annual Conference, June 25–July 2, 1998. Total conference attendance was 24,884 members, exhibitors, and guests, including 11,799 paid registrants. (**Ed. note:** *A special thanks to the ACRL members who made this report possible by writing these program summaries. Their response to a request for reporters was so good that, due to space constraints, we will run Part 2 of this report in October.*)

The value of values

W. Lee Hisle, Austin Community College, welcomed an audience of several hundred people to the Grand Hyatt Hotel on Monday afternoon for his ACRL President's Program, "The Value of Values: Changes and Continuities as We Face the New Millennium." Hisle expressed his hope that, taken as a whole, the program would reinforce our commitment to the ideals of our profession and would engender confidence as we practice that profession in the electronic information age.

Next came a 20-minute videotape, "A Question of Values," in which six academic librarians responded to questions posed by Program Chair Katherine Branch, Anne Arundel Community College, about their professional values. James Neal, Johns Hopkins University, recounted an instance of a very difficult clash of values among members of the ALA Executive Board, when the Board debated whether ALA should accept an award from the Hugh Hefner First Amendment Foundation, recognizing ALA's commitment to the free flow of information.

In response to a question posed to interviewees, several of them identified "the

faculty" as natural allies in our efforts to preserve our values, but one of them had a decidedly different view: "The faculty are hopeless as far as I'm concerned; we're never going to get anything out of them." A large laugh followed Lynda Logan's, Prince George's Community College, musing about the hypothetical question of whether she would allow someone to put up in her library a display on the KKK: "I hope I would. I probably would. I probably wouldn't."

"It's my pleasure, of course, to be among book people as well as books." With these words, William H. Gass cast off from the pier and, through his keynote address, carried the audience on a voyage of discovery. An award-winning essayist, critic, and philosopher, Gass is the David May Distinguished University Professor in the Humanities, director of the International Writers Center at Washington University in St. Louis, and in his youth he



No fan of the Internet, Gass observed that "The information highway has no destination," and that "Misinformation Alley" is an apt term for the Internet.

was a sailor and an officer in the U.S. Navy. In lyrical and well-delivered language he shared with us what books (not "information," but the physical book) and libraries had meant and mean to him and other readers. A small sample:

—"A library . . . extends the self; it is pure empowerment."

—"Like most books, *Discoveries* is a *library* book; that is, it depends for its existence on other books, books within reach of one pair of hands and eyes, one mind."

—"The aim of the library is a simple one—to unite writing with its reading. Yes, a simple stream, but a wide one when trying to cross."

—"In a library we are in a mind made of minds."

—"The work of the institution will often take place far from its doors at a kitchen table, . . . amid the clatter of a commuter train, even in a sophomore's distracted head. . . . Who can predict the places where the encounter will occur? The discovery will be made. . . . In the library such epiphanies . . . are the stuff of every day."

—"The book is a great salvation for the lonely person. And it's important to be lonely, especially in adolescence, so you'll learn to read."

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Rare book librarians prepare for the 19th century

In three years the nineteenth century will be the "century before last." Undoubtedly we will develop a new perspective on the period's textual and graphic record as we gain distance from it. This thought inspired the theme of the 39th Annual Preconference of the Rare Books and Manuscripts Section of ACRL, "Getting Ready for the Nineteenth Century: Strategies and Solutions for Rare Book and Special Collections Librarians," which took place June 23–26, 1998, in Washington, D.C.

More than 300 participants gathered to explore aspects of the care and use of published and unpublished materials from the nineteenth century, which present issues and problems different in both nature and magnitude from those associated with earlier books and manuscripts.

Most American libraries acquired the bulk of their earlier items retrospectively, and have since given them special housing and treatment. In contrast, many of the older library collections in this country contain masses of nineteenth-century material that were current at the time of acquisition and have since resided in general collections.

A library faced with such a situation must grapple with issues of identification, retention, and storage. Additional problems result from the vast quantity of surviving material, the introduction of new formats during the period (such as photography), and the physical instability of much nineteenth-

century paper. At the same time, scholarly interest in material culture, in graphic images, and in popular and ephemeral publications is on the upswing. The preconference offered a mix of plenary addresses, seminar sessions, research reports, and workshops designed to expand our understanding of the forces that shaped our existing collections and to share strategies and techniques for their preservation and use.

Sponsors for the preconference included: Antiquarian Booksellers Association of America (ABAA); Center for the Book, Library of Congress; and the Gelman Library.

On June 24 the first plenary session speakers—John Y. Cole, Center for the Book, and Nancy E. Gwinn, Smithsonian Libraries—presented a detailed study of the historical development of the Library of Congress and the Smithsonian Institution Libraries. Cole and Gwinn delivered their remarks as a two-person play in six acts, "National Pride and Prejudice: The Library of Congress and the Smithsonian Institution."

