

Report by Terry Belanger on the conference
**“Acknowledging the Past, Forging the Future:
National Colloquium on Library Special Collections”**
Organized by the
Kelvin Smith Library at Case Western Reserve University
21-22 October 2014

Rare book and special collections librarians tend to be creatures of habit, with traditional migratory patterns. They flock (1) to the annual Rare Books and Manuscripts Section (RBMS) pre-conference, generally held in late June, shortly before (2) the annual conference of the American Library Association (ALA); and – especially for mid-level members of the profession – (3) to ALA’s midwinter conference, generally held at the end of January, when it sometimes annoyingly competes with the various tribal shrieks of (4) Bibliography Week in New York City. Those on the archival side of the roost tend (5) to gather at the late-summer annual meeting of the Society of American Archivists (SAA), and there is always a substantial flight of librarians attending (6) the annual summer conference of the Society for the History of Authorship, Reading, and Publishing (SHARP) and the annual fall conference of the American Printing History Association (APHA).

Library salaries and institutional travel budgets being what they are, most members of the profession must pick which conferences in this clutch of treats they will attend, since few of them receive sufficient funding to go to everything, and fewer still wish to take the time off to do so, the more so because of the siren call of *e.g.* Rare Book School courses, which put further pressure on both migratory patterns and travel budgets.

Thus when notices began to appear this spring announcing a National Colloquium on Library Special Collections (“Acknowledging the Past, Forging the Future”) to be held in Cleveland in October 21st and 22nd, organized by the Kelvin Smith Library at Case Western Reserve University in collaboration with the River Campus Libraries of the University of Rochester, the Vanderbilt University Libraries, and the Libraries of Washington University in St Louis, many of the grown-ups in the profession wondered what was going on.

But the roster of announced speakers included (among others – many others) Sarah Thomas (Harvard), Alice Schreyer (Chicago), Stephen Ennis (The Ransom Center), and Mark Dimunation (LC); and additional sponsors of the symposium included (among others – many others) the University of Illinois, Zubal Books, Aleph-Bet Books, the Antiquarian Booksellers’ Association of America (ABAA), Bruce McKittrick Rare Books, William Reese Company, and Rare Book School.

A survivor myself of 36 successive annual RBMS pre-conferences, I tend these days to steer clear of events labeled colloquium, or convention, or forum, or round table, or seminar, or symposium, or suchlike. But I figured, what the hell: so I went ... me and 200 others; the colloquium sold out in short order.

I’m glad I did: the presentations were without exception worth listening to, and conference arrangements were superb.

A website (<http://library.case.edu/ksl/collections/special/colloquium/>) informed attendees that the colloquium would “explore some of the factors that governed the growth and use of special collections of the past, as well as current and emerging challenges for special collections in the future. How can libraries and university faculty work together to educate students to become more aware of the hidden treasures that are available on their own campuses, and to gain a lifelong appreciation for them? How can collections from individual institutions work together to create a robust whole from the parts? How can scholars, libraries, potential donors, and collectors come together to forge new partnerships to employ these valued collections to advance knowledge and scholarship – particularly in a digital age? This colloquium will be a seminal event in acknowledging the historic strengths of special collections of the past, and for speakers and participants to chart a course for the next decade and beyond.”

The opening speakers at noon on Tuesday, October 21, explained what was going on in more simple terms: the desire by Cleveland bibliophile Robert Jackson to continue conversations

begun at a memorable conference, held at the Library of Congress in 2001, on private collectors and special collections (the principal speakers were Mark Dimunation, William Reese, Alice Schreyer, and Jackson himself). In the early 1990s, Jackson took the lead in founding the Fellowship of American Bibliophilic Societies (FABS), and he has spoken frequently since then, pretty much all over the place, using his substantial personal resources to forward the cause of rare books, special collections, and archives in the overlapping worlds of antiquarian booksellers, book collectors, and rare book librarians and archivists. Since 2001, the attractions of digitization have become clamorous, archives is no longer a 97 pound-weakling, the middle has dropped out of the rare book market, and book collectors are younger, more heterogeneous, and less clubbable. This colloquium, said Jackson, was to be about forging our future: not waiting for it, but controlling and shaping it.

THE COLLOQUIUM OPENING KEYNOTE

From the colloquium website: “A high-level overview of the major issues that faced special collections, rare books and manuscripts in the past, significant concerns today, and some possible directions for the future.”

The colloquium’s opening keynote speaker was Sarah Thomas (Vice President for the Harvard Library and Roy E. Larsen Librarian for the Faculty of Arts and Sciences). Her title was “From Siberia to Shangri-La: changing perspectives on special collections.”

SARAH THOMAS

What do you think of when you think of Siberia, Sarah Thomas (ST) asked the audience. Shouted-out responses included “cold ... empty ... Gulag ... isolated ... punishment ...resources ... tundra.” Years ago, ST said that she worked at an unnamed university that regarded special collections as a subterranean Gulag, where the physical space was unwelcoming and the denizens were arrogant, surly, and computer illiterate. She thought back further, to a time when she was a graduate student, using libraries. She was confronted by rules: white-glove use restrictions; no pens. She found an elitist community, difficult to navigate, not at the center of things ... in a more kindly note, a place for scholars – and wannabe scholar grad students. Collections were frequently uncataloged and fragmentary. Today, we welcome your visit to special collections (they didn’t used to say that), though our hours even today are typically 9-5 M-F in a world in which ATM’s are always available, and supermarkets are open 24/7.

We still tend to turn people away. At Oxford (where until recently ST was Bodley’s Librarian), she was invited to speak to a group of Balliol students. She talked about digitization; a student asked, could you tell me about your rare books? See for yourself, said ST. The student replied that she had tried; she was told to look at the microfilm. Our worry that demand will outstrip capacity has resulted in a hierarchy of worthiness.

In the 1990s, we began to realize how much we had, and how little was available, both in North America and in England. By then most libraries had completed the conversion of their card catalogs and had begun to pay more attention to everything else.

The UK had similar problems: a recent survey suggested that there were 13 million uncataloged books in British libraries, and an additional four million inadequately cataloged ones, with disproportionately large problems in museums, small public libraries, and such ... everywhere, all that stuff out there in places that could use a helping hand.

Printed collections were under better control than archives; we have not been able to keep up with the staggering influx of archival material. One tends to process the easier stuff; English-language materials get preferential treatment. It was quite difficult to know what was, and what was not, done: processing practices were idiosyncratic. People were tackling projects, but the scale was well beyond existing capacity.

The 1998 Association of Research Libraries (ARL) study on the access to and use of special collections showed what could be done collaboratively. Successfully funded projects shared one characteristic: more product, less processing. How can we move materials through? How can social media publicize resources? How can we involve scholars and students in processing materials? (Students often end up with useful projects to develop on their own.)

Does it scale? Does it scale to do what we've been doing? The Council on Library and Information Resources (CLIR) and Mellon have put money into this idea. We have put finding aids on line and developed more product/less processing mantras. But we need to move from a hoarder mentality to decluttering. While not dumpstering, we need to move from the Collyer brothers to open access. ST's successor as Bodley's Librarian, Richard Ovenden, has made a policy of not acquiring collections where there aren't sufficient resources to catalog them. We need to ask collectors to donate resources to make collections accessible, meeting cataloging, preservation, and exhibition needs.

When ST came to Harvard last year, she discovered that Marilyn A. Dunn, the executive director of the Schlesinger Library on the History of Women in America and librarian of the Radcliffe Institute, had developed maximum access projects, eliminating a significant backlog and cataloging collections ranging from the records of Lamaze International to the papers of the Fishermen's Wives of Gloucester. She figured out how to do it in five years, by a variety of methods: in some cases, first they digitized; then they cataloged, worrying less about minimal cataloging and more about maximizing access.

At the Bodleian, ST got funding from Google to catalog unbound c19 copyright deposit music scores (see the What's the Score at the Bodleian? page on the library's website). The scores were put online, and everyone was invited to participate in cataloging them. The staff had to make some self-readjustments, but about 40% of the 4300 scores put online have been cataloged so far.

We're never going to be able to do it by our lonesome; we need an army of people. How can people in the Cloud help us; how we can help the Cloud? At this stage in her career, ST is really thinking about scale; she doesn't think we can continue to do it the way we have been. We have to connect more, vacuuming (ST likes "hoovering") up the shelves.

Our research libraries are still oriented on a c20 model. We're heavily print-based (look at the allocation of staff across libraries). At Harvard, there were about 750,000 books circulated in 2003; the current annual number is 400,000. This figure comes out to 20 books per undergraduate, and it tells us that, more and more, the younger generation is moving to online resources. We need to invert our model. The main part of our collections have to be much more digital. The Harvard libraries have nearly 200 people working on accessions and cataloging. What's the power of 200 people to make special collections, our primary sources, accessible to people?

We have been collaborating, even the very old institutions: the Bodleian has a cooperative project with the Vatican, and it worked with Buckingham Palace to digitize Queen Victoria's diaries. [Search "sarah thomas' queen elizabeth victoria's diaries" on Google Images for a picture of ST with Victoria's great-great-granddaughter.] The royal collections were looking for a public beyond those who could climb the hundreds of steps leading to the Windsor Castle archives. We're all reaching out more.

There are many topics ST said she was not able to talk about. To consolidate her own remarks, ST would say that special collections were once considered elitist; now they are welcoming. New approaches combine mass digitization to open up collections on a scale previously unimaginable, to new audiences. We're moving from an individual to a team approach, engaged in collective actions; from site specific to global horizons. Special collections is no longer Siberia; it is a wonderful Shangri-La peak we all hope to scale.

Questions after ST's deservedly well-received talk centered on copyright restrictions, orphan materials, and real and potential legal problems (law school professors tend to have a different take on these problems from the view held by the university's legal counsel!). ST: I think we can win this one.

PART ONE: ACKNOWLEDGING THE PAST

From the colloquium website: "This session will explore the enduring value of special collections and the book, as well as how these materials influence collectors, librarians and researchers today."

This colloquium had keynote addresses the way other conferences have coffee breaks. After

Sarah Thomas's opening keynote, Session 01 [their zero] of the proceedings ("Acknowledging the past") featured the keynote address of Alice Schreyer (Interim Library Director and Associate University Librarian for Area Studies and Special Collections, University of Chicago). Her title was "Exploring the past: everything old is new again."

