

WHAT IS THE LIKELY SHAPE OF THE LIBRARY IN 2005? AND HOW DO WE BUILD COLLECTIONS FOR IT?

Report on The Fiesole Retreat*

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This event was described by the organizers to be “an informal meeting of leading library and information industry participants devoted to thinking through and debating the new world order in collection development.” The inspiration for holding the meeting was to honor Mario Casalini, founder of Casalini Libri, who died last year and was beloved by many in our profession. It was an opportunity for a select group of diverse individuals to ponder the future together in a setting that was relaxing, magical and stimulating. The Pensione Bencistà, high in the hills above Florence, provided a homey, yet elegant and comfortable setting for the Retreat. It was a perfect place too, as spring was just awakening, providing a lovely change of pace for many of us who battled snowstorms to get there, plus it happens to be just down the road from Casalini Libri’s main offices.

On Thursday, March 11, Michael Keller, University Librarian, Stanford University and Director of Academic Information Resources and Publisher, HighWire Press, gave the keynote address. In framing the Retreat, he started by remembering Mario Casalini. Casalini had a gift for understanding the “vagaries of individual lives and behaviors” and his sense of humor extended to the ironies of institutional life. In a sense, the Retreat reflects this perspective.

Keller framed his paper’s organization into: Contexts, Intertexts, Dependencies, Media and distribution, and Commonality and Difference. To simply touch on some of the major themes within these groupings: Contexts: Computer network browsers have extended our contexts in new ways. As middle players, we’ve never been fixed, but we are in more flux than ever before. A theme that he touched on here and was repeated later in the Retreat was that of physical books versus digital materials. Keller believes that many private collectors are still gathering important works in the old formats and that libraries would do well to pay attention to these collections. They will be our print heritage. He also acknowledges that collections on specialized topics are often fragmented, and that the role of the bibliographer is critical in helping to bring these pieces together. He suggests that booksellers still have a viable place in our realm, in order to help us build collections of significance.

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Intertexts: You'll notice a few "made-up" words in this report and this is one Keller contributed. Coining new terms is the mark of a good conference! This theme was repeated later; it has to do with the vast interdisciplinary thrust that seems to be overtaking our scholarly world. Collection building must embrace this concept in order to thrive.

Dependencies: Keller mentioned a number of great ideas here, ideas that connected with my experiences in visiting Italy. Those of us who are American assume that the world speaks English. Most of it does not. This assumption gives us a "false strength." There is a movement to acknowledge our global community, to come to terms with the diversity of our world. The more technology connects us, the more we realize how vastly different, yet alike we are. Keller speaks of eliminating "entitlement mentalities which hinder experimentation and advancement." The bottom line: the big picture includes many people and they all do not think or speak alike. The quicker we learn to understand these variations, the better equipped we are to respond. He also mentioned that access to technology creates "information ghettos" and he observed that "what today may seem costly and far out, risky and scary, tomorrow will seem ordinary and expected." How true, how true!

Media and distribution: Keller suggests that we should at least touch on the issue of the digital archive and who should be responsible. Indeed, this topic did come up several times during the Retreat. It is an important issue for the future.

Commonality and difference: From this section, people picked up on several of Keller's remarks later in the Retreat. It was noted that research libraries more than ever are duplicating the same collections due to budgetary constraints. Further, the roles that we middle players take on continue to evolve. We usurp or try on new roles from each other. This is an essential part of the "re-engineering of the information industry." Keller ended with a musical metaphor in honor of Mario Casali. We are easily compared to a symphony: diverse, yet as parts, we come together to make a harmonious work.

On Friday, March 12, the morning began with presentations centered around user needs and expectations. Marilyn Gell Mason, Director of the Cleveland Public Library, led off with observations from that sector. There have been dramatic changes in public library services, and Cleveland was one of the first publics to offer access to the Internet. Consequently, they have had time to study the effects it has had on their services. As the chart she shared with us illustrated, their reference and circulation statistics have remained relatively flat while the electronic services show dramatic increases. While this finding may not seem surprising, an interesting side effect is that more printed materials are being used that were not being used in the past, due to the access to the electronic sources. There is greater literacy overall, therefore more demand for all types of materials. Mason is finding a demand for more staffing to assist the public in using the electronic resources. She is finding that more of the overall budget, now and in the

future, will need to be devoted to personnel instead of materials. Those of us who come from the higher education realm do not naturally assume this trend applies to our environment; we felt the need to ponder this. In higher education, there is more likely an assumption of increased self-service and less dependency on librarians for their navigational role. In all sectors, we agreed that there is a huge expectation by our users that everything will be digital some day, especially scholarly journals. So Mason left us with these questions: 1. What percent of the budget should be for materials? 2. What percent of the materials portion of the budget should be printed versus electronic materials? 3. How do we continue to provide for adequate coverage of printed monographs? She concluded that right now Cleveland Public Library is spending 22 percent of their overall budget on materials. How does this compare to what other types of libraries are spending?

