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And They Were There – Reports of Meetings

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Colloquium On Scholarly Communications Issues: Second Annual Faxon Institute — January 7-8, 1998 Hotel InterContinental, New Orleans

Report by **Julia A. Gammon** (The University of Akron)
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The Faxon Institute's mission is to promote the discussion and dissemination of scholarly information and to create forums to explore the critical issues surrounding the information industry. In keeping with that charge, the Second Annual Colloquium on Scholarly Communications Issues was a meeting not to be missed. This highly interactive two-day conference brought together a virtual "who's who" of the information scene including academic research library directors, chief academic officers, publishing executives, and a sprinkling of librarians for a common purpose: to have a direct dialogue on the complex and current issues relating to the dissemination of scholarly information.

After a New Orleans-inspired dinner, colloquium attendees were treated to a keynote address by **Dr. Stanley Chodorow**, a distinguished scholar and educator at the **University of Pennsylvania** who has held both teaching and administrative positions in his academic career. Dr. Chodorow's talk, entitled "The Faculty, The University, and Intellectual Property," was an eloquent, passionate plea for the regaining of university control in faculty's scholarly output. He described current custom, in which the university assigns ownership of intellectual property to the faculty members who create it; this practice makes it acceptable for faculty members to give the property to journal publishers to sell back to the university. This system was accepted for 250 years without much debate until the current era of inflationary rises in serials prices, and the proliferation of available journals.

Chodorow went on to relate the historical evolution of university responsibility for information resources, using his extensive background in medieval history to make numerous illustrations. He pointed out that the university's original function was institutional control of the information used by both faculty and students; the guild of teaching masters thus managed the production of texts which were written by teaching masters and students, creating a monopoly on the knowledge-making business. However, after the advent of the printing press in the second half of the fifteenth century, the university relinquished its role as a provider of information resources to others. It was not until much later, in the nineteenth century, that the university's obligation to collect and organize information for the use of faculty and students was reinstated. At that point, the collecting of books was shifted from the domain of individual faculty members to the university's central library. This revolution, Chodorow said, in the purpose of higher education, accompanied by the shift in obligation, has made the university the principal repository of human knowledge, and has contributed to the dilemmas faced by today's librarians and university administrators. The proliferation of academic disciplines, interdisciplinary research, and evolving fields of study have all affected the university's ability to meet its imperative to provide information resources.

Chodorow then discussed the critical nature of the problem with the university's intellectual property, and offered three solutions:

1. Consortial purchasing and licensing of information resources;
2. Consideration of the new pricing system for information;
3. Exploration of schemes to change the information market itself.

While the first and second of these options are currently being explored, Chodorow felt that the most successful option would be the third, as it will require universities and learned societies to find new means to compete in the market for scholarly information. While it is too early to ascertain how these efforts will turn out, he said, he cau-

tioned attendees to bear in mind that university administrators and librarians still need to repair their internal systems.

Chodorow concluded by reiterating that universities have a duty to provide information for their faculties and students, and to preserve the intellectual and cultural heritage of society. He suggested that public policy-makers step into the arena to help create an independent market for scholarly communications.

Following Chodorow's thought-provoking ideas and a good night's sleep, colloquium attendees reassembled for breakfast and a full day of roundtable discussions. Attendees were encouraged to participate in the roundtable of their choice, with the exception of the press. (We were too busy trying to keep notes for the fast-paced exchange!) The attendees' wide range of interests and backgrounds provided a lively diversity in the composition of the roundtables, which were skillfully moderated by **Eric Siegel**, renowned journalist and co-host of **National Public Radio's** popular news program, **All Things Considered**. Siegel had an impressive knowledge of the topics at hand; he provided an interesting and informative "outsider's" stance, probing deeply and insightfully for answers to questions which we in the field have trouble answering ourselves. Siegel's fresh viewpoint forced attendees to look at age-old problems through new lenses.

The topics of the four ninety-minute roundtables were: 1) Electronic Publishing and the Scholarly Communication Process; 2) Emerging Intellectual Property Models; 3) Evolution of Licensing Models for Electronic Information; 4) Funding Issues and Scholarly Information.

To summarize the dialogues of each of the four roundtables is not easy, as many thought-provoking ideas, arguments and solutions were raised. Concerning electronic publishing and the scholarly communication process, Siegel began the discussion with basic questions: what is the role of the publisher in the scholarly information process? What are the changes caused by electronic publishing? Who decides what the library must have? These questions provided a launch point for discourse on the role of intermediaries, electronic factors, cultural factors, and the direction of electronic publishing in general.

In the next roundtable on emerging intellectual property models, Siegel probed: What is the relationship between scholars and universities that warrants any changes in intellectual property? Is electronic publishing affecting the humanities, or only the sciences? Why not encourage faculty to distribute knowledge for hire, to increase faculty value? These questions gave the second group of roundtable participants a chance to vent frustrations, and to find some answers to the complex questions associated with this hot topic.

