

Maryanne Rusinak, Concordia University Chicago
ALA 2009 Annual Conference in Chicago
Summary of sessions attended

Academic Libraries and International Librarianship

ACRL User Services; Literacy and Learning *Speakers: Jay Jordan, President and CEO, OCLC; Beverly Lynch, Professor, Graduate School of Education & Information Studies, University of California-Los Angeles; Winston Tabb, Dean of University Library, The Johns Hopkins University; Robert Wedgeworth, Professor Emeritus, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign; Moderator, R.N. Sharma, Dean of the Library, Monmouth University.* Sponsored by the ACRL International Relations Committee.

It was a privilege to attend this historic conference of outstanding international librarians. Included were discussions of how libraries transcend national boundaries, the role of intellectual freedom, global library collaboration due to limited resources, OCLC as a global cooperative, and the lack of library access in at least 21 countries. Though there has been significant accomplishment in these areas, results indicate that there is a need to be more intentional in the formation of international councils, faculty appointments, fellowships for international librarians, and the establishment of worldwide minimum standards for academic libraries.

Diversity Currents: Redefining the Library in Political Context, the Danish Experience

ALA DIVERSITY *Speakers: Michel Steen-Hansen, Executive Director, Danish Library Association; Vagn Ytte Larsen, President, Danish Library Association*

Leaders from the Danish Library Association discussed the national association's structure which includes both local politicians and library professionals. Demark defines itself as a free society and enjoys a high level of literacy and is largely homogeneous with all municipalities required to have public libraries with "free and equal access for all." There is, however, a population of underserved, including recent immigrants. Advocacy for libraries within the political context was discussed.

Chicago's Ethnic Mosaic: Cultural Identity and Neighborhood Change

ACRL ANSS *Speakers: D. Bradford Hunt, Associate Professor of Social Science and Associate Dean, Roosevelt University; Janet Smith, Associate Professor, Urban Planning and Policy Program, University of Illinois at Chicago; John Koval, Senior Research Fellow, DePaul University.* Authors, Literature, Literature & Cultural Programming; Cultural Diversity

Speakers discussed Chicago's development in terms of ethnicity and how it affects critical issues such as education and housing, and the need for a national referendum to address these concerns. A view was presented of "libraries as neutral space for sensitive conversations."

Libraries, Archives and Museums -Converging for Real

ALA/SAA/AAM Committee on Libraries, Archives and Museums (CALM)

Authors, Literature & Cultural Programming

Speakers: Meg Bellinger, Director of the Office of Digital Assets and Infrastructure, Yale University; John Scally, Director of University Collections, University of Edinburgh; Cathryn Goodwin, Manager, Collection Information and Access, Princeton University Art Museum; Moderator: Jennifer Schaffner, OCLC Research.

This excellent group of scholars shared the development of extensive collaborative programs within departments of their universities (whether libraries, archives, or museums) to make collections more wholistic and accessible. They addressed the catalysts for collaboration which exist in varying

degrees in each of their institutions: vision, mandate, incentives, change agents, mooring, trust, external catalysts, resources, flexibility (incentives and resources being most essential). All speakers stressed the need for cooperation, collaboration, and convergence leading to unification of collections and the integration of resources, including preservation and electronic access, with the user of collections of primary importance.

Managing Preservation without a Preservation Librarian ALCTS PARS LLAMA SASS

Collection Management & Technical Services

Speakers: Roberta Pilette, Head, Preservation Department, Yale University; Oliver Cutshaw, Campus Librarian, Chicago School of Professional Psychology; Michele Stricker, Library Development Bureau Consultant, New Jersey State Library

Presentations of the unique efforts of three libraries to preserve collections, whether permanently or “just long enough.” The importance of a preservation policy was emphasized, as well as security issues, digital preservation, choosing conservation vendors, and working with library boards and educating users of materials. A detailed preservation process of historic collections in the Burlington Library in New Jersey was analyzed, including funding, ways of preserving materials, and restructuring library space.

President’s Program: Who Owns Antiquity? Museums and the Battle over Our Ancient Heritage ALCTS

Speaker: James Cuno, President and Director, The Art Institute of Chicago

James Cuno gave an excellent presentation about his 2008 book “*Who Owns Antiquity? Museums and the Battle over Our Ancient Heritage.*” The thesis of his research is that “culture has never known national borders...they are artificial constructs for political reasons.” Artists are individual agents. It is important to share ancient treasures for educational and other purposes. Maintaining archeological objects in the country of origin serves primarily to support current political systems which are often antithetical to culture. Formerly Museum collections practiced the system of *partage*, in which archeological artifacts were divided between host countries and excavators. Cuno believes this “legacy of the enlightenment” should be reinstated on some level.

Thank you for the opportunity to attend this ALA Conference.

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