

CLA CONFERENCE 2004
VICTORIA, B.C.
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Notes by: Mizan S. Ibrahim

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Thursday, June 17

9:00a.m. Keynote Session: Library Values in a Changing World

Speaker: Michael Gorman

[Video at www.cla.ca/resources/cla_bcla2004/index.htm]

Gorman discussed the eight librarianship values he wrote of in his book Our Enduring Values: Librarianship in the 21st Century. While he notes that defining a core set of values is problematic, he believes the establishment of such values not only provides librarians and libraries with a yardstick with which to measure the effects of their efforts, but may also ease the library world's current crisis of confidence. The unranked values are

Stewardship

- 3 ways to learn: experience, interaction with others who know, interaction with the human record
- librarians and archivists have a unique role in managing the human record
 - *Gorman commented that while print is largely permanent, content on web-pages is quite temporary. In addition, we don't know how long digitized content lasts. Are we, by using such electronic methods, really recording our human history? I find this idea very intriguing and would be interested in others' thoughts on the subject.

Service

- libraries serve individuals and humanity as a whole
- everything we do can and should be measured in terms of service

Intellectual Freedom

- individuals are entitled to believe or think whatever they wish

Equity of Access

- linked to intellectual freedom: access should not be fettered by the more powerful

Privacy

- the relationship between library and patron is largely based on trust

Rationalism

Literacy & Learning

- essential in making the human record accessible;
“an illiterate with a computer is no better off than an illiterate with a book”
- literacy is an open-ended range of possibilities

Democracy

- dominant global political ideal depends on knowledge and education
 - society is better off when people are educated, informed and literate
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1:00p.m. Session #203 Reading in Canada: Magazines & Newspapers
Speaker: Gary Garland, President, Magazines Canada
Speaker: Andrew Phillips, Editor-in-Chief, Victoria-Times Colonist

This session looked at the statistics of magazine and newspaper readership in Canada. It was very informative and I was pleasantly surprised at the good health of both industries.

Magazines (Handout available)

- currently there are more than 1,000 Canadian magazine titles (English, French and Bilingual)
- there are also more than 4,000 non-Canadian titles on Canadian shelves
- the Canadian magazine industry has grown 9.3% from 1996-2003; gardening (+25.4%) and home décor (+21.1%) show the greatest increases
- average Canadian reads six Canadian issues per month
- 5% read magazine in schools or libraries (2.1 million)
 - younger; less upscale; work P/T or are unemployed; rent vs. own; blue/pink/grey collar
- the more educated you are, the less TV you view and the more magazines you read
 - the same relationship holds for income level
- readership is largely white-collar; blue-collar is under-developed

Newspapers

- daily Canadian newspaper readership remained stable from 1998-2003
- readership is similar among the top 10 Canadian markets
- you are more likely to have read a newspaper yesterday
 - the more educated you are, or
 - the greater your job responsibilities, or
 - the greater your income level

- patrons may read newspapers in libraries because
 - they can't afford a subscription
 - a subscription is not a priority
 - they prefer the setting
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2:20p.m. Session #211 The WTO-TRIPS Agreement and Its Impact on Library Services

Speaker: Myra Tawfik, University of Windsor
(Handout available)

Tawfik gave an overview on TRIPS and how it came into being.

- TRIPS (Trade-Related aspects of Intellectual Property Rights) came about as part of the shift to the knowledge economy and incorporates norms from other trade agreements
- sets up a system of binding rules, regulations and dispute resolution for business operators
- TRIPS emphasizes that IP rights are private rights
- should a country file a TRIPS complaint against Canada, and is found to be in violation, Canada must change its IP regulations or the opposing nation can retaliate across multiple industries (trade retaliation)
- defences are viewed as exceptions and must be both clearly and narrowly defined
- users (e.g. libraries/patrons) can copy copyrighted material as long as it passes certain rules

3-Step Test: Limitations and Exceptions Must

1. be confined to special cases
 2. not conflict with a normal exploitation of the work
 3. not unreasonably prejudice the legitimate interests of the rights-holder
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3:45p.m. Session #215 Helping Children Thrive: The Early Child Development Mapping Project

Speaker: Dr. Clyde Hertzman, Director, Human Learning Early Partnership (HELP), University of British Columbia
(Handouts available)

This excellent session looked at factors which influence learning in young children. Hertzman presented some of the findings of his ongoing research into child learning and development.

- 3 factors strongly influence a child's success in school
 - whether the child was consistently read to before age 7
 - the rate at which a child has adjusted to school, by age 7
 - the percentage of his adult height that a child has reached by age 7
- the brain is disproportionately sensitive to environmental factors: visual, auditory, prefrontal
- the determinants of healthy child development in Canada (by school age)
 - family: income; education; parenting style
 - neighbourhood: safety/cohesion; socio-demographic makeup; ghettoization
 - society: access to "quality" care arrangements

* More information on Dr. Hertzman's research can be found at www.earlylearning.ubc.ca

Friday, June 18

9:15a.m. Keynote Session: Becoming Bunny Watson

Speaker: Bill Richardson

[Video at www.cla.ca/resources/cla_bcla2004/index.htm]

This extremely entertaining session talked about associations between seemingly disparate topics or items (the premise of Richardson's new show *Becoming Bunny Watson*). The title derives from the Hepburn/Tracy movie *Desk Set* (a great movie!); about a group of corporate librarians opposed to the installation of a new super computer that they fear would make their jobs obsolete. Librarians associate many things with many things, one of their many invaluable traits. Life is a chain of associations and connections that lead us from one thing to another. These associations happen everywhere, in stories and in life, and are unexpected, often making them magical. As great, democratic institutions, libraries assist in the occurrence of these associations: they create endless possibilities for patrons to enrich their own narratives or to lead their lives.

