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And They Were There

Reports of Meetings

Column Editors: **Sever Bordeianu** (U. of New Mexico)
and **Julia Gelfand** (UC, Irvine)

Online/CD-ROM Conference & Exposition '94

Sponsored by Online Database and
CD-Rom Professional
Hyatt Regency, San Francisco,
October 24-26, 1994

Report by **Kate Luger** and
Barbara Rosen
(University of New Mexico)

How can a Conference miss when it is held in San Francisco in late October during a warm and sunny week? Attendance hit a record 2,612 people.

The mix of information industry professionals, academic librarians and vendors brings a special flavor to the Online Conferences. One panel member noted that it was hard to sum up the week as we all attended different conferences. She was right but some basic themes did run throughout the sessions. Is there still a future for both online databases and CD-ROMs? Will print information survive? What new technological developments will again change all that we now know? Will "information professionals" become obsolete? And of course, has the Internet changed everything?

The Conference was organized to have morning general sessions on Monday and Tuesday with multiple breakout meetings in the afternoons. The final day, Wednesday featured morning Listserv Roundtable discussion groups followed by two general sessions in the early afternoon. The Exhibit Hall was crowded at all times and the Internet Demo Room was always busy with live demos of new tools and sites.

William Marovitz, president of Churchill Livingstone and former CEO of **BRS, Inc.**, gave the keynote address aptly entitled, "Looking into the Future: The New Information Equation." Marovitz's information equation dwelt with how all of the above mentioned themes can come together. He predicted that the developments in new multimedia technology will have a vast impact on the information business. He stated that CD-ROMs will reemerge as new

developments will enhance this medium's usefulness for storage. Marovitz also stressed that the future would see a convergence of telecommunications, cellular, satellite and cable in relaying information through PCs. Greatly improved computer technology is still needed to really achieve many of the possibilities of the Information Highway.

Following the keynote speech was the eagerly awaited session, Major Industry Announcements. Demos of new products and new technical features were enthusiastically received and the new information served as discussion points during many of the subsequent conference sessions.

The Breakout Sessions focused on Multimedia, Online searching, Networking, CD-Recordable and above all, the Internet. Natural language searching, using the Internet in Libraries, whether the Internet needs to be taught, how should it be taught? and how do you find what you need on the Internet, were all topics that drew large numbers of participants. It was apparent that most attendants were eager to learn about new technology and new techniques. Good information was exchanged on what works and doesn't at the smaller sessions. **Peter Jasco's** always informative session on CD-ROMs again reminded people that products do not always perform as advertised. A great advantage to the Online Conference is the easy accessibility of the vendors. Librarians and other Information professionals were repeatedly reminded that this was the perfect opportunity for them to tell vendors what products were needed and what changes would be advantageous.

The Hot Topics general session on Tuesday continued the theme of new technology and change. **Howard McQueen's** talk, Networking: From LANS To the Internet, dealt with the complex and exciting choices that businesses and libraries have in connecting their information systems. Networks, LANS and WANS were frequently heard words all during the Conference. People

wanted to know what others were doing with Networks and how to learn more about LANS. **Carol Tenopir's**, Online in 1994: Tradition, Developments, and New Choices, was an excellent discussion of the large number of possibilities that face online searchers today. She outlined the complexity of systems, and client or patron requirements in the Online world and suggested approaches to dealing in an undefined environment.

Online/CD-ROM is not a Conference to leave early. The last two general sessions drew large crowds and were worth staying for. **Robert C. Berring**, Professor and Law Librarian, UC Berkeley, discussed The Library's Role in the Information Infrastructure. Berring outlined the traditional roles librarians have played in the information world and showed how that world has radically changed. Librarians must move from gatekeepers who "control and protect" information to creative "agents who educate and distribute" all the new forms of information technology. If librarians cannot make the shift to be flexible, noncontrolling "agents" in the new information world then they will be left to the side. Following this excellent talk, **Barbara Quint's** Wrap Session, continued to hit at the theme of change or move over. Barbara's sessions are always awaited with enthusiasm as she cajoles and encourages Conference attendees to demand good service, good quality products and to understand when the ground rules have changed. Quint then announced her "scoop." **DataTimes** will introduce a dramatic change in pricing, very low monthly flat fees for searching in early 1995. Online/CD-ROM '94 ended on an exciting note as everyone wondered if the entire pricing structure of all the vendors would have to change and how all of this would affect the future of the online and CD-ROM information world.

More detailed information is available from any of the people at the Con-

ference. All Conference attendees will receive a CD-ROM of key speeches, sessions and speakers' notes.

**The Upside of Downsizing:
Using BI to Cope**
Santa Barbara, California,
March 24-25, 1994

Report by **Christina E. Carter**
(Zimmerman Library,
U. of New Mexico)

Nearly 150 academic librarians and other information professionals from throughout the United States gathered in this beautiful coastal city to hear about the state of library instruction in the midst of decreased funds and increased patron demand on library resources and services. The one-and-a-half day conference was sponsored by the University of California, Santa Barbara and co-chaired by **Cheryl LaGuardia** and **Janet Martorana** of UCSB.