Session 01 Keynote: Alice Schreyer

ALICE SCHREYER (AS) brilliantly began by showing us a videotape snippet of a vaudeville hooper singing an Allen/Sager song:

Get out your white suit, your tap shoes and tails
Let's go backwards when forward fails
And movie stars you thought were long dead
Now are framed beside your bed ...

[Chorus:]

Don't throw the past away
You might need it some rainy day
Dreams can come true again
When everything old is new again

We constantly discover the new in old books, said AS: in special collections, everything old is new again: the past two decades have been transformative. (The term "transformative" was used in the 10 June 2014 court decision that creation of full-text databases constitutes fair use; use can be transformative if its purpose is sufficiently different from the original purpose.)

Think of the ways we repurpose special collections materials. Transformations in special collections are intentional; we have embraced undergraduates, and abandoned a stations-of-the-cross approach. As we continue to uncover hidden collections, we are also seeking ways to enhance digital access. Digitization is fast becoming a necessity, not a luxury. CLIR has decided to discontinue its current hidden collections program, revamping it to focus it on digitization projects. There is a blog on the CLIR thought processes [do a Google search on "clir un-hidden"].

Digitization is driven by several factors. Access itself is coming to mean page images and full-text searching. Fears for the long-range security and preservation of digital images are diminishing.

Library administrators find it useful to talk about libraries as laboratories for the humanities. The collections are the equipment of these labs. Humanities scholarship is becoming collaborative; so are interactions between researchers and librarians. Cf. the theme of 2015 RBMs conference ["Preserve the humanities! special collections as liberal arts laboratory"]. "Special collections" no longer implies only a place in which to do research, but rather a research center: cf. the title at the Case Western library [Creation and Curation Services division, bringing together the Scholarly Resources and Special Collections Team and the Digital Learning and Scholarship Team]. Special collections staff are an essential part of the enterprise.

In his latest book, *A new republic: memory and scholarship in an age of digital reproduction*, Jerome McGann makes the bold assertion that the whole of our cultural inheritance has to be reformed and reedited, and that we need to explore anew the mechanisms of production history. Secondary documents can be as important as primary materials, especially when studying antiquity. [This one is required reading. -Ed.]

AS then talked about a recently completed project at the University of Chicago library's Special Collections Research Center: a catalog of the editions of Homer [*Homer in print: a catalogue of the Bibliotheca Homerica Langiana at the University of Chicago Library*, edited by Glenn W. Most and AS: essays by M. C. Lang, Glenn W. Most, and David Wray; entries by Alex Lee and Diana Moser (UC Press, 2013)]. The project yielded new knowledge that could only have been created using a combination of analog and digital tools.

In his introduction to the catalog, donor Michael Lang describes two motivations in establishing the collection: his interest in the physical aspects of the editions of the Iliad and the Odyssey, and the impressionistic but real benefits of the encounter with original material –

benefits that can be dismissed as foolish sentimentalism because they are hard to define.

Homer has been required reading by University of Chicago (UC) students since the university was founded (the UC Press published Richmond Lattimore's translation in 1949). In receiving the Lang gift, Chicago not only agreed to do a catalog of the collection, but also to continue to develop it (graphic novels included).

The first task was to delineate the scope of the catalog. The story was about physical books but not simply about bibliographical description; the focus would be on the transmission and reception of texts. Over the course of the work, the project explored several interesting by-ways, and AS gave examples of the opportunities such projects offer.

A list of the first line of all of the English translations of the Iliad brought attention to the original, now neglected, version of Pope's translation and the likely explanation for the later change.

One of the books in the Lang collection, a 1504 Venetian edition of the Odyssey, contained MS annotations in an unknown script: not Georgian, not Turkish, not Armenian – and certainly not Greek. In April 2014, the Chicago project mounted an online contest, offering a \$1000 award to anyone who could identify and translate this script. [See www.lib.uchicago.edu/e/identify-mystery-text-win-1000/] The project discovered the meaning of "viral": it was immediately flooded with requests for digitizations of the annotated text. Within 36 hours there was a winner and two runners up. The winner was Daniele Metilli, currently enrolled in a digital humanities course in Milan. The annotations were in French, employing a late c18 shorthand system devised by Jean Coulon de Thévenot.

T. E. Lawrence's translation of the Odyssey was designed by Bruce Rogers and published in 1932 (it has been called the most beautiful private press book of the c20). There were two copies of this edition in the Chicago collection; alerted by an outside enquiry, AS was surprised and charmed to discover that this edition had a characteristic smell, caused by an essential oil used in the manufacture of the ink used to print it: one feature of a book not likely to be reproduced online!

Materials don't always reveal themselves at first. We need to have, and to continue to have, the originals.

In her conclusion, AS said that at beginning of the c21, library administrators were concerned about an anticipated shortage in the near future of experienced special collections personnel; but the anticipated crisis never happened. In 2004, there were 301 attendees at the RBMS New Haven pre-conference; in 2009, there were 412 at the Charlottesville pre-conference; in 2014, there were 436 in Las Vegas. Special collections are flourishing, and many newly-appointed heads are coming from archival backgrounds.

[AS is overly optimistic about the current supply of available, experienced personnel, as any number of recent search committees looking for a special collections head will testify. There were few – very few – entry-level jobs in special collections in the 1990s and early 2000s, with the result that there now are fewer middle-level special collections librarians than usual willing to move to new and more senior positions. It will take a while for the catch basin to fill.]

Panel and Audience Discussion 01: Acknowledging the Past

Panel and Audience Discussion 01 followed immediately on Alice Schreyer's Session 01 keynote.

Panel participants included **Joel Silver** (Director and Curator of Books, Lilly Library, Indiana University), moderator; **Paul Ruxin** (Chicago-based book collector); **Ken Lopez** (Ken Lopez Bookseller: Fine Books and Manuscripts, Hadley, MA); Daniel De Simone (Eric Weinmann Librarian, Folger Shakespeare Library); and **Elizabeth Haven Hawley** (Chair, Special & Area Studies Dept, Smathers Library, University of FL).

The panel's website brief: "Acknowledging the past: what has endured? what has changed the most? what may not endure for much longer?"

Moderator Joel Silver began by recommending the late Gordon Ray's 1965 article, "The changing world of rare books," which deals with the relationships among dealers, collectors, and librarians [most easily available in *Books as a way of life: essays by Gordon N. Ray* (Morgan

Library, 1988)]. The three constituencies with which Ray deals are all represented on this panel.

Paul Ruxin

In acknowledging the past, PR said that we could hardly do better than to read the papers given by Robert Jackson, William S. Reese, and Alice Schreyer at the 2001 symposium at the Library of Congress, the conference that prompted Jackson to organize the present conference [published as *Collectors and special collections: three talks* (LC, 2002)]. Schreyer's paper was separately published in 2001 as *Elective affinities: private collectors and special collections in libraries*.

Most collections are built by collectors. These days, there are fewer collectors and fewer books, and the current emphasis in special collections seems to be more on the use of materials than on acquiring them.

Flash forward to 2014. At the recent opening of a brand-new university, FL Polytechnic University, the director of the library announced with pride that there are no books in the school's library. Is it possible that there is a new university proud to have no books?

The current quality of digitization, despite its many uses, is imperfect. The result is sometimes illegible, and it can be expensive to access if your institution doesn't have access to the relevant subscriptions. Universally available digitization won't happen for a very long time.

Another date: 1987, when David L. Vander Meulen (University of VA) gave an Engelhard Lecture at LC titled "Where angels fear to tread: descriptive bibliography and Alexander Pope" [published by LC in 1988; new edition just published by the Bibliographical Society of the University of VA]. Using a micrometer, Vander Meulen measured the thickness of the paper in 800 copies of 33 editions of the *Dunciad*, enabling him to identify the various paper stocks used and thus to distinguish different issues of the poem. His work shows the best way to do descriptive bibliography, a discipline that used to be much more widely studied and understood than it now is. Most PhDs in English once had more than a passing knowledge of descriptive bibliography. Descriptive bibliography remains important because of what a close physical examination of a physical object can reveal.

Special collections personnel need to re-emphasize the uses of descriptive bibliography: the book as object, the book as thing, put together with the book as information. As David Vander Meulen put it at the conclusion of his Engelhard lecture, descriptive bibliography "is a process that brings us not only closer to the minds and actions of those who manufactured the books but also, ultimately, into the presence of Alexander Pope himself."

Ken Lopez

KL has been a bookseller for 40 years; since the 1990s, he has also been dealing in archives. The archives he handles these days are very different from what they used to be: one no longer finds cut-and-paste MSS and the sort of annotated drafts that allowed you to see the archaeology of a work in progress. These days you see a lot of paper and a great many copies, often not very different from each other; they're hard to work with, especially if you don't have the digital files that produced them.

Brochures: there was no brochure advertising this colloquium. KL didn't know what the program was until he got here. KL once had the very large archive of a writer. Librarians were scheduled to come to look at it. Oh my god, thought KL: what about the stuff in the garage, also part of this huge archive? He threw some stuff away in order to increase the percentage of original material in the archive. The librarians were aghast – the discarded material included brochures for writers' workshops in which the creator of the archive had taught, and valuable marketing materials. An archive is a mosaic; you need the whole, to reconstruct something of value of the past.

Correspondence: another obvious thing that has changed. Archives used to contain lots of letters; nowadays the letters in archives are formal, or form, letters. The personal correspondence in a writer's archive is much more likely to be electronic. KL once handled a 1960s correspondence between a writer and his wife, written while the writer was away, attending a conference. The letters described Thursday evening social events at the conference which morphed into Thursday evening pot parties and later into Thursday evening LSD parties.

(Cf. the “acid tests” parties held by Ken Kesey in the San Francisco Bay area.) In this writer’s letters was the road to Woodstock. Such letters began to diminish with cheaper long distance phone calls in the 1970s.

Photographs: archives used to contain real photographs; more recently, the photos are digital, and harder to find. Images stored in the cloud may not be locatable digitally, especially if author has died without passing on the passwords. One of KL’s customers was a scholar who ran a website devoted to the works of John Updike. One day the scholar’s ISP died; his commercial host had changed the nature of its business and simply unplugged the machine. He lost ten years’ worth of work on the website; the information disappeared overnight.

One writer asked KL if a purchaser would want his honorary degrees. They did: repositories want stuff, not merely pictures of stuff. What, then, is the thing itself? The honorary degrees weren’t the degrees – they were a pale shadow of the thing itself. The thing itself: you can’t frame honor, or respect – these are intangibles. Wisdom, insight, &c., are intangibles: the noosphere. Intangibles are what define us as human beings. If we think of ourselves simply as sellers or custodians of paper products we won’t last long. Archives preserve our humanity.

