MOVEABLE TYPE

The Newsletter of the Mark O. Hatfield Library, Willamette University

Eliades Acosta Matos

Larry R. Oberg

Cuban Libraries Under the Embargo

By Eliades Acosta Matos

IT IS DIFFICULT TO EXPRESS HOW A PERSON SUCH as myself feels, having lived in Cuba for all my life under a U.S. trade embargo, a blockade that has informed and affected my daily life since I can remember. Throughout my entire life, from birth to adulthood, through my childhood and my school years, during all the moments of joy or sadness, private or public, in family or work life, like all Cuban citizens, I have felt the weight of a powerful external force that decides, not only our destiny, but every moment of our existence. It may help you, the readers of *Moveable Type,* to understand the significance and the consequences of the U.S. embargo upon our lives, the lives of all of us who live in Cuba, to consider that this country is less than 45 minutes by direct flight from Miami, or three hours from New York City.

At 42 years of age, I have no memories that have not been shaped by the limitations and the financial constraints imposed by the embargo. The difficulties involved in trying to make a telephone call, buy a pair of shoes or school notebooks for the kids, go to work or to the beach, treat a cold, or feed one's family three meals a day, rise before me like an invisible wall, a wall much higher and more formidable than that of Berlin.

How do I explain to you that on the seventh of February 1962, at 12:01 a.m., when President John F. Kennedy's Proclamation 3447 establishing the Cuban blockade first took effect, the life of an

Issues 2002 and Beyond:
Definitions, Directions, Solutions

By the Librarians of the Mark O. Hatfield Library

In anticipation of the arrival on campus of Tori Haring-Smith, the new dean of Willamette University's College of Liberal Arts, the librarians of the Mark O. Hatfield Library held a one-day summer retreat to discuss challenges that they consider pressing. The issues that emerged from this discussion range from building and space considerations, through information literacy, new services and emerging technologies. Some of these issues are outlined below.

BUILDING AND SPACE REQUIREMENTS

The present structure occupied by the Mark O. Hatfield Library was built in 1986. It was designed to accommodate the addition of a third floor. Fifteen years later, the library has evolved from an institution focused almost entirely upon print resources into one that increasingly relies upon networked electronic resources. It is clear that the library building, which remains an attractive and inviting structure, was designed in a different time for a kind of library that no longer exists. The planned expansion of the library has ceased being driven solely by the need for more space in which to store more books. The real need today is to configure new and existing space in order to create a study and research environment that fully encompasses the needs of today's students and faculty and moves us towards Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance.

ARCHIVES

A number of important archival collections are housed in the Mark O. Hatfield Library. Notable among them are the pre-gubernatorial, gubernatorial and senatorial papers of Mark O. Hatfield. In addition to being the library's namesake, Senator Hatfield is an illustrious Willamette alumnus and the school's former dean of students. The importance of his papers to research, particularly in the areas of politics and history, is considerable. Another important resource is the Willamette University Archives, a collection that documents the history of our institution and preserves its most important papers and artifacts. Presently, no policy statement ensures the collection, retention, and preservation of materials appropriate to this

Library Upgrades Computing

OVER THE PAST SUMMER, A NUMBER OF TECHNO-logical changes occurred in the Mark O. Hatfield Library. The library's outdated coaxial cable was replaced with twisted pair wiring. Several new computers were added to the popular mini-lab area. Study rooms on both floors were wired with network connections to be used with laptop computers; additional connections were located throughout the public areas of the library. Wireless network ports have also been installed. All of these changes enhance the library's services by providing better access to computing equipment and by offering users the convenience of connecting to the network from anywhere in the building. ◼

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entire nation, the lives of millions of human beings, changed so completely? How can I explain, how can I make clear to you, what it means to live under an embargo for almost 40 years, in such onerous conditions, conditions that are not experienced by most of the rest of humanity? How can I explain how two nations, Cuba and the United States, that share the same geographical space and the same human needs, cannot trade with each other either directly or indirectly, cannot buy or sell a pound of sugar, an aspirin, or even a book of poetry by Walt Whitman or José Martí?

Until 1998, the cost to the Cuban economy of this embargo, enforced by nine successive U.S. administrations, has been calculated at 67 billion dollars. However this figure cannot reflect the spiritual cost, the pain and suffering, caused to a whole people deprived of the most elemental means of living, when they are manipulated through hunger and sickness.

The cost of the embargo to the cultural life of the Cuban nation is immense and difficult to reduce to numbers. Still, it can be gleaned from the difficulties we face in acquiring the paper we need to print books, magazines and journals, and in obtaining the oil we need to generate the electricity that ensures, for instance, that our public libraries are not forced to reduce their evening hours. The embargo also makes it necessary for those who wish to donate books to Cuba – geography books, history books, children's books, dictionaries, encyclopedias or novels – to send them through Canada or Mexico. Of course, other technologies as well, computers, photocopy machines, microfilm readers, television sets or music players, items essential to the daily operation of any library, also face these same travel-related restrictions. And how could there be a normal and fluid exchange between Cuban and American colleagues when U.S. citizens face a fine of up to 200,000 dollars and twenty years imprisonment if they travel, for instance, to a library conference in Cuba without first obtaining a license from the U.S. Treasury Department?

