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## ILA/ACRL Newsletter, vol. 23, no. 6, November 2013

Association of College and Research Libraries. Iowa Chapter

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# **ILA/ACRL Newsletter**

vol. 23, no. 6, November 2013

In the November 2013 newsletter you'll find:

- Results of the Iowa ACRL election of officers
- Reports and photos from the ILA Conference held October 17-19, 2013 at the Marriott Conference Center in Coralville, Iowa including
- four ACRL sponsored sessions,
- one AASL sponsored session very relevant to ACRL
- the ACRL business meeting
- Summary of experience at the conference from our 2013 Scholarship winner
- Reflections on a productive year by our 2013 President, Amy Paulus

## **Election Results of 2014 Officers**

Congratulations to the 2014 elected officers!

### **Vice President/President Elect:**

Anne Marie Gruber, University of Dubuque

### **Secretary-Treasurer:**

Andi Beckendorf, Luther College

### **Member At-Large:**

Carrie Dunham-LaGree, Drake University

## **Conference Sessions at ILA – Great Sessions!**

These sessions, held at the 123rd Iowa Library Association Conference on Oct. 15 to 17 in Coralville. Four were co-sponsored by ILA/ACRL; one was sponsored by AASL; and one is brief overview of the ACRL business meeting.

### **From Gatekeeping to Gate Opening: An Evolving Higher Education Role for Academic Libraries**

Presented by Steven Bell. Sponsored by ILA/ACRL.

Steven Bell, Immediate Past President of ACRL (Association of College & Research Libraries), gave an inspiring presentation at a well-attended session at the Iowa Library Association's Annual Conference. Bell began by explaining that ACRL is the higher education association for librarians and strives to advance its members, provide value, and communicate its goals to those outside of librarianship.



Bell then reflected on the higher education landscape and stated that it's important to examine and challenge traditional learning practices especially in these times where some students and parents are questioning the value of a college degree. Rather than continuing with conventional four or five year degrees, higher education may need to re-invent itself and look for new models such as those espoused by Sebastian Thrun, Research Professor of Computer Science at Stanford University. Thrun believes that online education including MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses) hold a great deal of promise for the future of learning. In addition, he believes that front loading education before people begin their career is ineffective and that people should initially only obtain enough education to secure employment. As individuals advance in their professions, they should then supplement their education with additional courses and continue on with lifelong learning. However, Bell mentioned that change is not an easy proposition especially for those who have been entrenched in one way of doing something for long periods of time. It takes persistence, the willingness to confront those who are resistant, and a strong belief in what you are doing to change minds.

Academic librarians also need to examine their own professional roles which have been traditionally perceived as gatekeepers who only provide access to content. To remain relevant, librarians need to be seen as gate openers by building relationships, providing enhanced library environments, and ensuring better user experiences through improved services. Librarians must think in terms of totality and become design thinkers who provide solutions to problems that are important to its stakeholders. It's also vitally important to gain emotional connections with users

and demonstrate a shared value to increase support as people don't always buy what you do, but rather why you do something.

Similarly libraries need to become more relevant by being recognized as places of distinction. Since institutions can't do everything, it's important to find a niche area in which to excel. Collections are a part of the solution, but it's critical that other areas be developed as well. Things such as user experience, community engagement, and assessment are examples of ways in which libraries can be more specialized.

Bell concluded his presentation by stating that librarians need to be leaders in change. This can be accomplished by having conversations about disruption, attending group readings and videos, discussing core beliefs and values, and developing team idea projects in which the library can take a leadership role.

*Report by Rob Van Rennes of The University of Iowa,  
ILA/ACRL Newsletter Committee Member*

### **Cutting Through the Noise: Academic Librarians Need to Capture the Signal**

Presented by Steven Bell, 2012-2013 ACRL President; Associate University Librarian, Temple University Libraries, Samuel L. Paley Library, Philadelphia, PA. Sponsored by ILA/ACRL.

Steven Bell spoke to a room full of academic librarian groupies. In his second session at ILA, Bell emphasized the importance of communicating with our users and addressed two central questions through the lens of social media:

- How can we do a better job of listening to our users?
- How can we do a better job of creating conversations with our users?

We're all familiar with the formal or traditional ways of listening to our users (or capturing the signal) such as surveys, focus groups and advisory boards. But Bell suggests some new and more informal strategies like carpet time, observations and social media monitoring. Social media monitoring can be a great way to see what users are really saying about the library, but Bell cautions that users raving/gripping about the library on Twitter are rarely looking for a response from a librarian.



