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And They Were There / Meeting Reports

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And They Were There

Reports of Meetings

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

The New Latin American and Caribbean Literature: SALALM XXXIX Annual Conference

Report by Claire-Lise Benaud
(University of New Mexico)

The topic of this year's Seminar on the Acquisition of Latin American Library Materials (SALALM) annual conference was "Modernity and Tradition: Development of the New Latin American and Caribbean Literature between 1956 and 1994." The conference was hosted by **Brigham Young University** and took place in Salt Lake City, Utah, May 28-June 2.

Five sessions were devoted to Latin American and Caribbean literature: 1) recent trends in Latin American poetry and drama, 1970-1994, where speaker **Merlin Forster** (Brigham Young University) listed several Latin American poets and dramatists of particular importance in the "post-boom" period. He felt that this period could be characterized by the search for a specifically Latin American —rather than European— modernity, and by the increase in publication by women writers, a group restricted to very small numbers before 1970; 2) recent trends in the Latin American novel, 1970-1994, where speaker **Ray Williams** (University of Colorado) discussed the "boom" authors, such as **Garcia Marquez**, **Vargas Llosa**, **Carlos Fuentes**, etc., women writers, and authors belonging to racial and other minorities who are creating distinctive literary styles; 3) three decades of gay literature in Mexico, Argentina, and Brazil, which provided insights into often-ignored trends in Latin American literary production; 4) themes in Mexican literature which emphasized women writers and children's literature; and, 5) themes in Latin American literature which dealt with **Death in Doce Cuentos Peregrinos** by **Garcia Marquez**, and with the representations of the prostitute in Latin American narrative.

The Conference also offered sessions on broader issues: Latin American materials microfilming, trends in Latin American publishing, the role of journal publications, collection analysis for Latin American literature, cataloging Latin American literature, Latin American newspapers, the USIA/ALA Library Program, Latin American studies and collections in Canada, and documenting Latin American culture at three southern depositories (Tulane, the University of Texas, and the University of Miami). Two panels discussed the issue of access vs. ownership for Latin American materials. The panelists elaborated on the access vs. ownership debate from four different perspectives: **Stella Bentley** (University of California, Santa Barbara) presented the theoretical framework; **Terry Peet** (Library of Congress) emphasized the national perspective; **David Block** (Cornell) focused on large libraries; and **Molly Molloy** (New Mexico State University) represented smaller and medium-sized libraries.

SALALM's attendees had the opportunity to visit the **Family History Library** —and to enjoy the Mormon Tabernacle Choir— in Salt Lake City. In 1894, members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints founded the Genealogical Society of Utah and opened a library, now known as the Family History Library. This library houses the world's largest collection of records of deceased people who have lived during the past 400 years. SALALM's Family History panel focused on the Latin American collection of the Family History Library, microfilm records of birth, baptism,

marriage, and death certificates. The panel highlighted the use of the records for the purposes of the church — to baptize ancestors by proxy — as well as scholarly uses of the collection — historians collect valuable information about migration, epidemics, famine, intermarriages, etc.

As usual, librarians had a chance to meet with Latin American book dealers, to visit universities (Brigham Young and the University of Utah), and to exchange views and information with colleagues at other US and Latin American libraries.

SSP Meets in San Francisco

Report by Sever Bordeianu
(U. of New Mexico)

The 16th annual meeting of the **Society for Scholarly Publishing** took place in San Francisco, June 8-10, 1994. The theme of the conference was "Reshaping the Information Marketplace: New Paradigms, New Technologies." Indeed, the proliferation of electronic information formats, with predictions that by the end of the century, 98% of all information will be available electronically, are forcing information producers, providers, and users to look carefully at this medium, which despite its pervasiveness, still contains many unknowns. Issues ranged from technical standards to legal aspects, and ultimately to the more mundane problems of financial expenditures.