Last May, Havana hosted a successful conference of the Association of Caribbean University, Research and Institutional Libraries (ACURIL), a professional organization that brings together librarians from research centers, universities and institutions throughout the Caribbean. As is customary at these events, an information fair was organized where different businesses and information centers might promote their products and services. Yet the U.S. Treasury Department

Cuba in the 21st Century:

Information, Knowledge and Society

By Larry R. Oberg

For most Americans, Cuba is an enigma, a place where few of us have traveled. Many are too young to remember this small island nation before the revolution when it served as a playground for the wealthy, a brothel for the U.S. fleet and a mafia stronghold. Although the Elián González affair generated considerable press, the crippling U.S. blockade, in effect for over 40 years now, ensures that Cuba, while only 144 kilometers off our shore, remains as foreign to most Americans as Tibet or Nepal.

Recently I spent over three months in Cuba on three separate occasions. In March 2000, I joined a delegation of North American librarians, educators and students who journeyed there for two weeks to learn about Cuban libraries, meet their Cuban counterparts and attempt to separate North American myth from Cuban reality. We visited eight libraries in four cities, several archives, two national institutes, an elementary school and Casa de las Américas, a highly respected literary publishing house. The Cuban librarians and educators we met were uniformly open, receptive and desirous of establishing closer contacts with their North American counterparts. They were also willing, even anxious, to work with tour organizer Rhonda Neugebauer (bibliographer, Latin American Studies, UC-Riverside) and me on a number of research projects. These include a book that will document the history, current practice and future perspectives of Cuban librarianship and the formation of a Cuban-American support group to facilitate the exchange of librarians.

The Cubans' willingness to participate in our research encouraged me to return to Havana in December 2000 for a two-month stay. This time, I worked with Eliades Acosta Matos, director of the José Martí National Library; Marta Terry, president of ASCUBI (the Cuban library association); Gloria Ponjuan, dean of the library school at the University of Havana; and many others. This experience taught me a great deal about my colleagues' dedication, hard work, and ability to offer quality services on limited budgets.

After my return home, I was invited back to Cuba in March 2001 to participate in a conference organized by Casa de las Américas library director, Ernesto Sierra. Entitled "From Papyrus to the Virtual Library," the *coloquio* drew a large international audience, including eight U.S. librarians. As a postscript, my flight was shared by a contingent of enthusiastic Willamette University faculty and students off to explore Cuba and, to our delight, Ry Cooder, the American musician who formed the popular Cuban musical group, The Buena Vista Social Club.

Despite restrictions imposed by the U.S. embargo – the Cubans call it a blockade – and a severe economic downturn following the collapse of their Eastern bloc trading partners, Cuban librarians have made remarkable progress. Before the 1959 revolution, a population of seven million was served by 32 public libraries; today there are nearly 400 and every elementary and secondary school in the country also has a library. Cuban plans for automation include establishing an online union catalog of the nation's library holdings, opening computer laboratories in all elementary and secondary schools, and ensuring the Cuban population equitable Internet access, initially by installing public-access computer terminals in post offices (which have a robust infrastructure).

Libraries occupy an important place in Cuban society and Cubans are avid readers. (The literacy rate and the educational level are among the highest in the world.) The ethics and values of Cuban librarians are reflected in their successes in building quality professional training programs for librarians and equitably distributing library materials and services throughout the country, while emphasizing services to children and the historically underserved rural areas.

Recently, the U.S. and the Cuban library associations signed an historic protocol that condemns the U.S. blockade and calls for closer cooperation and further exchanges between our two countries. In April of 2002, John Berry, president of the American Library Association, will be the keynote speaker at INFO 2002, an important international conference on information, knowledge and society, to be held in Havana. I invite all of my North American colleagues to join me there. ■

Larry R. Oberg is university librarian, Mark O. Hatfield Library.
Email: <loberg@willamette.edu>

Liberal Arts Education in the New Millennium:
Beyond Information Literacy and Instructional Technology

By Elliot Shore

Networked information technology does two things at once: it opens up exciting new ways of thinking while it radically destabilizes organizational structures that have underpinned the way we teach and learn. It has engendered many apparently different responses. How many have heard this from faculty members: "My discipline is text-based." Or from the librarian or information technologist: "Let's do information-literacy workshops." Or, from the student: "Do I have to do a web-page for this class?"

