2014

If Rumors Were Horses

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If Rumors Were Horses

S

aw that the gorgeous Mary Sauer-Games is now Sr. Director, PsycINFO at the American Psychological Association. She was appointed this February. Mary was formerly Vice President, Publishing - Humanities, STM and Dissertations at ProQuest. Many undergraduates these days are majoring in psychology which is a diverse discipline, grounded in science, but with nearly boundless applications in everyday life. I was interested to learn that APA was founded in July 1892 at Clark University. Its first president was G. Stanley Hall and it began with 31 members. After World War II, it expanded and grew quickly. Today, APA is the world’s largest association of psychologists, with 54 divisions and more than 134,000 researchers, educators, clinicians, consultants and students as its members. The awesome Linda Beebe was one of my favorite APA friends. Linda was retired Senior Director, PsycINFO and she retired in December 2012 and is into quite a few new endeavors according to LinkedIn. I am positive that Mary Sauer-Games will be an equally good friend! Congratulations, Mary! http://www.apa.org/

Moving right along, when I was poking around the APA Website, I noticed that there was a link to an article in the Huffington Post called “An Olympian’s Happiness Is No Different From Yours” which caught my eye because of the recent Olympics and all that. And also because the incredible

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Letters to the Editor

Send letters to <kstrauch@comcast.net>, phone or fax 843-723-3536, or snail mail: Against the Grain, MSC 98, The Citadel, Charleston, SC 29409. You can also send a letter to the editor from the ATG Homepage at http://www.against-the-grain.com.

Dear Editor:

I hope this note finds you well. I was delighted to see the December 23, 2013 Against the Grain article entitled “Massachusetts Launches Multitype Library eBook Pilot Project.” (http://www.against-the-grain.com/2013/12/massachusetts-launches-multitype-library-ebook-pilot-project)

We are so proud of our friends at the Massachusetts Library System. They have been a great resource to the eRead Illinois project from the beginning. Baker & Taylor has also been a true partner to us throughout this project in serving the diverse needs of developing a shared collection for Illinois school, special, academic, and public libraries. Illinois libraries have a strong commitment to resource sharing statewide and we are excited to continue this tradition through eRead Illinois.

Thank you for your thorough article and the mention of the Reaching Across Illinois Library System and the eRead Illinois project. The eRead Illinois project is funded through a grant from the Illinois Secretary of State Jesse White through the Illinois State Library. If you have any other questions or need more information about eRead Illinois, I would be happy to speak with you.

I look forward to further articles on the important strides being made to close the conversation gap between publishers, vendors, and librarians.

Sincerely,
Veronda J. Pitchford
Project Director, eRead Illinois
Director, Membership Development and Resource Sharing, Reaching Across Illinois Library System

<veronda.pitchford@raillibraries.info>
http://www.raillibraries.info

Rumors

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Nobel-pursuing scholar, Donna Jacobs’ column is called “Gross National Happiness” (this issue, p.50) and is a discussion of Alice Munro (Too Much Happiness) who won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 2013 and the Centre for Bhutan Studies which Donna learned about from a running buddy. The Kingdom of Bhutan, is a landlocked country in South Asia located at the eastern end of the Himalayas.

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/valerie-alexander/in-olympians-happiness-is_b_4801042.html
http://www.bhutanstudies.org/bi/about-us/

Have you seen these articles on the ATG NewsChannel?

Occam’s Reader Project Tackles eBook ILL — by Paula J Hane — A partnership called the Occam’s Reader Project, comprising Texas Tech University, the University of Hawaii at Mānoa, and the Greater Western Library Alliance (GWLA), has announced that they have entered into an agreement with Springer to run a year-long pilot program with GWLA’s 33 members, focused on eBook interlibrary loans (ILL). — http://www.against-the-grain.com/2014/02/atg-original-occams-reader-project-tackles-ebook-ill/.