The keynote speaker was professor **Gregory J. E. Rawlins**, from Indiana University, Bloomington, who addressed the topic "Technology's Impact on the Publishing Industry Over the Next Ten Years." In no uncertain terms, professor Rawlins informed the audience that, just as in revolutions aristocrats will lose their heads and the peasants will win, so in the publishing industry, small publishers, who are more easily able to adopt the new technologies, will make money, the implication being that many of the major publishers will go out of business. Rawlins proceeded to analyze the costs associated with current publishing practices and concluded that electronic publishing will dispense with warehousing and transportation costs. However, protecting the product from illegal copying becomes a major issue in electronic publishing because copying is so easy in this medium. Rawlins presented the idea of "a buck a book," to support his theory that if the product is made available cheaply enough, people will not bother stealing it. He proposed a model based on the one currently available for cable television, where people would pay a monthly subscription fee, and then be able to download books for a very small fee. Based on the assumption that if the Internet keeps doubling every 14 months and by the year 2000 over one billion people will be connected to the Internet, he concluded that traditional publishers will be out of business if they don't go electronic.

In contrast, **Ted Nelson**, owner of "Project Xanadu" who spoke about "The Future of Scholarly Publishing," took the opposite view. Nelson envisions an information universe in which each discrete piece of information is tagged and interconnected. The tagging achieves two purposes: each piece of information can be retrieved through hypertext links from anywhere on the Internet, and as a

piece of information is retrieved, the user gets charged for using that information. It is obvious that common practice has to find a middle road but these two extreme points of view highlight the dilemma in which publishers find themselves vis a vis electronic information.

In addition to these major addresses, four groupings of meetings, each running four concurrent sessions, took place during the two days. The topics covered the following aspects of electronic publishing: "The Internet: A Functional View for Publishers," "Electronic Products: Are End Users Ready?" "Ethics: From Plagiarism to Electronic Piracy," "The True Cost of Your First Electronic Product," "Legal Considerations in Electronic Agreements," "Embracing Change: Top Management Speaks Out," "Case Studies of Electronic Publishing Projects," "Own Vs. Order: Decisions For Document Delivery," "Publishers and the Internet," "Scholars as Users and Authors," "Issues in Multimedia Title Development," "Value Added: What Is It? How Do You Get It? How Do You Sell It?" "Automated Manuscript Tracking Systems," "Beginnings and Endings: Getting Into New Fields and Products," "From Disk to Film, Plate, or Press: Advances in Digital Production," and "Asian Markets: Realizing New Sales Potential."

A second plenary session addressing the issue: "Creators as Owners: Changes for Scholars, Publishers, and Academe," and the "Hyde Park Corner and Tea," ended the conference. The plenary session consisted of a report on the ARL Electronic Information Taskforce. ARL has created three taskforces to address three distinct issues: 1) the acquisition and distribution of foreign language and area materials; 2) the management of scientific and technological

"... libraries are ahead in their understanding and use of electronic information."

information analyzed three models: a) print based; b) an automated version of what's done in print; and c) the emergent model, which envisions new forms of communication. The taskforce concluded that no one model will dominate, but there will be a mixture of the models in the next 30 years. Fifty percent of the information will still be available in print format, 40% in electronic, and 10-15% in emergent formats, which are unknown today. These new forces will produce a reengineering of the library and its role. The report from the Intellectual Property Taskforce stressed the fragility of copyright in the electronic environment and encouraged authors to retain the copyright. **Clifford Lynch**, reacting to the first taskforce report, underscored the importance of critical mass in the evaluation of the three models. Scholars want a coherent view of the information universe, and unless a critical mass of information is available in one medium, it will not be adopted or used. Conversely, as soon as critical mass is lost, older media will become obsolete.

The "Hyde Park Corner and Tea," session gave participants the opportunity to ask and answer questions spontaneously. The first question: "When will change stop?" struck a chord with everyone in the audience, and in a sense it also summarized the entire two day conference. It was unanimously agreed that we will never have the luxury of even a small reprieve from this constant phenomenon called change. Many of the aspects of change, and how it impacts each of us individually were discussed.

Together with the SGML seminar offered on Wednesday, this conference was extremely interesting. It brought to the surface the many issues faced by publishers, scholars, and librarians in the age of the Internet, and provided an excellent opportunity for dialogue and communication. For the librarians in attendance, it also made it clear that libraries still have a crucial role to play in the delivery of

electronic information and that in many ways libraries are ahead in their understanding and use of electronic information.

