
The state of the Association

By JoAn S. Segal

*Executive Director
Association of College & Research Libraries*

The Executive Director's report for 1988/1989.

This is my fifth annual report to you. In these five years, ACRL has displayed a "bias for action," of which I feel very proud. In 1984/1985, we assessed member needs and began work on a Strategic Plan, which was completed in 1986 and has driven the Association's activities ever since. The planning process set in motion has now been stabilized. The Planning Committee regularly solicits planning information from ACRL committees and other units, many of whom have completed or are involved in their own planning processes. President-elect Barbara Ford and the Board have already set their priorities for the 1991 year, emphasizing information literacy. The Financial Plan, 1989-1992 was approved by the ACRL Board in Dallas, and the Annual Operating Plan and Budget for 1990, our first, was approved by the Board at Dallas. Of course, we know a plan is not the be-all and end-all, but the annual review of Association accomplishments under the plan shows that we have moved ahead on all our goals and carried out most of the strategies designed to meet our objectives.

This indicates that we have some maps to guide us into the future, but since new roads are constantly under construction, we need to revise our map! This fall a membership survey will go to a random sample of ACRL members. We hope you will respond if you are one of those who receive a questionnaire. An independent research firm (Research USA) has been hired to do the survey; their credibility is very good and we expect to have

reliable and usable results. These will be used to help the Planning Committee in revising the Strategic Plan.

Accomplishments

Some of the significant accomplishments of the last year have included:

- Our fifth National Conference, in Cincinnati, with record attendance and high interest. Cathleen Bourdon was conference coordinator, assisted by Beverley Washington, and Sandy Donnelly was exhibits manager.
- Publication of the conference proceedings, *Building on the First Century*.
- Publication of the 1988 biennial statistics of non-ARL university libraries, *ACRL University Library Statistics, 1987-88*. Mary Ellen Davis was in charge of this project.
- Our first publication on diskette: *ACRL Academic Library Statistics, 1978-79/1987-88*. This was also in Mary Ellen's bailiwick.
- Our first tape product, *Books for College Libraries*, 3d edition (this is also included in the AMIGOS/OCLC Collection Analysis Packet). Pat Sabosik, *Choice* editor and publisher, shepherded this project.
- Publication of *Collection Development Policies for College Libraries*, CLIP Note #11.
- Regular publication of *College & Research Libraries*, *College & Research Libraries News*,

Choice, *Rare Books & Manuscripts Librarianship*, *Fast Job Listing Service*, *Chapter Topics*, and 11 section newsletters. *C&RL* editor Charles Martell, *C&RL News* editor George Eberhart and assistant editor Cheryl Robinson-Smith, Alia Al-Taqi (*Chapter Topics*) and the *Choice* staff have kept these coming regularly.

- The 30th RBMS Preconference, "Local History, Global Village." Although this was largely member-run, the staff liaison was Mary Ellen Davis.

- Publication of *State Education Documents: A Directory for Their Acquisition and Use*. EBSS prepared this; Mary Ellen Davis provided staff support.

- Revision of the Standards for University Libraries, with ALA acceptance and ARL blessings, with Kent Hendrickson as chair and Mary Ellen Davis as liaison (see pp. 679–91).

- Acceptance of our 40th chapter, and lots of chapter activity. Alia Al-Taqi is chapter coordinator.

- Progress on the output measures manual by consultant Nancy van House, under direction of the Performance Measures Committee, ad hoc, with liaison from Mary Ellen Davis.

- Progress on an accreditation manual, also overseen by Mary Ellen.

- A preconference on preparing for accreditation, targeted at Historically Black Colleges and Universities. This was under my direction, with help from Sandy Donnelly and Alia Al-Taqi.

- We completed our series of humanities programming workshops, jointly sponsored with the Public Library Association and funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities. Sandy Donnelly served as consultant; I helped staff.

- We also held one special humanities programming workshop for historically black colleges and universities. Sandy Donnelly coordinated; I served on the staff.