Different as these reactions seem, they have in common the notion that the changes engendered by a revolution in the way networked information can be organized and deployed can be domesticated into the patterns that seemed to have worked so well, the patterns of thinking that predate the revolution, that do not take into account or even allow for the opening up of new ways to approach old questions or to ask new ones. One of the most salient features of these standard responses is the ossification of the roles we all play in this drama: The professor decides what is useful knowledge, the librarian and the information technologist try to be service technicians, and the student weighs in with a bottom-line mentality. The world didn't change much after all.

Or did it? For those who think of the life of the mind as one that questions assumptions, challenges authority and revises categories, the revolution that is networked information technology is revivifying. From building language learning communities to integrating text, image, sound and song into the study of philosophy to the building of a layered sense of group interactions in an introduction to psychological research methods class, the fusing of information technology with other learning technologies (the book, the discussion, the paper, the lecture) has resulted in the development of new ways of seeing and thinking and understanding. It is this promise that has been realized in several liberal arts colleges through a project called: Talking Toward Techno-Pedagogy: A Collaboration across Colleges and Constituencies. This project has tried to work with, not against, the notions that a webbed world has brought with it. At its heart, then, is the notion that learning is neither a set nor an isolated activity, but rather a process that takes place within a community, among people who collaborate towards the shared goal of better understanding. This assumption, at the core of what networked information offers, has led to the shaping of a project that redefines roles, rethinks courses, revamps relationships and rediscovers the deeply moving possibilities that lie at the center of the small liberal arts learning environment.

Talking Toward Techno-Pedagogy was a collaboration from the outset between three colleges, two libraries, two education programs and four people: Elliott Shore, director of libraries and professor of history at Bryn Mawr College; Alison Cook-Sather, assistant professor and director of the Bryn Mawr/Haverford Colleges Education Program; Susan L. Perry, college librarian and director, Library, Information and Technology Services and Sandra M. Lawrence, associate professor and chair, Education Division, both of Mt. Holyoke College. Funded by a grant we received from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation for a series of three, four-day workshops: May 2000 (for social sciences), June 2001 (for humanities), and June 2002 (for natural sciences), we brought together this past May at Bryn Mawr College nine teams, each composed of a faculty member in the social sciences, a rising third-year student in the social sciences, a librarian whose area of expertise is the social sciences and an information technologist. The colleges represented were Amherst, Bryn Mawr, Hampshire, Haverford, Mt. Holyoke, Smith, Swarthmore and Vassar and the University of Massachusetts.

Participants spent four days together planning how they would collaborate to explore the possibilities for revising one of the professor's courses through or with technology. Each of the four members of the team had expertise and a legitimate perspective in this collaboration and began to break down some of the divisions and hierarchies that structure teaching and learning in traditional college settings. They asked and answered such questions as: How

> *"How does the role of librarian need to change given the rapid and profound changes in storage and retrieval of information?"*

does the role of librarian need to change given the rapid and profound changes in storage and retrieval of information? Who has the authority to make suggestions to professors regarding the appropriate use of new technologies in their teaching? Should an instructional technologist do the technology work for faculty and students or teach it to them so that they can do it themselves? Given that they are often more facile with using new technologies, what role should students play in integrating those technologies in the classroom?

The workshop struck a deep chord in many of the participants and has engendered other collaborations outside of the single courses that we focused upon. But the collaborations have made more visible a number of yawning gaps in our institutional structures: collaboration such as this model proposes, embodies – and requires – a culture change at our colleges. As one librarian put it at a reunion at Mt. Holyoke College in November, "Individually we don't have a problem collaborating; institutionally we do." To support this culture change, participants stated again and again that they need new formal mechanisms, supports and rewards for each of the members of the groups. But even more importantly, it requires some new thinking about what all of us do and how we do it. The faculty members came away from the workshop relieved of the sense that they must be able to know and do everything. Librarians and information technologists learned that the integration of their knowledge and expertise into the shaping and teaching of a course sharpens their own focus in providing useful and successful service. Most importantly, students made us all aware that this will only work well if they, the ultimate beneficiaries of our work, have a say in what happens in the classroom. So it isn't about information literacy or instructional technology; it is about learning and teaching together. ■

Elliott Shore is the Constance A. Jones director of libraries and professor of history at Bryn Mawr College, Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania.
Email: <eshore@brynmawr.edu>

Briefly Noted

Digital Delivery of ILL Requests

OVER RECENT YEARS A DRAMATIC IMPROVEMENT in the range and quality of the research databases provided by the Hatfield Library has led, not surprisingly, to a growing demand for articles published in journals that are not part of our collection. The Interlibrary Loan (ILL) department meets this demand by requesting articles from other libraries across the nation. Libraries today commonly fill these requests electronically. The result is a significant improvement in service, with most articles arriving in days rather than weeks.