Daniel De Simone

One change in the library world is the impact on research as the result of the digital text. The doors have been blown open. The library’s position in this universe has changed; it is no longer at the center of the space, and it can be remote from it.

In the book trade, the value of inventories has changed over time. The middle layer of the books in trade has disappeared. The trade has had to adjust, and to learn how to stay in business with a missing middle. Dealers are driven to find, collect, and offer for sale unique and ephemeral material.

The collecting community is getting older, filling in rather than building. But collectors still have a major impact both on the trade and in the rare book community. This symposium today a testimony to the bond – the love of books – that unites us and brings us together. This interaction is going to sustain the book world no matter what changes we go through.

We know our present audience, but we’re all looking for new ones. At the Folger Shakespeare Library, when someone comes in to see an exhibition, this may be the one time that we have access to this individual. How do we capture this individual? We need to create a dialogue among ourselves, talking about new audiences, to try to understand what to say to people coming in to look at books for the first time.

Dealers complain that the new breed of librarians may understand special collections, but they don’t know anything about rare books. Dealers should consider internships made available to library school students. If ten booksellers had annual interns, over time there would be a difference.

The way institutions deal with collectors is important. A recent University of Dayton exhibition got faculty to pick objects and write descriptions; students then wrote papers on these books. We all need to work together to work to find new audience. At a recent dinner, DDS sat next to Meredith Woo, then Dean of the Faculty at the University of VA. Did he know, she asked, that most Koreans learn English in large part through the works of William Shakespeare? Had the Folger done anything about this, she asked. They hadn’t: they didn’t know.

Elizabeth Haven Hawley

Having worked at a number of very different institutions, HH has discovered that a community’s take on objects can be fundamentally different from that of the typical library special collection; objects of social practice, for instance: ceremonial swords and flags. It is the enormity of these collections that is their most important part to the community that produced them.

We need to honor those who have long supported us, while dealing with those who have been locked out. Eight ruminations:

1. The artifact matters, but not always in the way that you think it does. You give me your business card. Because I used to work in the printing trades, I think of by whom and how it was printed; I think of processes because I have done most of them myself – this has little to do with the text of the card, or why you gave it to me.

2. Objects are meaningful when they are attached to stories, and it's an object of power to be able to tell the stories. Printers glorify the artistry of their work. In reality, printing is (and especially was) a dirty, nasty trade. We don't think of this when we make printer's hats. We have created stories about the meaning of objects where their context is secure. When we focus on literature, we are highly selective. Our selection positions ourselves in the social structure.

3. We know that materiality is tied to meaning, but it is hard to tell how that happens. HH likes to give books to students that are older than their great grandparents. The object represents continuity over time; wear. The past is a strange place, but the outlines are somehow material: ghosts on the landscape. A student applies pre-existing knowledge to the object. This thing has lasted; someone has thought it to be important enough to be saved.

4. Every generation between then and now is involved, if a book is going to be kept alive. Each generation needs to have its own opportunities to react to objects; we have a responsibility to keep the doors open, even if we don't wish to walk through them ourselves.

5. Books are meaningful when attached to stories about their production, or about the persons who collected them. They can serve both as memory markers and memory makers. We have some difficulty when the physical book carries more weight than its text does.

6. Books are conduits of information. Objects have meaning when they are used, not simply because of the continuity of their existence: it could be argued that objects have no meaning otherwise.

7. If objects help us to tell stories, we must be aware of materials not in special collections. We're strong in our connection to current collectors. But the direct transfer of materials from their creator to a special collection can be accompanied by difficulties: an ethnic leader may wish to stipulate that there be no translation from the original language of the material.

8. How do we become ourselves in society? Structuration: the active working out of social structure and human agency: how we become who we are is entirely determined neither by society nor independently by ourselves. Structuration: how do we balance the meaning of the book given by its creator with current use in special collections? Who touched this book before we did, and how, over time? What does the inclusion in special collections and the transfer to institutions of materials with no direct connections with their creators mean?

Panel & Audience Discussion 01: Q&A

[The panelists' presentations evoked a lively Q&A session (or, more accurately, a question and comment session). Here and elsewhere, I was not generally able to get the names of those coming up to speak from the audience microphones. Most of the conferees sat at large round tables that were comfortable to take notes, eat lunch, or use a laptop on, but their bulk resulted in great physical distances between audience and presenters (and me, beavering away at one of the front tables).]

Q: I was taught descriptive bibliography, but it has not turned out to be one of my more useful skills at work. Descriptive bibliography is very much about the physical materials rather than the meaning of their texts.

Ruxin. There were two moments when PR realized that he was a collector. The first one was when a dealer told him he was. The second one was when he realized that he didn't know enough. At a book fair, he saw a book described by the dealer as the 8th edition of Samuel Johnson's dictionary. He went home and consulted David Fleeman's bibliography of Johnson; the book was in fact a rare Dublin piracy. He went back to book fair and gave this information to the dealer. Crestfallen, the dealer asked him if he was interested in buying the book for half-price.

Hawley: it is impossible to deal with gray literature without a knowledge of descriptive bibliography..

De Simone: there's a difference between special collections librarians and curators. It's a privilege to be a curator; the job allows you the time; it's your responsibility; descriptive bibliography is in your job description. Not being able to do that is tough. One thing that worries booksellers is that libraries are so lean that everyone is their own administrator, working in capacities different from what they were trained for.

Silver: a generation ago, bibliography was replaced by theory in graduate school programs.

Hawley: there is no casual descriptive bibliography, and you damage books doing it. We're missing collaborative bibliography. It would be helpful to have collaborative online information to build on; we need more common vocabulary.

Q: I am a docent at LC, and I get to see how visitors react to what is on exhibition; it a pity that so little is available. LC has an important collection of string instruments, but a requirement of the gift is that they much be used [put "Gertrude Clarke Whittall [article]" into Google for more information].

Comment by Kate Dunning, working on an English literature PhD at Case Western. The walls aren't necessarily coming down. After you've read ten *New York Times* articles online you have to switch to a different browser. The Emily Dickinson archives at Harvard/Amherst are working hard to provide wide access, but there are lots of barriers if you don't have access to the right subscriptions. There is tension between the ideal of open access, and fiscal realities.

De Simone: I have too much available to me!

Ruxin: The negotiations between Amherst and Harvard about the Dickinson archive was contentious. Libraries are competitive and possessive. Some libraries still want to build a wall around their collections.

Hawley: The University of FL works with South American institutions with very limited access to all sorts of stuff we're used to.

Lopez: when a writer dies, if we don't know what online accounts exist, they disappear; this economic aspect of digital existence is sometimes forgotten.

Q: Ohio is the home of Dard Hunter. We're really talking about the allocation of resources; we have lots of ways of spending our money. Lots of us want to ride the newest horse. How can digitization deal with Hunter's books: watermarks, the sock of letterpress? You can't see the bite of type in a digital representation.

De Simone: we have an acquisitions budget. Institutions still have enormous buying power; its size dwarfs that of everyone else (except perhaps dealers selling to one another!). Believe me: there's a powerful library presence in the antiquarian book market.

Ruxin: a Boswell letter came up for auction recently, and several collectors were interested. At the auction itself they learned that Harvard was going to bid on the letter. Ruxin and his friends bowed out but others did not, and bid the letter up to an absurd price. We need more collaboration. [We need to stay out of jail, too: a ring is a ring. -Ed.]

PART TWO: WHERE ARE WE TODAY?

From the colloquium website: "This session will consider issues such as preserving and revealing the artifact, understanding the role and limitations of digital surrogates, elevating the importance for collecting rare books and manuscripts, revealing physical collections through digital scholarship, and collecting issues in a time of transition, including collection scope and means to determine the optimal collections to meet institutional academic needs."

The Session 02 keynote speaker was Jay Satterfield (Special Collections Librarian, Dartmouth College). His title: "Considering the present: special collections are the meat, not the dessert."

SESSION 02 KEYNOTE

Jay Satterfield

JAY SATTERFIELD (JS): Fantasy conversation in the reading room: "Hi. My name is Jay and I'll be your server today. I hope you enjoy your book." At Dartmouth, we want the use of our Rauner Special Collections Library to be a mundane act, but also a memorable experience. We have made structural changes to encourage the use of our collections. Dartmouth is wealthy; it has unusually strong collections and a long tradition. But when JS came there, it had a splendid, newly renovated special collections building with a pretty empty reading room. The goal was to blow open the doors and to put special collections at the center of the intellectual life of the

college.

Use has gone from five or six classes/year to (recently) 115 classes, 265 individual sessions, involving 25 of the college's 44 academic departments and 1500 of Dartmouth's 4200 students: over a third of undergraduate body. We want every student to have had Rauner experience before graduation.

The curatorial model did not seem suited for an institution of our size, or for what we wanted to do. Dartmouth always straddles a line between the aspirations of a research library and the realities of a college library. We dumped the curatorial model; now the department head, the processing personnel, and reader services librarians all devote time to outreach; we all teach a lot. The lines are permeable; we discuss acquisitions widely, looking for materials that will immediately be useful (not long ago, an intern successfully suggested the purchase of an early c19 diary). We are no longer adding to the backlog.

JS gave an extended case study of how his department currently does its business. For a class of 16 students, the staff assembled eight objects from the collections and asked the students, working in pairs, to 1) identify the item; 2) tell the class the item's informational value; and 3) explain what questions the item needed them to ask. One of the items was a January 1777 MS petition from Dartmouth students, asking the town and the College to permit inoculations against smallpox. The second item was a letter dated 12 February 1777 from a Dartmouth student to his brother, describing the inoculation (the students did OK, but one young native American servant caught the disease and carried it back to her family). The third item was a c18 book with a bookmarked digression concerning smallpox in the colonies; the fourth was a copy of an early law book, containing the first laws passed by the state of New Hampshire after Independence: one of the laws required those who wished to be inoculated to get advance permission from the town selectmen. The fifth item was a 1765 edition of the life of Jonathan Edwards, with a bookmarked passage regarding Edwards' own inoculation as president of Princeton (he died of it). Other items included copies of two short treatises published in the 1720s, soldiers in the pamphlet war at the time pro/con smallpox inoculation.