**Special Libraries Association (SLA) Annual Conference
Information Vision**

Atlanta, GA June 11-16, 1994

Report by Donna Cromer
(U. of New Mexico)

SLA seemed pretty smooth this year, with fewer burning issues than the last few years. The dues increase had already been passed (by a mailed ballot to all members rather than just passing a motion at an annual business meeting, so I can't complain too much I guess, although there will be sticker shock come next December!); the Internet, while still a hot topic, is no longer so new; and the Texaco copyright decision is in hiatus right now off in the appeals courts somewhere, although librarians must remain vigilant about not giving up rights to Fair Use.

More than 5,000 people attended the conference, which consisted of more than 400 Division workshops, tours, and continuing education courses. The Exhibit Halls (yes, there were two!) had more than 400 booths hosted by more than 280 companies. In addition to the conference, there were 30 pre- and post-conference professional development courses.

The weather, too, cooperated some. While it was hot and humid, it didn't seem as bad as previous conferences such as last year in Cincinnati and that year in Boston (apparently their last heat wave).

I heard laments that shrimp were no longer to be found in hospitality suites and other receptions and that there were fewer receptions in general. On the other hand, you had to hand it to **Disclosure** for having one of the best exhibits booths. They usually have some gimmick to draw people into their area, but this year was the best yet—CHAMPAGNE at all times! Thus one's numerous trips through the Exhibit Halls (always one of the best parts of the SLA Annual Conference) could always start with that little extra stimulation of a glass of champagne. The **IEEE** reception won hands down by all reports — hosted bar (with name brands even! At least the bottles were name brand) and even shrimp, with lots of other goodies. Of course, this was preceded by another reception hosted by the **Solo Librarians Division**, an annual event looked forward to by all: the Ice Cream Social. Besides the booze, food, and goodies, these are all wonderful ways to mingle with and meet colleagues from around the country and with very different backgrounds.

The two keynote speakers were pop management consultant types. I enjoyed the first one especially. **Richard B. Ross**, speaking on "Re-engineering the Future and the Learning Organization," talked about the importance of "vision" and how to achieve vision in an organization. He emphasized that a vision should be simple and able to be expressed in a sentence or two, such as: "Our company will make the best light bulbs in the United States." You then progress down the chain to short specific ways of ensuring that vision. To work, everyone in the organization has to buy into that vision, and to do that, the organization must be a learning one. The second speaker was **Charles Garfield** who talked about the best in business and peak performance, extolling the virtues of the great service-minded companies.

SLA members belong to local Chapters, and also belong to one or more Divisions, which break down along subject lines. It's the more than 25 Divisions that are responsible for programming for the Annual Conference. Thus the programs are quite varied and there is something for everyone. While the Internet may not have been quite

as 'hot' as last year, it was certainly in evidence, as many of the conference sessions dealt with the topic in one form or another.

I can list only a few of the programs here because of space. Some were very specific, such as "International Business: NAFTA" (Legal Division), "Is Something Better Than Nothing? Update on Image Archiving" (News Division), and "Federal Libraries: Personnel Issues" (Military Librarian's Division). A growing trend is more general sessions, sponsored by a number of Divisions, such as "One-Stop Searching: Integrated Information Resources" (Chemistry; Engineering; Food, Agriculture, & Nutrition; Information Technology; Petroleum & Energy Resources; Physics-Astronomy-Mathematics; and Public Utilities Divisions).

The PAM (Physics-Astronomy-Math Division) events were the most useful for me. No surprise there — they are one of the main reasons why I continue to go to SLA. I went to a PAMwide Roundtable, a new event this year for Sundays. For the Vendor Update we had the good fortune to have **Jim Ashling** of INSPEC in the audience, so he could give us the latest on the INSPEC/Physics Briefs merger. I believe this is a very good trend, overdue for years and years. Now there will only be one database to search in for physics info! I attended the Annual Business Meeting (which was also a continental breakfast sponsored by the **American Mathematical Society**, and, thankfully, free — as opposed to most other Division Annual Meetings that charge \$20 or more.)