The second morning presenter was Maureen Pastine, University Librarian at Temple University. She addressed trends in higher education and pointed out how many of the common denominators that drove higher education in the past have changed. Demographically, our students are more female, are older and come from diverse ethnic backgrounds. There are more efforts at partnering with corporate entities, a surge in the exploration and establishment of distance education programs, and less demand for humanities and social science programs and greater demand for business and computer science programs. There is a greater need for interdisciplinary materials. Universities are having to support expensive and complex computing infrastructures that support collaborative learning models. The emphasis on and availability of remote access has increased usage of library resources, but new users are rejecting print resources and traditional methods of bibliographic instruction. Truly “sophisticated” users are few and far between, yet librarians are having a hard time reaching the eager and many. Pastine suggests that information-seeking behavior needs to be analyzed more rigorously in order for campus librarians to effectively continue to serve their student populations. It is critical that we listen to, talk to, and gather information about our users so our services will be relevant and valued.

Liz Chapman, Librarian of the Taylor Institution, Oxford University, next treated us to her musings about the past, present and future. She gave us a few fatal quotes from the past that had us chuckling, such as the one attributed to Ken Olson of Digital Equipment Corporation: “There is no reason anyone would want a computer in their home.” Unfortunately, such pronouncements are made all the time and we would be well served to remember that. Chapman emphasized that we need to realize that we spend a great deal of our time giving our users what WE think they want, rather than what THEY want. We are moving from a time of imposing buildings with lots of rules and regulations to a time of instant, 24-hour access. The qualities we’ll need to survive through this include: a sense of context, curiosity, ability to be challenged, confidence and humor.

Jerry Curtis of Springer Verlag served as reactor to the morning panelists. He agreed with Mason that staffing shifts are occurring. He observed that there are great opportunities for newly-trained professionals with technical talents, both in libraries and within publishers and suppliers. He addressed the point that Pastine and Keller both made about the duplication of collections and suggested that centers of excellence be developed so that not everyone is collecting the same thing. Curtis also mentioned the importance of developing non-proprietary standards, and concluded by saying he was not convinced that printed journals and books would die out completely.

Discussion highlights from the morning session included questions to Mason about the nature and format of reference statistics that were being kept. Why are they so flat? Reference staff are going to have to change the way they count and what they count as “reference questions” so they can better analyze service needs. While Mason observes that right now new users are flooding the public library looking for assistance with technology, how will this shift in the future as the comfort level increases? Mason thinks that both experienced and novice users are requesting their services so she is not sure if there will be any leveling or drop off of demand.

Other points that were made: Is computer use driving literacy or vice versa? Current models of acquiring digital resources are laborious and are based on print publication models. In the future we should be able to “click and link.” However, both the vendor and library sectors, as middle players, are concerned about being left out if the user goes direct to the resource. Using fear as a motivation will not work. We need to find out what users actually find that they are pleased with, in fact, what are they finding that delights them? Considering the environment in which the Retreat was being held, these morning observations rang true. Sitting in the dining room of a pension in Italy, where all the buildings around us were so incredibly ancient, gave one a different perspective on time. To know that the Romans built structures that survived many millennia and that along the way there were people who lived in them later who did not even understand how they were built, leads one to realize that knowledge gained is not always maintained. It can be lost. What we know today and take for granted may not always be available or relevant in the future. With this in mind, we began the second session.

The second session focused on changing models of scholarly communications and library organizations. Betty Bengston, Dean of Libraries at the University of Washington and President of the Association of Research Libraries, talked about ARL initiatives such as SPARC (Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resources Coalition) and the AAU/ARL Global Resources Program. SPARC’s aim is to “create partnerships with publishers who are developing high quality, economical alternatives to existing high-priced publications,” and is considered “an alliance of libraries that fosters expanded competition in scholarly communication. A number of related organizations also endorse or hold membership in SPARC. The Global Resources Program is jointly

sponsored by ARL and the Association of American Universities, and its principal aim is to “improve access to international research materials regardless of format or location.” For more information on these and other ARL initiatives, go to <http://www.arl.org>

Edwin Shelock, Director, Turpion, Ltd. (and for years director of the Royal Society of Chemistry) was the next speaker and he gave some background on how scholarly publishing moved from the scholarly societies to commercial publishers. He pointed out that prior to the Second World War, scholars purchased their own journals and research materials and that now most rely on research libraries for this access. He also noted the rites (and rights) of passage that scholars traditionally went through in composing, editing, reading publicly and then publishing their papers. Trying to impose this old model on the new world of Internet publishing is not an easy, or even appropriate fit. In the future, Shelock suggested that universities should handle the process of external refereeing, not publishers. This suggestion was met with some misunderstanding. Though he only meant the process, it was noted that since it is difficult to obtain reliable referees in the first place, this model may not be workable.

