November 2013

And They Were There -- Reports of Meetings -- ARL National Conference and NEDCC Workshop

Editor

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Recommended Citation
Editor (2003) "And They Were There -- Reports of Meetings -- ARL National Conference and NEDCC Workshop," Against the Grain: Vol. 15: Iss. 4, Article 26.
DOI: https://doi.org/10.7771/2380-176X.4493

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individual users to violate the law by copying entire works. However, with most libraries under the gun financially, it would be unreasonable to expect librarians to remove those machines or police their use. At some point you have to believe in the good of people and learn to accept that those who wish to violate the law are going to find a way to do so.

It is important to note that current copyright law is being written to protect corporate holders of copyright. Corporations have introduced, promoted and pressed Congress to pass laws favorable to them, but not especially for the individual author.

**ATG: What’s going on with Contentville, Copyright Clearance Center, etc?**

**TB: Contentville** went out of business, mainly because of copyright problems with writers. The Union is proceeding with its own royalty program — Publishers Rights Clearinghouse. A writer can register works and those wishing to post them to sites can get permission and pay a royalty through PRC. It works like ASCAP and BMI really.

**ATG: What does the Union think about Amazon selling used books? Do publishers share your opinion?**

**TB:** The NWU has no position, to the best of my knowledge, on Amazon.com. I personally wish that readers who shop at their independent new or used book stores. Access to small press books, books with small printing runs or non-mainstream content will cease to be available (and possibly to even be published) without small, local independent store making them available to the consumers. I also believe, personally, that an integral part of the culture of literature, reading and enjoying the company of other lovers of books, is kept alive by the owners of used book stores who read their lives recycling books and other reading material which would otherwise be forgotten, lost or sent to the landfill. (Disclaimer: my husband owns and operates a used book store here in the Pioneer Valley of Massachusetts, as does the interviewer).

**ATG: What are some of the future plans, issues, projects for the Union?**

**TB:** The NWU is currently pursuing two major national campaigns. One is to get AOL/Time-Warner to offer fair contracts. The second is a legislative campaign. In the last Congress, **Representative John Conyers** of Michigan introduced a bill which would protect freelancers, including artists as well as authors, by allowing them to collectively bargain. This is a right we artists, writers and other creative independent contractors do not now have, because we are not traditional employees and do not create in a traditional “workplace” for the same employer. The struggle with AOL/Time-Warner, an entity which encompasses many publishers and other entertainment and intellectual companies (and growing all the time), underlines the need for the **Conyers Bill**, which will be reintroduced in the current legislative session. Currently, every writer negotiates separately with every publisher and editor. The power of writers as a collective bargaining unit would enhance their ability to protect their rights, including their right to make a living.

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**And They Were There**

**Reports of Meetings — ACRL National Conference and NEDCC Workshop**

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**Learning to Make a Difference**

ACRL 11th National Conference, April 2003, Charlotte, North Carolina

Report by Cassandra Osterloh (University of New Mexico)

With record-breaking attendance, the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) held its 11th National Conference in Charlotte, North Carolina this past April. “Learning to Make a Difference” was this year’s theme. With over 250 programs, workshops, and pre-conferences from which to choose the conference was both educational and invigorating. The conference theme was broad enough that every program seemed a good fit and the sessions I attended were informative and interesting. There were a few troublesome points — too many good programs running concurrently and virtually no sessions in fields such as cataloging, acquisitions, special collections, or preservation. Reference, instruction, collection development, and technology, however, were areas well represented.

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Keynote speaker Paul Duguid, a research specialist from the University of California, Berkeley addressed attendees on the library’s role as a community and the librarians’ relationships with their users. The luncheon keynote, Bill Ferris, former head of the National Endowment for the Humanities, spoke of the South and his love of libraries and librarians. He even brought along his guitar and serenaded the audience. The closing keynote speaker was Belle Wheelan, Secretary of Education for the Commonwealth of Virginia. She beseeched the audience to build on the strengths of one’s institution and make the library a place to go for more reasons than just for an assignment.