With accompanying slide illustrations, Cole and Gwinn traced the unique, intertwined, and complementary development of these two institutions, as the United States struggled to create, operate, and manage a de facto "national library" system during the nineteenth century.

Both speakers highlighted the important roles played by librarians, members of the

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tion.” and that “Misinformation Alley” is an apt term for the Internet. And he reminded the audience of the oft-overlooked fact that the book itself is a technology.

Our voyage with Gass was followed first by prolonged applause and then by a panel of four librarians, ably moderated by Ree De Donato, undergraduate librarian at Columbia University.

She noted that values unite us as a profession of librarians while distinguishing us as individuals, and she said that one value she holds dear is the ability both to be brought together and to be left apart as we strive to do our work and live our lives. Panelist John

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U.S. Congress, scientists and academicians, and private citizens in the formation and development of our nation's first two government libraries.

On Thursday, June 25, the Mumford Room of the Library of Congress served as the site for a plenary session that explored the crucial issue of preservation of library research materials in their original formats. “Common Cause: Collaborating to Preserve Printed and Primary Source Materials,” with Alice Schreyer, University of Chicago, as moderator included three presentations: Paul Conway, Yale University Library, on “Preserving the 19th Century: Challenges and Possibilities”; Sandria B. Freitag, American Historical Association, on “A Scholar's Reaction: Personal and Professional Priorities”; and Abby Smith, Council on Library and Information Resources (CLIR), on “Setting a National Agenda: A Collaborative Plan.”

Conway outlined the current status of nineteenth-century materials in our library collections and proposed a multi-tiered model for evaluating and determining the preservation status of these materials. Advances in preservation technology and significant experience gained in the handling of nineteenth-century materials allowed Conway to offer the opinion that sufficient time exists to meet this preservation imperative. Freitag and Smith offered perspectives on how to meet this imperative, with a powerful emphasis on the need for information professionals to engage schol-

Ulmschneider, assistant director for Library Systems at North Carolina State University, predicted that in 50 years books will not exist in the form they do now, and he wondered what our values would be when we no longer had to provide access to a collection. The “garbage” on the Web is actually beneficial, he observed, because it is garbage that is free of the constraints of “the power structure in which we work.” He and Gass exchanged friendly ripostes on the relative merits of horses and automobiles, manure and carbon monoxide.

The entire program was videotaped, and the President's Program Planning Commit-

ars in the process. Preliminary steps, including the delineation of means to enhance communication between librarians, scholars, and related professional organizations followed.

The final plenary session on Friday, June 26, included presentations by James Green, Library Company of Philadelphia, on “The Nineteenth Century: Overrated or Under-valued” and James Neal, The Johns Hopkins University Library, “The Future of the Nineteenth Century: Preparing the Research Library for a Renaissance in Cultural and Historical Studies.” Green underscored recent successes and failures of librarians and repositories engaged in the collection and management of significant nineteenth-century collections. Neal offered the perspective of a university librarian, one who must deal with this issue within the larger world of academic research libraries.

As Green related individual and collaborative responses to the challenges posed by large, expensive nineteenth-century collections, Neal summarized the need for rare book librarians and archivists to inform their administrators of the role nineteenth-century materials play in academic research and teaching, and to delineate the key issues and challenges academic libraries must consider as they collect, manage, and house nineteenth-century materials.—*William E. Brown Jr., University of Miami, e-mail: wcbrown@miami.edu; Laura Stalker, Huntington Library, e-mail: lstalker@huntington.org*

tee expects to make "The Value of Values," including the videotape within the videotape, available to ACRL chapters and other groups via interlibrary loan from the ALA library. The committee has long considered this two-hour program as part of a larger process, including the structured forum at last Midwinter's meeting and the several articles written by Hisle and certain committee members for *C&RL News* in recent months.

One values-related question that might be worth addressing in subsequent discussions is the extent to which Gass was correct when he naturally assumed that he was among "book people."—*Richard Hume*

Werking, U.S. Naval Academy, rwerking@nadm.navy.mil

Engineering the future

"Engineering the Future: A New Look at Organizational Thinking and Hyper-learning," the 1998 program cosponsored by the Science and Technology Section and the University Libraries Section of ACRL, was attended by over 400 people. It focused on adapting new organizational theories that center on constant learning and self-organization to current practices in higher education and academic libraries.

The program featured Peter Denning, director, Center for the New Engineer (CNE) at

News from the University Libraries Section

Ed. note: For a report on the ULS/STS program, please see above.

Executive committee

The University Library Section (ULS) Executive Committee, chaired by Lori Goetsch, met twice during Annual Conference. The 1999 Annual Conference Program Committee for ULS reported on plans for New Orleans. The committee is putting together an exciting program entitled "Bottomline Leadership: Communicating Your Resource Needs for Successful Services," cosponsored by the ACRL Instruction Section.

