

2014

## And They Were There: Reports of Meetings

Ramune K. Kubilius

*Northwestern University*, [r-kubilius@northwestern.edu](mailto:r-kubilius@northwestern.edu)

Follow this and additional works at: <http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/atg>



Part of the [Library and Information Science Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Kubilius, Ramune K. (2017) "And They Were There: Reports of Meetings," *Against the Grain*: Vol. 26: Iss. 2, Article 42.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.7771/2380-176X.6727>

This document has been made available through Purdue e-Pubs, a service of the Purdue University Libraries. Please contact [epubs@purdue.edu](mailto:epubs@purdue.edu) for additional information.

# And They Were There

## Reports of Meetings — 33rd Annual Charleston Conference

Issues in Book and Serial Acquisition, “Too Much is Not Enough!” — Francis Marion Hotel, Embassy Suites Historic Downtown, Courtyard Marriott Historic District, Addlestone Library, College of Charleston, and School of Science and Mathematics Building, Charleston, SC — November 6-9, 2013

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

**Column Editor’s Note:** Thank you to all of the *Charleston Conference* attendees who agreed to write short reports that highlight sessions they attended at the 2013 conference. All attempts were made to provide a broad coverage of sessions, and notes are included in the reports to reflect known changes in the session titles or presenters, highlighting those that were not printed in the conference’s final program (though some may have been reflected in the online program). Please visit the *Conference Website*, <http://www.katina.info/conference>, for the online conference schedule from which there are links to many presentations’ PowerPoint slides and handouts, plenary session videos, and conference reports by the *2013 Charleston Conference* blogger, **Donald T. Hawkins**. Visit the conference blog at: <http://www.katina.info/conference/charleston-conference-blog/>. The *2013 Charleston Conference Proceedings* will be published in partnership with *Purdue University Press* in 2014. — **RKK**

### WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 6, 2013 PRECONFERENCE

**SelfPub 2.0** — Presented by **Mitchell Davis**, Moderator (BiblioLabs); **Eleanor Cook** (East Carolina University); **Bill Gladstone** (Waterside Productions); **Deb Hoadley** (MA eBook Project); **Robert P. Holley** (Wayne State University School of Library & Information Science); **William Kane** (Wake Forest University); **Leslie Lees** (ebrary); **Michael Levine-Clark** (University of Denver); **Bob Nardini** (Ingram Library Services); **Matt Nauman** (YBP Library Services); **Cyril Oberlander** (SUNY College at Geneseo); **Joyce Skokut** (Ingram Library Services); **John Shearer** (UNC Press); **Charles Watkinson** (Purdue University Press)

Reported by: **Eleanor I. Cook** (Assistant Director for Discovery & Technology Services, Joyner Library, East Carolina University, Greenville, NC) <cooke@ecu.edu>

This preconference covered a range of angles reflecting upon the phenomenon known as self-publishing. Current trends were examined and predictions made. Here are a few highlights from a diverse set of speakers. The session was sponsored and conceived by the folks who run **BiblioLabs** and **BiblioBoard**. Papers from this preconference will be represented in the *Charleston Conference Proceedings* and another publication is also being spun off independently.

**Mark Sandler**, Director of the **Center for Library Initiatives (CLI)** for the **Committee on Institutional Cooperation (CIC)**, served as the first keynote speaker. **Sandler** made interesting observations about academic library collections, delivered with dry humor. He noted that **CIC**, which includes fifteen large research libraries, cooperates on many fronts and as far as he knows, holds the largest single toilet paper contract in the world. The **CIC** universities boast 108 Nobel laureates, and place a high value on research. There is a great deal of money to be spent keeping up with all this research, and there are plenty of enterprises just waiting to help them to do just that. **Sandler** notes that academic libraries are like giant reverse vending machines; they gather up not only the best

of the best, but pretty much everything else except perhaps the very worst publications.

So, what happens to academic library collecting when scholarly communication begins to spread itself all over the place on platforms and in formats not easily gathered up as before? There are so many new avenues of dissemination — such as Flickr, Hulu, and arXiv.org (among others). This is a whole world not yet captured by academic libraries. On top of this, over 40% of all new books today are *self-published*. Therefore, vast quantities of possibly relevant materials are not being vetted by research libraries that probably need review, and may deserve acquisition and preservation.