To further improve the speed and efficiency of article delivery, last spring we began to post these articles to the library Web server, thereby providing direct access to them as they arrive. Patrons waiting to receive these articles are sent emails informing them that the article is available, with clear instructions on how it may be retrieved and printed or down-loaded. This expedited delivery has been popular, particularly among students who are working to complete a research project by a specific date. For more information about electronic delivery of articles through ILL, see http://library.willamette.edu/home/services/ ■

Research Directory Organized by Subject

FINDING THE RIGHT DATABASE TO USE FOR YOUR research became a lot easier this past spring after the library added a new option to the WebStation Research Directory. In the past, the library's databases were typically accessed from an alphabetical list. This list required you to know, for example, that the principal database for researching educational topics is called ERIC. If you were not aware of this, you easily could have missed a key component of your study. To solve this problem, the librarians reviewed each database and assigned them to appropriate subject areas. They also noted whether or not these databases are fundamental to research in a given field or if they provide only secondary information. Now a student or faculty member need not rely solely upon an alphabetical list and their recollection of database titles. Beginning this fall, they can go to *Databases* on the WebStation sidebar to see all of the Library's databases organized by subject. ■

Double-Fold: Libraries and the Assault on Paper

By Nicholson Baker (New York: Random House, 2001, 370 p.)

Reviewed by Bart Harloe

"The antiquarian sense of a man, a city, or a nation always has a very limited field. Many things are not noticed at all; others are seen in isolation, as though through a microscope. There is no measure; equal importance is given to every thing, and therefore too much to any thing."
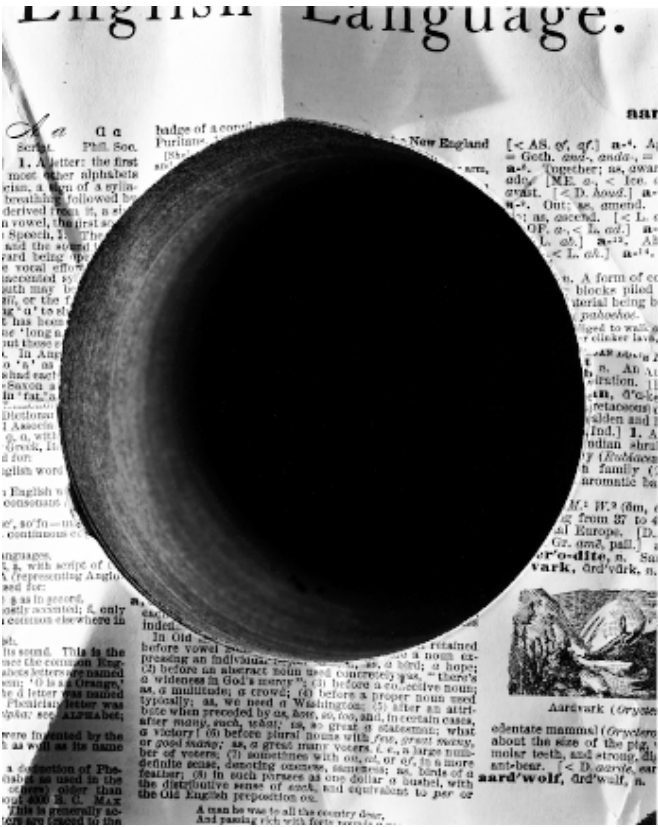Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Use and Abuse of History.*

By now many readers in academe will have heard about or read Nicholson Baker's latest polemic against the library profession. The author of many works of fiction as well as nonfiction, Baker first took up the issue of the destruction of the nation's historic newspapers in a July 2000 article in the *New Yorker*. That article has now been expanded into a full-fledged book that covers the question of microfilm and newspapers, but also attacks, in Baker's inimitable style, the last fifty years of preservation work by the large North American research libraries and the Library of Congress.

One of the difficulties in reviewing this rather dyspeptic work is the multifaceted nature of Baker's argument: There is an attempt to deal with the question of the growth of print collections and how the library profession has falsely projected huge growth rates in order to rationalize its preservation strategies for replacing paper (with first microfilm and then digital copies) and to ameliorate what Baker considers to be an overhyped space problem. He sketches out a "cold war" history of the Library of Congress that associates this institution and its leaders, as well as the invention of microfilm, with the origins of the National Security State and the CIA. There is an argument about the fateful contradiction between preservation and conservation impulses in the profession (Baker sees conservation as good because it takes care of the artifact and preservation as bad because it destroys the