Each pair of students presented its document; together, the eight documents formed a web of context. One volunteer was then asked to put the story together: a smallpox epidemic hit Dartmouth College in 1777, students requested permission and were inoculated, a servant got the illness and spread it to her home. Students in the class then built on, corrected, and expanded the narrative provided by the volunteer. By the end of the session, they usually did a pretty good job of telling the story.

No curator interpreted the story for them; the students owned the story. JS's students are hungry for information about Dartmouth; the aura of the original documents is part of the impact the class session makes, putting students into an arena of communal discovery. The session is really about how primary sources work: discovery and connectivity. the result is exuberant chaos = active learning, expressed in a different way.

The lesson of special collections is that history is written not only in books, but also in MSS and from other sources. We need to discourage structures that encourage the isolation of documents.

Chaos is not easily associated with special collections – but it should be. Think of it as a moment of anti-structure. Let the experiential moment define the class. It's hard not to be directive; old school show-and-tell sessions are fun for students, but JS doubts whether much learning takes place in them.

Dartmouth is fortunate to have an important Polar collection. A 70-student class "From Pole to Pole" required students to use two original documents in writing their term papers. Evelyn Stefansson Nef and the Delmas Foundation supported a project to enable full-text XML searching of the typescript of a proposed 20-volume encyclopedia prepared by the U.S. Navy in the late 1940s, but never published. Students have 24/7 online access to the Encyclopedia Arctica (it can count as one of the two original documents). They now come to class better prepared, and write better papers.

When we first put up digital collections, it was hard to avoid trying to provide context; what if people don't understand this? JS doesn't really care any more: a good confusion.

We're still gatekeepers, not so much regarding who, but what. We have to be so selective: we

have so much more than we can deal with. We all went wild in second half of the c20, trying to collect everything: we have 100-year backlogs.

Dartmouth is full of high achieving students – but they're also terrified of failure. But failure is part of the process of learning. Chaos in the classroom.

The important thing is to position our collections to make them most useful – like Lou's Restaurant in Hanover (nothing fancy: the meat is not pasture fed, but the food is all home-made). Students always get a good meal there.

Session 02 Keynote Q&A

Petrina Jackson (University of VA) commented: a third of Dartmouth's students use special collections each year. How did you do this?

JS: I got myself invited to every faculty meeting I could, carrying relevant special collections objects, and bringing the library's appropriate subject specialist along with me. I told faculty members that you can talk to your students about stuff, but we *have* the stuff. I established a warm relationship with the Dartmouth Center for Advancement of Learning [www.dartmouth.edu/~dcal/]. I started doing sessions in DCAL on integrating special collections into the classroom, and networked all over campus. Word travels real fast at Dartmouth, which is small and isolated. I emphasized over and over to faculty members: the use of special collections is about forwarding specific goals in your syllabus, not just show and tell. We're trying to change our footprint on campus, to have everything available within 15 minutes. We would rather have a book used to death than not used at all.

Janine Pollock (Free Library of Philadelphia). Are you under pressure to prove results? Are you keeping statistics?

JS: yes, but not well. We do get great stories from faculty members – stories that can be presented to the provost.

Panel and Audience Discussion 02: Where are we today?

From the colloquium website: "Where does the collector/donor community see special collections today? Will collectors change their perspectives about giving their collections? Are there new/different ways libraries should engage collectors to encourage them to donate collections? What is the current state of relations of collectors, booksellers, donors and rare book auction houses to libraries?"

The panelists included **Geoffrey Smith** (Head of the Rare Books & MS Library, The Ohio State University), moderator; **Selby Kiffer** (Senior Vice President, Sotheby's); **Jon Lindseth** (bibliographer and book collector); **Jim Kuhn** (Joseph N. Lambert & Harold B. Schleifer Director of Rare Books, Special Collections & Preservation, University of Rochester, River Campus Libraries); and **Christoph Irmischer** (Provost Professor, George F. Getz Jr. Professor, Wells Scholars Program Director, Indiana University)

Geoffrey Smith

We hope that prospective donors will continue to believe that special collections provide a happy home for their collections. The panel members represent various stages of the journey from private collector to institutional repository.

Jon Lindseth

Bibliographical description has always been a focus of JL's collecting, both with collections he's already given away, and on those in progress. He has two books in the works: *Alice in a world of Wonderlands* (3 vols, 250 contributors, more than a hundred languages represented, June 2015 publication date), celebrating the 150th anniversary of the first publication of *Alice in Wonderland*, with an accompanying conference and an exhibition at the Grolier Club (opening in September 2015) of translations of Alice. The second book is a collection of Jewish fables, edited by Emile Schrijver, curator of the Bibliotheca Rosenthaliana at the University of Amsterdam. Publication in 2015?

1. Where does the collector/donor community see special collections today? We know that digitization is important, but we must have original documents. Special collections depend on donors, who can collect in depth over a long period of time, including ephemeral material. Jay Satterfield's approach is economical; but for scholars, complete collections are essential.

2. Will collectors change their present perspectives? Not unless the U.S. tax laws change. Leaving a collection to one's heirs rarely works (the Scheide Library at Princeton is an exception). Auctions: most collectors believe in recycling collections to other collectors (this is the most frequent choice: convert your present collection to cash, then start a new collection!). Part gift/part sales options are also possible.

3. Are there new ways of forming relationships? Professor Marty Marshall of Harvard used to say that if you don't have a plan in writing, you don't have a plan. Why does the University of Texas now have a great library? it started well behind the curve – but Harry Ransom had a plan. Cf. Alice and the Cheshire cat: "Alice came to a fork in the road. 'Which road do I take?' she asked. 'Where do you want to go?' responded the Cheshire Cat. 'I don't know,' Alice answered. 'Then,' said the Cat, 'it doesn't matter.'" Be sure your goals are clear.

Thoughts: the number of collectors shrinking today. Clone Bob Jackson (he once had two exhibitions running in New York City at the same time). Join the Fellowship of American Bibliophile Societies (FABS): currently, there are 30 member organizations plus 16 affiliates. Start your own society. If you want to get together with book collectors, read what they read. Read *The Book Collector* and *Fine Books & Collections*. Establish a collectors' circle at your college or university. Start a book collecting contest: every college should have one. Cf. *FB&C* for an annual report on local collegiate contests and the national run-off, sponsored in part by the ABAA. You need to subscribe to *FB&C*. Don't say we have it at our library! Join single-author societies. Get your English department to teach descriptive bibliography (Michael Suarez reports that none of the top 50 English departments currently require bibliographical training).

Without a plan to seek out engaged collectors, you're left just with chance, and hope.

Selby Kiffer

SK said that he did not feel like a complete interloper; he has a library degree from Columbia University. When he got his degree, no library would hire him. He has been at Sotheby's since the mid-1980s.

One of the Van Dorens once pointed out that the future will never be futurist; it will be like the present, only more so. Everyone is always getting older; curricula are always changing. In 1984, working part-time at the Grolier Club, he thought, gosh, these people are really old.

What has changed since the 2001 LC conference, the ultimate progenitor of the present colloquium? There used to be two main options for collectors: sale and donation. A third option is emerging for those with collections in the \$20-\$50+M range: establish your own library/foundation. Part of the reason: unmet promises from libraries.

There has been a real shift to highlights collecting. There was a time when you could buy first editions of e.g. *The origin of species* or of the Lewis & Clark expedition or of *Moby Dick*. These books now fetch astronomical prices – these books, but not others by the same authors; other Melville titles remain collectible. You'll pay a bundle for a copy of Hemingway's *The sun also rises* (ten years ago, a copy with a pre-sale estimate of \$80-120K sold for \$340K); but you can still buy a copy of Hemingway's *Torrents of spring* (admittedly, not a very good book).

Private collections could become less important to libraries. The cool stuff is what attracts collectors, and there has been movement from collecting more traditional stuff to pop culture. The most expensive MS sold at Sotheby's this year [\$2M] contained Bob Dylan's lyrics for "Like a rolling stone." In 2010, James Naismith's rules for basketball brought more than \$4M.

Sotheby's sold a collection of books from George Washington's library (the largest single group of GW books to come up since the early c20). The lot was purchased by an institution for \$100+M. There is still a case for libraries buying books that produce a sense of wonder.

We all have this in common: to some extent we're all competing. Are books and MSS intrinsically boring? I've been to a lot of boring exhibitions. Sotheby's is now using "exhibition enhancements" in its pre-sale viewings. SK's Sotheby's colleague Tobias Meyer [head of the contemporary art department] once said: my job is to make art expensive. Our job here is to

make books interesting.

Ten seconds is the average time a visitor spends looking at LC's copy of the Gutenberg Bible. People think they ought to go to museums; we need to inculcate some the feeling for exhibitions. The cost of the objects is a part of the attraction. Cf. the copy of the Bay Psalm Book recently sold at Sotheby's, which went on tour all over the country before the sale. Visitors to the exhibition took selfies with the book. Part of lure was that the book might be worth \$15M (it was). People don't telephone Sotheby's to ask about bibliographical description; they ask about value. The financial value of books enhances their interest.

Deaccessioning – it would be vulgar to talk about it now, but that's what breaks and lunch are for!

Jim Kuhn

JK is a new director in an older institution. He celebrates his first anniversary at the University of Rochester in about ten days; the University's relationships with donors go back to the mid c19. Here are some of the questions that have come up during his first year at Rochester.

Over the past 11 months, he has had many conversations about potential gifts and acquisitions: Oz, medieval seals, an early J. M. Dent Everyman collection, AIDs posters, 20 years of papers from a local non-profit with 55 boxes (sealed) already on site. Most of the conversations were about important collections with real value.

JK's responses: Thank you, yes. | Yes, if. | Thank you, no. A written collection development policy helps. JK tries to work with donors on making gift possible. Success can depend on connections with current collections and existing strengths, and with curricular needs. It helps to have specific one-on-one conversations with relevant faculty members. We want the collections we bring in to be used.

What else would help? JK wishes that we had more tools, more model policies, including tools for the development of print collections in a world of mass digitization. He would love to see comparisons of print and online copies. Checklists are useful: here are the reasons to buy, accept gifts in kind, this is why THIS physical copy is important – not *despite* a copy on line but *because* of a copy on line. These questions are going to be asked in more and more pointed fashion in years to come. Let's start answering them now.