- The reports of the task forces on International Relations, Professional Ethics, and Social Responsibility have all been forwarded to the Planning Committee for their recommendations. The Small College Assessment Program Task Force was disbanded, having worked out an arrangement with the Association of Research Libraries for cooperative action; a new committee will be formed within the College Libraries Section to carry out the activity.

- Significant progress was made by the Task Forces on Extended Campus Guidelines, Paraprofessionals in Academic Libraries, and Recruitment of Underrepresented Minorities.

- Continuing education had a good year. Eight hundred people took 31 courses locally, at Cincinnati, and at Dallas.

- 15 programs were offered by ACRL sections at Dallas.

- We added a new award: Community College Learning Resources Achievement Awards. Sponsored by the Community and Junior College Libraries Section, two annual awards may be given to recognize significant achievement in the areas of 1) program development and 2) leadership or community service. Individuals or groups from two-year institutions, as well as the two-year institutions themselves, are eligible to receive the awards, which are in the form of printed citations. The first award will be made in 1990.

- K. G. Saur increased the cash prize for their award for the best article in *College & Research Libraries* to \$500 for each joint author.

- We administered nine awards (see pp. 701–707).

- The Special Grants Fund provided money for the BI Think Tank, two chapter programs, and the membership survey.

- Much work was done by the President and the staff on creating a new set of Policies of the ALA in Relation to its Membership Divisions (also known as "the Operating Agreement"). Passed by ALA Council in Dallas, the policies will have a profound effect on all divisions. As one of his last official acts, President Joe Boissé appointed a Special Committee on Implementing a Revised Operating Agreement to carry out a complete review of ACRL's activities and assure a smooth transition to the new operating environment.

Finances

The division is strong in its fund balances, with a mandated level set at 50% of the average annual operating expenses over a three-year cycle. But it is not strong in its ability to balance an annual budget. This is a matter of concern being addressed by the Task Force on Financial Development and the Special Committee mentioned, as well as by the Budget and Finance Committee and the entire Board. Strategies for Association funding, embedded in the new financial plan, must be implemented to ensure the financial and programmatic strength of ACRL. For instance, the Board has systematically reduced the fund balance to the mandated 50% level, but that level continues to increase as annual budgets go up. This means that annual budgets must include an allowance for this increase. The vote in favor of a dues increase means we will have a better pool of funds for membership activities, allowing us to match those expenses with the dues revenue that is supposed to support them. However, increased demands for service (which show a healthy desire for an Association that is useful to members) constantly keep us on our toes to balance the budget and the demands on staff.

The new Policies of the ALA in Relation to its Membership Divisions will have a profound effect

on ACRL. The first charges to divisions under the new policies will be implemented in 1991, but division overhead rates have been on the increase in 1989 and 1990 and in 1990 divisions became responsible for their own bad debts (yes, there are purchasers of our products and services, including advertising, publications, courses, and exhibit booths who fail to pay their bills) and for the Unrelated Business Income Tax (UBIT) associated with their revenues (advertising and mailing list rentals.) For ACRL and Choice the UBIT will be about \$100,000 in 1990.

Staffing

Changes in staff have affected ACRL more this year than in the past few years. In 1988-1989 we operated with a temporary reduction in regular staff below the level of the 10-11 we have maintained over the past 5 years. Elaine Opalka moved to the ALA Executive Office as assistant to the deputy director in September and we have not yet filled the position she vacated. Sheryl Stephens accepted a management-level position at the American Bar Association in April.

Cheryl Robinson-Smith gave birth to a daughter, Macie, in June; during her absence, Pam Spiegel has filled in as assistant editor. George Eberhart has been spending part of his time managing a local area network for ALA Publishing. He has had part-time helpers to cover his heavy workload; they have included Pam Spiegel and Karen Christopher. Cynthia Taylor has joined the staff as half-time secretary for the Chapters and Membership activities.

The *Choice* staff has remained at 19.5 FTE. During 1988-1989, Cynthia White and Ron Epp left the magazine. Bob Balay has taken the long-term temporary position of automation director as

computerization of production and office operations moves along. For both *Choice* and the ACRL Headquarters Office, the introduction of automation over the past five years has been a major contributing factor to our ability to take on additional projects without significantly increasing staff.

