

RBMS Membership and Professional Development Committee
Saturday January 19, 2002
8:30-11:00
Fairmont Hotel, Explorer's Room, New Orleans

Members present: Henry Raine (NYU/N-YHS) (Chair), Lois Fischer Black (NCSU), Richard (Dick) H. Dickerson (U of Houston), Ellen Ellickson (Yale), Ann Ferguson (Cornell), Julie Grob (U Houston), Rachel Howarth (Harvard), Mike Kelly (NYU), Susan Szasz Palmer (Cornell), Gerri Schaad (UTSA)

Members excused: Kathryn Beam (U Michigan), David Faulds (Yale), Shanon Lawson (UCSD), José Fernando Peña (Grolier Club) (Intern)

Visitors: Jennifer Schaffner (UCLA) sitting in for Shanon Lawson (UCSD)

1. The meeting was called to order at 8:30 am, with welcoming remarks and introductions.
2. Schaffner agreed to take minutes.
3. The minutes from the June 16, 2001 meeting were approved.
4. Housekeeping (Raine):
 - a. The RBMS Manual has now been updated on the website.
 - b. The committee's charge and the roster are now correct on the website.
 - c. We had hoped for a regular 11:00 time slot for our meetings, but were told it didn't exist; at Annual, this meeting will be at the same time. We regret the conflicts.
5. Educational Opportunities Directory (Ellickson)

Last time, the committee had spoken about expanding the Directory to include relevant college and university courses offered by departments other than library schools. Everett Wilkie had submitted a sample of selections from two institutions, which was handed out. The committee decided this was not appropriate, however, because whether library school credit is given for these courses is a matter of individual school policies and to list both courses and policies would expand the scope of the Directory far beyond this committee's capacity to maintain it.

Ideas were floated about advertising the Directory on various listservs, and about having a bulletin board on the RBMS web site to post ad hoc courses. A good question was whether a Google search would turn up this Directory. Raine agreed to post a notice about the Directory once a year to other lists, such as RBMS and SAA. Howarth suggested we send a notice to all the library schools, right off the website directory. Kelly suggested we post the notice on H-Net and the Voice of the Shuttle, because they both act as impressive clearinghouses for links. Students really use these two sites. Raine suggested we use vocabulary to make the Directory easily retrievable through various search engines.

6. Scholarship program (Howarth/Ellickson)

Ellickson talked about the spontaneous letter written by Eileen Smith (of the JCB and then the Huntington) about her RBMS scholarship experience. Smith has rewritten the letter, so that we can use it for publicity. Ellickson will contact the RBMS Newsletter for possible publication.

Howarth is collecting responses from a survey she conducted of scholarship winners. The survey responses have been enormously positive, though some scholarship recipients reported that they have sometimes experienced delays in getting checks for their scholarships, and that it is difficult to join committees. Raine suggested we try a seminar on new members and scholarship winners at a future Preconference, but Howarth asked, "Who's it for?" In the future, Howarth will be asking for evaluations from the recipients. Raine said that we should give more information about how to get involved in committees at the Preconference orientation, and that we should continue offering each recipient a buddy. Prior to the Preconference in San Francisco, all scholarship recipients were offered buddies, and most accepted the offer.

Kelly would like to write an article for *C&RL News*, with Schaad, about the responses to the survey of scholarship recipients, and Raine mentioned that he had also conducted a survey of buddies, and suggested that they might want to include information from the responses he collected.

Howarth said that this year there was potentially more money available for scholarships, \$3,238, which is %50 of the surplus from last year's Preconference. She will recommend 3 full scholarships, and 5 partial scholarships for students, to the Budget and Development Committee, subject to approval by the Executive Committee. She and Kelly will continue to work on the scholarship program. Raine offered thanks to Howarth and Kelly.

7. Buddy program (Raine)

Raine reported that he had received only one request for a buddy in New Orleans, compared to 17 requests at the San Francisco Preconference and Annual Conference. This is not unusual for a Midwinter Conference. He has done a survey of past buddies, and received 16 responses, which were overall favorable.

Schaad passed out drafts of forms for requesting a buddy and for volunteering to be a buddy, to be posted on the RBMS website. The committee suggested adding an introductory page about the buddy program and adding space for the applicant's position and special interests on the form.

Kelly asked if we could have an "I want a buddy" box to check off on the Pre-Conference registration form, perhaps with references to the URL for the electronic buddy form. Ferguson will contact Nora Quinlan about this. Ferguson will also contact Margot Sutton about tracking first-time attendees in the ACRL database. Grob mentioned that the

Membership Committee needs to ask the Preconference Committee for the ribbons for first-time attendees.