**Sandler** made a creative analogy which was one of his best take-aways. Academic libraries’ efforts to review, select, and promote scholarly content have, in the past, been like a mainstream grocery store inventory, which depends on national brands and low margins. These stores buy brands from outside suppliers that help convey value to the store. One might shop at Kroger and select brands such as Campbell’s, Del Monte, etc. (like libraries buying materials from **ProQuest**, **Elsevier**, **Oxford**, etc.) In the Whole Foods model, which includes specialty brands and high margins, the store brand conveys its own value. (Some traditional stores are copying this model as well.) In this model, the enterprise controls the process from the means of production through the distribution. Should academic libraries control the product from its inception? Can academic libraries bring order to chaos and help democratize scholarship? If not, we may see a continued co-dependence of big libraries, big research, and big publishers.

The second session was a panel with each presenter discussing libraries as publisher. Several projects were described. **John Sherer** from the **University of North Carolina Press** discussed a civil rights movement project which is **Mellon** grant-funded. They are collaborating with several **UNC** library departments on this. They view future monograph publishing in a completely new model. Many of their publications are open access now and will be more so in the future. The “information scarcity” model is no longer viable.

**Charles Watkinson** from the **Purdue University Press** described their two-pronged approach to the support of scholarly publishing. The press is part of the library at **Purdue**. Their PUP sector publishes branded, peer-reviewed works and their SPS sector provides publication opportunities for less formal works such as technical reports and conference proceedings. In fact, the *Charleston Conference Proceedings* are now published through this channel. He provided an example of how the **Purdue Library and Press** were able to save some transportation technical reports that were languishing in the hallway of a classroom building. These reports are now available digitally and are being sought after and used.

**Bill Kane**, Director of Digital Publishing at **Wake Forest University**, described a digital publishing initiative that he is heading up there. The publications are from the university community and draw from many disciplines and areas. Many of the publications are open access and/or print-on-demand. Since the university press focuses on Irish poetry as its specialty, digital publishing@Wake (<http://digitalpublishing.wfu.edu/>) provides additional opportunities for a variety of types of publishing.

The last member of the panel was **Cyril Oberlander**, the library director at **SUNY-Geneseo**. There, the library is actively supporting and publishing faculty publications and is supporting a textbook production program that is **SUNY**-wide. They were able to do this by reframing their technical services structure

*continued on page 71*



### Accoutrements and Accessories

[www.museumreplicas.com](http://www.museumreplicas.com) — A Website of purchasable replicas of historic items and articles, including a Steampunk collection. This site goes further than just clothes, into weapons, jewelry, gadgets, and décor items.

[www.blondeswan.com](http://www.blondeswan.com) — This is a site almost exclusively dedicated to hats of all kinds, of high-quality construction.

### Music

<http://www.steampunk-music.com/> — This would be the online music magazine for Steampunk. Their tag line says it all — “the Sound of a World that might have been.”

<http://www.abneypark.com> — Abney Park formed in Seattle and is a tasty blend of industrial and world music with Steampunk-flavored lyrics.

<http://www.thomasdolby.com> — Yes, that **Thomas Dolby**. After blinding us with science, he kept going with atmospheric music. His latest work is music for an immersive multi-player game, “A Map of the Floating City.”

<http://www.clockworkquartet.com/> — The members of the **Clockwork Quartet** vary in age from 13 to 28, according to their site which began as a multi-media project, with a graphic novel, art, and music. They specialize in ballads of an alternate England, tales of love, and revenge.

[www.professorelemental.com/fr\\_home.cfm](http://www.professorelemental.com/fr_home.cfm) — Hip-hop Steampunk. “Cup of Brown Joy” extols the virtues of tea and the pleasures of being heavily caffeinated.

### Boot-strap Creativity

Early Steampunk was much characterized by personal creation of gear and wardrobe to project the desired appearance.

<http://www.instructables.com/id/Steampunk/> — All sorts of different creators from around the world display their work and give step-by-step instructions that the reader can follow to make their own Steampunk devices and accoutrements.

### Public Events Associated with Steampunk

<http://www.craftster.org/forum/index.php?action=tags;sa=showtopics;tag=steampunk#axzz2cf2n11YA> — Craftster also has people posting their Steampunk creations with pictures and instructions.

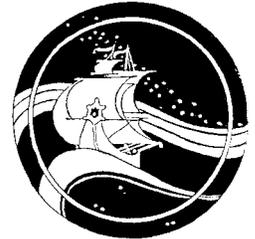
Gatherings of like-minded individuals.

[www.anachrocon.com](http://www.anachrocon.com) — Held in February in Atlanta, this is a gathering of around 1,000 Steampunk people, with informative panels and space to socialize in Steampunk fashion.

[www.steampunkworldsfair.com](http://www.steampunkworldsfair.com) — The World’s Fair, if it were Steampunk, which is held once a year in May in New Jersey.