Charles Lowry, Dean of Libraries, University of Maryland-College Park, focused on external forces shaping libraries. He coined the term, “informating process,” suggesting that scholarly endeavors are changing their shape and that networked information takes on whole new models. With the rise of asynchronous learning styles and other new trends in higher education, the library has to realign its services. He described some of the team-based arrangements his library will be implementing, based on TQM management principles that have become increasingly popular recently.

In reaction to this session, Karen Hunter, Senior Vice President, Elsevier Science, commended ARL for their Global Resources Program, and had less to say about SPARC, understandably. The discussion centered around just how much can the academy control the scholarly publishing process, or should it? This seems to be one of the major issues we have been discussing this entire decade and it still remains to be resolved.

After a wonderful lunch and tour of the Casalini headquarters, we settled in for the afternoon sessions, the first which addressed the management of content: archiving, publishing and access. Peter Boyce, Senior Consultant, American Astronomical Society, led off the afternoon from the perspective of the researcher. Boyce, being a scholar in the sciences and well-acquainted with scholarly publishing, has a unique observation role. His comments focused on the differences between digital information and print publishing. While content still rules, expanding and improved access methods are critical. He critiqued what makes a “good” and “bad” electronic journal in terms of design and delivery. He emphasized the importance of common, open standards, linking that is complex and reliable, and the need for archival integrity. Boyce looks to the future of electronic publishing and points out that it is important that archiving be maintained in formats we will be able to read in 2005. Can you read a WordStar

document today? He spoke of “intertextualized” information that comes in smaller pieces, but all of it is linked. He notes that the boundaries of networked journals are becoming indistinct, that they are not the same thing as what we think of with print journals. They are instead, systems, where not the whole journal is in one place, that articles can include data, video, 3-D, and much more. We can now experience publishing where something was always electronic, never first in print. The new thinking in many scientific circles is, “If it’s not on the Web, it doesn’t exist.”

Shifting gears somewhat, Bruce Strauch, Professor of Law, The Citadel, gave us a quick tour of two important legal cases making their way through the courts right now. *Ryan vs. CARL* and *Tasini vs. NY Times* are both cases about who can distribute published materials and in what fashion. After an author sells a work to a publisher, what further use of that work is allowed and under what rules? The cases so far have opposite rulings, (both are being appealed) which makes final resolution and legal precedent anyone’s guess. Strauch concludes that the U.S. legal system is not keeping up with the technical possibilities for delivery and that we may be in for some stifling rulings that could hinder the forward progress of scholarship, depending on how these two cases are resolved.

Ward Shaw, Chairman and CEO of the CARL Corporation, is optimistic that we’ll work out the kinks of the systems that we are using now to deliver information. It’s just a matter of time before people will be using electronic devices such as the Rocketbook to read monographic materials. Everything just takes longer than we think to become developed, but these predictions will come to pass. While archiving is extremely important, Shaw does not think publishers will be committed to serving this role. Much of what is driving technology is not driven by scholarship but by the entertainment field. Traditionalists who we are used to serving are dying off or are retiring so we need to focus on our new users instead. While for the moment, technology is “dumb,” that too is changing. Shaw warns that we should not get drawn into belief systems about technology. For example, most of us are used to the concept of “long distance” telephone service. With new satellite systems being implemented, that concept is going away. That was obvious in Italy, where everyone, it seems, carries a cell phone! Technology is nothing by itself—the application is the point. Shaw concludes that while he won’t be going to the library in the future, he will use it. So he asks, what exactly will we be collecting and where will we put it? How can we help the users do it themselves? And, since technology enables the increase of personalized services, we should tailor our services to meet this trend.

As a reactor, Angie LeClercq, Library Director of The Citadel, observed that the transformation is somewhat like the story of the ugly duckling transformed into a swan. (I think we’re still in the ugly duckling stage!) She heralded the potential of digitized historical materials and how marvelous it is for researchers who are more and more able to access information more quickly, without having to travel great distances to examine

unique items and without having fragile materials damaged by use.