What else would help? Collaborative acquisition. JK used as example the so-called Burned-over District in western NY State, an area had been so heavily evangelized by the 1870s that there was no "fuel" (unconverted population) left over to "burn" (convert). There are strong and deep research collections throughout NY State, many of them overlapping. If researchers are going to fly up to suburban Canada [joke], how many collections can they visit? JK would love to talk to colleagues about this; but where are the collaborative collection development policies?

What else would help? Almost all of us here are collectors of one kind or another. The hard part is cultivating the donors that we need at OUR institution. What are your suggestions about evaluating collections that come over the transom? We all have collections that must have once seemed great but are now very little used.

JK gave two successful examples of social engagements with collectors.

1) A completist collection: 100 years of Gilbert & Sullivan posters, bequeathed in 2003, now starting to arrive in small annual increments. They show the long history of the operas in a remarkably wide variety of graphic design, including foreign language versions. Donor Dr Hal Kanthor leads tours of the collection; the university carillon did a Gilbert & Sullivan concert during Homecoming.

2) AIDs education posters, collected and donated by Dr Edward Atwater. The collection was given to Rochester starting in 2007, with accruals. There is material from 100 countries, in 60 languages. Posters are large, floppy objects, and the collection is easiest to use online (it was the donor's stipulation that the posters be digitized; it's the best way he has to avoid duplication when adding material to the collection!). A disclaimer on the web site states that the posters are available for research purposes only: if you don't want your images to appear, let us know ... but we hope you will reconsider. JK is proud to be part of institution willing to take this risk.

Where we are today is dependent on where we have been. The answers we arrive at will forge our future.

Christoph Irmischer

I could not exist without the efforts of collectors and librarians. The Lilly Library has the papers of Max Eastman [poet, writer, political activist], purchased in 1961, and later augmented by generous gifts. CI is doing a biography of Eastman.

I teach semester-long archival classes in the Lilly Library. One is called “Working with modern MSS”, the other is called “Modern literary archives.” In the first few weeks, students select archives of interest to them. Their excitement over original materials is palpable, for example about a printed newspaper interview with Walt Whitman, with Whitman’s own comments written on and added to it. Whitman tried to sell the result to a NY magazine; because he recycled paper, part of the item includes writing on the back of his tailor’s bill.

Students handle material with more care than many of CI’s faculty colleagues. We do make digital copies, but most of his students want to work with the objects themselves (they also spend a lot of time on their computers). Because students choose their own collections, they have a sense of ownership over the material.

One student worked with the love letters of sailor writing home during WW2, hoping his girlfriend wouldn’t forget him (she did). CI tells his students that they know more about their archives than he does; he become a student, too. The research authorizes his students to become experts on their subject; it’s a great way to give them skills. He asks them not to write final papers but to do web exhibits, using open-source software. The Lilly Library sometimes host these exhibits on its website: one was drawn from photographs taken by Frank L. Crone, the American Director of Education in the Philippines papers between 1913-1916. He was a Hoosier; he taught the Filipinos how to grow corn [see www.indiana.edu/~liblilly/digital/exhibitions/exhibits/show/crone]. Another: a web exhibit on a c19 utopian community that came to Indiana from Manchester (it fell apart over the sharing of an ax, or lack of [see URL as above ... exhibits/show/ashton]).

CI has hosted two NEH Audubon seminars at Lilly, using the library’s double elephant folio. Lilly has the complete printed Audubon, including the quadrupeds and the 8vo *Birds* in original wrappers. Through them, we can trace the entire Audubon trajectory.

CI hopes that these examples give a sense of end use. He could not do anything without the Lilly’s generous policies (he has a classroom at his disposal for the entire semester). His students get a complete overview of how a research library works.

Panel and Audience Discussion 02 Q&A

Mark Miner (Minderd.com Publishing). Story-telling = a dirty word called marketing. What are you doing to market your collections?

Kuhn: There are tours called “Research Rochester” for prospective undergraduate students that include a visit to special collections. We teach pre-college classes in the summer.

Smith: We promote our collections as well as we can. “I didn’t know you had it!” is a frequent comment by local faculty. We’re limited by our resources.

Irmischer: We’re at capacity. It’s easier in Bloomington, a small town: when you come to the Lilly Library, the first thing you see is a reception desk, not a security station.

Kiffer: Most of Sotheby’s marketing money goes to promoting paintings. The book department relies on editorial coverage.

Alice Schreyer: We want to work with colleagues (and the granting agencies want us to); but another theme that’s come up is competition, both between collectors, and between private collectors and institutions. Jim’s thoughts on collaborating with Burned Over collections refers to sharing AFTER acquisition. What about before acquisition? Chicago is an unusual case because all of the major collections there were formed in 1890s by the same donors, who divided up the territory. Libraries today don’t yet seem to be able to wrap their hands around any way to collaborate in special collections. How do we tackle this?

Petrina Jackson (University of VA): Libraries often have only a small stable of donors. Can you give specific examples on how to find new donors?

Lindseth: if you’re trying to attract donors, advertise. Use the university alumni journal; tell

them what you're trying to do. We know advertising works.

PART THREE: CHARTING THE COURSE FOR THE FUTURE

From the colloquium website: "This session will explore the future of the book as object: how will it look, how will it be collected, and what should we begin to collect and preserve today to ensure its longevity? The emerging role and value of special collections in a world of digital scholarship will also be examined, such as how digital techniques can complement and advance the use of manuscripts, rare books and other archival materials in all formats, including images, art work and audio/video files."

The Session 03 keynote speaker was Stephen Enniss (Director, Harry Ransom Center, University of Texas at Austin); his title was "Objects of study: special collections in an age of digital scholarship."

SESSION 03 KEYNOTE

Stephen Enniss

STEPHEN ENNISS (SE) was formerly the Librarian of the Folger Shakespeare Library [before which he was head of special collections at Emory University]; he became the director of the Harry Ransom Center (HRC) only within the last year. His transit from Washington DC to Austin, TX, involves time travel from the c16-17 to the c20-21. SE has not, however, been to the future, and his topic gives him pause. But he'll begin early, and see how far we'll get into the c21.

In London in 1791, Samuel Ireland announced the discovery by his son William Henry of important Shakespeare MSS, including the MS of King Lear. Boswell went to visit the new find: "I shall now die contented," he said (he died a few weeks later). The MSS were finally dismissed as fakes only when the it-sez-here new Shakespeare play, *Vortigern and Rowena*, was laughed off the stage during its first performance at Drury Lane. SE is interested in the Ireland forgeries because of what they say about the status of literary MSS at end of the c18: they were already worth forging. He is interested in examining how our attitude towards MSS have shifted over time, and how these changing attitudes affect opportunities in contemporary archives.

It was formerly not uncommon to clip signatures from original letters for insertion in autograph albums. It was the signature that was the coveted object, an object of veneration and devotion rather than of study: a stand-in for the author in the way that words were not. But literary MSS have long held a persistent value as a coveted object, as well.

Now we have an altered form of MSS, and SE can date the beginning of the change quite precisely: in the early 80s, between 1982-85, when word processors came into general use. For Gabriel García Márquez, the change occurred after 1981 – *Chronicle of a death foretold* and before 1985 – *Love in a time of cholera*. (Marquez: if I had been given a computer 20 years ago, I would have written twice as much.) For Salman Rushdie, the change occurred in 1988. (Rushdie: I email a lot, but don't ask me what's in there.) Virtually all textual production (we used to call it writing) is now done on word processors.

The holograph persists as an object of interest and value, but it's not uncommon to find that MSS exist as a succession of piles of clean 20# copy paper. The Norman Mailer archives contains hundreds of disks. Were they made by him or by his assistant? authenticity is a problem.

At Emory University in the 1990s, the special collections staff didn't know quite what to do with disks (like sound tapes, they are hard to deal with). It wasn't practical to open files to compare them with hard copies. The solution was to print out the electronic documents and catalog the printout. When an object is digital, reformatting of content that has always been digital. But often our finding aids do not distinguish between typescript and computer printout. Practice is inconsistent. Nearly half of UK repositories do not accept digital media. Unwise? cf. a policy of responsible ownership: don't accept what you can't care for.

But it seems clear that much is being lost because of a refusal to accept digital media, or not knowing what to do with it once it arrives. Cf. Updike at Harvard: his 5 1/2" floppies didn't survive; his 3 3/4" disks do, but he overwrote disks while saving hardcopy copies.

Boswell would probably not want to kiss a modern diskette. Future textual projects will adapt to new textual forms. Rushdie stored his old and obsolete computers in a closet. He was

represented by the agent Andrew Wylie, who emphasized the importance of Rushdie's email archive, very different from the conventions of the more formal level of written or typed letters. Wylie was intent on driving the sale price of the Rushdie as high as possible. The final agreement between Rushdie and Emory did not itemize the various parts of the archive; thus no precedent was set about establishing the value of the digital part of a collection.

The monetary level of writers' archives are a major driving force in their survival; what will happen with digital-only archives? More than two decades have passed since email became common. Since 1997, Ian McEwan has systematically organized his email correspondence; it contains both sides of the exchanges. (McEwan: I didn't start out to save them, I just didn't know how to get rid of them.)

MS archives supported major publishing projects in the 1950s and 1960s, when authorial intention reigned high. The Mark Twain archive at Berkeley has prosperously become a site of competing *textual* claims. Critical editions based on the digital files of e.g. Norman Mailer, on the other hand, are a long way off, if ever. It will be a long time before we're sure whether or not these digital archives have value. With the death of the author, his or her papers now become a corporate entity: literary production, canonization, reading practices, illuminated by email (perhaps the most interesting part of digital archives).

We have the potential to ask new questions: new forms of enquiry. Scholarship is becoming deeply collaborative, with important implications for our work. This has the unintentional consequence that the physical object becomes more important. Digitization can reunite separated MSS parts. Digitization projects tend to privilege the single author. Thus at the Folger, conducting research on word usage: did Shakespeare really invent the many words he is supposed to have coined? or is it just that his texts are the ones that have survived? What would the linguistic analysis of a large body of c17 printing tell us about Shakespeare? We now have the tools to answer such questions.

The growing bulk of digital content in contemporary archives similarly will allow us to do new work. As the quantity of digitized material grows, it seems likely that the next decade will see new tools for the manipulation of large bodies of text. We may recoil from machine-based analysis, but the further development of such tools will become more and more necessary. A greater facility with these techniques will produce new forms of digital publication – and not just books: websites, &c., and other innovative forms of publication. Cf. the website created by Janine Barchas (UT Austin): "What Jane saw"

[<http://www.whatjanesaw.org/%5dhttp://www.whatjanesaw.org/>]. Jane Austen visited a picture exhibition in Pall Mall in 1813: visitors to the site can see what Austen saw. The website provides an online gallery space, illuminating the c19 museum-going experience.

