

American Library Association Annual Conference
Chicago
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The ALA conference this year was quite informative and refreshing. Although it always seems that ALA is more geared towards public libraries, I think that different types of librarians can learn quite a bit from each other. One only has to be clever and think of ways that “public” or “school” library ideas can be twisted slightly or adapted to serve our college patrons.

Exhibits/Vendors

I always find it very beneficial to spend time in the exhibit hall and talk with the vendors. Many times, I know I will not be using/purchasing their services but it is always interesting to hear about new products, services, and, of course, new publications. I learned quite a bit from Better World Books about their new antiquarian book resale service. I also learned about some databases and straightened out some problems that we are having with current vendors.

I attended the Serials Solutions presentation of 360 degrees Search product that we will be getting through CARLI in the next year. I really look forward to this product as a replacement for Web Feat and believe that it will be an excellent research tool for our patrons. The information on their web site is very informative:

<http://www.serialssolutions.com/360-search/>

Speakers/Programs

On Sunday, I attended “Active Shooter in the Library!” presented by LLAMA LOMS. It was a chilling, powerful and strangely comforting presentation about what to expect during and how to survive an active shooter scenario in your library. Did you know that most active shooter scenarios are over before the police arrive on scene? Two police officers discussed what to expect as the police response and how to train your staff

to know what to expect. Multiple training programs were discussed and the need for staff training was highlighted.

I also attended “Building Balanced Collections,” presented by ACRL Committee on Ethics. This fascinating presentation called upon collection developers to follow the “Library Bill of Rights” and make smart, fair purchasing decisions. The presenters highlighted the need for librarians to learn about and order more from small presses which represent a variety of (often fringe) opinions and materials. A gentleman from one of the large book jobbers spoke about how collection developers can work their book vendors to purchase more materials from “non-mainstream” presses. Book vendors also need to clarify subject headings and book summaries so that collection developers truly know what they are purchasing.