When communicating with users, Bell argues that librarians need to create conversations and “make it about them”. Bell challenges librarians to “be the beacon”. This means providing more signal (useful, relevant, timely information) and less noise. Bell offers some strategies for creating a strong signal: 1) Know your community members; 2) Deliver something unique; 3) Give tips and empower users; 4) Be a trusted advisor; and 5) Look for other signals.

For librarians who are managing social media channels for their libraries (or planning to), Bell suggests some next steps: 1) Assess your beacon status; 2) Study how conversations are created; 3) Consider joining or creating a social media group; 3) Focus on “Them”; and 4) Talk about how the library can lead the conversation.



Steven Bell answering questions from audience member, Chabha Hocine Tepe, Senior Director of Library Services at Palmer College of Chiropractic, after the talk.

*Photos by Mary Iber, Cornell College.*

*Report by Sara Scheib, University of Iowa*

*Chair of the Electronic Communications Committee of IA/ACRL*

## Open Source and You

Presented by Peter Murray. Sponsored by ILA/ACRL.



*Photo composition by Chelsea Williamson, Technology Peer Consultant for the Center for Teaching and Learning at Cole Library, Cornell College*

Peter Murray, the Assistant Director for LYRASIS Digital Technology Services, showcased FOSS4Lib [<http://foss4lib.org/>] which serves as a registry of open source products and decision-making tools to help libraries navigate the various facets of open source selection, implementation, and evaluation. LYRASIS Technology Services responded to subscriber questions about open source software by launching FOSS4Lib in January 2012 with the support of an Andrew W. Mellon Foundation grant. FOSS4Lib provides tools to gauge readiness and risk tolerance for open source solutions and to plot timelines and costs. Surveys, checklists, worksheets, and a bibliography guide librarians, IT support personnel, and stakeholders through IF and WHICH scenarios when open source software adoption is under consideration. Web analytics show that hundreds of site visitors have utilized the readiness survey instrument and find the COSST template helpful.

Mr. Murray welcomed audience questions, concerns, and experiences. Audience input contributed to the FOSS4Lib knowledgebase by alerting Mr. Murray to an open source product that wasn't yet included. In closing, Mr. Murray assured the audience that he, and more broadly, LYRASIS, believed in FOSS4Lib's purpose to the extent that they do indeed "eat their own dog food." FOSS4Lib uses Drupal, an open source content management system, and the wiki-ish nature of the FOSS4Lib user-based conversation and forums enable the library community to benefit from collective knowledge and enhance the extensive work that Mr. Murray has done in his role at LYRASIS. If you would like more information, there are a number of upcoming free webinars listed at FOSS4Lib.org

*Reported by Julia Dickinson, St. Ambrose University  
Member of the Newsletter Committee  
Chair of the ILA Fall Program Committee*

### **A Report of Research: College Readiness: What Can We Learn from First Year College Assignments?**

by Professor Jean Dohnam, School Library Studies, University of Northern Iowa. Sponsored by Iowa Association of School Librarians (IASL) and oh, so relevant to ACRL.



*photo by Kathy Kaldenberg*

In her study on college readiness, Jean Donham seeks to understand the assumptions instructors in first-year college courses make regarding a student's readiness and skills. To understand this, Donham solicited assignments for first-year students from private and public Iowa colleges and universities. Following a content analysis of those assignments, Donham noted three broad instructor expectations. One, the expectation that the student has information seeking skills, including initiating inquiry, searching, and information processing; two, the assumption that incoming students possess the ability to write, develop thesis statements and find evidence; and three, that first-year students possess the intellectual qualities of curiosity, self-reliance and open-mindedness.

Donham notes that contrary to what a first-year student often experiences in high school, college instructors rarely provide research topics. Instead instructors may suggest the student pursue his or her own inquiry based upon interest. The student might be told to “Spend time exploring a topic . . .” or to do “. . . a literature review on your selected topic and narrow your subject . . .” All good advice, but such suggestions may be unfamiliar to a first-year student.

Donham’s content analysis also indicates that many instructors assume that when they tell students to use “scholarly . . .,” and “credible . . .” sources, and to evaluate those sources based upon “. . . purpose, authority, timeliness, and scope . . .,” that students understand what this means. When students are told to use journals instead of magazines, instructors must do so believing the distinction is understood. Further, even after sources are found, the next daunting expectation a student encounters is to make meaning of the information rather than merely reporting on it. Donham states that the ability to integrate information from many sources in order to answer or to support a research question or thesis is a skill that requires practice and cannot be taught in a one-shot fashion.

Whether an incoming student even has learned what a thesis is or how to construct one is not a given. However, Donham finds that first-year course instructors often assume they do. Concepts such as an “arguable claim,” and a “working thesis” that is liable to change may be foreign to new students. Further, first year students probably do not realize that what one academic discipline considers research and evidence is not universal across all disciplines. Additional findings indicate that first-year course instructors often over estimate what Donham terms a student’s “disposition.” That is, a student’s curiosity, self-reliance, ability to manage long-term projects, open-mindedness, and perseverance. All skills necessary to conduct college level work.