* This summary doesn't nearly do justice to Richardson's delivery. I do suggest you listen to the audio.

10:45a.m. Session #304 The Focused Mind

Speaker: Jamie McKenzie, From Now On (The Educational Technology Journal) www.fno.org

In this session, aimed at school librarians, McKenzie talked about the issue of children learning through research. He noted that it is important to have a focused mind: “one that doesn’t flit from thing to thing.” He also spoke of “wonder boxes” that young students use to keep track of questions they wish to answer through research or ideas of topics to look into that they come across in the course of their explorations. [Similar to the “Bunny Watson” concept of association.]

- school-assigned topical research is “slabbing,” merely collecting information with no thought involved
 - we are living in the “Age of Glib”
 - information is “entertainerized” so that the story is everything
 - powerpointlessness: when flash supersedes thought & meaning
 - disneyfication & misinformation
 - iconization of the mundane
 - presumptive intelligence
 - to develop focused minds that succeed we need: wonder, persistence, serial questioners
 - traits of a serial questioner:
 - focused mind that persists through frustration & barriers to understanding
 - hungry to find the truth, even the difficult truth
 - positive scepticism
 - indefatigable persistence, dogged determination
 - humility
 - sharp humour, edgy wit
 - vivid imagination
 - relentless curiosity, thirst for the missing
 - open-mindedness, tolerance of ambiguity
 - schools need to change their rituals
 - ban topical research
 - stress investigation into matters of import – essential questions & issues
 - make prolonged, deep research an annual event
 - make research and serial questioning a daily event
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2:00p.m. Session #314 World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS)
Speakers: Margaret Haines, President, CILIP
Kay Raseroka, President, IFLA
Margaret Watson, Past-President, CILIP
Bob McKee, Executive Director, CILIP

This CLA Salon Session talked about the WSIS and stressed the importance of freedom of information and that libraries are key in the delivery of the information mandate. Raseroka noted that technology and content must go together and that librarians are leading users of technology in the provision of information. Libraries are strongly mentioned in the Summit paper. She also called upon all involved to groom/nurture students and the public in the importance of libraries; so that once those people are in positions of power they will know the issues and value of libraries. In this way libraries will be more powerful because we know those people. The IFLA resolution and related documents can be accessed at <http://www.ifla.org/III/wsis.html>

Other speakers mentioned additional resources which may bear further examination in regards to this subject:

- Civil Society Declaration (a UK document)
- Librarians Without Borders (a new professionals discussion group)
- World Library Project
- UNESCO National Commission
- UN Declaration of Human Rights, Article 19

3:45p.m. Session #321 The Future of the Book
Speaker: Martha Whittaker, VP – Sales & Marketing, Blackwell

I found this session quite disappointing and poorly presented. However, Whittaker did make some points of interest.

- the definition of “book” has evolved to include digital and electronic formats
- given that reference materials are used mainly for picking up pieces of information, the digital format is the most suitable for this purpose
- it is not efficient for individuals to purchase e-book/electronic materials, thus libraries are an effective conduit between supplier and user
- purchasing departments of many organizations are not authorized to purchase electronic materials and must go through their IT departments; what is the library situation?

- Additional resources
 - *The Battle to Define the Future of the Book in the Digital World* (by Clifford Lynch) http://firstmonday.org/issues/issue6_6/lynch/index.html
 - Open E-Book Forum www.openebook.org
 - Ebooks.com www.ebooks.com
 - Ebrary.com www.ebrary.com
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Saturday, June 19

10:30a.m. Session #415 Reading & Boys: The Challenge of Info-Kids
 Speaker: Dr. Ron Jobe, University of British Columbia
 (Handouts available)

This was a great session that focused on ways to interest boys in reading. There were a number of suggestions regarding genre, format, attitude, and method.

Jobe comments:

- those who are afraid of boys are of no use to them
 - current trend is non-fiction narrative
 - boys are often linked with negatives in relation to reading
 - we need to change our concept of reading to encompass what boys do read
 - if it works use it (e.g. graphic novels)
 - 2 types of non-readers: those who can read but don't vs. those who struggle with reading
 - boys are 2-3 times as likely to be diagnosed with learning disabilities as girls (U.S.)
 - there is inequity in the attention teachers pay boys vs. girls
 - boys more often read for utilitarian purposes; want to know what they need to know; focus on immediate experience; reject reading for future use/preparedness
 - ways to encourage boys to read
 - link novels to facts
 - look at reading/thinking processes
 - use associating strategies and research strategies
 - acknowledge boys have to feel they're in control; find ways for this to happen
 - use fine arts, picture books and biographies
 - have fun with language
 - make sure it's "easy" for the boys to get to the books
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