ATG Interviews Mary Graham, Vice President of the Charleston Metro Chamber of Commerce — by Tom Gilson and Katina Strauch — Does Mary see “bookless” libraries as eventually replacing existing facilities? — http://www.against-the-grain.com/2014/02/atg-interviews-mary-graham-vice-president-of-the-charleston-metro-chamber-of-commerce/
and clandestine visits to reserve rooms and copy copyright and said so. They declared that would violate the publisher also warned users about copying for customers. In the early pages, in bold print, which they could, for a fee, create mailing lists data and produced it on the computer from illegible by the curve created by the binding. pencil the entries that didn’t reproduce correctly, for photocopying. Most likely the kid had to of local phone books and unwieldy, especially $400.00 each year. It was as thick as a couple source for this information.

The directory wasn’t cheap, costing at least $400.00 each year. It was as thick as a couple of local phone books and unwieldy, especially for photocopying. Most likely the kid had to pencil the entries that didn’t reproduce correctly, illegible by the curve created by the binding.

The publisher painstakingly collected the contents. They declared that would violate the law or authority standing in for the law — once or twice. These were in pre-Internet times, which may as well be prehistoric. What I got caught for probably wouldn’t be as carefully watched these days.

One faux move was to allow an entrepreneur-consultant or wholesaler who is interested in improving and/or expanding your position in the U.S. library market.

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if you are a publisher, vendor, product developer, merchandiser, consultant or wholesaler who is interested in improving and/or expanding your position in the U.S. library market.

Watch on Publisher’s Row:
Google Book Settlement
In a lifetime in libraries I’ve only run up against the law or authority standing in for the law — once or twice. These were in pre-Internet times, which may as well be prehistoric. What I got caught for probably wouldn’t be as carefully watched these days.

One faux move was to allow an entrepreneurial student to use rolls of quarters to photocopy sections of a local business directory. He was creating a direct mailing list of potential customers, and this book, thick and full of addresses, well-organized and thorough, was the only source for this information.

The directory wasn’t cheap, costing at least $400.00 each year. It was as thick as a couple of local phone books and unwieldy, especially for photocopying. Most likely the kid had to pencil the entries that didn’t reproduce correctly, illegible by the curve created by the binding.

The publisher painstakingly collected the data and produced it on the computer from which they could, for a fee, create mailing lists for customers. In the early pages, in bold print, the publisher also warned users about copying contents. They declared that would violate copyright and said so.

To protect misuse the publisher made surprise and clandestine visits to reserve rooms and copy centers of library subscribers to police abuse of their directory. If they saw a violation they would simply hand the offender a cease and desist letter.

Of course that kid got caught and handed me the letter for advice on what to do. I didn’t say much, just shrugged my shoulders, but ever more I thought — well, someone means business. This thought has stayed with me, twenty years or more, until today.

Recently, we read that on Friday, November 14th, U.S. Circuit Court Denny Chen ruled in favor of Google Inc in its court battle with the Author’s Guild on the Google Book Settlement. The judge ruled in favor of Google that complete scanning of 20 million library books out-of-print yet in copyright was transformative under Fair Use rules of current law.

Judge Chen did not buy the plaintiff’s argument that Google broke the law by not getting permission from copyright holders to scan their works cover to cover into their databases. He decided the random snippets, produced from a keyword search, did not violate the author’s right to ownership of said snippet.

Judge Chen used friend of the court filings — from librarians, researchers, and other book readers that today we need this full-text indexing of library books to use them for research, entertainment, and other bookish uses.

The news media describes our reaction as one of joy. Larry Page’s brainiac idea of scanning all of the library books of his alma mater, the University of Michigan, into Google’s millions of computers — using an equally versatile scanning machine that Page himself timed and motioned into a 40-minute cycle to photograph the average library book — thrilled librarians all over the world who did not have Web access to such a large collection. The dozen or so big libraries that joined also contributed their special content and in return got a digital copy and the snippets database. All they had to do was house Google scanners (staff and machines).