In the session on the evolution of licensing models for electronic information, Siegel asked: What is the future of the Web? What are the changes in licensing you have seen so far? What are the variety of licensing arrangements? Consortial arrangements, licensing contracts and the role of the subscription agent made for engaging after-lunch discussion. There was no nodding off here!

Finally, with regard to funding issues and scholarly information, Siegel identified key issues such as: Where are institutional funding priorities shifting? Is there any sign of abatement to price increases? Can the Internet create a cheaper and more efficient means of information distribution? Even the lateness of the day did not keep roundtable members and the audience from engaging in a spirited de-

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bate that eventually had to be cut off, due to time.

The unique format of these roundtables enabled all colloquium attendees to serve as both audience members and as "speakers," and gave everyone the opportunity to share viewpoints. While civility and decorum were naturally maintained throughout the colloquium, the exchange was often so infectious that one hesitated to leave the room for any purpose and risk missing a valuable comment or idea.

Lovely accommodations, delicious food (including chocolate!), and dynamic conversations with colleagues all made for a highly successful colloquium, with attendees reluctant to end the conversations with Eric Siegel and company. Everyone will doubtless look forward to a continuation of this volatile discussion next year.

Publishers' Sites on the Web: How We Communicate in the Online Environment — ALA Midwinter, New Orleans, February, 1998

Report by **Judy Luther** (Market Development Services, Ardmore, PA) <jluther@earthlink.net>

During the **ALA Midwinter** meeting in New Orleans, the ALCTS Publisher Vendor Library Relations Committee held a forum on Web sites — what works, what doesn't. Two publishers described their companies' approach to developing their Web sites, while two librarians presented their ideas on features that they would like in a Web site. While each speaker acknowledged that their comments represented their own opinions, their experiences and perceptions offered a range of options.

Jay Trolley, Director of Corporate Communications with the **Institute for Scientific Information** began with the observation that it is not always easy to find a company with the existing Web search engines. This realization prompted the decision to promote their URL through advertising, print literature and promotional items at conferences. To determine what goes on the front page of a Web site requires that the company be able to approach the information they are presenting from the viewpoint of the customer.

A good statistical package will report on which pages are accessed most often. The typical visitor sees 4.6 pages. ISI is particularly interested in why people visit their site. Are they looking for product demonstrations, training information, pricing? Jay concluded her remarks by requesting that the audience visit the ISI Website <http://www.isinet.com> and answer their survey to provide them with additional feedback.

Stephen Rhind-Tutt, President of **Chadwyck Healey**, mentioned, as did most of the vendors/publishers, that they were in the process of upgrading their site which is now one and a half years old. Stephen referenced the Microsoft ad that says: "Where do you want to go today? What do you want to do?" Helping potential customers discover the company's Website and offering them real value to stimulate their interest in the products is the primary objective for their Web site.

A site can include product demonstrations, product information, a directory of staff, a list of conferences attended, pricing. Chadwyck-Healey offers a writer-in-residence program and the author runs a poetry workshop and a master class on writing.

Nancy Gibbs, Head of Acquisitions at **North Carolina State University**, illustrated her points with many slides of Web sites that had good features and those that did not. Positive features include placing the address and phone number of the company on the first page and presenting an uncluttered easy to read screen. Data falls off the sides of smaller screens and solid backgrounds can be difficult to

load and impossible to print, especially if the letters are white on a dark background.

Although knowing how many times a page has been accessed is irrelevant, it is useful to have data indicating that the information is current. If a publisher decides to convert their catalog to the online environment, they need to offer the user the ability to search by title and not present the titles grouped only by subject.

Joe Raker, Coordinator of Technical Services at **Boston Public Library**, rounded out the panel with his observations on best and worst features. Simplicity of design led the list of good features while cluttered screens led the list of bad ones. A directory of employees is helpful, especially when there are pictures or senior staff are indicated. Answers to frequently asked questions are useful as is the "fine print" which explains the copying rights of the publisher. Helpful icons serve as prompts and make navigation easier. Slow response time can be affected by aspects of design.

Among the criticisms were the use of outdated information, along with false leads and dead-end links. Publishers are encouraged not to use jargon specific to the company but unfamiliar to customers as this affects navigation. The Web can be a good tool for customer feedback via email links.

The program concluded with a discussion, focused on the topic of cookies and their appropriate use. Cookies can save the customer time by identifying them to the publisher and can be used to indicate local library holdings.

Once created, Web sites require ongoing maintenance and every publisher/vendor mentioned that they were in the process of redesigning their site. Continuous effort is needed on an ongoing basis to maintain a Website that is current and serves to provide useful information for the customer.

