2015

Graphic Recordings from the 2015 Charleston Conference

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by **Leah Hinds** (Assistant Director, Charleston Library Conference)
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The **Charleston Library Conference** is excited to report that **Greg Gersch**, a graphic recorder from the Washington, DC area, created works of art from information presented in sessions at the conference on Thursday, November 5. We are thankful for a Platinum Sponsorship from **bepress** (*http://www.bepress.com/*) that made this possible. We also thank **Melanie Dolechek**, Executive Director of the **Society for Scholarly Publishing**, for her invaluable assistance onsite providing guidance and industry-specific information to **Greg** as he worked and asking questions and talking with attendees.

Greg used large canvases, approximately 8x4 feet, to capture the main ideas and takeaways from the conference through graphic art. He recorded the plenary presentations from **Courtney Young** (Head Librarian and Professor of Women's Studies, **Pennsylvania State University** and 2014-2015 **American Library Association (ALA)** President) and **Jim O'Donnell** (University Librarian, **Arizona State University**) as they were presented live on stage. During the afternoon breakout sessions he was stationed in the lobby area collecting notes from attendees and asking questions to summarize their "Aha!" moments.
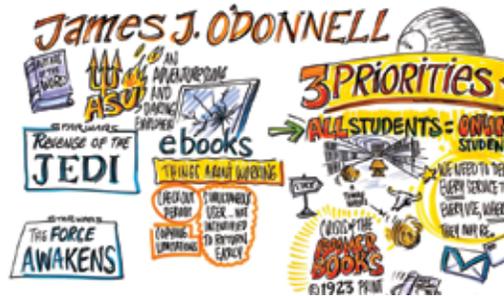
Larger images are available on the **Charleston Conference** Website (*http://charlestonlibraryconference.com*) and for more detail, but you can see some of the excerpts below.

And the ultimate answer to the question, "Where Do We Go From Here?"

"The **Charleston Conference** has always placed emphasis on innovative and out-of-the-box thinking. This year we are going to try using a graphic recorder who will listen to speakers and transcribe the Eureka moments and insights visually. This should be perfect for the **35th Charleston Conference**," said Conference Founder and Convener **Katina Strauch**. "We would like to thank bepress for sponsoring this exciting new approach. We will be sending a digital image of each of **Greg Gersch's** masterpieces to the attendees following the conference and hope that this will serve as one of the touchstones to continue conversations long after the conference is over."

These games, especially Adventure and Trek, used a lot of printing paper, so it was wise to ask the computer lab person if it would be alright to play them. I can remember feeling that I'd really stepped into the future when the lab got a video terminal which presented what before had been printer output in beautiful green characters. Now one could explore **Will Crowther's** creation without regard for the amount of fanfold printer paper one was piling up behind the terminal.

Many *Against the Grain* readers will remember CompuServe, America Online, and other early commercial computing services. A CompuServe ID was a mark of the forward-looking person. Originally seven digits in length, later eight, nine, and ultimately ten digits, these IDs were generated in advance. Starting in 1989, CompuServe enabled email access using the ID in the form of "xxxxx.xxxx@compuserve.com."

It was through such vehicles that we could first explore the unregulated world of the bulletin board. The extent to which such communications were assumed to be anonymous, or nearly so, had an influence on the way some people would express themselves. A person might adopt a persona, and establish it as a comfortable "*nomme de plume digitale*." Some people felt empowerment in the discovery that they could actually, finally, be the stinkers they really were.

As deep as the cesspool of human depravity and criminality is the Internet's capacity to harbor it. In the libraries we've struggled with the tensions between our ideal of providing access and providing a protective environment in which people can learn and grow in safety. I've seen reminders on placards near publicly accessible computers, there to remind people, for example, not to enter certain types of information into a Web page's text entry form. In the restrooms of these same libraries, we might find a reminder, taped to the mirror, that washing your hands helps prevent the spread of flu. Such efforts are well intentioned, but perhaps demonstrate in their simplicity an inability to take on the multi-faceted, difficult domains of cybersecurity or public health policy.

I think the challenges of cybersecurity are exactly what we should take on in our schools and universities. We have Drivers Education programs because untrained people can cause grievous harm to themselves or others behind the wheel. I'm not suggesting that one ought to need a license to surf the Web, but might we not at least include in our curriculum content designed to help people understand the nature of the network, its characteristics and the threats it can carry, and how to navigate it so as not to endanger themselves or others?

I have sometimes observed in Bibliographic Instruction a tendency to focus upon the operation of a particular interface rather than on the broadly applicable underlying information science inherent in search and retrieval across all interfaces. At most, and only perhaps, an explanation of Boolean operators might be provided (and described as "advanced" searching — perhaps because that is what the interface calls it). But the difference between "And" and "Or?" Not so often. And left aside are proximity operators, wildcard searches, even the usefulness of examining a search result set to understand why particular records were returned. "Well, most people don't want to bother with all that," I've been told. Ok — maybe it's not our jobs to elevate people's understanding of how things really work.

But we ought to be able to show anybody what a sophisticated modern spear phishing attack looks like. We can promote the idea that complex passwords, changed at reasonable intervals, are simply what it takes to be a responsible citizen of the net. We can suggest that a Friend is something more than someone you Like and who Likes you back on Facebook. And as ever and always, we can create an environment in which it's not an imposition to ask people to think.