Then wait a couple of years for the lawsuit to settle. Of course, no one on the Google side of things won the right to have a cover-to-cover database of books from time immemorial until that point, yet to be determined, when this second electronic copy falls outside copyright. This reading suggests the growth of the database is limited by a library’s reluctance these days to buy print copies. Google could continue by buying books, but this may be too bold a move if it is directed at publishers only.
Interview — Jim O’Donnell

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seeing each other catching up a little bit and making a lunch date and doing the lubrication that makes the university work, even when the purpose of the meeting was in a large measure me doing the same thing with that particular group. If you suddenly imagine the “Super MOOC University of the World” with professors teaching in their bathrobes from their cabins in Vermont and the administrative staff on a space station orbiting the planet, you would at least have to find different ways to work on trust, and we’re only at stage one of doing that.

ATG/TG: Something’s obviously going to be lost in that setting.

JO’D: Facebook helps, but it’s not the answer.

ATG/TG: Well, Jim, thank you very much. We really appreciate you taking the time out of your schedule here at the conference.

JO’D: It’s always a pleasure to be here down in Charleston with Katina and her retinue and assembly. This conference is one of the most extraordinary assemblages of smart people, and I like to go places where there are smart people, so it is always fun to be here.

ATG/TG: Thank you very much.

JO’D: Thank you.

Rumors

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And while we are on the subject of baseball, have you read Bill Bryson’s One Summer: America, 1927 (Doubleday, 2013)? There are some great Babe Ruth stories among other fascinating things. The book is so chock full of data that it’s worth reading more than once!

Along those lines, be sure and read the astute Nancy Herther’s article, “University Presses Facing ‘Enormous Tectonic Shift’ in Publishing” (this issue, p.12). There is collaboration going on! This article was originally posted online on the ATG NewsChannel. Did y’all meet Nancy in Charleston at the Conference last year? She said she was glad to get away from the Minnesota cold!

http://www.against-the-grain.com/

Speaking of scholarly communication, Myer Kutz edits engineering handbooks for Wiley, McGraw-Hill, and Elsevier and still gets good print royalties. Myer asks if everything is going electronic, why are publishers still making print versions available? Another question is, why and where are the print books being printed and bought? Could it be that electronic counterparts are helping the sales of print? (This issue, p.57.)

Speaking of print versus digital, I have to agree with Bob Holley who mourns the loss of the print edition of College & Research Libraries (this issue, p.59). It seems to me that it is much easier to avoid reading digital editions than print editions. It’s the push/pull phenomenon.

Speaking of reading, several of us are wondering about the reading of virtual versus print content and what this does to comprehension and literacy of digital natives who are largely our library undergraduate population these days. Mark Herring (see p.50) and Tony Horava have both written about this in earlier issues of ATG.

With this issue, we have a new column “Digital Conversations – Libraries, Learning, and Literacy,” by the astute and alert Paul Chilsen and Todd Kelley of Carthage College. Quoting Marc Prensky who coined the term “digital native,” “by the time students reach their early 20s, they have spent 10,000 hours playing video games, sent and received 200,000 email and instant messages, but have allotted just 5,000 hours to reading books.” (See the new column, this issue, p.44.)

To balance the reading scales, be sure and read Raymond Walser’s “Browsing on the Bayou” (see p.37) about bookstores in New Orleans. Not to mention Tom Leonhardt’s “You Are What You Read” (see p.46). Do you have a record of everything that you have ever read?

The industrious Ramune Kubilius has compiled the first series of reports from the 2013 Charleston Conference (see p.64) continued on page 28.
Interview — Kari Paulson

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against the grain / february 2014

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much resistance in colleges and universities

SelfPub 2.0

above) wrote the report on

and you will notice that Tony Horava (see above) wrote the report on

library collections, where do you see things going in the next five or ten years? Obviously eBooks are going to be a big part of it, but what other developments do you see? Is there a place for print, for example, what do you think?

KP: Absolutely. Print will continue to have a place. There will continue to be, in some cases, a preference for print. I think print will work better for some content types more than others. When we talk about “E versus P,” I don’t think it’s really a “versus,” I think it’s about “E and P,” and just like different models serve different content better in “E,” different formats serve different content better overall. We know libraries have challenges around space. We know they have challenges around budget. The print and the “E” really supplement each other. The “E” can make the print much more valuable by making it more discoverable or more “scannable,” and the print will often provide a more immersive reading experience.