There was the usual vendor maze with free food, drinks, and other goodies as well as roundtables available with assigned topics and moderators. Some of the topics addressed the assessment of library instruction, the pros and cons of paper and electronic journals, the use of technology in library instruction, how to deal with student employees, library services for distance education students, working with faculty on plagiarism issues, recruiting young library professionals, and coping with budget reductions. The one hundred roundtables (fifty at a time), unfortunately, were scheduled at the same time as presentations and lunch which made it difficult to participate.

The poster sessions, however, were scheduled during the free time reserved for viewing the exhibits and gave everyone a quick glimpse at projects being done at various institutions. Some were very innovative (a virtual tour of new books with streaming video introductions by the author and interactive portions allowing students to ask questions of the author). Some were the usual suspects (this is how we do instruction — smile, teach to all learning styles, etc. or this is how we tested our Website — nothing new).

Since there were so many sessions and workshops from which to choose, I focused on teaching, learning, and technological issues while letting the others in my group attend different tracks. What follows are descriptions of some of the most outstanding sessions I attended.

One session that was very eye-opening was the session on making the library environment accessible. It demonstrated how a reader software (i.e., JAWS, Window Eyes) talks through a Website and how important the setup of the page is for those using that software. The demonstration included a “Bad” Website in which the software read through images with jumbled or meaningless names, tables that had no explanation for their purpose, and text-only options buried in the middle of the links and images. The “good” Website demo showed how proper placement of a text-only link or a skip to main content option can be less frustrating and less time consuming. It also demonstrated how proper ALT tags for both links and image names can lessen the frustration felt by the user. It is imperative we stay aware of how our Websites are viewed and used by all our users.

Three librarians from New Mexico State University presented the results of an interesting study in which they interviewed faculty who were heavy users of library instruction. They were asked why they thought the library was important and what they felt their students got out of the instruction. The faculty felt that students lack basic library skills, the students need library instruction to be successful in their academic careers, the instruction helped to “combat” the Internet, and that the students needed to know how to evaluate information and develop critical thinking skills. In these interviews, the faculty also revealed why they went to a librarian to teach their students these skills because: the librarian is the expert, the faculty see themselves as lifelong learners (learning alongside their students), and the librarian is seen as an “expert-witness.” The presentation provided interesting insight into how positively some faculty members view library instruction, the library, and the librarians.

There were also sessions on faculty-librarian collaborations and successful instruction endeavors. One such session from the University of Michigan presented a program about how the library collaborates with departments on campus such as the language resource center and the media department to put on an annual training sessions and discussions open to university faculty and staff or such topics as Web authoring, schol-

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early communication, plagiarism, the invisible Web, searching specific databases, etc.

Preservation Options In A Digital World: To Film or To Scan
Northeast Document Conservation Center (NEDCC) Workshop, May 20-23, 2003,
University of New Mexico

Report by Sharon A. Moynahan (University of New Mexico General Library)

Decision-making in today’s rapidly changing library world is fraught with uncertainty. Technologies and laws change so rapidly that today’s brilliant decision is tomorrow’s embarrassing mistake. From May 20 through May 23, a group of fifty librarians, library specialists, technical support people, archivists, and museum curators gathered for a workshop at the University of New Mexico. Sponsored by the Northeast Document Conservation Center (NEDCC), the program, “Preservation Options in a Digital World: To Film or To Scan,” featured experts in microfilming, digitization, program planning and the legal issues involved. While the majority of participants were from New Mexico and surrounding states, both coasts, the Midwest, and even New Zealand were represented.

The first day featured a summary of traditional microfilming and photographic reproduction used for preservation. Steve Dalton, Director, Field Service, for NEDCC, welcomed the participants and launched into a comparison of the advantages and disadvantages of microfilming. Components of cost along with factors to be considered in selecting items to be filmed rounded out the discussion. During the late morning and early afternoon, Wes Boongaarden, Preservation Officer of the Ohio State University Libraries examined the options for both microfilming and digitization along with the decision-making process in selecting the best method for different types of collections. Costs, standards for quality, delivery options, copyright law, and finding aids were discussed as components of good decisions for successful projects. The day ended with a presentation by Nancy Dennis, Director of Collections and Technology Services for the University of New Mexico, describing New Mexico’s successful statewide digitization initiative. Although packed with information, Day One proved to be just a warm-up for Day Two, which featured a comprehensive look at digitizing, including selecting the items for preservation and the nuts and bolts of the technology involved. Paul Conway, Director of Information Technology Services at Duke University, presented what felt like participants “really needed to know” about the digital landscape and later discussed the infrastructure needed to support digital projects. In between his two presentations, Steve Puglia, a Consultant for Image Constructors, LLC, stretched most of the participants’ comprehension of pixels, resolution, bit depth, color, and other specifications further then they would have believed possible. By the end of the day, it was apparent that good decisions were in the future.