Structure

The division now consists of 54 standing and ad hoc committees, editorial boards, and task forces; 15 sections, with a total of 237 sub-units, 17 discussion groups, 40 chapters, and a membership of 10,521. The increase in membership and in member activity reflected in the expanded number of sub-units is a sign of Association health and vitality. But some of the increase in membership came as a result of the National Conference and we have a responsibility to keep membership interesting for members, so they will continue to find belonging to ACRL of value to them.

Available

Key documents produced this year, the ACRL Financial Plan, 1989-1992, the ACRL Operating Plan and Budget for 1990, and Membership Annual Reports, 1988-1989, are available upon request from ACRL.

Conclusion

ACRL has had another strong year. Its Fifth National Conference was extremely successful, it had an active publishing and education program, it remains financially stable, and it offers members a wide variety of opportunities to participate. I hope you will. ■ ■

Social responsibilities

ACRL business

The Task Force on ACRL and Social Responsibilities developed the following working definition as part of its charge to determine whether ACRL is addressing issues of social responsibility.

Definition

For academic and research libraries, social responsibility is the obligation to promote open access to information. This embraces:

a. Assuring that collections reflect a diversity of perspectives (including those that may not be disseminated through the "mainstream" channels) and that censorship, whether by oneself or others, is not a factor in selection, collection evaluation, or

maintenance.

b. Assuring that the high price of library materials, such as serials, and reduced acquisitions budgets do not hamper access to information.

c. Assuring that information traditionally generated by the federal government continues to be available to the public without restrictions and delays; that privatization does not mean less access.

d. Assuring that fees charged by providers of information services utilizing new communication, storage and access techniques do not restrict access to information.

e. Assuring that the dissemination of information is not subject to undue restrictions and that the academic and research community and other users

of college and research libraries have access to this information.

f. Assuring that cataloging and other organizational procedures are free from prejudicial damage.

g. Assuring that users are trained in the use of new technologies in order that their access to information is not impeded.

h. Assuring that the information and library needs of special populations of users, such as older or non-traditional students, those who are non-English speaking, the disabled, students from particular ethnic and social groups, are attended to.

i. Assuring that effective teaching and usage of databases and other access tools provide an understanding of what is included in order for no patron to be deprived of information inadvertently.

j. Assuring the confidentiality of circulation rec-

ords, database searching records, and other patron-based records is maintained in order that privacy of library research and usage is respected.

k. Assuring that the library joins with other parts of the parent educational or research institution in participating in public service and outreach programs that address the needs of the broader social community.

Additionally, social responsibility embraces a sensitivity to the practice of the profession with respect to the active recruitment, promotion and retention of minorities, women, and special populations.

While the Task Force does not intend that the above is a definitive statement on social responsibility, its members believe that ACRL may use it as a starting point and in doing so, the organization would be in line with other ALA divisions. ■ ■

ACRL actions, June 1989

ACRL business

Highlights of the Annual Conference meetings of the ACRL Board of Directors.

The Board of Directors of the Association of College and Research Libraries met twice during the ALA Annual Conference in Dallas: on June 24, 1989, and June 27, 1989.

Budget

The Board approved as policy the recommendation of the Budget and Finance Committee that "when an ACRL unit undertakes an activity which generates revenue in excess of expenses, this revenue will revert to the ACRL operating budget."

The Board also voted to express concern to the ALA Executive Board and to the incoming ALA Executive Director, Linda Crismond, regarding excessive delays experienced in receiving monthly financial information on ACRL expenses and reve-

nues. A request will also be made to the ALA Executive Board for assistance with questions regarding ACRL's Unrelated Business Income Tax liability.

The Board approved the 1990 budget and 1990 financial plan presented by the Budget and Finance Committee, which shows a deficit of \$74,750. A full report on the ACRL budget will appear in a future issue of *C&RL News*.

Discussion groups

The Board approved a petition for the establishment of an Academic Librarians' Association Discussion Group. The group will be for librarian associations located in individual libraries and is not intended for state-wide associations.