Copyright will continue to hinder research, but development in open access are encouraging. Evidence suggests that new sets of questions will emerge not connected with reading or copyright issues (what was Shakespeare's speech? What did Jane Austen see?). Some scholars will continue to use digital archives to read texts, but others will have other motives (applying forensics; recreating earlier digital environments; sources of data for machine analysis). As Bob Jackson said in his opening remarks, we will control our future.

One critique. A remarkably diverse group of special collections is represented at this colloquium. What we are stressing is not a conformist future (one of our strengths is our diversity). Each of us will have to make our own decisions about the value of what we have. There is great promise in digital technology, though copyright imposes restrictions. Files that once moved at the speed of light are now available only onsite in copyright-bound archives. This will lead to increasing concerns about privacy rights. The protocols for stabilizing content are emerging. What is most needed now are not tools but policies to guide our use of this material.

We will continue to see new lines of questioning emerging from special collections, and equally new forms of visualizing and sharing. But I remind you that the archive is more than a site of questioning and investigation. Much of what we deal with consists of persistent physical objects. Resistance to oblivion is one of the most important parts of the role of special collections. The continuing existence even of locks of hair is a victory over time.

Session 03 Q & A

Julie Grob (Houston): What advice can you give to those who want to work with current writers on how to manage their material?

Ennis: The existence of digital archives encourages earlier intervention and relations with authors. The ephemeral nature of the material will require guidance. The institution that wishes to document a literary moment will have to deal with this.

Jay Satterfield: We have a donor who wants to have our institution develop a website to encourage use of the materials. We envisaged the gift as a MS collection. In special collections at Dartmouth, we don't have the ability to build out what the donor wants, and our digital advisors thought of the project quite differently from what special collections thought. We're now negotiating more internally on how we're going to handle this matter. We used to be our own players; now we're discovering that the rules of the game are much more complicated.

Ennis: The growth of collaboration is needed: we need partnerships with digital humanists and technology staff. We know the traditional issues of authenticity and the responsibility for ensuring the survival of collection material over time, but our collaborators are themselves looking at them another way. We should not shrink from these opportunities – but remember Jim Kuhn's mantras: yes; yes if; no.

In negotiation with sellers, we're increasingly laying out what we, as the receiving institution, are willing/able to do by way of reformatting. At HRC, we try to leave masters untouched after an initial reformatting. It's not yet clear how to allow reader access to born-digital content. This is an area where we're focusing a lot of our attention: we need to develop best practices.

Q: does HRC archive the emails of its curators?

Ennis: this is very much a conversation we're having at the Ransom Center.

Sean Quimby (Columbia): I agree that our policies lag behind our techniques. How should we manage the uniqueness of content when it is so easily reproduceable.?

Ennis: It's for this reason that at Emory, you have to visit the place to use the digital archives. There are people who will tell you that digital content has a physical manifestation. But our own interest is not so much with the digital artifact as with its research potential. Our agreements do ask that when digital content is transferred, it will not similarly be placed at other institutions. The point is not so much possessiveness as it is an understanding that we don't need multiple institutions performing the same actions on the same digital material. Part of our emerging policies should deal with who will have the responsibility for collection care; it should be in one place.

Quimby: There can be a healthy balance between competition and collaboration – a mechanism for certifying uniqueness while making materials widely accessible.

Ennis: There is competition for much-sought-after research collections. Whether born-digital or paper-based, we spend a great deal of time saying no to proposed collections, directing them to more appropriate institutions. Cooperation is occurring on many levels; we need to combine our curatorial fire power.

Susan Brynteson (University of DE): I am the [pro bono] librarian for Yaddo [see www.yaddo.org/]. The earlier archives of this artists' retreat are at NYPL. I have suggested that Yaddo print out its current emails, but they're not doing it.

Ennis: Many institutions do do it; we did it at Emory. Personally, I think that the conversation has moved beyond making digital content look like a MS. It was digital in its earliest form; it is likely to be a more complete and useful archive in digital form than as printouts.

Panel and Audience Discussion 03: Special collections in an age of digital scholarship

From the colloquium website: “What can or should be done to employ library special collections in new and interesting ways? What are the potential opportunities to expand special collections into new formats (images, art, audio/video files)?”

Panel participants included **Daniel Cohen** (Dept of History & Art, Case Western Reserve University), moderator; **Athena Jackson** (Associate Director of Special Collections, University of Michigan); **Melissa Hubbard** (Head of Special Collections and Archives, Case Western Reserve University); **Tom Congalton** (Between the Covers Rare Books). [Gerald Early was scheduled to appear but was unable to attend.]

Daniel Cohen

DC has hypothesized that the American Antiquarian Society (AAS) is cutting its own throat by putting its resources online; in gaining a world of digital readers, institutions like AAS stand in danger of losing their core function as a destination for scholars. AAS staffers have told him that this probably won't happen; but it does still seem to him that special collections will have to strategize very carefully to keep themselves viable. To this end, DC proposes six strategies:

1. Reach out to school alumni as potential donors and potential users.
2. Outreach should extend well beyond the borders of institutions to draw in members of the surrounding community, both as potential users and as potential donors.
3. Most special collections librarians should to the extent possible gear acquisitions to materials not yet digitized, preferring unique MS material to printed books, however rare. Also look for scrap books and other ephemera, and mixed media.
4. Special collections libraries should sponsor activities that will draw attention to their non-digital collections. Establish fellowships, run a best-paper contest, publish an ongoing periodical.
5. To the extent possible, special collections librarians should familiarize themselves with, and promote, analytical bibliography, reader reception scholarship, and other tools and scholarly fields that emphasize the importance of physical books, and of individual copies of books.
6. A wide array of strategies are in place to get funding for digital projects. But on prudential grounds, special collections should digitize cautiously and carefully. Big institutions can afford to digitize wide swaths of their immense holdings. Small institutions need to be more careful about digitizing their most important paper collections, unless they can convince their administrations that remote clicks from anonymous users are as important as scholars in the reading room.

Athena Jackson

To leverage the brain power in this room, AJ thinks that she represents a glimpse of the future. She cares a lot about the past, and she is grateful for a future that which will include the marginal, from all points of the compass. She likes Jay Satterfield's "exuberant chaos" phrase. Her own trajectory into the field was a bit backwards, from the digital to the analog. In the early 2010s, she was a dance instructor at a high school. Then she read a job ad: "Do you like books? Do you have a BA?" and she found herself working as an indexer. She participated in the early stages of digitalization in an electronic publishing firm, where she felt such a passion for her work that she left to get a library degree. During library school she realized that her personal ethos was more likely to be in academic libraries than in the commercial sector. She hopes her experience offers a fresh view.

She started library work in a state library, then took a job in Florida, then moved to Michigan. Why is she here today? She hopes to bring a perspective that highlights both boutique and large institutions.

In her current job, AJ, said, she brings a lot to the table. She doesn't have all the answers, but she does have a lot of questions.

Melissa Hubbard

The future is going to be a lot of work. We have to digitize our analog collections. We need robust online platforms, linked metadata, and changed attitudes in our communities. We need

to settle on best practices, meanwhile substantially increasing access to digital materials.

Everyone here knows this, but here we all are, here talking, instead of at home, working. In her colloquium keynote address, Sarah Thomas emphasized the difficulties of scale. In her session 01 keynote, Alice Schreyer talked about the barriers of competition among institutions. But here is a further problem: we're all very busy. Conferences like this one are good, but can they be extended to our daily work? Collaboration should be considered to be core work.

Shared history can be a loaded term. We must engage communities as partners. If we tear down the walls and treat all of our stakeholders as true collaborators, this will increase utility in ways that (for example) no exhibition program can do.

We can't predict the future, but if we collaborate we may be able to forge the future we want to see.

Tom Congalton

TC would like to whine a bit about the topic of this panel. He is an odd choice to be here. He began in 1969 as a book shelver in a NJ public library. He was surprised then to see librarians welcoming technology. Librarians in general seem well situated to embrace technology – much more so than antiquarian booksellers, who need to take their cues in this regard from librarians. What little TC has had to do with born-digital materials concerns appraisals.

TC does deal in digital author archives. (He hopes his authors don't use email much.) Booksellers can contribute to the enterprise by continuing to be hunter-gatherers, truffle-hunters. TC's Rare Book School course [co-taught with Johan Kugelberg and Katherine Reagan] does not neglect non-book materials (items discussed range from 7" vinyl records to London prostitute cards).

The beauty of book collecting is that you can do it if you're interested in anything. The future is increasingly going to be with non-book materials. When do librarians become museum curators? When do antiquarian booksellers become antiques dealers?

We need to become increasingly visually oriented. We're going to have to find ways of incorporating non-book materials into our strategies as a lure to printed materials. All stripes of collectors will find something to do here. There will be creative and financial rewards for dealers and librarians in marketing these formats to their audience.

Thus far at this colloquium, there has been little sense of the fun that we all have at work. Every day is an adventure and treasure hunt. We need to convey this enthusiasm.

Take the case of the Willa Cather Box. TC saw and purchased it at a book fair in Lawrenceville NJ: a small empty box, with a label on the outside indicating that it once contained a shipment from Alfred A. Knopf to Willa Cather. TC began by commissioning a conservator to make a folding box in which to put his empty box. A month later when he got his box back, he auditioned various books to figure what was originally in the box. He was able to determine that the box originally contained two copies of the illustrated edition of *Death comes for the archbishop*. TC eventually sold his box to a library that will have to figure out how to preserve it digitally!

Q: Born-digital materials. Zines and fanzines were traditionally hard to collect; now many of them have gone online. Does anybody see value in collecting in online fanzines?

Jackson: at the University of Miami, we had burgeoning zine collections, and we tried to track zines that went from the analog to the digital. A rabbit-warren, unfathomable unless you are a part of that community. We're looking for someone to suggest best practice.

Q: We've been hearing a lot of talk about relationships, and a lot about digitizing, and about making collections available online. What about relationships with the people out there? One of the ways the web is moving is away from show-and-tell; it talks back to you. Special collections have not traditionally established relationships with persons who are not scholars, and not donors.

Hubbard: I won't do show-and-tell sessions in the classroom, but I do find myself doing it with our Tumblr site. Exuberant chaos can become overwhelming chaos. Online environments has encouraged new relationships. I have friends whom I've never met.