### And Finally

[www.facebook.com/SteampunkSteampunk.com](https://www.facebook.com/SteampunkSteampunk.com) — Amusing feed of Steampunk tidbits, memes, couture, hairstyles, on a social networking feed, to keep your Steampunk spirits up and protect you from the daily monotony. 🐻



to assist with this. They appear to have a robust support mechanism with the development of a “Library Publishing Toolkit.”

The next panel was moderated by **Bob Nardini** from **Coutts** and focused on vendor services to self-publishing. **Michael Levine-Clark** (**University of Denver**) began the session by asking, “How radically will the scholarly book publishing landscape change in the next five years?” As it is now, librarians rely on others in the publishing and distribution sector to assist them with vetting content. The peer-review process, publishers, approval vendors, and eBook aggregators all have a hand in pre-selection of what libraries eventually acquire. The explosion in self-publishing is bound to have some effect on this. Will libraries want to provide access to self-published books? This is a trend we simply cannot ignore, but there are questions. If there are “good” academic books being self-published, then how do we find them? Scholars’ attitudes towards self-published materials may be changing, and if so, how will we change with them? It seems that niche scholarly areas could benefit from self-publishing opportunities. Another question raised is how to deal with established scholarly authors who write off-the-wall books on topics outside their established areas of expertise. An example: an electrical engineering professor who also publishes materials on holocaust denial.

**Matt Nauman** from **YBP Library Services** presented next. He noted that the heyday of the vanity press, while not totally over, is forever changed by the huge increases in self-publishing opportunities. He observed that self-publishing may be more about networking rather than book publishing, and that we need to monitor this and listen to what our customers want.

**Joyce Skocut** from **Ingram** presented next. She illustrated that self-publishing is indeed part of a huge iceberg where mainstream publishers represent only the tip. A number of famous authors started out with self-publishing. Many talented writers never can break through the rejection piles of the big companies but turn to self-publishing as an alternative. A number of successful self-published authors go on to get recognized by larger publishers once they have established a following. So why do authors opt for self-publishing? **Skocut** outlined a number of reasons. More control over the finished product, the ability to control marketing, direct use of social media, delivery faster to market, and design control issues all make self-publishing attractive. Of course the flip side to this is the author has to do all or much of the work, or employ author services companies to do pieces of it for them, which can be expensive.

However, with no publisher contract to deal with, the author makes all the money and can retain all the rights.

**Skocut** then went on to discuss librarians’ concerns about discovering these hidden gems. Vendors should work with their customers to determine criteria and expectations for both library collection development goals and end-reader interests. One concern is that a title might be discovered too late, but as one public library director was quoted, “If the work is good, it’s never too late to promote it.” In order to develop regional and subject profiles, better metadata needs to be collected earlier. She also mentioned a product called IngramSpark that her company was making available to independent publishers and self-publishing authors. While academic libraries are developing self-publishing support programs for scholarly works, public libraries have been a bit slower to go in this direction. However, a good example of a project developed by a public library was described. **Williamson County Library** in TN published a children’s book that helps “sell” the library and the proceeds go to the Friends of the Library.

**Deb Hoadley** was the final presenter of this panel. She serves as the eBook Project Lead for the **Massachusetts Library System**. She discussed some of the challenges and opportunities presented when trying to put together a system-wide eBook collection. A particular challenge she mentioned was restrictive licensing that makes it difficult to obtain access to certain kinds of content.

The next panel was moderated by **Mitchell Davis** and included **Bob Holley** (**Wayne State University**), **Eleanor Cook** (**East Carolina University**), and **Leslie Lees** (**ebrary**), who discussed “Finding Balance in Humanities and Social Sciences Acquisition.” **Bob Holley** began the session by again reiterating the vast numbers of self-published titles that are being produced each year. **Bob’s** remarks focused on academic subject matter that had niche interest, was highly collectable and important but hard to find in mainstream sources. An example he gave was the memoirs of Vietnam veterans. He outlined the advantages and disadvantages of going the self-publishing route for these kinds of scholarly works. He agreed that libraries to this point have not been able to easily identify these kinds of materials for acquisition. **Eleanor Cook** built her comments on **Bob’s** and agreed that, generally, academic libraries have ignored self-published materials except within the purview of special and regional collections. Within that area, self-published works are quite common and sought after, since many genealogical materials are published in this fashion and they are a linchpin of regional collections. Another dilemma faced is when identifying faculty authors for local recognition. Many libraries hold such events and tend to recognize publications that are peer-reviewed and/or

*continued on page 72*