ATG/TG: One of the things that came up when we were talking to Stephen Bell earlier: we asked him how, because he presented this morning and talked about this notion of serendipity and just happening upon things, we asked him, and I wanted to ask you, how does that translate into the eBook space? How can people just “happen” upon eBooks like they do on the shelf in a library, just “Oh, I didn’t even know it was there, and there it is!”

How does that happen in the eBook space?

KP: We’re seeing it happen now with eBooks in the demand-driven acquisition model. For example, I just came from a session, “Ebooks Down Under,” and there were a couple of Australian universities that we work with who have been doing DDA for eight years now. The number of titles they can expose to their users with the “just-in-time” delivery model behind it means that the students can pass their eyes over a greater number of resources. So, the serendipity of stumbling upon something that the library wouldn’t have otherwise made available to them or discoverable to them and the ability to micro-transact means that the library can expose more things than they may not otherwise afford in their core collection or their collection building environment, than they can through these other mechanisms. So, that is one example of how that is happening.

ATG/AJ: So, as you expand your formats, do you see your platform as a supplement to or a complement to the current discovery engines? A lot of places have moved into these big discovery engines just to give that serendipity, but it almost sounds like, as you expand beyond simply eBooks, that might be what you’re aiming towards with this innovative business model.

KP: Discovery and PDA or DDA are actually perfect for one another because it is a wider breadth of content and the ability to micro-transact or to make things available just at that second.

ATG/AJ: I think it is very exciting.

KP: It is exciting. In this session, there were some really fantastic stats, and both of these universities are spending 88 and 90% of their acquisition budgets electronically. We don’t see that happening as frequently here in North America, but it is moving in that direction. The kinds of changes in behaviors and the different ways in which we are able to make this content available are exciting, and the stats are starting to flow from that now.

ATG/TG: So, you are seeing usage stats that support this kind of purchasing model?

KP: Right. There was a statistic presented in this session about the books that were purchased in this way (through DDA). 98 or 99% of these books continued to have usage post purchase. We haven’t seen these kinds of usage stats across preselected print content before.

ATG/AJ: Actually, research shows about 40% of the approval plans models never get use. Whereas with PDA, we know there’s one user already because that’s the person who is requesting it. And statistics show that something that someone has requested has a much greater chance of being used again.

KP: Right. So, it’s a combination. These books are more discoverable so they are being found more often, and what’s being acquired is absolutely tied to what’s needed. There are some interesting statistics coming out, and I think we still have so much to learn. The stats that came out of this presentation were absolutely encouraging and tell us that some of the things we’re doing, we’re doing right.

ATG/TG: I think what we normally end the interview with is what I kind of refer to as a trick question, but it’s really not. If you were sitting in Albert’s chair or sitting in my chair what question would you ask yourself?

KP: That’s a tough one. What question would I ask myself? I might just set this up to make it really easy (laughing).

ATG/AJ: What are your challenges?

KP: I think we are in a challenging environment as we’re shifting, print to “E”; when you hear of libraries spending 90% of their budget on electronic resources, that is a big shift, and there’s a disruption associated with it. It wouldn’t be so hard if we could just take this thing and flip it over and there was no change in behavior, but we see hiccups through this transition. The biggest challenge is to understand. When you’re looking at short-term data and trying to understand what that means long-term, it is a challenge. It’s something that we have to continue to pay attention to. We need to keep looking at what’s happening in the immediate term, but we have to understand it in the context of the longer-term. We don’t have that many years of experience with eBooks, but it’s growing. Now, both eLibrary and EBL have been around about 12 years. So, it’s not an excuse to say we don’t know. We have to really make sure we do know and that we are taking the time to understand, both within our world, but also within an industry as a whole. How is this impacting the libraries? How is this impacting publishers? We are a community, we have an ecosystem here, and we all play our part in maintaining a healthy environment.

ATG/TG: We all have a responsibility to gather the data and share it so that these kinds of decisions can be made in the most effective and efficient way for our users and for our budgets and for so on.