The current state of academic library funding was outlined by keynote speaker, **Carla Stoffle**, Dean of the University of Arizona Libraries. Dean Stoffle is the 1992 ACRL Academic/Research Librarian of the Year, recipient of the 1991 Miriam Dudley Bibliographic Instruction Librarian of the Year Award, and past-President of ACRL. Stoffle opened by stating that changes often translate into less staff to carry on the mission of the academic library — especially its instructional mission. With increasing technology, Stoffle stated, there will be even more of an emphasis on instruction. Yet libraries, Stoffle emphasized, are not always equipped to deal with such demands and are often in fact "dysfunctional": organized for the convenience of library personnel, not patrons. The lean times in which we find ourselves immersed can be viewed as an opportunity for a "radical restructuring" of library services and day-to-day contact with patrons. Stoffle offered these suggestions for improvement: (1) reduce hierarchy in libraries by creating teams to empower the front line to meet the ever-changing information demands of our clienteles; (2) move from a collection-centered approach to a customer-centered one; (3) and move more library staff from "behind" the front lines into public contact positions. Stoffle said that it has often been instruction librarians who have led the way in pointing out

shortcomings in the ways in which libraries and information are organized; it was instruction librarians, for example, who first pointed out the inadequacy of subject headings concerning diverse populations. Stoffle urged attendees to think in terms of "connection development" — focusing on reaching out to, working with, and understanding our patrons — rather than collection development. She ended her address by reminding the audience that economic adversity can be viewed as advantageous in terms of implementing difficult change; difficult choices are often supported by library administrations in lean times. This is one "upside of downsizing."

The University Librarian at UCSB (sitting in for **Gerald Lowell**, University Librarian at UC San Diego, who could not attend), **Joanne Euster** (University Librarian at UC Irvine), and **Gloria Werner** (University Librarian at UCLA) — all three in turn picked up on Stoffle's theme of "connection development" by emphasizing different partnerships in the philosophy of library instruction — a more self-sufficient user: partnerships between librarians and teaching faculty, librarians and teaching assistants, libraries and computer centers, and among all library staff.

Next, **Janice Simmons-Welburn** (University of Iowa) presented a paper on library learning in the "post-bibliographic instruction" era, where the emphasis is on the pragmatic concerns of users and where there are simultaneously and increasingly diverse styles of learning to deal with. At the University of Iowa, "Library Navigator," a hypercard program that provides basic information about the library, and "Library Explorer," another hypercard tool designed as a book with chapters on library research are two CAI tools that enhance reference and instructional services. Simmons-Welburn stated that the populations of remote users in our libraries will become larger and will increasingly demand remote instruction. Following Simmons-Welburn, information broker **Barbara Quint**, who is a columnist for the *Wilson Library Bulletin*, did a BI "reality check." Taking the side of the user, she said that patrons have "more task than time and more task than talent" to worry overmuch about how they get their information. We shouldn't waste the patrons' time with needless instruction. BI, she said, should really develop into "information instruction" or "II," where the

emphasis is on the teaching of retrieving, transferring, and manipulating information in electronic formats. Instruction librarians should teach automation in the library as a prime example of our increasingly automated environment.

The first day's breakout sessions included presentations and discussions on improving signage, the Ohio Gateway, teaching instructors how to teach library skills, and helping diverse users become information literate. This conference goer attended the session on the Ohio Gateway. **Fred Roecker**, User Education Librarian at Ohio State University, discussed this Macintosh-based system which helps the user identify, locate, and critically evaluate library resources and is available from 79 PC's at Ohio State. Remote access to the Gateway will become available sometime this year and a version is being developed which can be easily customized to any library collection.

In the evening, poster sessions were presented on the topics of learning to teach library skills, multicultural users and BI, teaching chemistry information to non-science majors, conducting BI for faculty, and orienting library guides to specific course assignments.

The following morning's breakout sessions covered teaching future librarians to teach, BI and collaborative learning, teaching the Internet within traditional library orientation programs, the Peer Information Counseling program at the University of Michigan, and the impact of CD-ROMs on BI. Speakers in these sessions again emphasized "connection development" by stressing the importance of partnerships between librarians and students and among students themselves in learning about library resources.

The important themes of the conference were: (1) BI is really now II or information instruction; (2) more technical services staff should be brought into public services; (3) there should be much more collaboration with other units on campus in doing library instruction; (4) we should take the time to measure outcomes of our instructional efforts; and (5) we should view the academic library as a "learning organization" — one that adapts and changes continually, to actively teach and to meet the information needs of its users.

Among the conference attendees, there was unanimous agreement that there should be regular "BI summits"

such as this gathering provided. Conference organizers are assessing when and where the next such event would occur. In the meantime, they are busily compiling the proceedings of the 1994 "Upside of Downsizing" conference, which will be published by **Neal-Schuman Publishers** this year.