English Dictionary with Hole, 2001

object in order to save the content). He concludes with lessons drawn from our experience with microfilm as a preservation medium and how the current digital turn in libraries is likely to be as destructive as microfilm.
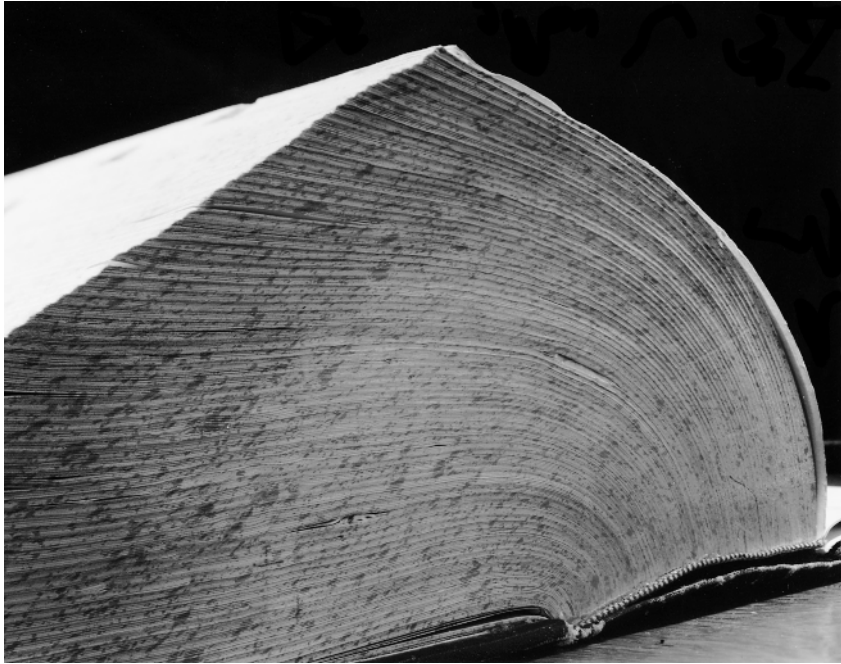
In the usual Baker fashion, there are many sub-plots along the way. These include a wickedly entertaining account of the Library of Congress experiment with DEZ (diethyl zinc), the many explosions and cooked books resulting from this failed chemical preservation process and a less than flattering account of the National Endowment for the Humanities and its funding of the United States Newspaper Program. These are important stories that Baker pursues relentlessly. Finally, there are many library villains in this book, usually big-time library administrators, but only a few good conservationists who truly appreciate the book and the classical print newspaper as material and cultural objects.

Because it would take more space than is available to unpack even one of the above arguments, I would like to focus on Baker's sense of history and how it affects his writing about library matters. First a quote from an earlier library piece by Baker, again written for the *New Yorker* in the early 1990s, on the library profession's trashing of the old card catalog:

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Dictionary, 1994

"One of the odder features of this national paroxysm of shortsightedness and anti-intellectualism ('In a class with the burning of the library at Alexandria,' Helen Rand Parish, a historian specializing in the sixteenth century, said to me) is that it isn't the result of wicked forces outside the library walls. We can't blame Saracen sackers, B-52s, anarchists, or thieves; nor can we blame propagandistic politicians intent on revising the past, moralistic book burners, or over-acidic formulations of paper. The villains, instead, are smart, well-meaning library administrators, quite certain that they are only doing what is right for their institutions." (*The Size of Thoughts,* 128.) We find similar rhetoric throughout *Double Fold.*

This brings us willy-nilly to the "double fold test," the paper-twisting test used by preservationists to determine the degree of brittleness, whether that paper be in the bound volumes of old newspapers or in brittle books. If Baker is correct, this crude test has been falsely used to identify for destruction many hundreds of thousands of books, not to mention the country's collection of major national newspapers. Baker further argues that 19th century acid-based paper has not deteriorated at nearly the rate that modern preservationists have maintained, that "microfix" solutions are themself problematic from a long-term preservation point of view and that finally, the research library community (aided and abetted by the Library of Congress) has, as a result of its obsession with microfilm, needlessly destroyed an important part of the country's cultural heritage. Thus Baker on the various applications of the double fold test: "This is of course utter horseshit and craziness." (157) And thus his final plea: "Leave the books alone I say, leave the books alone, leave them alone." (135) Readers may know that Baker has now purchased back files of many old and rare newspapers, storing them in a barn close to where he lives. He has put his money and his personal resources where his rhetoric has led him.

What are we to make of Baker's case against the library profession? I urge you to read and evaluate for yourself the many overlapping arguments and complex narratives that Baker weaves together in order to tell his story. Doubtless you will find many points to agree with and perhaps not a few to disagree with as well. It seems to me, however, that Baker makes what philosophers refer to as a category mistake by conflating the role of libraries as cultural institutions with both archives and museums. "Once a large research library makes the decision to add a particular book, it has the responsibility to try to keep that physical book in its collection forever." (225) Indeed, Baker cites approvingly the argument that because libraries own, "whether they like it or not, collections of physical artifacts," they must "aspire to the condition of museums." (224)

But libraries, even large research libraries, are not museums, and although they may have a local, regional or even national archival role, libraries are not finally archives. Libraries build collections to support educational and research missions. They are repositories of *ideas* as well as *artifacts*. Further, in order to use the ideas that libraries store on their shelves and in their databases, scholars must also use (perhaps use up) the actual physical artifacts that contain those ideas. Whether we like it or not, libraries will continue to support their educational and research missions by acquiring materials in a variety of formats: microfilm when necessary, printed books and journals