KP: Right. So that we’re not looking at it just from within our silo, we really have to understand how our behavior and what we’re saying with our data impacts the environment as a whole. And that is a challenge. We couldn’t hire enough data analysts [laughing] to solve that completely. The challenge is prioritizing that and making sure we don’t jump to conclusions.

ATG/TG: Kari, we really appreciate you taking the time to come over and talk to us. We’ve learned a lot, and it’s been a lot of fun and, again, I want to thank you for doing this. It’s been great.

KP: It’s been my pleasure. Thank you.

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and you will notice that Tony Horava (see above) wrote the report on

SelfPub 2.0. Since self-publishing is currently not vetted, there is much resistance in colleges and universities

to purchasing this type of material. There is an opportunity for libraries to vet this body of material which is doing nothing but growing!

Speaking of vetting self-published material, check out “Assuming the Risk for Your Own eBook” which gives a general overview of the publishing process and the peaks and valleys that are necessary to get something out there. The Data Conversion Laboratory, Inc. (DCL) has many resources available on this topic. Did you meet the vivacious Laura Dawson of Bowker, and one of the coauthors of this white paper in Charleston?

http://www.dclab.com/resources/whitepapers-content-strategy

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<http://www.against-the-grain.com>
literate bemusement but with some biting social commentary, too, when called for.

I am dismayed at how poor my recall is of most of the books in my loose-leaf catalog but am pleased at how many memories are connected to either individual entries or a whole year’s worth that remind me of a phase of my life long past. The third book that I read in 1963 happened to be the first book I read as a soldier. I was in Basic Training at Ft. Dix, New Jersey in the days when the draft swept up not only high school graduates in college or college dropouts, but college graduates. When I was seen reading Jane Eyre for pleasure (why else would I be reading a high school requirement as a buck private in the Army?), I must be a college man. Being a dropout and reading Jane Eyre only added to my status. You are what you read.

The next year in fall 1964, I was a member of the 84th U.S. Army Band stationed in Fulda, West Germany. I was a trumpet player who owned a stack of Bob Dylan records and was thus suspect in the eyes of a group made up of professional musicians and those with music degrees from college. I had come from a combat outfit and had not been assigned to a band straight out of Basic Training. I spent more time in downtown Fulda drinking beer with my German friends than I spent socializing with my fellow musicians, soldiers, countrymen. But one day I was caught reading Thomas Pynchon’s V. Don’t ask me how I came to know about the book or the author, but I had bought a paperback copy of the book at the PX and liked it from page one. I was asked if I would let a colleague read it when I was finished (September 25, 1964), and thus it began circulating around the band and once again my status was bumped up a notch by a book. You are what you read, redux.

1965 was my last full year in the Army. I skied in the Vorarlberg in Austria that January and spent a week on leave in Spain that July. The 84th combined with two other Army bands and went to the Netherlands for a week to participate in a NATO Tattoo. And in between, I played music for a living and spent as much time as I could finding beer and making friends with some German families who helped me improve my German. And I had time to read and a wonderful Post Library to supply me with books. I read Schiller’s Maid of Orleans in English seven years before I read it in German along with G.B. Shaw’s version. I read The Screwtape Letters and discussed it with a preacher’s son. I discovered Willa Cather (Death Comes to the Archbishop, My Antonia) and Walker Percy (The Moviegoer). There are 49 books listed for that year, the most I was to read until 1971 when I was a grad student.

I may not have read as many books a year while in the Army, but as I look at what I read, including books by Max Shulman, Peter Devries, and Simenon thrown in for pure entertainment, I was really preparing myself to finish college and go on from there. It was not a conscious effort by any means, but what drove me to read those books is the same force that pushed me through college.

When a soldier gets short, that is, has six months left in the Army, it is the company commander’s duty to have a conversation with the short-timer.

“What will you do with your life then?”

“I’m going back to college, sir.”

“You are what you read.”

In this vein (no pun intended), note the interview with Jennifer Lohmann (p.31) who had an auction fundraiser for naming a character in one of her novels. Pretty cool!

