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I Hear the Train A Comin' - A Postcard from Charleston

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century origin, which the professor had lent the college during the 1930s. The heirs of the estate made it clear that they wanted to recover the telescope. It had been a loan. They wanted it back. Everyone at the college was eager to comply with what was a simple request, but they had a problem. They couldn't find the telescope, and no one at the college had even a recollection of ever having seen it. Most importantly, the administration had no records of such a device having ever been given, lent, or received in any matter. As you can imagine, the college's part-time archivist diligently searched what records she had. She connected with current science professors, contacted retired faculty and staff, and checked all relevant histories of the college. She found nothing.

Of course, it is quite possible that she could have located information about the telescope in specific departmental records, faculty letters and trustee files. Nevertheless, because the college seriously ignored archives for so many years, none of these records had been processed or organized to facilitate any sort of systematic search. Some of these records may have indeed been lost to earlier inattentions to record keeping, or they may actually have been left in storage somewhere on campus. In the meantime, the science professor's heirs insisted that the college should be able to find this large and important scientific instrument. They figured that the college should at least know what became of it. It seemed unimaginable for an institution to have lost or misplaced a historically valuable scientific instrument. At press time, the professor's heirs are still waiting for an answer that the college archives currently cannot and may likely never be able to give.

Another institution, a small university which had ignored its institutional records in much the same way, faced a similarly difficult

situation. A local attorney wished to donate a large sum of money to the university's science program in honor of her mother, a graduate of the 1950's. She hoped to link her recently-deceased mother's early interest in science with her undergraduate career at the university — the courses she took, the societies in which she had membership, and her work as a lab assistant (according to family legend) under a distinguished science faculty member. Nevertheless, the university's archives were in such disarray that little could be learned about the woman and almost nothing about her time at the university. The potential donor found this lack of information about her mother so altogether unimaginable and so frustrating that she withdrew her initial proposal. Development personnel attempted to assuage the attorney's misgivings, but the college's lack of an organized archival record made that office's efforts largely ineffectual. Later the university's public relations department learned that the potential donor subsequently gave a significant sum to another institution's chemistry program. Her mother, they discovered, had done graduate work there, and the institution's well-organized archives easily uncovered details of her performance and life as a graduate student.

These two examples point to the enormous importance that archives can play in ongoing relations with alumni and potential donors. My scenarios delineate the drawbacks, of course, of neglecting and funding archives — the potential money that could be lost and the opportunities missed. But imagine the positive dimensions that could emerge from a library archives that did the opposite — of an archival and special collections staff that aggressively pursued good relations with its alumni and community. At the **University of Central Florida** the university archives did precisely that. They implemented a concentrated outreach program in concert with the alumni and development office that created,

what they called, "lasting relationships with their donors." Their efforts proved that creative archival staff and their collection could not only help an institution avoid losing money; they could actually reach donors and alumni in ways that few could have imagined.²

Of course, there are other important advantages to maintaining archives — issues besides alumni and donor relations. Archives undergird institutional research, and they document the institution's past, giving the college or university a collective sense of where it has been and where it is going.³

Even so, none of these additional archival roles equal the value of the good will and positive public relations that come from a well-run and assiduously-organized archival collection. Archives may have huge significance for an institution internally, but externally the benefits are virtually incalculable.

So when those budget cuts come — and come they will — downsize where you will and how you must. But maintain and fund archives and special collections, lest you suffer that rare and dangerous budgetary side effect of frayed and deteriorating alumni relations. 🐼

Endnotes

1. Some institutions, of course, have wisely digitized some of their rare book collections and parts of their archives, but our concern here is with a larger issue, the temptation to neglect institutional records in their totality.
2. **Konzak, Elizabeth** and **Teague, P. Dwain**. "Reconnect with your Alumni and Connect to Donors," *Technical Services Quarterly*, Vol. 26, no 3, 2009, pp. 217-225.
3. **Maier, William**. The Management of College and University Archives. **Methen, N. J.**: Scarecrow Press and *Society of American Archivists*, 1992, pp. 9-10.

I Hear the Train A Comin' — A Postcard from Charleston

Column Editor: **Greg Tananbaum** (Founder and CEO, Anianet)
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This November, I had the pleasure of hosting the live version of this column that **Katina** has been gracious enough to incorporate into the annual **Charleston Conference**. The goals of the column are also the goals of the session — to take a look around the bend, into the future of scholarly communication. In print and in the flesh, the hope is to get a sense of a future intuited but as yet unseen. At the 2009 conference, it was a distinct pleasure to give **Douglas Armato**, Director of the **University of Minnesota Press**, and **Kevin Guthrie**, President of **Ithaka**, a forum to opine about what is coming next in our space. **Kevin** and **Doug** took aim at a common theme

— how to effectively serve multiple masters in a rapidly changing environment.