However, it wasn’t really the end of the day. During the early evening, Mary Minow, Library Law Consultant, gave an overview of the legal issues of microfilming and digitization. The fact that digitizing constitutes “republishing” would likely interfere with some plans in the works at participants’ home institutions. International copyright agreements, changes in U.S. law, the Bono copyright extension act all impinge on the public domain, and add new challenges for librarians trying to stay within “fair use” guidelines. By the end of her presentation it was abundantly clear that the group had dozens of questions and not enough time. No one minded postponing dinner to the evening hours.

Day three was the Paul Conway show. He delved deeply into the relationship of producer, archive, and consumer. His discussion of the real costs of digitization projects (most of which are not connected to the actual imaging process) opened many eyes and probably caused some rethinking of projects in the works. Discussions of the move from “projects” (one-time initiatives, often grant funded) to a regular institutional program of preservation, as well as the costs of maintaining viable access in the face of constantly changing technology were comprehensive. Putting realistic budgets into grant proposals, with believable, well researched back-up data, was described as crucial to getting the outside funding that sustains most preservation projects.

Day four was a lagniappe aimed at the New Mexico institutions’ projects for preserving the state’s history. Paul Conway, Mary Minow, and Steve Puglia discussed the essentials of collaboration, again tackling technology choices, project management and legal issues.

Throughout the four days, innumerable sources for additional information were given to participants. It was soon apparent that, however extensive, this workshop was to be just the beginning of the learning process. Rather than suggesting a particular course to follow, the panelists prepared the fifty participants to examine the many options and factors involved in making good digital or microfilming preservation decisions.

Talk of the Trade

by Barry Fast (Deltabooks, 186 Cross Street, City Island, NY 10464; Phone: 718-885-9563) <barry0112@aol.com>

Oprah’s Perfect Solution

Oprah Winfrey’s wildly successful “Book Club” segment on her TV show made obscure authors famous, and propelled their novels to the top of the best seller lists. But Pulitzer Prize author Jonathan Franzen doomed the gravy train when heissed Oprah, saying he’d refuse to have his book, The Confessions, included in her club because her selections were not up to his literary standards. To the consternation of publishers and book lovers, Oprah took this withering criticism to heart, announcing she would no longer feature books on her show. Now she’s had a change of heart, but instead of risking more critical pronouncements from ungrateful authors, Oprah has come up with the perfect solution: Only dead authors will be featured on her show.

Academie Francaise Insists Gourmandise Must Wait Its Turn; Desperate French Petition Pope on Seven Deadly Sins

Even thought the Catholic Church has downgraded the seven deadly sins to the venal sin category, a French pressure group seems no reason to feel the slightest tinge of guilt when indulging in their favorite pastime, eating. The problem is that the French dictionary, compiled by the Academie Française, translates “gluttony” as “gourmandise.” In fact, there is no precise English language equivalent of “gourmandise,” which irritates French foodies—meaning practically everyone in France. They insist that this word exemplifies what is best about their food culture, a combination of “Athenian elegance, Roman luxury, and French delicacy” according to the eighteenth century food philosopher, Brillat-Savarin. The six other deadly sins (pride, avarice, lust, anger, envy and sloth) translate accurately into French, but a coalition of food societies and food writers complains that “gluttony” should be translated as “glauttonerie,” a more reproachful word. Led by historian Jean-Francois Fayard, they have demanded that the linguists who constantly revise and update the Academie Française-sponsored French dictionary, the official arbiter of the French language, immediately correct the flawed “glutony”/“gourmandise” translation, substituting “gluttonerie.”

However, the Academie Française linguists are now working on words starting with the letter M, and they refuse to disrupt their alphabetically ordered revisions. It could be years before they arrive at words starting with G. Mr. Fayard and his cohorts, refusing to take no for an answer, continued on page 101