New Databases at the Hatfield Library

OVER THE PAST YEAR, SEVERAL NEW DATABASES have joined the Hatfield Library's continually growing collection of online resources. The new databases offer access to information that supports study in several areas crucial to Willamette's curriculum. *Bibliography of the History of Art (BHA),* provides coverage of European and American Art from late antiquity to the present. *BHA* indexes and abstracts books, journals, conference proceedings, dissertations, and exhibition and dealers' catalogs. *Standard & Poors NetAdvantage* provides online, full-text access to a variety of corporate and industry resources produced by Standard & Poors, including *S&P Register, Industry Surveys, Investment Reviews, Stock Guide, Stock Reports, Bond Guide,* the latest 12 months of *The Outlook,* and other investment analysis tools. *Ethnic NewsWatch Complete* is a full-text database providing a rich collection of articles, editorials and reviews with a broad spectrum of viewpoints from ethnic and minority newspapers, magazines and journals. A number of electronic reference resources were also added such as the *Grove Dictionary of Art, New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians,* and the *Oxford English Dictionary.* ∎

Workshops for Staff

THE LIBRARY EDUCATION GROUP OF THE MARK O. Hatfield Library has begun a series of workshops for Willamette University staff and administrators, an audience that is often not reached by traditional library instruction efforts.

The first of these staff workshops, held last May, included an overview of the library's catalog and borrowing policies; as well as Orbis, the common catalog shared by nearly 20 Pacific Northwest libraries; interlibrary loan; and database access. The workshop also included an introduction to some of the library's non-traditional collections, such as the video collection, and a walk through the InfoStation, the in-house library workstation. These workshops will continue to be offered on a regular basis during breaks in the University's academic year.

The education group has also designed other workshops aimed at introducing the faculty to electronic journal archival products such as JSTOR and Project Muse. Subject-specific workshops will continue to be presented as needed. ∎

when possible, and increasingly, electronic resources that meet the particular needs of their scholarly or educational communities. Over time, difficult choices must be made, whether to store and how to store (Baker seriously underestimates the cost of building and staffing storage facilities), whether to microfilm or purchase microfilm copies of important titles, whether to digitize or purchase digital versions of important titles and finally, whether to discard or keep titles that no longer meet the needs of their particular user communities.

Library collections are the historical byproduct of hundreds of thousands of individual selection and "de-selection" decisions. They are the result of an all too human selection process, necessarily imperfect, that anticipates the current and future needs of the communities they serve. It simply will not do to say (as Baker does): keep all the artifacts! The antiquarian sensibility would have us strive to keep all the artifacts because for the antiquarian the artifacts *are* the ideas. But I think one reviewer has it right when he states: "History is not a static entity comprised of 'what happened' but a dynamic record of what gets remembered and how. It is a deeply selective process in which certain aspects of the human experience are memorialized and others forgotten. The hard fact is that we can remember only so much." (Peder Zane, *Literary Life and Death,* NewsObserver.com, April 29, 2001)

Yet, this is a book that raises important questions about past library preservation practices and therefore should be read and discussed as we ponder the digital future and the immense preservation challenge that confronts the library profession in the years ahead. ■

Bart Harloe is university librarian, St. Lawrence University, Canton, New York. Email: <bharloe@stlawu.edu>

collection. In consequence, much of the history of Willamette is at risk of being lost. The Mark O. Hatfield Legacy Project aims to create the position of University Archivist. This position will be charged with maximizing the value of the library's archival collections to scholarship and teaching.

INFORMATION LITERACY

A shared understanding of our students' information literacy needs is a prerequisite to formulating an effective response to the changes that are occurring in the information environment. The skills and understanding students require to locate information and evaluate it critically are, in turn, a prerequisite to academic achievement, life-long learning, and productive citizenship. Because traditional library instruction does not fully address today's challenges, librarians and teaching faculty alike will seek new ways to merge essential research skills into the academic experience. Librarians will play key roles in defining desirable educational outcomes, reshaping the curriculum, and creating effective teaching strategies.

DIGITAL COLLECTIONS

Digital collections will play an increasingly important role in teaching and research at Willamette. Faculty, WITS, and library staff have already created several collections of digital objects that are accessible via the Web. Librarians will play an important role in the process of integrating these new resources into the curriculum by working to assure that digital materials at Willamette are easily located and retrieved; digital collections are effectively managed using widely accepted metadata standards and software; and intellectual property issues are addressed. Library staff are currently evaluating for possible digitization the many student recitals, faculty lectures, and campus performances in the library's audiovisual collection. Student Scholarship Recognition Day and Carson Undergraduate Research Grant papers are potential candidates for digitization. Digital collections of curricular interest also may be purchased commercially and are under consideration by subject librarians. This fall we plan to acquire Web-based digital asset management software and begin exploring its usefulness.