Katrina Jackson (University of VA) Regarding the concept of community, of making special collections more inclusive, what are your plans to be more inclusive about traditionally excluded materials? The group attending this colloquium is overwhelming unrepresentative. There are, for example, tensions between institutions and the black communities whose materials they want to collect.

Hubbard. Our collection development policy includes a diversity clause. I have to lean into my own discomfort. Part of the plan is that the archival record needs to be diversified. To do it, we start having conversations. It's important that we don't objectify people on the margins. We need to listen and diversify our profession.

Jackson: It cannot just be your culturally aware librarian making outreach initiatives. How are we promoting the profession to make it more diverse? A large proportion of the Latinos interested in library careers want to go into public librarianship, not special collections work.

Congalton: I always get into trouble when I talk to librarians, especially when I don't make a distinction between librarians and special collections librarians. I think that special collections have taken notice of the need for diversity, and I'm happy to supply the materials!

Pamela Eyerdam (Cleveland Public Library): Great special collections do exist in actual public libraries. The Cleveland Public Library is the third largest public library in country, with rich special collections. A new digital area is opening in our central library in January, right next to special collections.

Maria Estorino (University of Miami): We've been hearing a lot about relationships. We are in the business of stuff, but the stuff doesn't come without relationships. So much of donor relationships with underserved communities is based on trust. Not all communities are marginalized. There is institutional danger in becoming avuncular. Better: how can we help YOU take care of your collections?

D. J. Hoek (Northwestern University): We haven't been talking much about published online materials with license requirements. Librarians other than in special collections talk about this, but we don't much. Why aren't special collections librarians talking more about access to commercially or otherwise restricted collections?

Jay Satterfield. Some materials are making major format changes in the move from analog to digital: romance fiction, for instance. the kind of stuff that public libraries collect, but that we don't. We traditionally ignore such materials.

Q: I am surprised to hear a note of caution about the dangers of digitization. I thought that digitization *increased* onsite use.

Cohen. I'm the only one who said this. I'm not going to drive two hours to use stuff I can find online. It's dismaying to me that the AAS librarians aren't worried.

Athena Jackson: regarding marginal materials, there's a tendency in many institutions to say, "Oh, just get them to donate it," rather than thinking to buy such materials.

Bob Jackson: We haven't heard enough about how librarians are trained to deal with collectors and donors.

Congalton: We often have collectors coming to us, asking what to do with their collections.

Jeffrey Reznik (National Library of Medicine). The Foundation Center offers instruction on donor cultivation. Partnerships are essential with born digital material. NLM has knowledge and capacity, and can advise you.

Kuhn: Everyone should know about ALADN the annual conference for development officers [see www.uflib.ufl.edu/aladn/].

Valerie Prilop (University of Houston). I am a digital librarian. It's probably clear that I don't fear digitization. We talk about reaching out to users; digitization allows us to reach out to previously unreached audiences. We're putting stuff online, but people aren't finding it. There are rights issues: our users don't know what they can do with materials online because we don't know ourselves.

Athena Jackson: We have a special collections library image bank at Michigan, and we offer

lots of advice about using it. I was able to put together a plan to take images and digitally preserve them, working with legal counsel to make it a meaningful collection.

I would like to know why users use the images they use. This information would be helpful in telling the story of our electronic outreach; we may have only two persons in the reading room but thousands of online contacts.

Julie Grob (University Houston; curator of the Houston hip-hop collection): A little story. So I'm on Twitter, which has a pretty high percentage of Hispanic and African American users; it's one place where you can reach out. Somebody told me that someone's father's picture was in one of our online exhibitions. We got in touch with dad, and ended up acquiring a collection of born-digital sound, now digitalized and used, of Houston rap videos.

Ruxin: The Newberry Library has one of the greatest genealogical collections in the country; reader days have fallen by more than half. Why do we care? What difference does it make how readers use our resources? Ask yourself: the choice between putting something online or buying the physical book is not exclusive.

Barbara Prior (Art Library, Oberlin College): The digital era has created opportunities. A big part of what I do is identifying and protecting materials. I can make collections available that I couldn't have done before: mail art and exchange art, for example. In Eastern Europe, these areas ran under the radar. One of my problems is name authority (is Crackerjack Kid his real name?). I've been a little surprised that so much of our conversation here has been devoted to print. My hope is Mark Dimunation will chart a course for us in his summation. We need to embrace the opportunities, rather than worry about the problems digital formats create.

PLENARY CLOSING KEYNOTE

From the colloquium website: "Examine the most significant obstacles in our path and the most promising solutions for the next few years and decades."

The closing keynote speaker was Mark Dimunation (Chief, Rare Book and Special Collections Division, Library of Congress). The title of his keynote was "The once and future special collections."

Mark Dimunation

Mark Dimunation (MD) began by asking the colloquium attendees to give a hand to the organizers of this conference. [We did, for a long time.]

He then began his summation, brilliantly, by muttering slowly: "Alice ... Jay ... Alice ... Sarah ... Stephen ... Jay ... and then launched into a story about Albert Einstein, who was once asked for his ticket on a train. Einstein patted down his coat but couldn't find it. The conductor said he would return later; when he did, he found a despondent professor on his hands and knees, searching through his luggage. "Don't worry, professor," said the conductor, who had dealt with Einstein as a passenger before; "it will turn up." Einstein looked up, wild and desperate. "My dear boy," he said, "it's no longer a question of where is my ticket. It's a question of where am I going." At one time or another, we have all kept an eye on our tickets while forgetting our destination.

I'm supposed to take a look at what we have learned from the past, talk about expanding access in new formats, identify problems, and list solutions. This is my version of what we've heard at this colloquium. We have done it many times before: pulse-taking; as a profession, we have been remarkably prone to self-examination. The earlier RBMS pre-conferences were comfortably curatorial; but more and more, we looked inward, and pre-conferences began to examine our relationship with the rest of the library. (A favorite: the 2003 pre-conference workshop titled "Computers and rare books, an introduction.") [In 1993, Rare Book School ran a course on the use of computers in special collections whose description included the following: "Some experience with a mouse is desirable." -Ed.]

We meditate on the future of our profession: the changing university, strategies, opportunities, mainstream vs margins. We have become flexible as a group. But. Very few of us

predicted the degree to which digitization would change what we do. The original fear was that digitization would dilute what we do; overexposure; that we would lose control.

Overexposure fears now seems outdated. The profession has embraced digitization to make special collections more accessible: if you digitize it, they will come. We were able to embrace the forest of the digital world rather than trying to attract the individual tree to our reading rooms.

Only 13 years ago, we gathered at Brown University to address the future of special collections. I don't think that we imagined then that we would soon be at the forefront of more product less process, coping with born-digital materials. Special collections have moved to the center of the research experience. But what has evolved over the past few decades is a new profession. Collect, preserve, yes. But many of us have faced the need to reposition collections in relation to larger institutional visions. We are now called upon to create all levels of access for everything, to everybody.

First: we understand that our collections must have relevance to the academic program. We have accomplished this through a variety of strategies. We have indeed learned to edit and revise our collection development practices. We can't buy for the collections' sake alone; how materials will be used is now an important factor. This is one of the most exciting developments in our acquisitions behavior. (Cf. the Cornell library's developing program around hip-hop.) Numerous new collections are emerging to respond to academic discourse.

Second: bringing collections to users. Cf. the 2010 Dooley and Luce OCLC report [*Taking our pulse: the OCLC research survey of special collections and archives*]. User demand for digital collections remains insatiable. We have built another strong bridge between special collections/archives and researchers. The Council on Library and Information Resources (CLIR) Hidden Collections initiative has been a great success; e.g. the Revolutionary era and early Republic collection at the Litchfield Historical Society [2008]; Mexican work relations at the Arizona State University Library [2010]; Emory and Tulane received a single grant; Yale and Stanford joined on song/speech/dance [2009]; nearly 150 Chicago institutions banded together as the Black Metropolis Research Consortium [2010]. There is a long list of such ventures [see www.clir.org/hiddencollections/awards]. As MD peruses these proposals, while he is optimistic about results, he fears that we have veered off course. We have been caught up in boutique projects: we should be Google Books.

Third: the exceptional, not the exception. Our materials are often enlisted to help universities to establish cachet. Administrators may want to brag about our stuff, but they may not have the same goals and objectives as special collections. We have learned to participate in larger groups in the library (rather than being dismissed as separate and problematic). But each time a bit more of our legacy data is washed away; a poor model for coping with research collections. I'd like us to look at techniques that will help all boats to rise with the tide. Many special collections units were bypassed; as principal players in the continuum we need to be vocal and insistent.

Fourth: access is not the end-product; it is the beginning. The 2010 OCLC report stated that half of all collections had no digital presence. Cf. David Stam at the 2001 Brown conference: what's so special about special collections? [Put "ARL Agenda Special Collections" into Google.] Hidden collections are reprehensible; we must avoid aloofness, put stuff into the hands of users, and encourage inquiring students. The conference launched a decade-long endeavor. Barbara Jones's White Paper ["Hidden collections, scholarly barriers"], prepared in 2003 for the Special Collections Working Group of the Association of Research Libraries (ARL) has shaped hidden collections strategies ever since. By their very nature, hidden collections are staff-dependent, hidden from digital projects, vulnerable to loss and theft. Their presence is a signal to make a major change in special collections. In the future, we will move away from "special" and become part of system-wide work flows. Digitalization: now is the time to consider digitization prior to description. Born-digital materials will remain problematic if we continue to think of them outside standard procedures.

Fifth: It is hard to finish something that has not been started. We have all experienced attractive collections that don't ever get anywhere. MD inherited a backlog in his division at LC; he is still adding to it. (MD collects based on needs rather than processing resources.) LC has

digitized 18,000 broadsides with minimal cataloging (they are completely machine-readable), and it has published a collection of color wartime photos and invited users to tag them (the results varied widely: one tagger identified all the women wearing red nail polish). Such projects suggest a new image for special collections; special collections have moved to the core of the research library. In the old model, each special collection stood as a self-contained access point: what is needed is here. In the here and now, research libraries are intertwined; physical presence is not necessary, nor is actual ownership relevant. In this model, special collections emerge as one of the few assets that characterize a research library: original objects of value. At center of this is the power of material culture, cutting across all levels of academic endeavor, allowing us to create astounding research opportunities, building collections in the virtual world that are unimaginable in the real world.