EDUCOM '97 — October 1997 — Minneapolis, MN

Report by **Judy Luther** (Market Development Services, Ardmore, PA) <jluther@earthlink.net>

EDUCOM's annual conference with the theme "Embracing the Changing Learning Environment" was hosted by the **University of Minnesota** from October 27th-November 1st at the convention center in Minneapolis. Slightly larger than last year, the 2500 participants attended three plenaries (one each day), and had a choice of 44 ses-

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Library Profile — Arlington County Department of Libraries — Arlington, Va.

by **Barbara C. Dean** (Arlington County Public Library) <bdean@leo.vsla.edu>

The County

Arlington County is a 26-square-mile area directly across the Potomac River from Washington, D.C. Arlington National Cemetery, the Pentagon, and Crystal City are all in Arlington County. It was originally part of a ten-mile square surveyed in 1791 for the capital, but the U.S. Congress returned the portion of the west bank of the Potomac to the Commonwealth of Virginia in 1846. The area was known as Alexandria City and Alexandria County until 1920 when the county portion was renamed Arlington County. It has no incorporated towns or cities, but is fully developed with a combination of commercial and residential buildings.

The county is an area in transition. It is home to the multi-story modern buildings of Crystal City as well as to storefront businesses typical of a small town. The population of 187,000 people is highly educated as well as increasingly diverse. In 1997, 24 percent of those 25 year olds or older held a graduate or professional degree. One in five residents is foreign-born, and one in four speak a language other than English at home.

The Library

The Department of Libraries has one main library and seven branches of varying sizes. Together the branches hold 671,000 volumes. Total circulation is about 2 million volumes a year. Over Memorial Day weekend 1997, we transferred from NOTIS to CARL for the public catalog, circulation,

and cataloging. CARL acquisitions came up on July 1, 1997. We plan to bring up the serials module this spring.

The library has enjoyed modest materials budget increases during this decade, up 28 percent between 1990 and 1997. The library had to cut periodical subscriptions for the first time this year; it was done to increase funding of electronic products. This spring a team of selectors will examine the serials collection in order

to cut more titles. The portion allocated to books has decreased slightly over the years to pay for serials, electronic products and audiovisual materials, although books continue to command a far greater percentage of the entire budget than all other formats combined. It is possible that by the end of FY'98 we will have to reduce staff in order to accommodate budget cuts mandated by the county government. The Materials Management Division (aka technical services) may lose 18 out of 78 hours of temporary staff and one FTE out of 17.5 FTE. We plan to accomplish this by attrition or reassignment.

Materials Management Division (MMD)

Because MMD reorganized on July 1,

1997, one can't describe the acquisitions unit without discussing MMD as a whole. The obvious reason for reorganizing was to make our processes fit the parameters set by the CARL software rather than NOTIS, but we also wanted the process to be more efficient which meant not only redefining responsibilities, and shifting staff around, but also changing some parts of the work culture.

The tenets we used to guide the redesign follow: complete as much of the process as early as possible in the workflow; avoid duplication of efforts, and too many handoffs, i.e., one person doing a small task on an item then giving it to someone else to perform a small task and then returning it to the first person to do a little more work on it; design work around the norm rather than the exception; cross train people so they can be shifted to where the most work is at any given time; take full advantage of CARL; and create job satisfaction.

Sue Epstein, our consultant, proposed our new structure and continues to advise us as we implement changes. Acquisitions, receiving, cataloging, and processing are now merged in one large group called Bibliographic Services. For now, the functions remain distinct under the Bibliographic Services umbrella, but I expect the lines to become quite fuzzy when acquisitions staff

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sions, 50 discussion groups and numerous scheduled vendor demonstrations.

Programs were organized in nine tracks representing different interests: living in an electronic society, understanding the evolving institution, organizing for information service, focusing on student-centered learning, delivering content in context, foraging for economic solutions, developing strategies for change, hot topics and updates.

Pre-conferences focused on distance education and library services, publishing on the Web, managing multimedia, copyright in network environments, emerging projection technologies and developing I/T competency, to name a few. A post conference held at the University was devoted to change and the organization and change and technology.

Eli Loam, professor of Finance and Economics at **Columbia University Graduate School of Business** and author of *Electronics and the Dim Future of the University* delivered the first keynote pointing to the relationship between higher education and the book and anticipating the impact of distance education, given the new technologies. Sherry Turkle, professor of Sociology and author of *Life on the Screen: Identity in the Age of the Internet* stated that we make our technology

and it makes us. Her conclusion is that the new technology supports collaboration, community and consensus. John Grateful Dead and Perry Barlow, lyricist for the

commentator on intellectual privatization of society and is a proponent of "net religion," feeling that everything should be available on the Web.

The 115 exhibitors offered software and hardware for instructional technologists, library directors, chief information officers and heads of academic computing. Although Microsoft was missing, there were multiple presentations on network solutions, the new DVD (digital versatile disk) format, multimedia software. Twenty percent of exhibitors were content providers including: H.W.Wilson, OCLC, Prentice Hall.

In 1998 EDUCOM's annual conference will be held in Orlando, Florida, hosted by the **University of Central Florida**.