> *"Librarians will play key roles in defining desirable educational outcomes, reshaping the curriculum, and creating effective teaching strategies."*

NEW LIBRARY SERVICES

New library services will be introduced as the methods by which information is produced and distributed evolve and the needs and expectations of users change. For example, when Internet access to licensed electronic databases became the dominant model for research, the Hatfield Library began to support off-campus access to these resources via a proxy server. Two years ago, at the suggestion of faculty and students, we developed and implemented an electronic reserves system that has proved to be extremely popular. Better access to quality research databases has led to an increase in Interlibrary Loan borrowing of journal articles. In order to streamline the Interlibrary Loan process, last year we began to deliver these journal articles electronically. Because the creation of new and innovative library services has a direct impact on academic programs, careful planning and review is particularly important. As the library implements new services, existing services will change or be eliminated and some level of controversy may be inevitable. New services for the coming year may include support for the EndNote bibliographic utility, streaming audio and video reserves, and support for image collections.

EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES

Although it is difficult to predict which technologies will have an impact on library services, some trends are visible on the near horizon. Digital asset management software is evolving rapidly and may soon compliment the systems used to manage traditional library collections. We expect to implement and evaluate a digital asset management package in the fall of 2001. Digital audio and video, in the form of streaming media, are increasingly important to research and education, and we are exploring both their potential value and the many issues that they raise, including rights management and fair use. Pending the success of the Hatfield Library Consortium's Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) grant proposal, our Innovative Interfaces library system will be upgraded to the latest generation of Innovative software. This upgrade will have immediate implications for internal library operations, and will position us to take advantage of future enhancements to the Innovative system. ■

Orbis:
Questioning Foundations in the Midst of Success

By John F. Helmer

Orbis has always been a moving target. Although remarkably consistent in its focus, the Orbis library consortium is growing and new activities proliferate to the extent that it is difficult to provide a consistent answer to the question, "What is Orbis?" Continual change causes the consortium to actively reconsider its purpose, services, legal status and membership criteria. This tendency, even enthusiasm, for questioning its very foundations, is a source of great strength and flexibility.

ORBIS TODAY

Starting as a collaborative project of five Oregon public university libraries, Orbis has grown to become a formally organized library consortium serving 20 private and public academic libraries in Oregon and Washington. A major milestone was achieved this summer when Portland State University (PSU) and Oregon Health & Science University (OHSU) joined Orbis. With the entry of these two institutions, Orbis now serves the entire Oregon University System (OUS) and approximately 95 percent of the students enrolled in Oregon's public and private four-year colleges.

ORBIS IN THE NEAR FUTURE

The Orbis Borrowing union catalog and lending system continues to be the jewel in the crown, lending some 98,000 books last year. In 2002, when PSU and OHSU add their holdings to the system, the union catalog will include 4.5 million unique titles representing nearly ten million items, and the level of Orbis Borrowing is expected to rise considerably. In support of Orbis Borrowing, the consortium administers a courier system used by 170 Pacific Northwest libraries to ship approximately 15,000 packages per month. Other major services include a cooperative database, ebook, and ejournal licensing program and sponsorship of a wide variety of conferences.

Among several new initiatives, the most ambitious seeks to determine the feasibility of building a shared library facility. The Orbis Regional Library Services Center would be a high-density storage facility for less-used library materials and a potential home for a wealth of other services. Academic libraries increasingly look to such facilities as an economical means to accommodate growth in collections and make room for new services in campus libraries. Such facilities also afford an opportunity for libraries to preserve a shared 'copy of record' of selected material now chiefly used in electronic form. Prime examples include the Harvard Depository, the Amherst College Library Depository, and the University of California's two regional storage centers. The projected facility would employ cutting-edge electronic delivery technology, offer fast retrieval of print originals, and provide excellent environmental conditions for the long-term preservation of collections. Beyond book storage, Orbis envisions a shared facility that could support a wide array of collaborative initiatives including a library materials preservation laboratory, office space for consortium staff, and digitizing and data archiving services.

Orbis Library Consortium
http:orbis.uoregon.edu

Central Oregon Community College
Eastern Oregon University
George Fox University
Lewis & Clark College
Linfield College
Marylhurst University
Oregon Health & Science University
Oregon Institute of Technology
Oregon State University
Pacific University
Portland State University
Reed College
Seattle Pacific University
Southern Oregon University
University of Oregon
University of Portland
University of Puget Sound
Western Oregon University
Whitman College
Willamette University

QUESTIONING FOUNDATIONS

Orbis' success, vitality and relevance are a direct result of its grassroots creation and the active participation of member library staff. The Orbis Council, composed of the directors of member libraries, historically has shown a remarkable interest in revisiting the original assumptions of the consortium. The active and involved Council frequently evaluates services and membership criteria, discusses the impact of growth, and analyzes legal structures and governance models that might better serve the consortium.

