1998

And They Were There - Reports of Meetings

Julia Gelfand
University of California, Irvine, jgelfand@orion.oac.uci.edu

Follow this and additional works at: http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/atg
Part of the Library and Information Science Commons

Recommended Citation
Gelfand, Julia (1998) "And They Were There - Reports of Meetings," Against the Grain: Vol. 10: Iss. 5, Article 35. 
DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.7771/2380-176X.3014

This document has been made available through Purdue e-Pubs, a service of the Purdue University Libraries. Please contact epubs@purdue.edu for additional information.
The Oklahoma Conference, 1998, March 5-6, 1998
Report by Bruce Neville (Collection Development Coordinator for Science and Engineering, University of New Mexico)

The "Oktober Conference" was held March 5 and 6, 1998, in — not surprisingly — Oklahoma City. This year's theme was "Challenges of Collection Development: Digital Information, Internet, and Print Materials." For those unfamiliar with the conference — as I was — it is presented by the University of Oklahoma Libraries and the University of Oklahoma Foundation. The conference centers on some aspect of collection development. There is a single session Thursday afternoon and another Friday morning. Time is set aside for extensive discussion, some of which was quite animated. The conference is a small one (82 participants this year), drawn mostly from surrounding states, but including librarians from all parts of the United States and Canada.

The conference began Thursday afternoon with a welcome from the Conference Chair and very able Moderator, Sul Lee, Dean of the University of Oklahoma Libraries. In "Chaos Breeds Life," James Neal, Director of the Milton S. Eisenhower Library, Johns Hopkins University, reviewed a few of his fifty "revolutions" occurring in our world and their impact on librarians. The Virtual Librarian must become the Virtuoso Librarian, as was the Virtuous Librarian. Joan Giesecke, Dean of the University Libraries, University of Nebraska, outlined the steps of "Scenario Planning" and some of the experiences that her library went through in an episode of scenario planning. Rather than working toward a preferred future, scenario planning looks at possible futures, how to deal with them, and how to identify the direction the future is taking as it happens. In his very literary presentation, "Making the Wild Wind Visible," Dennis Dillon, Head of Collections and Information Resources, University of Texas at Austin, discussed the respective values of the World Wide Web and of traditional books. Both have their strengths, and both will be with us for a long time. Librarians, he says, must hold to core principles and must redefine their roles and add value, lest they be swept aside by the wild winds of change. Dillon even managed to quote Machiavelli; I don't remember Machiavelli being recommended in library school, but perhaps it should have been. Finally, Kathleen Born, Vice President and Director, Academic Division, EBSCO Information Services, spoke in "The Role of the Aggregator in the Emerging Electronic Environment" on the role that serials vendors can play in the growing world of electronic serials. By providing a common gateway and by continuing to provide subscription and other services, serials agents can relieve some of the burden from librarians, publishers, and patrons.

Ken Frazier led off Friday morning with a spirited presentation on "Professional Ethics and Collection Development: Dealing (or Not Dealing) With Unprincipled Commercial Journal Publishers." After reminding us of the meaning of "professional," he detailed three instances of questionable behavior by commercial publishers. Two famous cases had already undergone extensive litigation. The third case, which he called "license to kill," involved the growing trend in electronic licenses to curtail interlibrary loan and other aspects of fair use. In "Building the Global Collection — World Class Collection Development," Mary Case, Director of the Office of Scholarly Communication, Association of Research Libraries, continued on page 82


A compilation of reviews and bibliographic data for some 3,000 recent titles chosen for CHOICE's prestigious "Outstanding Academic Books" award. Essential for collection development at the undergraduate level, and useful for any research collection.


Ed. by Rebecca A. Bartlett. $80 ($68 ACRL members) ISBN: 0-8389-7929-7 June 1998 For fastest service, call toll-free (800) 545-2433, press 7. Or fax (312) 836-9958. Or mail order to ACRL Attn: Hugh Thompson 50 E. Huron St. Chicago, IL 60611.

CHOICE is a publication of the Association of College & Research Libraries, a division of the American Library Association.

<http://www.against-the-grain.com> 81
Libraries, discussed the increasing globalization of research and the difficulty of any library to provide access to these materials for its patrons. She discussed the AAU/ARL Global Resources project, which aims to distribute the burden of building the global library among its many members and the need to maintain the commitment in difficult budgetary times. On a similar theme, Milton Wolf, Vice President for Collection Development Programs, Center for Research Libraries, called for true cooperative collection development and increased resource sharing. Attempts by all libraries to provide the basic core are resulting in the "McLibrary," and no one has resources for the esoteric material. At the same time, control of information production has shifted from the producers in science and government to commercial publishers, resulting in much more "noise" in the information universe. Librarians must return to their original roles as information evaluators. In the final paper of the conference, Kit Kennedy, Director of Academic Sales for Blackwell's Information Services, spoke on "Digital Information and the Subscription Agent as Information Coach." Ms. Kennedy reinforced Kathleen Born's comments of the previous afternoon on the role of subscription agents in the digital age and gave a tantalizing glimpse of Blackwell's product.

For me, the take-home message was that we are in a period of rapid and dramatic change, which is a period both of tremendous uncertainty and of tremendous opportunity. None of us can predict what the "library" will be like in just a few years, but it will be unlike anything we have seen so far. While many things will change, the core "values" of librarianship remain the same, whatever the medium. Unlike many Cossard's heard today, the participants felt that the changes would invigorate and strengthen the library profession.

SLA 98 — 89th Special Libraries Association Conference, Indianapolis, June 6-11, 1998
Report by Donna E. Cromer (Coordinator of Reference Services, U of New Mexico) <dcromer@unm.edu>

The Special Libraries Association (SLA) held its 89th annual conference this year in "indy" (I discovered that even the locals are a bit loath to spell out the name completely and that it's perfectly acceptable to use the short form), a surprisingly delightful host city. Once again, the conference was a great success.

The conference is always a mix of half- and full-day Continuing Education (CE) courses, Association business, the Exhibits Hall, and the main course, the many Division-sponsored sessions presented on a wide range of topics sure to be of interest to information professionals.

Each conference typically begins and ends with many CE courses, such as: Serving Your Web Visitors (and Yourself!) More有效地: A Short Course in Web Demographic Measurement Techniques; Business is News: A Primer and Evaluation of Business Resources Available to News Librarians; and Exceptional Information Delivery: Using the TQM/QM/SLA Competencies Connection.

A highlight of any annual conference is the Exhibits Hall, with its special strengths in science and technology and business-related resources. This year, during the Ribbon Cutting Ceremony we were highly entertained by the Gordon Pipers, a local group presenting Scottish music and dance.

The main Keynote Address was given by Stanley Davis, a noted author and business consultant. The talk focused on the fast pace of technological change as companies race toward the year 2000 and how businesses must adopt lifelong learning processes to keep up. The key to increasing a business' value is by making it knowledge-based, no matter what the business is. A plus was that he managed to discuss libraries and information professionals in a thoughtful manner (how many of you have heard a Keynote address by a management or business guru whose primary take on libraries was warm fuzzy memories of going to the public library when they were children, but had obviously not set foot in one in years?).