

Public Services joint with MSS & Other Formats Discussion Groups
ALA Midwinter January 17, 2010
Westin Copley Place, Essex North-West, Boston, MA
10:30 am - 12 pm

Topics for discussion

1)

Input requested (by the Task Force chair reviewing the Guidelines for Borrowing and Lending Special Collections Materials) concerning loaning materials for research use and exhibition.

- What are your experiences in lending (and borrowing) special collections materials? Do you view the two activities (loaning for research use (ILL) and loaning for exhibition) differently?
- How are decisions made? What is the supporting policy and personnel infrastructure? To what extent, if any, do other library departments (e.g., library administration) or consortial partnerships drive/influence your decisions or inform your library's philosophy toward lending materials?
- In a world that expects more and more of everything to be at our fingertips, is anyone facing pressure from forces/departments/administrators/partners who may or may not understand all the implications of lending Special Collections materials? How autonomous should Special Collections be in this decision-making?
- What are the major sticking points or obstacles when it comes to loaning materials? What have you done to develop a more effective program?
- In what ways have the current guidelines been helpful? What would you like to see addressed through guidelines? Do any of your institutions have a combined ILL/exhibition loan policy? Do you have further suggestions for the task force?

2)

Serving non-print formats to researchers.

What non-print types of materials are in your holdings and who looks at these materials?

What are the challenges getting them into the hands of researchers?

Are there collections for which curatorial staff must make alternate arrangements for consultation, such as sending researchers to an art gallery, off site storage, etc?

Suggestions for improvement?

3)

In light of the joint meeting, let's revisit the impact "exposing hidden collections" is having on the reading room.

What are some of the staffing, security, conservation, and reference implications of newly exposed collections? What kinds of materials are being newly exposed? How are decisions made about what is to be exposed, and how are the newly exposed collections being made known to staff? to readers?

Susan Walker (PSDG) – susan.walker@yale.edu

Margaret Tenney (PSDG) – mtenney@mail.utexas.edu

Lois Black (MSS&OF) - lob206@Lehigh.edu