Since its founding, Orbis membership criteria have changed several times. Originally envisioned as an OUS cooperative, the scope of the consortium was quickly broadened to include independent colleges, community colleges and institutions in the state of Washington. The consortium is now engaged in a discussion of membership criteria and will reevaluate its current focus on academic libraries in a two-state geographic region. As Orbis completes an eight-year cycle of growth, Council will also consider the optimal size for the consortium in the future.

In addition to evaluating membership criteria, Orbis is working to create collaborations that do not require membership in the consortium. To this end, Orbis has established highly productive relationships with the Center for Research Libraries, OCLC Western, the Bibliographic Center for Research, the Portland Area Library System, and statewide database licensing groups in Oregon and Washington. In the future, we hope to create closer ties with public universities in Washington.

As Orbis services and membership continue to diversify and the number and complexity of our business relationships develop, the question of legal status has come under consideration. Since it's founding, the consortium has been structured as an independently managed project of the University of Oregon. The UO is a valued partner and generous host and has consistently proven to be a strong fiscal agent. Although this has been a successful model, the consortium is investigating the option of structuring Orbis as a non-profit corporation. As with all fundamental issues, the Council will determine Orbis' legal status based on a careful weighing of costs, benefits, and the best means to achieve consortium goals.

Orbis continues to be a highly productive collaborative venture. We have seen tremendous growth and increasing diversity in membership and services, and this trend appears likely to continue. The consortium's strength and success are based on the dedication of Orbis staff and all staff at member libraries and the willingness to change. Perhaps most remarkable is Orbis' penchant for questioning its foundations in the midst of success. This enthusiasm for the organization helps Orbis stay relevant, tuned into membership needs, and ready to embrace new opportunities. ■

John F. Helmer is executive director of the Orbis Library Consortium. Email: <jhelmer@darkwing.uoregon.edu>

refused to allow the Online Computer Library Center (OCLC), a well-known U.S. company that provides an international database and other products vital to library resource sharing and bibliographical verification, from exhibiting. The foreign delegates, including the delegations of the American Library Association (ALA) and the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA), headed by ALA president John Berry and IFLA general secretary Ross Simón, were astonished to learn this news. None of the Cuban librarians present showed any surprise at all, they were used to it.

Recently, the 67th annual IFLA conference was held in Boston, with the participation of some 5,000 delegates from 157 countries. Of the six Cuban librarians expected to attend, only three were granted U.S. visas. Because the U.S. government delayed issuing these three visas, the first Cuban delegates arrived the day after the Conference began and the last, Dr. Martha Terry, president of the Cuban Association of Librarians (ASCUBI), arrived barely three hours before it ended.

In spite of these overtly hostile acts, the IFLA General Council approved an historic resolution that strongly condemns the U.S. embargo for the damage it causes the culture, the education, the libraries, and the rights of both the Cuban and the American people to be informed. This resolution is a clear expression of the growing rejection of a policy considered by the majority of the nations of the world to be illegal and detrimental to an entire culture. At the United Nations, a recent Cuban-introduced resolution condemning the American embargo received, with a few abstentions, 157 votes in favor and three opposed: those of the United States, the Marshall Islands, and Israel.

José Martí National Library, Havana, Cuba

Yet in spite of all of the aggression and all of the suffering, there is no hate, no resentment, in the hearts of Cubans against the American people. We have attained a high level of cultural development; free education is available to us from preschool through university, and we demonstrate respect for the best of all cultures and all literatures, including those of North America. Thus, all Cubans, from a child on the street to a taxi driver, are imbued with a profound knowledge of history, a knowledge that helps prevent us from making mistakes of judgment and from treating others unfairly. We know that governments are to blame, not the citizens who defend noble causes: sovereignty, liberty, independence, and culture.

In spite of being a small underdeveloped country living under a stringent embargo, Cuba today has the largest number of teachers and doctors per capita of any country in the world and its child mortality rate is only 7.2 per thousand live births. The life expectancy at birth is 76 years; 99.1 percent of all children ages six to eleven, and 98.2 percent of all children ages six to fourteen, attend school. There is no illiteracy in Cuba, and we have more than 6,000 school libraries and almost 400 public libraries.

The cost of the embargo to Cubans and their libraries is a bitter reality, yet our country's successes in education, culture, health care, and even sports, are clear proof that an embargo can be overcome. Our accomplishments also suggest that, were it so inclined, the U.S. government could use the tax money that maintains the embargo to eradicate the illiteracy that afflicts some 32 million of its own people. ■

Lic. Eliades Acosta Matos is director of the José Martí National Library, Havana, Cuba, and author of 1898-1998: Cien respuestas para un siglo de dudas *(La Habana: Editorial Pablo de la Torriente, 1999). Email: <eliadesa@jm.lib.cult.cu>*

(Translated from the Spanish by María D. Blanco-Arnejo, associate professor of Spanish, Willamette University. The original Spanish-language version of this article is available at: http://library.willamette.edu/home/publications/mt/)