The Executive Committee approved the Organization/Bylaws Committee's recommendation to form an Ad Hoc Membership Committee. This ad hoc committee will examine the impact of the new ALA/ACRL fee structures on ULS membership, propose methods for recruiting and maintaining ULS members, and determine whether a permanent ULS membership committee should be instituted.

The ULS Communications Committee is working on a Web page that will be available on ALA's ACRL Sections site. This page will have current information on ULS committees, programs, and how one can get involved in ULS.

Discussion group reports

The Librarians in Higher Education and Campus Administration Discussion

Group is planning a discussion for the Midwinter Conference in Philadelphia on public outreach and the social responsibility libraries have towards their communities, while the Current Topics Discussion Group plans to discuss "Education vs. Training: Assessing Student Learning Outcomes." Both discussion groups welcome all librarians who are interested in these topics to attend their meetings this Midwinter.

The ACRL/ULS Public Service Directors at Large Research Libraries Discussion Group, chaired by Betsy Wilson, met to discuss the latest developments at ARL, assessment initiatives, and organizing for Web support. Mary Jackson of ARL updated the group on the activities of Scholarly Publishing & Academic Resources Coalition (SPARC), a project that encourages the development of competition in the scholarly publishing marketplace. (**Ed. note:** for more information about SPARC, see page 565.) She also summarized the new ARL publication *Measuring the Performance of Interlibrary Loan Operations in North American Research and College Libraries*.

The group then discussed various assessment initiatives that have been undertaken at the University of Iowa (UI), University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (UIUC), and the University of Washington (UW). Assessment initiatives are valuable for determining which information services

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George Mason University; Paula Kaufman, dean of Libraries at the University of Tennessee; and Kenneth Frazier, director of the University of Wisconsin Libraries.

Kaufman's introduction included mention of management theories, such as quality circles, TQM, re-engineering, etc. Theorists such as Margaret Wheatley and Myron Kellner-Rogers are taking the findings of scientists who now look at organizations as living organisms with values-based management; values being defined as enduring beliefs that affect actions. Emphasis is shifted from task-driven management to management defined by commonly shared ethical

values. They have also observed that living systems learn constantly and are self-organizing; that life is attracted to order, but uses chaos to get there; and that because we are living systems, most people are intelligent, creative, adaptive, and self-organizing.

Denning's research and scholarship at CNE recognizes the implications of these findings and is using their premises to transform organizational structures within universities and particularly engineering programs.

Denning asserts that the new market and commercial forces are profoundly affecting the university educational system. These

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and resources library users are using and gauging library users' understanding of and ease with library services and resources. The libraries used various methods to obtain their data, such as Web questionnaires at UTUC, focus groups and usability testing at UW, and surveys sent to a random portion of the student population at the UI.

Finally, the group considered various solutions for supporting Web services in their libraries. While many schools, such as Rutgers, have decided to advertise for Web masters/systems programmers to design and maintain library Web sites, others such as NYU, have brought in professional design teams to assist with their sites. Indiana University's Pat Steele stressed that Web support demands a professional long-term approach.—*Anne Garrison, Georgia Institute of Technology, anne.garrison@ibid.library.gatech.edu*

The Undergraduate Librarians Discussion Group focused on library services to undergraduate students in research universities that have no separate undergraduate library.

The discussion began with descriptions of recent initiatives in service to undergraduates at the University of Maryland (UM) and the University of Toronto (UT). Speakers were Charles Lowry, dean of libraries from (UM), librarians Sue Baughman, Diane Harvey, and Desider Viko, and Rea Devakos made the presentations for UT.

The libraries at UM merged the information and reference services of the McKeldin and Hornbake Libraries at the McKeldin Library. At the same time the libraries initiated a new model, Service Plus. Service Plus provides welcoming, teaching services to library users, especially new users, and at all service points in the libraries.

A report on the library's study of undergraduate users' needs, "Undergraduate Library Services in the 21st Century," as well as the "Service Task Force Report and Recommendations" and the "Libraries Strategic Plan," are available at <http://www.lib.umd.edu/UMCP/PUB/Publications.html>.

At UT, as at UM, a number of factors led to a reorganization of services for undergraduate students. At UT these included campus geography and budget pressures. The library's report on undergraduate services is available at http://utl1.library.utoronto.ca/www/undergrad_services/report/index.htm.

The presentations sparked a discussion that ranged from service philosophy to budget issues and implications to some of the details of day-to-day operations.