I attended as many other sessions as possible, while still leaving plenty of time for the exhibits. Two of the best were sessions on "Global Change Data Information" and the second half of "The Impact of Electronic Services on Reference Staff" in which the presenter, **Katie Clark** from Pennsylvania State University, emphasized the need to work with and embrace a climate of change, be flexible, self-motivated, and have a commitment to life-long learning.

All in all, a great conference once again!

Joint meeting of the 15th **National Online Meeting** and the 9th
Integrated Online Library Systems Meeting

New York, NY
May 10—12, 1994

Report by **Joan Griffith** and **Barbara Rosen**
(U. of New Mexico)

Joint meetings are interesting. You can pick and choose from a range of sessions, hear speakers who talk at both conferences on different topics, and chat with a variety of computer/systems vendors. Considerable overlap exists between the two conferences but they are dissimilar enough to warrant two events.

lar enough to warrant two events. Our job was to figure out "how it's all gonna work" in our own library/campus computing environment.

Martha Williams, program chair, **National Online Meeting (NOM)** — May 10-12, 1994, began with statistics showing the amazing growth of the online industry since 1975. The three largest vendors in the industry continue to be **Mead**, **West** and **Dialog**. She emphasized that full-text databases have grown by 490% since 1985. Sixty-seven percent of the databases are accessed online and 20% are CD-ROM accessible. The 7% of the databases available on magnetic tape for local mounting are now beginning to undermine the use of online in certain markets, especially in the university setting.

Allen Paschal, from **DataTimes**, in his Keynote Speech, "Life After Boolean," pointed out how the business-information industry has not been keeping pace with the expectations of personal computer users. He stressed the need for value pricing and satisfying customers.

One social event that was particularly enjoyable was "Breakfast with **Barbara(Quint)**" which was held over coffee and danish. Barbara, who is the editor of **Searcher: the magazine of data professionals**, had much to say in the way of industry news and consumer warnings. She commented on how in today's online environment customers can become your competition, that segmentation of information is occurring, and that value-added services will prevail over giant databases that are not user friendly. Those corpora-

"Libraries must acquire platforms that are independent of proprietary utilities."

tions that survive this era will be stronger but they must lead or fail. Libraries

must acquire platforms that are independent of proprietary utilities. The future lies in multi-media based datafiles, networking skills, and text database management services. We must forget past practices and identify current and future needs of our customers. We must become electronic collection developers. She warned that we must "negotiate everything" and be "aggressive on quality."

The NOM conference continued with coverage of the future of information technology, electronic publishing, full text data, document delivery, the Internet, search and retrieval, CD-ROM end-users, systems and product reviews. **Pamela Cibbarelli**, program chair, **Integrated Online Library Systems (IOLS)** Meeting — May 11-12, 1994, opened the session with a discussion of the latest technological innovations in integrated systems. **Clifford Lynch**, University of California Division of Library Automation gave the keynote speech: "Issues in the Development of the Next Generation of IOLS." He commented that what we face for the future is moving away from the term "library automation" toward public access information delivery systems which will dominate the next phase of development. Library automation over the last 10-15 years focused on automating workflows of routines which had manual antecedents. We went from simply automating a card catalog to figuring out what users want and are willing to do. For example, some students have never seen a "card catalog." Now we have entered a new territory, and we don't really understand what we are doing — it's all new and we have no models. Cliff and others also gave a presentation titled, "Status Report on Z39.50" which described how far we've come with client/server models in libraries. He said the best way to think about client/server is to think of the client as patron; Z39.50 as a call slip; and the server as the page who retrieves the materials in a closed stacks environment.