Double Your Pleasure — LOEX East and West

Report by Linda St. Clair
(U. of New Mexico,
Zimmerman Library,
Instruction Coordinator)

Two conferences on library instruction were offered in 1994: **LOEX in Ypsilanti**, Michigan and **LOEX of the West** in Salem, Oregon. The two LOEX conferences were more similar than different. In fact to use the name LOEX of the West, organizers of the Northwest conference contacted **Linda Shirato** at the LOEX Clearinghouse in Ypsilanti and requested permission to name this conference LOEX of the West. Both of the LOEX conferences were filled to capacity. Both focused on teaching the Internet and improving instructional strategies. The trends of change in libraries and the availability of opportunities were addressed in both keynote addresses and by individual presenters. LOEX, as usual, plans to publish its proceedings. Organizers of LOEX of the West were discussing publishing the proceedings. Only the locale and the players were different.

Speakers were playing to a "packed house" again at the 1994 LOEX conference held in Ypsilanti, Michigan, May 12th and 13th! Over 180 enthusiastic participants met to listen and discuss current challenges, issues, and trends in library instruction on the theme of "Reference and BI: How Much Help and How?"

James Rettig, Associate Dean of University Libraries for Reference and Information Services, College of William and Mary, delivered the keynote address entitled "The Convergence of the Twain, or Titanic Collision?" Rettig, on reference and bibliographic instruction, stated that the split between the two is exacerbated by vague and imprecise definitions that promote misinterpretation of each function. Rettig posed that service, not bibliographic instruction, should be the hallmark of libraries. However at this time, bibliographic instruction is nec-

essary as a remediation measure because library systems are not easy to use.

The dinner speaker was **Dan Ream**, Head of Instruction and Outreach Services, Virginia Commonwealth University Library. His talk entitled, "Scratch That Glitch; Or, the Fine Art of Glitch Management", was a humorous look at "what to do when the computer fails." Ream's four commandments are: (1) always have a "Plan B"; (2) know equipment before it's too late; (3) know technicians on a first-name basis; and (4) prepare your mind.

Cheryl LaGuardia, Assistant Head of Reference for Library Instruction/Computerized Information Services Coordinator from the University of California at Santa Barbara, described her experience re-designing credit courses in "Regenerating a Library Instruction Program: One Survivor's Experience (Or, Broken Field Running at Twilight)".

LOEX of the West was as informative and exciting! Held in Salem, Oregon, at Willamette University, June 9th through 11th, the conference was entitled "Cultivating the Electronic Landscape: Teaching & Learning in a Climate of Constant Change". One hundred thirty nine dedicated and friendly instruction librarians from 20 different states and Canada attended. Addressing a "full house," **Betsy Wilson**, Associate Director of Libraries, University of Washington, opened the conference with a keynote entitled "Glacier or Avalanche: Shifts in the Electronic, Educational and Library Landscape". Because of the shifting landscape of librarianship, Wilson encourages librarians to look at the present landscape differently.

Amid the changes in library clientele, technology, social framework, educational forces, economic realities, Wilson sees that opportunities abound. Basic to the new landscape, librarians need to understand the changing clientele with which we work; develop methods for on-going assessment and feedback; encourage and participate in experimentation to transform access, ways of learning, and resources; use technology to foster the transformation; and form alliances between computing centers, academic departments, student services, development officers, university administrators, and librarians. By changing attitudes, people may learn "to fall in love with change."

A new vision of the library, the collaboratory, is on the horizon. The collaboratory will support an educational

agenda of critical thinking, improved teaching methods, collaborative learning, and new learning communities. Librarians can design libraries to promote self-sufficiency in clientele by improving signage and use of space, promoting methods for self-orientation, and developing systems that break down barriers instead of creating them. In closing Wilson emphasizes the importance of keeping in touch with our landscape.

Saturday morning was devoted to a workshop conducted by **Mary Ellen Litzinger** of Penn State University Libraries, and **Randall Hensley** of University of Hawaii at Manoa, on "Designing Instruction on the Electronic Frontier: Learning Styles, Instructional Design, and Electronic Information Access Systems." Automation has changed how people think about information as well as fostered changes in instructional strategies. Because of these changes and the need to reach a diverse clientele, an understanding of learning styles is important.

Two general areas dominated the presentations at LOEX of the West: teaching electronic resources and improving methods of instruction using technology. The first on teaching the Internet included sessions on teaching faculty, forming peer support groups, promoting critical thinking in using and teaching the Net, and a session on the Net as being promoted as something it isn't. The other area focused on the impact of the new technological environment on training and teaching. Sessions focused on working with reluctant users, influence of electronic instruction locations on teaching, using television as a means of instruction, demonstrations of multimedia teaching resources, coping with multiple electronic software packages, teaching information technologies to working adults, and a demonstration of the Ohio Gateway project. All in all, there were 12 breakout sessions available at LOEX of the West.

These were two well-organized conferences with exciting and practical strategies for instruction librarians. Opportunities were plentiful to talk over issues and ideas with new acquaintances and old friends. We, instruction librarians are looking forward to LOEX 1995 focusing on methods of teaching and learning. LOEX 1994 will be held in Denton, Texas. The next LOEX of the West is scheduled in two years. We will be there. ☞