I was fascinated by the recent Outsell “Information Management Trends and Benchmarks 2013” in this issue. Tom Gilson and I pored through this report and tried to delineate some “takeaways” for us academic
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librarians in light of all that is happening in our industry. I was especially struck by the truth of the “big data” takeaway — “Big data skills will become more important in the years to come. Because of the skill gap, professionals are not investing limited resources in content they do not understand.” (See this issue, p.18.) And we libraries have lots of big data — so much in fact that Dennis Brunning says that “we are headed toward data obesity.” (See p.8, 10.)

Speaking of which, the how-wonderful-that-he-is-talking-to-us Jim O’Donnell will be directing a panel in Charleston this year

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In a world of Pinterest and Instagram, Tumblr and Facebook, it is engaging graphics, not blocks of text or talking heads, that will allow us to communicate most effectively with our users.

With an emphasis on visual marketing, then, it makes sense that that about 70 percent of the ‘Texas Tech Libraries’ marketing is delivered online or digitally. What do they do?

• There are monitors throughout the Library displaying digital posters and videos
• They send HTML digital flyers via email to their 16 Personal Librarians who then share these with students and faculty as appropriate
• A rotator on the home page displays Library news
• Rotating wallpapers highlight services and events on the Library’s 250 public computers
• The Library also has contacts across campus who manage digital monitors within their own departments, colleges, or buildings who agree to host their digital posters.

And of course, the Libraries utilize social media extensively.

Texas Tech’s marketing efforts paid off with a 2013 John Cotton Dana Library Public Relations Award. In the next issue we will see some examples of what they did.

References

Monday, November 3 and half day on Tuesday the 4th by the School of Information and Library Science at UNC-Chapel Hill. We are quite excited about this collaboration! Also, don’t plan to leave Charleston too fast after the Conference because we are planning a luncheon-infused Ramp Session on Saturday after the Conference (12-4?) to discuss big issues! More coming soon! In the meantime, let us know any thoughts/suggestions/whatever please! Watch for more information soon at http://www.katina.info/conference/.
Notes from Langlois
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indeed upon moving beyond the already established foundations of regional library support to something more grounded, more stable, and ultimately more unassailable than what has gone before. If we cannot fashion a measured solution to the basic question of how do we keep this thing going, the citizens of Curry County will be without library services.

That libraries need to do a better job of marketing is not news. That we need to incorporate advocacy as an ongoing, daily facet of our service delivery is not news. How we accomplish this is a more opaque question.

For us, the first steps will be to disband the independent districts and form a single county system. Far easier said than done. The political canyon that exists just between Langlois and Port Orford, thirteen miles apart, is enormous. In recent years the two schools in Langlois were closed and merged with Port Orford; this has left a bitter taste in the mouths of Langlois residents, and that toxic legacy will make it very difficult to accept the idea of combining just these two districts. Port Orford’s tax rate is lower; persuading their voters to approve a new district with a higher rate may prove impossible. Add to this the idea that north county, already convinced that the officials in the county seat of Gold Beach ignore or conveniently forget this neck of the woods, might ever be persuaded to join forces with the rest of the county, and — well, you get the picture.

This will require a ballot measure. Voters will have to approve it. Talk with many here, and they’ll tell you it’s impossible. The challenge for the likes of me is to demonstrate that if they don’t, everyone suffers.

As noted earlier, simply forming a county system isn’t a guarantee of success. Just because Hood River and Jackson Counties re-opened doesn’t assure survivability. We need to grow beyond being a unified system, and beyond understanding ourselves to be libraries in the traditional, historical sense. We need to re-invent ourselves yet again.

Do not misunderstand me. I remain committed to the core values of librarianship. I spent thirty years as a book vendor and serials agent before becoming a librarian, and I still have to pause when someone asks me what I do for a living without answering, “I’m a bookman.” To change into what we must re-shape ourselves to be is not to abandon what we have been or where we come from, but to re-affirm those values while embracing new ones.

Cynics might also read personal ambition into this, but they are mistaken. My goal is not to build a fiefdom within this obscure little corner of the state — the country — the world — with Langlois as its center. My goal is to ensure that Langlois continues to have a library at all; one that reflects the interests, concerns, and virtues of its odd, quirky, and fundamentally wonderful little constituency.