Donham concludes with what she considers the implications of her research for high school and for academic librarians. For high schools, she stresses the importance of teaching students how to develop their own research investigation; to differentiate between research and reporting; to support an argument with evidence; and to develop greater self-reliance. For academic librarians, Donham highlights the importance of working with first-year faculty on long term research assignments; teaching how to construct research questions; and to impart the difference between research for background information and research for evidence.

Donham began her presentation reminding those in attendance that there are but four scant years to prepare middle school students for college level work or for the challenges they will face. As a strong advocate for high school library programs and for information literacy instruction, Donham asks, “Who will teach students so that they are prepared . . .?”

*Report by James O’Gorman, St. Ambrose University  
Government Representative to ILA/ACRL Executive Board*

## Library Linked Data

Presented by Peter Murray. Sponsored by ILA/ACRL.



*Photo by Mary Iber, Cornell College*

Peter Murray, Assistant Director, Technology Services Development at LYRASIS, and author of the blog [Disruptive Library Technology Jester](#) gave a lively presentation to which offered new ways to considered adding value to the services we offer to library patrons. In the past, with closed systems such as MARC cards, the library staff was responsible for keeping the records up to date. Implementing linked data may require additional partners, but also greatly expands the possibilities for enriching the data we want to provide.

Murray used the BBC website as an example of linked data, using [Eric Clapton](#) as an example of how links can enrich content through collaboration with other sites. On Eric's page, in addition to the original content, is biographical information via Wikipedia, YouTube clips, a list and links to bands Eric has been a member of, links to relevant web pages, BBC Reviews, and much more. This information assembles "automatically" based on agreements among BBC, Wikipedia and Music Brainz.

Google has also been offering Linked Data for the past couple of years. The "extra" information in the side column often adds additional insights into the subject searched. Frequently, this comes from Wikipedia.

How can libraries adapt this model for our users benefit? Murray suggests that we can look at ways that the original MARC record can reach out. For instance:

- the author field can link to variant names using the data from authority control
- the 650 subject field can be linked to other fields such as author, genre, isbn, title, other subjects

Murray summed up three Key Concepts:

1. RDF (Resource Description Framework) Triple. Each has its own URI (Uniform Resource Identifier)
  - a. Subject
  - b. Predicate
  - c. Object
2. Unambiguous Identifier
  - a. If two resources have the same URI, they are referring to the same thing
3. Graphs
  - a. The collection of statement (triples)
  - b. Shows connections between items (e.g. subject and object URIs)
  - c. A rich resource page can be built based on these connections.

Murray also discussed the [Linked Data Principles by Tim Berners-Lee](#), inventor of the World Wide Web. The BibFrame Listserv is a good way to keep involved in this topic, and to see where it might be going.

Questions talked about the [OCLC RDA Policy Statement](#), having machines build the paths and do the updating, as well as discussing why it seems like it is “google vs. us.”

In summary: Linked data provides channels for different pools of data to be extracted and shared. A current challenge it to try to purify the data to increase accuracy. Benefits include improved efficiency of our library systems and the ability to respond to our patrons better. More information can be found because we have the data online.

*Report submitted by Mary Iber, Cornell College  
Chair of the ILA/ACRL Newsletter Committee, 2013*

In the spirit of linked data -- Additional resources:

- [Tim Berners-Lee – Biography](#)
- [Library Linked Data Incubator Group Final Report: W3C Incubator Group Report 25 October 2011](#)
- [Linked Data Entry in Wikipedia](#)

## **ILA/ACRL Business Meeting**

Amy Paulus, President of ILA/ACRL, (way up in the corner behind the podium in the photo) convened the business meeting during which each officer, committee chair, and representative reported on their responsibilities. The meeting ended with an inspiring round of members sharing notable events and strategies happening around the state.



Did you ever wonder who sits in the back row(s)?



*Photos by Mary Iber, Cornell College*

## Reflections on Fall Conference by Scholarship Winner, Ariana Santiago

### Reflections on the Fall Conference



Receiving the ILA/ACRL scholarship to attend the ILA Fall Conference in October 2013 was an incredible opportunity. As a new member of ILA, participating in the conference allowed me to meet librarians of all kinds throughout Iowa and to better get to know this state that is my new home. I was able to attend the full conference as well as some of the pre-conference events, which truly added to the experience. I saw firsthand how friendly everyone is at the Book'n It 5K Fun Run, when every time we passed each other on the trail, people would wave and cheer each other on with words of encouragement. The same friendly and welcoming atmosphere was present at the lovely reception held by the Iowa City Public Library and the New Members Orientation and Breakfast.