The Internet was a major focus of both conferences. Speakers

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Drinking from the Firehose

Tabloids & Listserves; Or, Inquiring Minds Want to Know

by Eleanor I. Cook (Serials Librarian, Appalachian State University, Boone, NC 28608 COOKEI@CONRAD.APPSTATE.EDU)

I went to the supermarket the other day and bought copies of the *National Enquirer* and the *Sun*. I've never done this before; I was as embarrassed as a teenage boy is when his mother or older sister sends him out to buy feminine hygiene products. I felt compelled to explain to the check-out clerk, "Uh, I'm only buying these because I'm writing an article about tabloid newspapers." She didn't blink an eye. She didn't care about my weird need for self-justification since people buy this stuff all the time. If nothing else, most of us scan the crazy headlines as something to do while we stand in line. (C'mon, you know you do.) I have always been fascinated by their absurdity and have often wondered how much truth is there. Actually, there is more than you might think. I have a friend who ended up as a story in *National Enquirer* in the mid-1970's due to a freak motorcycle accident; he has the clippings to prove it.

In the electronic environment, certain Netnews news groups come close to being online tabloids, though they are devoted to specific topics. Any given tabloid print magazine, on the other hand, will cover many topics, the standard themes being the body alteration, weight loss/gain, marriage, divorce, affair or child-bearing activities of high profile celebrities. Some cover stories of fantastic events unknown in the mainstream press, such as sightings of UFOs, Elvis, Bigfoot, etc. The ever-present stories of John F. Kennedy and his relatives, dead or alive, are also among the meat of many of the stories. All these topics and anything else

you can think of ("Family Lives on Pet Food and is Super Healthy," by Mike Jones, see the *Sun*, v.12, no.39, September 27, 1994, p.29) are included in these rags. Their aim is to entertain. No one claims any of this is fact. Some people believe everything they read, though; and that is scary.

So — you're thinking, what does this have to do with libraries? Or acquisitions work? Let me make some analogies, even if it's a stretch . . .

Everyone knows that this is the year to speculate whether **O.J. Simpson** really murdered his wife Nicole. And are **Michael Jackson** and **Lisa Marie Presley** "really" husband and wife? Inquiring minds want to know the "facts" of these and other fascinating stories.

In the library world, we have our own scandals. For those of us involved in the acquisition of serials, the "War of the Roweses" (Thanks to **Myrna McCallister** for this quip.) and the financially nightmarish aftermath has kept us scanning our mail regularly.

Please note that this is NOT a column specifically concerned with the sale of the **Faxon Company**. This is, rather, a discussion of why gossip, rumor and speculation can actually drive the progress of any given event. It is important that electronic listowners who elect to moderate their lists guard against the potentially harmful spread of mistruth. Gossip can lead to self-fulfilling prophecy. Of course, it ALWAYS comes from a reliable source, doesn't it? Certainly, many rumors are based in fact. Experience suggests

to me, however, that even believing a trusted colleague or friend, without cross-checking, can lead to the making of hasty decisions not grounded in complete information.

Every single one of us has fallen victim to having something we truly believe as fact later discovered to be false. It has been observed that people generally would rather believe in speculative misinformation than to admit that they lack enough information to make a rational judgment. Wishful thinking is something to hang your hat on, even if it comes straight out of someone's imagination. This is particularly true during the unfolding aftermath of a natural disaster. The Internet has been quite handy for spreading both rumor and fact during times of trauma. During California earthquakes, the Oakland fires, and the Los Angeles riots we heard from colleagues who gave us useful damage reports and other critical information. We also received conflicting reports during the L.A. earthquake that needlessly drove many librarians away from attending the **ALA Midwinter** conference in February 1994.

One must weigh the long-term effect of posting certain kinds of information when one is responsible for an electronic list. I commend the listowner and the associate

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discussed how their libraries were accessing databases through the Internet, mounting them locally, updating databases through Internet, and developing databases and making them available through Internet. Databases are mounted as Gopher text files or made available from **LISTSERVs**. Internet services are also available transparently through menu options on the online catalogs. **Peter Jasco's** helpful tutorial sessions throughout the conference offered practical suggestions on desktop CD-ROM publishing, and purchasing CD-ROM databases,

software and hardware. He gave simple analogies to understand the basics of storage, memory and operating systems. He did not hesitate to give his own well-researched, pointed opinions, which basically concluded with the fact that publishers don't tell you everything and you cannot be depended on for anything they say about their databases. He reminded his audience that all information needs to be verified by the purchaser of the products — years covered, currency, indexing of various fields. He gave practical methods to check their errors of omission. In addition, he specifically mentioned many of the popular systems' vendors and databases, going into detail about their strengths and

weaknesses. The sessions can all be purchased on tape and can be beneficial to searchers/librarians who can learn how to modify their searches to retrieve the best results from the deficient databases — at least until they cancel their subscription and switch to another vendor.