Doug tackled this issue from a local/institutional perspective, specifically the collision of structural interests and opportunities currently shaping one of the bedrock relationships of the scholcom space — the partnership between libraries and universities presses. These two entities have enjoyed a strategic pairing for years. Librarians and press employees have long advanced each others' interests and worked together to promote a deeper understanding of the scholarly communication terrain. However, this relationship is at a crossroads,

with one possible path heading toward further convergence and the other toward dissolution of the partnership.

There are a number of forces, from **Doug's** perspective, that are pushing the university press and the library toward divergence. Some factors are political, such as disagreement over which units of the institution are best equipped to run point on new publishing initiatives. Some factors are economic, as different emerging scholarly communication models impact the budgets and fortunes of the press and the library differently. Some factors are technological, as new forms of hardware

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and software options emerge that impact how parties view, value, and support traditional forms of scholarly communication (e.g., books, monographs).

On the other hand, **Doug** also sees political, economic, and technological forces that are pushing the university press and the library toward deeper convergence. Politically, both parties have an interest in working together to clearly communicate to faculty the strains that exist within the current scholarly communication system. Economically, it has become clear to all that neither presses nor libraries have healthy funding models; working together may make it easier to dig out of the hole. Technologically, it is becoming easier to envision and develop a system that captures an institution's scholarly output at the source, and to build layers of publishing services around this scholarship. Both the university press and the library bring certain complementary expertise and skill sets to this type of endeavor.

While **Doug** did not definitively state where this relationship is headed, he drew some interesting conclusions by looking at the convergence/divergence outcomes through the lens of how to effectively serve multiple masters in a rapidly changing environment. The university press and the library each are both dealing with significant structural changes

to their identities. Their business models and budgets are in transition. Their intramural and intermural relationships are subject to market forces, to political forces, and to new technologies. Given these rapidly swirling winds, it is important to remember that the university press and the library share unique and important values — a belief in the actual value of scholarship and knowledge, a desire to support and promote the work of research faculty, and a desire to draw faculty into the process of scholarly communication, not just as consumers or customers, but as participants. Given the tenacity with which both parties hold these principles, convergence seems the best way to advance them.

Kevin Guthrie took a systemic perspective on the issue of serving multiple masters in a rapidly changing environment. He examined the confluences and contradictions that go into serving both the local institution and the scholarly community more generally. Developments in technology have created a tension in which libraries hosting digital collections bear the costs locally, but the audience served by these collections is global. How does one justify the expenditures, of, say, an open access subject collection or an image database, to those paying the bills? How does the parent institution justify these costs if there is not an apparent or direct institutional benefit?

Kevin pointed out that some costs can be reduced by market consolidation and by scaling. However, these paths are anything

but clear in the library world. Where will the larger scale reside? Within the libraries? Within the presses? At the joining of libraries and presses? Of academic disciplines? It will undoubtedly become more efficient to serve both the local institutional community and the larger academic world if such scale can be identified and implemented.

As **Kevin** explained, one reason we are fumbling in creating a more efficient scholarly communication space is because we are not big enough to support specialized solutions. Information now shares the same infrastructure, in every sector, all over the globe. Scholarly communications are no longer insulated from the commercial information marketplace. Does the scholarly community need to create specialized capabilities, or can it rely on commercial services, which may not be perfectly fit for purpose but which are innovative and inexpensive because of their scale (i.e., **YouTube** for videos, **Google** for search, **Amazon** for books, etc.)? Will it be more efficient if the local institution and the scholarly communication space operate more globally by adopting imperfect but widely accepted and cheaply available nonspecialized tools?