8. Preconference Orientation (Raine)

Raine listed what we need to do for the 2002 Preconference Orientation:

- a. prepare handouts – Black’s handouts were admired by all, and she volunteered to take care of the handouts
- b. have RBMS brochures on hand
- c. have available the schedule of meetings at Annual
- d. have copies of the *RBMS Newsletter* available
- e. have *RBMS* subscription flyers available
- f. provide ribbons for first-time attendees
- g. work with Suzy Taraba on a letter to committee chairs who need to attend the orientation, which should emphasize that they must show up (or designate someone), and that they should be brief in talking about their committees – Raine agreed to work on this with Taraba
- h. Palmer agreed to speak about the Membership and Development Committee during the orientation
- i. announce the orientation on the listervs – Faulds volunteered to do this

Raine asked if any changes were needed in the overall structure of the orientation session. Schaad said we should ask if there are any questions. Kelly called this a useful “Info exchange junior”.

9. NMRT Orientation Program (Schaad)

Schaad said that the Annual Conference in San Francisco was the first time that RBMS had participated in the ALA New Members Orientation Program. She didn’t have to stay for the whole session, and she volunteered to do it again at Annual. The deadline for sending RBMS brochures to ALA for this orientation session is fairly short. Raine asked if our URL was in the brochure.

10. Preconference Seminar (Grob)

Grob spoke about the seminar she will be moderating at the 2002 Atlanta Preconference, *A Dialogue on Diversity: Issues Raised by the RBMS Non-Member Survey*, and handed out a description of the seminar and a list of participants. At the seminar, she will discuss the initial results of the non-members survey, and there will be a round-table discussion among 6 librarians and archivists with a variety of backgrounds. She has already identified 5 participants, but she is still looking for an RBMS member, and several names were suggested. Schaad asked about diversity statistics for ALA vs. RBMS, and Grob said she would have those figures. As an offshoot, Grob has been invited to the Spectrum Scholarship introductions. Raine offered thanks to Grob for all her work on the seminar.

11. Outreach to non-members (Raine)

Raine spoke about the comments Peter Graham made at the Executive Committee meeting in San Francisco about diversity in RBMS and in our profession, and about Graham's concern that our lack of diversity is a scandal for the profession and for the section. Raine asked if we as a committee should be thinking more about this issue, and suggested asking the Executive Committee to amend the committee's charge to include encouraging diversity in RBMS, or words to that effect. Schaad asked whether it was appropriate for this committee to be "in charge" of diversity for the whole section.

Grob mentioned that SAA has a Task Force on Diversity and a Position Statement on Diversity, and that it would be useful for RBMS to have a similar statement. Diversity is also one of the 5 key action areas adopted by ALA to fulfill its mission of providing library and information services for all people. The committee discussed the need for a statement on diversity specifically for RBMS, and agreed that it should be a section-wide initiative, and not just the committee's responsibility. There was concern that the Executive Committee would decide that the Membership and Professional Development Committee should take care of this issue, and that they would not need to do anything. Raine agreed that he would inform the Executive Committee of everything the Membership and Professional Development Committee is already doing to encourage diversity in RBMS (e.g. the scholarship program, the buddy program, the seminar in Atlanta, participation in the ALA Spectrum Initiative) and he said that he would ask the Executive Committee for a statement on diversity.

12. Liaisons

Palmer reported that she enjoyed being the committee's Liaison to the ACRL Membership Committee. She said that they had asked for copies of the *RBMS Newsletter*, and for a summary of the Preconference. They spoke about new members at ALA who are not at the Preconference. Should we have a dinner or a social event? There was discussion of "virtual membership" where a member could join a section, but not the ruling division. It was a big topic: what if the person does not work in a college or research library, but is a rare books and manuscript librarian? There was no mention of diversity, and Palmer will ask next time.

13. New Business

The Committee discussed the possibility of sponsoring other seminars at future preconferences. Raine mentioned a topic suggested by James Fox, "*The View from Newcomers*" to RBMS, which would allow recent new members and first time attendees to discuss their experiences as RBMS members. Schaad asked about how to attract and retain members? She is on the SAA Membership Committee, where there are questions about how to mentor. Howarth asked about sponsoring a seminar on education, and mentoring. Kelly mentioned the agenda for the Public Services Discussion Group, which includes a discussion on training and retaining staff, and said that this would be a good seminar topic.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:30.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Schaffner