Speaker lists were impressive for both conferences. Beneficial tidbits were also picked up from each presentation including diagrams, specific equipment information, and particular experiences of individual libraries: **OhioLink** and **Z39.50** are the state of the art (**Reiman**); the next frontier — the Internet (**Pooley**); it is a myth that informa-

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You Gotta Go To School?

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rolled himself in the nearest technical college and set himself on the new road to fame and fortune as a first time college student.

Foreman John is now student John. John is not your average student. This means, of course, that he does not wear jeans with holes purposely cut in them, his hair is not shaved off on one side, and there are no discernible rings or studs in his nose. He also does not use the word "like" sprinkled throughout every sentence. This certainly puts him at an immediate disadvantage to the other "normal" students and has been a cause for great concern to my brother, who is very determined to succeed in this alien environment.

On top of the general culture shock, brother John is the first to admit that he is not the academic type. School has therefore been noticeably hard on him. Not having the academic background many other students have, he sometimes finds himself lost in a sea of weird stuff.

He told me about a recent class discussion on Greek mythology. "The teacher asked us what we thought of Zeus," he said. "I told her that I thought that anybody that was a god, could throw around lighting bolts and pick up women was okay by me." The teacher sort of looked at him funny and said, "Hmmm. That's partly right ... but ... Roger, what do you think?"

"Well, 'front row Roger' starting talking about the whole socio-political history of the Greece thing, all the mythicopsychological interrelationships of the gods and goddesses and why Zeus was a real bone head. Of course, the teacher said that was exactly the answer she was looking for."

"How did he know all that stuff?" said my esteemed bro. "I felt like a weenie brain. I thought Zeus was a squared away dude."

Now is brother John dumb? No. Brother John is merely adrift in a sea of academic stuff on an inner tube while most of those around him are sporting about in speed boats. Brother John does not have the background, yet, to intuitively handle many things that academic types some-

times take for granted. Like when to use the word "sexagenarian" without embarrassing yourself. Or trying to understand how anybody likes opera and why they would even want to. Curious. Confusing. Even frustrating.

How are we as elite information professionals to deal with folks who feel like aliens in academia? Simple. We should treat them as we would any other alien to our world of knowledge splendor. Approach them cautiously but gently. Let them know that no matter how weird they feel, we will be able to assist them with all their info needs. The aliens will then use this knowledge to get better jobs, fulfill their wildest dreams, and make more money than we do. Hopefully, when they are rich and famous, they will then remember us poor but virtuous info professionals. We will then be able to find that financially stable sinecure as librarians to rock and roll stars we've always longed for.

So, always remember this when you are helping some poor helpless soul who has no idea what to do or where to go in the library: Elvis was a helpless soul once too. Wouldn't you have liked to have been his librarian? ☹

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tion has to be free on the Internet and that users are hackers (Pooley); design new IOLS to the "users'" lowest common denominator (Lynch); vendor has the power (Paschal); users need "in your face HELP" screens (Lynch); the Sharp XGE800U overhead monitor/projector makes classroom instruction/demonstrations what we have always wanted them to be (Cheryl LaGuardia).

Conference Proceedings are available from: **Learned Information**, Inc. 143 Old Marlton Pike, Medford, New Jersey 08055 Phone: (609) 654-6266 for approximately \$30.00 (IOLS), \$55.00 (NOM). Cassette tapes are available from: Minute Tape, 1066 Sunnyvale-Saratoga Road, Suite 18, Sunnyvale, CA 94087 U.S.A. Phone: (408) 732-8450.

In addition to the joint conference there were a variety of satellite events on May 9 and May 13th. Topics covered included: CD-ROM LAN/WAN Access; Database Implementation; Developing and Implementing a Global Intelligence Program; Introduction to Image Databases; The Internet: An Introduction. The satellite events were offered at additional fees each ranging from \$250.00 to \$290.00. ☹