

Public Services Discussion Group and Technical Services Discussion Group  
ALA Annual Meeting  
Sunday, June 27<sup>th</sup>, 2010, 10:30am - 12:00pm  
Hyatt Regency Washington on Capitol Hill, Yorktown / Valley Forge

Attendees: Margaret Tenney (UTX Austin, PSDG co-convenor), Annie Copeland (Penn State, TSDG co-convenor), Ellen Ellickson (Yale, TSDG co-convenor), Jennifer MacDonald (Delaware), Jennifer Nelson (UC Berkeley), Kate Moriarty (Saint Louis U.), Richard Noble (Brown), Francis Lapka (Yale), Helice Koffler (U. of Washington), Stephen Skuce (MIT), Jane Gillis (Yale), Melissa Conway (UC Riverside), Joellen Dickie (Newberry Library), Heather Smedberg (UC San Diego), Nicolette Dobrowolski (Syracuse), April Brewer (UNC-Chapel Hill), Eva Guggemos (Yale), Elizabeth Call (Brooklyn Historical Society), Moira Fitzgerald (Yale), Catherine Hecker (U. of Chicago), Maria Molestina (Morgan Library & Museum), Molly Poremski (Vanderbilt), Emily Epstein (UC Denver Health Sci. Lib.), Randal Brandt (UC Berkeley), Alison Bridger (Folger), Mark Danley (U. of Memphis, Norwich U.), Martha Conway (Michigan), Aislinn Sotelo (UC San Diego), Christine Megowan (Loyola Marymount), Michelle (U. of Akron), Ellen Cordes (Lewis Walpole Library, Yale), Charlotte B. Brown (UCLA), Margaret Nichols (Cornell)

- 1) Welcome, Introductions, and Announcements
- 2) What would Public Services folks like to see in a Catalog record?

Discussion centered on the general frustration with our systems, knowing that catalogers are putting information in the record that is not retrievable in a standard OPAC display. Curators want explanatory notes, provenance information, and genre terms in the record. Technical and public services personnel consult on a regular basis about how users search for materials and what information should go into a record. Booksellers' notes that describe why an item is significant should be maintained in the cataloging record to instruct our users. Notes on artists' books in the cataloging record would help with exhibit preparation, teaching, etc. Problems of retrieval currently rest with our systems (eg. relator codes with "former owner" are often stripped upon display, which is frustrating for provenance research). There can't be too much information in a special collections catalog record!

- 3) How do people learn/how do we teach, about searching the OPAC in a world increasingly comfortable with Google or keyword-only searches?

The discussion evolved into how the search design structure used with traditional library catalogs is not compatible with the way untrained users today expect to find information. Users need to be trained how to search on the library catalog and how it differs from a Google search. Training should center on getting to an Advanced Search function and doing a subject browse. The fallacy of one search box, like Google, for library catalogs (several people said library in their home institution is moving to one box) is that "Google" is built on sophisticated searching and ranking algorithms - but library catalogs are not.

- 4) Given budgetary constraints, what might affect our ability to provide individual assistance in the next 2-3 years? 5 years?

Participants talked about how much time can be devoted to providing research help given budget cutbacks. Often material keeps coming in at the same pace with fewer catalogers to do the work; collection level records are created, but are not always understood by researchers. Public Services staff try to use the half hour allotted to each user to teach how best to conduct research. Many libraries offer a list of “researchers for hire” following a half an hour of one on one assistance.

- 5) What are your institutions’ policies, procedures, & fees for duplication of collection material? What about metadata--who has primary responsibility for which aspects?

Some institutions offer scans of varying quality/price for patrons while others allow digital photography and still others have digital photocopiers that give low-resolution color scans. Some save jpegs and store them by call number; catalogers provide the metadata. Subsequent requests for those jpegs are thus cheaper. There is often no charge to publish. This would be a good topic to revisit in a future session.

Respectfully submitted by Margaret Tenney, Annie Copeland, and Ellen Ellickson