As the discussion continued, it was noted that technology is more accessible to more people now than ever. However, it is critical that archiving methods be refreshed so that data can be retrieved. An example of this failure is that much of the data collected from the moon expeditions is now inaccessible. Transforming technology means we have a responsibility to keep up with it.

The last session of the afternoon was captioned: "Aggregation: Here today? Still here tomorrow?" and we all concluded that sometimes aggregation is more like aggravation. Suzanne Wilson Higgins, Blackwells Information Services, characterized aggregators as those who shepherd flocks of data. These shepherds include authors, libraries, booksellers and agents and publishers, as some obvious examples. The role of the aggregator depends on the motive. In the case of the agent, their motive is to provide service and simplify the trading environment. In other words, they want to stay in the loop.

Sir Charles Chadwyck Healy, Chairman of Chadwyck-Healy, Ltd., discussed the role of the aggregator from the viewpoint of the publisher. He reminded us of the many "aggregations" his company has sold through the years—thirty years ago we would have been talking about microform sets and series. He admits that many of these products have been fairly inaccessible to the everyday user. Another example of aggregated data is the ability in Dialog to search across different databases. So the concept is not new, just being applied in new ways.

Bob Neville, Assistant Director, College of Charleston Libraries, noted that if a resource is too complicated, it will be under used. He talked about the strengths and weaknesses of the aggregators and says he is waiting for the day of the "great unbundling." He'd like to see linking across providers, and flexible pricing and presentation. He expects and anticipates strategic alliances. An example, Project Muse is talking to other university presses about mounting their journals. At the same time mega-sites are developing, there are also trends towards customized and do-it-yourself scenarios. The California State system has put out an RFP for development of customized e-journal sites.

The panel reactor for this last session was Dan Tonkery, Faxon/Dawson. He noted that presently there is a great deal of experimentation going on. Regardless of the lawsuits, there is no turning back on the delivery systems that have been developed. He mentioned the frustrating ordering environment that librarians and vendors are experiencing in regards to e-journals and databases, and how this must change.

That evening, Casalini treated the Retreat participants and their guests to a visit to a private villa in the hills above Florence and an unforgettable dinner. The experience cannot be described. After a long day, it was a treat beyond comparison.

The work was not over. On Saturday, we reconvened to explore possible scenarios

for the future and to summarize and conclude the Retreat. First, Tony Ferguson, Head, Collection Development, Columbia University, discussed three scenarios and how they might work. A non-commercial scenario, a commercial scenario and a collaborative scenario. His preferred scenario is the third one. It was suggested that Scenario no.3 be incorporated as a “Fiesole Principle.” Tony’s paper appeared in the April issue of *Against the Grain*, p.94, 1999.

Next, Adrian Alexander, Executive Director of the Big 12 Plus Libraries Consortium and Sara Michalak, Library Director, University of Utah, presented some information about the NEAR Proposal. NEAR stands for National Electronic Article Repository. It was first conceived by David Shulenburg, Provost, University of Kansas. Shulenburg is an economist by training. The proposal is prompted by urgent concerns over the increased cost and amount of scholarly information available today and the need to gain access to it. NEAR would be a federally mandated repository of all scholarly publication, available some time after official publication (90 days is being proposed, but that could change) in digital form. This would form an archive of all scholarship in the U.S. and articles from elsewhere would be welcome, though not required. Who the maintaining agency would be is still undecided. Funding mechanisms have not been decided but several models have been proposed. It would guarantee researchers access to all scholarship published by U.S. faculty. It would “guarantee the ultimate right of the academy to inexpensive and open access to the scholarly communication it generates.” Supposedly, it would not eliminate commercial publication of the works, since the rapid dissemination of such work would still be needed and would still have value.

After outlining the proposal, many questions were raised. Who would define what IS a scholarly article? Who sets the charges and who gets the revenue? For promotion and tenure purposes, would deposit in NEAR be an expectation, a requirement and how would it change the nature of the process? What about multinational and corporate authors? If mandated, what happens to people who refuse to participate? What about retrospective materials? How does this impact on “work for hire” interpretations? Several people in the Retreat group dismissed this proposal as “ludicrous.” However, Alexander reported that the Big 12 group has endorsed it and expects others to as well. A lively debate was continued during lunch among a number of participants.

Anna Maria Tammaro, Library Director at the University of Florence, described some of the projects they are embarking upon with digital resources in Italy. It was interesting to observe how many different approaches there are in the European arena, and that even in one country, such as Italy, there are various models and conditions under which they work. Compared to the United States, the rest of the world is fragmented and isolated in many ways. After the previous presentation, this was an eye-opening contrast. Accompanying this article is a summary of major themes by Fred Lynden.