Kevin also noted that the emergence and rapid maturation of the commercial information marketplace coincides with a fundamental change in the library's role. With content going digital, libraries are deep in the midst of a shift from the need to manage a local capital

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Reports of Meetings — 28th Annual Charleston Conference

Issues in Book and Serial Acquisition, “The Best of Times ... The Worst of Times,” Francis Marion Hotel, Embassy Suites Historic District, and College of Charleston (Addlestone Library), Charleston, SC, November 5-8, 2008

Charleston Conference Reports compiled by: **Ramune K. Kubilius** (Collection Development / Special Projects Librarian, Northwestern University, Galter Health Sciences Library) <r-kubilius@northwestern.edu>

*Column Editor's Note: Thank you to all of the conference attendees who volunteered to become reporters, providing highlights of so many conference sessions. In this issue, we are providing the fifth and final installment of 2008 Charleston Conference reports. Visit the **Charleston Conference Website** for handouts and presentation outlines from many conference sessions. — RKK*

Concurrent Sessions 3 — Friday, November 7, 2008

National Science and Technology Library of China: Leading the Way in Technical Information Resource Collection — Presented by **Mr. Jiancheng Zheng** (Vice Director of Collection Development Department, National Science and Technology Library, China)

Reported by: **Ramune K. Kubilius** (Northwestern University, Galter Health Sciences Library) <r-kubilius@northwestern.edu>

The fascination with the Chinese library and publishing scene was evidenced by the variety of attendees-librarians (a few originally from China), publishers (some already working with Chinese libraries, some investigating the possibilities). Not indicated in the program, and initially a bit confusing to newbies in this area, was the presence of two additional persons who joined speaker **Zheng** at the front of the room. They were from Philadelphia-headquartered **Charlesworth Group** (service/marketing agents for China). CEO **Adrian Stanley** provided background information and Marketing Coordinator **Dan**

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infrastructure (to house and distribute physical objects) to managing services (applied to digital objects), which are largely provided by infrastructure offered externally. Libraries are no longer judged by the size of the library or the number of print volumes they hold. Rather, they are assessed on the quality of the services they provide to connect their constituents to the right information when they need it. **Kevin** stressed that the key to succeeding in this new environment is nailing the services where the library (or the press, or any other local actor) has a unique advantage. He cited **IBM** as a possible case study, which has managed to transform a good part of its business from being capital driven (selling computers, especially mainframes) to becoming a business services provider. **IBM** is now a problem solver using technology, with more than 50% of their revenues derived from services. Libraries would be well-served to look at **Big Blue** as a model for transitioning their core business. The successful libraries will be the ones that develop and adapt their services, models, and approaches to further the goals of both their local institutions and the scholarly communication space globally.

As a quick editorial aside, I must commend not only **Douglas Armato** and **Kevin Guthrie**, but also the audience at the Train-LIVE session. All parties brought their “A” games, and the result was a lively and free-wheeling plenary that gave us an interesting peek at the challenges and opportunities our industry faces in this rapidly changing environment. 🍷

Yang served as an “ad hoc” translator, when one was needed, but by and large **Zheng's** detailed presentation on its own merit provided a thorough overview of the complex structures that make up the **NSTL** — the nine academies/institutes, the decision-making council, two expert committees. **NSTL** concentrates primarily on STM. Print collecting still takes place but the current priorities are digital and preservation issues. Licenses with international publishers are crafted carefully, keeping in mind the responsibilities and rights of publishers, providers, and preservers. The Q&A segment raised comments, e.g., “we must guarantee access no matter what happens,” analogous to a “Chinese Portico” (natural disasters cause breakdowns in communication networks with the world, “tsunami trigger events”). It was also clarified that **NSTL** is a government body focused on STM, but other private consortia exist, such as **CALIS (China Academic Library and Information System)**, consisting of over 100 members and largely focused on humanities and literature.

Developing a Library Collection Development Allocation —

Presented by **Jeff Bailey** (Assistant Library Director, Arkansas State University); **Linda Creibaum** (Acquisitions Librarian, Arkansas State University)

Reported by: **Rita M. Cauce** (Florida International University, Green Library) <caucer@fiu.edu>

Deciding on how to allocate the library's resource budget across the university's programs is a topic of much debate in collection development departments. In this presentation the speakers described the formula used by **Arkansas State University** to distribute funds throughout the academic departments.

Arkansas State University has approximately 10,000 students, five PhD programs, and is experimenting rapid growth. The library does not have a book approval plan. Prior to using an allocation formula, almost 30% of the collection development expenditure was going to one department, mainly to journals. Funds had not been redistributed in many years. A task force was created to research current use of allocation formulas. The decision was made to base their formula on the one used by **Colorado State University**, and to run a single formula for books and journals. The factors used in the formula: semester credit hour production (actual enrollment), number of classes offered, degrees awarded and their levels, number of faculty per department, average cost of materials.

Before the formula is applied to the available budget, funds are set aside to cover interdisciplinary databases and other general library expenditures. Academic programs are advised as to how much of their allocation is needed to continue their current recurring costs and it is up to them to discontinue any they would rather not continue funding. The added benefit to this process is the active participation of the departments in collection development, including review of recurring costs.

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