The meeting concluded with the election of Mark Watson, of Southern Illinois University, as chair of the discussion group for 1999–2000. He succeeds David Taylor of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.—*Linda K. TerHaar, University of Michigan, terhaar@umich.edu*



Relaxing at the Rare Books & Manuscripts Section Preconference are: (l to r) Laura Stalker, Mary Ellen Davis, Gary Menges, and Pat Bozeman.

forces include employers' expectations regarding job competence and students' demands that they be treated as customers, as well as the inevitable political forces affecting funding and support.

In particular, Denning stressed the impact of the development of "hyper-learning" as represented by the use of the Internet in distance education. Gestated on the Internet, hyper-learning involves a nonlinear, decentralized system in which the path one takes to attain knowledge and the time it takes one to achieve it will vary. By contrast, the traditional classroom model of teaching is linear and centralized, occurring within a fixed path and a fixed time period, yet entailing variable outcomes in the form of grades. Together these forces mandate structural

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Engineering the Future: A New Look at Organizational Thinking and Hyper-Learning (ACRL University Library Section, Science & Technology Section). Order no. ALA 814

Research 2001: Learned Societies Facilitating Information Awareness and Dissemination in Sociology and Anthropology (ACRL Anthropology & Sociology Section). Order no. ALA 830

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Books and Manuscripts Section, Electronic Text Centers Discussion Group. Order no. ALA 836

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A World in Motion: Refugees and Resources (ACRL Asian, African & Middle Eastern Section, ACRL Women's Studies Section, International Relations Committee). Order no. ALA 853

Diversity and Demographics: Are We Ready for the 21st Century? (ACRL Racial & Ethnic Diversity). Order no. ALA 854

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The Value of Values: Changes and Continuities as We Face the New Millennium (ACRL President's Program). Order no. ALA 862

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changes in the curriculum and in the ways we teach and learn.

Denning's work concentrates on redefining engineering curricula, but it also has relevance for universities and libraries as a whole. He feels that in the past engineers have been trained to be primarily problem solvers. In the future, engineers will need to do more than solve problems to satisfy the new forces at work. For example, they will need to be good listeners and effective facilitators of their clients' projects.

Denning's solution to this situation is called Sense 21, which he defines as "a new engineering common sense for the 21st century." In order to discover and adjust to the new common sense, Denning believes we must first discuss how our current common sense is constituted. This means evaluating shared sets of beliefs, values, suppositions, myths, and habits that are usually taken for granted.

In teaching his experimental classes at CNE, Denning seeks to put the vision and values of new organizational theories into practice by pursuing what he terms a "hermeneutical pragmatics." One aspect of this approach involves asking his students to attempt an "ontological mapping" of their lives. Ontological mapping is the ability to map out one's domain of action by his or her background assumptions; or, more simply, to know how one comprehends the world. Since this is a complicated multileveled procedure, Denning's students must go through several skill levels as they dissect and define their ontological maps. Among other skills, they must learn to identify and control their individual identities by managing the human tendency towards storytelling and (auto)biography. Once this is achieved, they can move to managing and mobilizing others.

Those who can attain the highest hermeneutic skill levels, Denning notes, gain the ability to centralize practices that were formerly anomalous. Denning points to the Internet as a prime example of an arena that those skilled in hermeneutical pragmatics have managed to normalize.

Ken Frazier, director of libraries at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and Paula Kaufman followed Denning's talk with some observations on how his work and theories can be applied to academic libraries, since the emphasis is on the joy of learning and solu-

tions to seemingly intractable problems. Working together on trust and commitment to collaboration are valued by librarians. In an environment that may not be favorable for libraries, opportunities are there to apply new organizational practices, which will require shifts in librarians' attitudes. Accountability must be to a shared organizational mission.

Frazier commented that while many people fear the influence of market forces on academia, he sees reason to be optimistic. He avows that libraries are accepting the challenge issued by market forces by increasingly embracing collaborative projects. An example is the Scholarly Publishing & Academic Resources Coalition (SPARC), a partnership project of the Association of Research Libraries (ARL) and other educational and research organizations whose mission is to create a more competitive marketplace for research information.

Kaufman also senses that libraries are well placed to embrace the challenges of values-based organizational thinking. She points to the shifting interpretations of once conventional wisdom with regard to organizational leadership and planning. Where before we tended to lead by declaration, she noted, we



Photo credit: Mary Ellen Davis

Michigan was well represented at ACRL meetings. Here are (left to right) Elaine Didier, Barbara MacAdam, and Patricia Breivik.

now tend to lead by example. And where before we would chose five to six goals to pursue, today we recognize that goals are constantly shifting and that we must constantly plan and evaluate our goals.—*Anne Garrison, Georgia Institute of Technology, anne.garrison@ibid.library.gatech.edu and Lois M. Pausch, University of Illinois, l-pausch@uiuc.edu* ■

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