The theme of "Healthy Libraries Build Healthy Communities" was prevalent throughout the conference, especially in Emily Sheketoff's opening session speech. It was a strong reminder of the need to communicate to legislators as well as our communities, and to keep patrons educated on issues regarding their library. I attended sessions that dealt with various aspects of my position as Undergraduate Services Resident Librarian at the University of Iowa. These included topics on first-year college assignments, digital literacy, social media, and the evolving role of academic libraries. I appreciate the wide variety of session topics that were available at the ILA Fall Conference, and I left with relevant information and many new ideas.

I enjoyed meeting members of ILA/ACRL at the business meeting and hope to become more involved in the organization. Thank you ILA/ACRL for the conference scholarship! I am looking forward to next year, as well as the upcoming ILA/ACRL Spring Conference.

Ariana E. Santiago  
2013 ILA/ACRL Fall Conference Scholarship Recipient  
Undergraduate Services Resident Librarian  
University of Iowa Libraries

## President's Piece

November 2013 ILA/ACRL Newsletter  
President's Piece  
Amy Paulus



One of my goals as ILA/ACRL President was to support ILA/ACRL members and the ILA/ACRL executive board members to make our organization better. As I review the year, it is very clear to me that our members contributed to the success of 2013 ILA/ACRL activities and accomplishments. Thank you to everyone!

Cyd Dyer and the **Spring Conference** Committee members created a venue at Simpson College in Indianola that allowed the membership to collaborate and communicate. The conference itself was formatted slightly differently from your traditional conference set-up and the programming was excellent as well. Overall, this event was a huge success and my thanks to Cyd and the Spring Conference Committee!

The sessions at the ILA Conference held in Coralville this fall were fabulous! Julia Dickinson and her **Fall Program** Committee members provided sessions featuring nationally-recognized speakers and at a zero cost to the ILA/ACRL organization. Steven Bell and Peter Murray each spoke at 2 sessions that appealed to not only academic libraries but others as well. I know Julia and her crew are already hard at working planning for the 2014 conference! Thank you!

The **Nominating** Committee, led by Dan Chibnall, spent many hours identifying members to contribute to the organization by participating on a committee or running for an elected office. The quality and quantity of members on board for 2014 demonstrates this group's hard work – thanks for continuing to support ILA/ACRL to both the committee members and the ILA/ACRL members who have volunteered for 2014!

The **K12/Higher Education** Ad Hoc Committee ends in 2013 but because Pam Rees and her committee members, which involves not only academic librarians, but librarians from the K12 libraries and works with school administrators and AEAs is gaining a lot of momentum, a new Ad Hoc Committee was approved to continue this important work.

A great benefit of ILA/ACRL membership is the opportunity to win funding for conference attendance or to initiate a new project. Rebecca Funke and the **Awards** Committee members did a great job soliciting and selecting these award winners.

Sara Scheib, **Electronic Communications** chair, has been instrumental in so many endeavors this year. She has commanded each Google Hangout session, kept her committee members busy updating the web site, and most recently is undertaking an initiative to bring together all of the blogs from academic librarians across the state. Thank you to Sara and her committee members!

This is the 6th and final ILA/ACRL **Newsletter**, provided by Mary Iber and her committee members. I hope you have enjoyed the content in each of these (I know I have!) and I wanted to recognize the hard work, time, and effort the committee has put into each and every one of these!

**Membership** initiatives focused on library science students this year and the benefits of membership to them. Work is still in progress and is a joint effort with other executive members, Sara Scheib and Chris Neuhaus. Becky Canovan, chair of the Membership Committee, has provided new and fresh ideas on how to engage with the membership – thank you to her and her committee members!

The **Directory** committee, led by Deb Robertson, made some important changes to streamline the work of this committee. Rather than duplicating a membership list, the committee recommended using the list generated by the Iowa Library Association and the executive board agreed! The committee members spent a lot of time updating the directory and Google Maps feature as well – thank you!

Another goal of mine was to improve communication by having the executive board meet more regularly online via Google Hangouts. The more frequent meetings allowed us to keep on top of topics and ideas as well as expose us to a technology that was not familiar to some of us! Additionally, we started devoting time during the executive and business meetings to allow the membership to share ideas, initiatives, or information about activities happening in their libraries. Collaboration and networking was seen as one of the major benefits to membership in ILA/ACRL, as shown in the membership survey done by Past-President Rebecca Funke, and I wanted to ensure this value was given the opportunity to the membership.

It has been a wonderful year – thank you to all the ILA/ACRL members!