So what are the futures of special collections? Will we carry forth we have learned, support teaching curriculum, become more global, change processing habits? Will we take a leaf from the efforts of the largest research libraries to reposition themselves? Two recent projects: NYPL's Central Library Plan to repurpose the Schwartzman Building, removing the book collections and creating a new space for an entirely new user. At LC, Plan I:900 [initiative: 900 days] a proposal to reconceive the Jefferson Building's main reading room as a research hub, with consolidated reference services [see <http://www.gUILD2910.org/I900.htm>]. As applied to special collections, the I:900 plan would have provided a new service model. Researchers would experience a single service point for all forms of knowledge, with a decentralized staff (the professional as nomad, unimpeded by boundaries), and with collections sent off to remote storage to make way for social spaces.

As we know, both plans failed to launch, and were set aside. Nevertheless, both plans were based on realities that won't go away. The expectations from technology are high – and volatile. Language barriers are breaking down; geography is no longer destiny; information is social not solitary; sources of knowledge are diverse. Special collections will become the custodian of all traditional formats. We'll be called on to mix physical objects and digital recreations, delivering all of them to the reader at the same time.

One aspect must remain at forefront and constant. Most training of special collections librarians is left to the field. There has always been entry-level training, but not enough. Special collections are pushed in every direction, and traditional skills endangered. Rare Book School (RBS) offers a curriculum on the craft of rare books, and the range of courses offered is impressive. But RBS is not a degree program; it cannot stand alone, at least at the moment.

We will move to librarians with hyphenated skill sets. Do I worry needlessly here? In the RBS course that John Buchtel and I teach, we see a constant flow of librarians who have suddenly inherited responsibilities for special collections without an inkling of previous knowledge on the subject. There is a shortage of trained personnel; meanwhile, hordes of new librarians are clamoring for positions.

At LC, MD is coping with a staff half the size of the one he inherited in 1998. We do more with less; special collections of the future will be looser, and more closely connected to other positions in the library. (At LC, one of our digital librarians has become the curator both of the LGBT collection and the poetry collection.)

The problem of talks like mine is this: truth be told, we can only imagine what's going to happen. In 1983, there was no way at all that we could have predicted what was going to happen. The world was comfortably analog. Fresh out of the Berkeley library school, MD attended his first RBMS pre-conference in Austin in 1984. The room was filled with librarians already prominent in the field. Through Peter Hanff, he met Peter Van Wingen, Samuel A. Streit and Daniel Traister. They were gods.

The future of special collections will be determined by the extent to which our core values – among them, a passion for the material object – remain intact. We have by now moved to a much bigger space. In the crowds at RBMS is the next generation of special collections professionals. (I even find tattoos engaging.) So really, there's no need to worry about our future.

TB's comments on the colloquium

“Acknowledging the Past, Forging the Future: National Colloquium on Library Special Collections” was organized by the Kelvin Smith Library at Case Western Reserve University (CWRU) and presented in collaboration with the River Campus Libraries at University of Rochester, and the Vanderbilt University and Washington University in St. Louis Libraries.

Readers of these ExLibris reports may have missed the colloquium’s structural forest for the trees; the structure of the colloquium program was quite simple:

Tuesday 21 October

11 am Registration and light lunch

12 noon Welcome (Arnold Hirshon and Robert Jackson)

12:30 pm Opening Keynote (Sarah Thomas)

Part I – THE PAST

1:30 pm Part I Keynote (Alice Schreyer)

2:30 pm coffee break

3 pm Part I Panel (Silver, Lopez, Ruxin, De Simone, Hawley)

Part II – THE PRESENT

4:30 pm Part II Keynote (Jay Satterfield)

5:30 pm Reception and dinner at the Western Reserve Historical Society

Wednesday 22 October

8 am Continental breakfast

9 am Part II Panel (Smith, Kiffer, Lindseth, Kuhn, Irmscher)

10:30 am break

Part III – THE FUTURE

10:45 am Part III Keynote (Stephen Enniss)

11:45 am lunch

1 pm Part III Panel (Cohen, Congalton, Jackson, Hubbard)

2:30 pm Closing Keynote (Mark Dimunation)

The relatively late start on the opening day of the colloquium enabled those who were commuting from home to drive fairly considerable distances to get to the conference opening on time without having to get up at the crack of dawn, or before. The alternation of keynotes and panels worked very well.

There was a list of the conference registrants in the colloquium program brochure, according to which There were no attendees listed with addresses in AK, HI, WA, OR, ID, NV, MT, WY, AZ, NM, ND, SD, NE, KS, OK, AR, WI, MS, SC; attendance from other distant states (even CA) was slight. Four Canadian provinces (BC, AB, SK, and ON) were represented.

The names of about 195 attendees were printed in the brochure. There were about 10 each collectors and dealers, five public librarians (good to see), and 11 representatives from IRLA libraries (including six from the Newberry). All of the Ivies except Penn showed up. College libraries were represented by Bowdoin, Kenyon, Lafayette, Oberlin, St Olaf, and Washington & Lee. About 30 of the registrants were from Case Western University itself, with several more from allied Cleveland institutions.

As these numbers suggest, Case Western library staffers were all over this conference, many of them working directly for it, and to considerable purpose; the logistics of this colloquium were very well thought out, and local arrangements were superb. Robert Jackson convened this colloquium, but it was clear that co-chair Arnold Hirshon (Associate Provost and University Librarian at Case Western) and his staff were the part of the iceberg that didn’t show.

The conferees were to a considerable extent a regional crowd. The speaker were almost all (broadly speaking) from the East, though many of them certainly have national reputations.

My suspicion is that an unusually large percentage of the colloquium attendees paid their own way, in part because of the short lead time (the conference was first widely announced on in the spring of 2014) and the resulting difficulty of inserting unexpected conference expenses into academic budgets at short notice.

So: what was different, if anything, about this conference, and was it worth attending? The colloquium was well-funded; the location was attractive. AV support was strong and competent; the food was good; the program brochure was comprehensive and handsomely designed (it even

included color photographs of all of the presenters). The colloquium's theme was focused, and the speakers stuck to business; there was very little slack in their presentations. The keynotes were uniformly excellent, with the laurels for charm going to Jay Satterfield (half the crowd was wishing that JS was *their* special collections librarian by the end of his presentation). Most of the panel presenters spoke from notes; notable among those with fully-prepared texts were Haven Hawley, the collectors, and the dealers.

Immediately after Stephen Enniss gave his "Charting the course to the future" keynote, the President of Case Western Reserve University (CWRU), Barbara R. Snyder, spoke to the colloquium for about ten minutes. She said that since Librarian Arnold Hershon came to CWRU in 2010, there have been ongoing discussions about increasing student/library relations. More recently, the university has been thinking about library facilities supporting CWRU's new health education campus, being built in conjunction with the Cleveland Clinic. The plan is to place librarians throughout the building to integrate them into the life of the school: a librarian will be right there when an idea comes up. CWRU is not closing its health sciences library – but they're not duplicating it, either. The plan is experimental, BS said; it wouldn't work at the law school!

How do you strike the right balance? she asked. CWRU has a partnership with the Cleveland Museum of Art [right down the street]; a new center for art history is planned, supporting a dramatically re-imaged, artifact-based, art history doctoral program. She is aware of the many challenges of digitization in the university, and she congratulated the colloquium attendees for their willingness to deal with them: your efforts center on some of the most meaningful aspects of what universities are doing, she concluded.

Another coup for the conference organizers: how many of us could have secured the services of our university president for such an occasion?

Here again is the colloquium's charge, as set forth on its website

(library.case.edu/ksl/collections/special/colloquium/): "This national colloquium will explore some of the factors that governed the growth and use of special collections of the past, as well as current and emerging challenges for special collections in the future. How can libraries and university faculty work together to educate students to become more aware of the hidden treasures that are available on their own campuses, and to gain a lifelong appreciation for them? How can collections from individual institutions work together to create a robust whole from the parts? How can scholars, libraries, potential donors, and collectors come together to forge new partnerships to employ these valued collections to advance knowledge and scholarship – particularly in a digital age? This colloquium will be a seminal event in acknowledging the historic strengths of special collections of the past, and for speakers and participants to chart a course for the next decade and beyond."

A tall order. The "past" at this colloquium turned out to be the very recent past; virtually nothing was said by anyone about special collections before the 1970s; even the term "rare book" seldom came up. The colloquium's dominant themes were:

General

- Even if you have a ticket, you may not know where you're going
- We need increased inter-institutional collaboration
- We don't do collaborative acquisitions, but should
- The challenges and difficulties of scale (boutique vs Google-Books)
- Licensing problems; copyright problems
- Who will maintain locally unneeded/unwanted special collections?

Digitization

- Digitization efforts continue to dominate the landscape
- Digitization may decrease onsite use
- Access to digitized materials is spotty; just because we put stuff online doesn't mean people will find it
- The most interest part of authors' digital archives may be their email correspondence
- Less-processing more-product continues to be a dominant mantra

Acquisitions

- Collectively, library acquisitions budgets are still formidable

The number of collectors may have shrunk, but there are still plenty of them around
Collectors are shifting to highlights (rather than completist) collecting
Donors will continue to give collections to libraries so long as the US tax law on gifts remains unchanged

The current emphasis in special collections is more on the use of currently owned materials than on acquiring new materials, and the acquisition of archives is more fashionable than the acquisition of printed books

We want the collections we bring in to be used

Use

Students *really* like working with original materials of the sort found in special collections
Show-and-tell sessions in special collections are less useful than more imaginative approaches in presenting materials to students

Special collections increasingly focus on intra-institution instruction

Lady-Bountiful approaches in dealing with underserved communities don't work

Strategies

Academic collections must be relevant to the teaching curricula

Books and archives are most meaningful when attached to stories

In dealing with prospective donors, special collections libraries need to adopt a yes/yes but/no unless/no approach

Our bosses may have a different take on the our collections from ours; proceed with caution

We need more model policies, best practices guides

Special collections libraries need to continue to promote themselves, and as widely as possible

There are all sorts of tools already out there (*cf.* ALADN)

The web talks back to you: listen to what it says

Personnel

Descriptive bibliography is still an important skill, even if English departments don't think so

The pool of currently available, experienced special collections librarians is lumpy

We are going to see more special collections librarians with hyphenated skill sets

l'Envoy

Don't forget the public library collections

Don't forget that this is fun