My job is to secure this Library’s funding and support. My job is to steer this district to its future. Ultimately, my job may be to put myself out of a job. Sustainability is about the institution, not the individual — and besides, getting there is a journey unlikely to be achieved in my lifetime. In my next column I’ll talk more about what I think the coming versions of the Langlois Public Library might just look like.

Back Talk
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online to NYU’s Digital Studio for specialized teaching support.

Conclusion

NYU’s libraries have the overall goal of providing excellent equivalent library services to its students and teachers, irrespective of their location on the globe. Since there are now branch campuses in Abu Dhabi and Shanghai, in addition to the main campus in NYC, this is both a wonderful aspiration and a source of great challenge. It is a wonderful goal because it says to the students and staff that their library experiences should be equal and familiar on whichever campus they might find themselves in the future. But it also says to the parents and government officials paying for the educations of local students that their investment is well spent, that their sons and daughters are being treated equally.

But this goal also poses great challenges. Culturally these three locations, beyond the shared academic functions they pursue, have little in common. Linguistically, they are different. Their histories are different. Their core values come from radically different sets of experience. The students in Shanghai come from near 30 different countries. They eat and dress differently. Although all bureaucracies have much in common, the specifics of how things are supposed to get done differ. So, those who work in places like Shanghai have to be flexible when finding the right balance between how things are done in Manhattan and how the local people expect things to be done. For me, it has been exhausting at times but overall a lot of fun. Besides, the food is better in Shanghai.

The Final Question

As I have gone through this experience, time and again the same question has come to my mind, since we can meet so many of the needs of students without all the bricks and mortar or the arm’s length access to the millions of volumes that I enjoyed at the seven other universities where I worked or studied: how much of all that is needed? In the print world, I have always stuck to the dictum that ownership is the fastest form of access, and therefore I loved huge libraries with as many bound books and journals as could be purchased. But now, I wonder if quite modest physical surroundings (but cooled in the summer and heated in the winter) with immediate access to millions of electronic resources and the sort of delayed access enjoyed by NYUSH students to the huge printed archives of the world wouldn’t be just as good.

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And returning to Oscar Wilde and London, be sure and notice the picture in this issue, p. 1 of Mike the incredible MarkWITH. I know for sure that Mike was at the very first Charleston Conference with twenty other people! What a guy!

Speaking of another what a guy, we told y’all about Bill Potter’s retirement on the ATG NewsChannel a few weeks ago. Did you see it? The incomparable Bill Potter is retiring as University Librarian and Associate Provost at the University of Georgia Libraries this August. What a career Bill has had! Dr. William Gray Potter is a former editor of College and Research Libraries, has served on the boards of the Association of Research Libraries, OCLC, and Solinet and is a past-president of the Library & Information Technology Association. Bill holds a doctorate in Library Science and Information Technology, as well as Master’s degrees in English and in Library Science, from the University of Illinois. He earned a bachelor’s degree in English from Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville. He has been head of the Libraries at UGA since 1989. Bill was an early adopter of technologies and digitization and was one of the main architects of GALILEO. He spoke at the Charleston Conference many years ago. I can’t find exactly when right now but it must have been 1990 or 1991 that Bill was a keynote speaker. I remember that he stayed at the Charleston Place Hotel which had just opened in November 1986 amid many lawsuits and hoopla! I also remember discussing the germ of an idea, a publication for Charleston Conference regulars, the idea was to become – ta da – Against the Grain! “I’m retiring because I want to,” Bill says. “I’ve been doing the same thing for 25 years. I’d like to think about doing something different.” Have fun in retirement, Bill! Bill: http://www.against-the-grain.com/2014/02/rumors-from-the-atg-newschannel-22414/

Against the Grain just keeps on truckin’! This is our 26th year! And the Conference’s 34th! And we have plenty of new columnists and initiatives happening! Coming up — Tim Devenport (EDIHUR and ICEDIS) are going to keep us updated on events in the UK. Tim is planning a meeting in conjunction with the 2014 Charleston Conference. And I believe that SSP and perhaps ITHAKA are considering sessions as well. When it rains, it pours!