
ACRL President's letter

1985—ACRL's year in review.

Dear ACRL Colleagues:

Each year, the President of the Association of College and Research Libraries writes an open letter to the members in order to review the activities of the Association during the past year. As you know, much energy has been expended this year towards a long-range strategic planning effort. One year ago, a sample membership survey was done by mail to determine what directions, initiatives or programs were both feasible and desirable for the Association to pursue in the next five years. The results of that sample survey were tabulated, computed and analyzed and formed the basis of the President's Program in July of 1985. In Chicago, approximately 500 ACRL members reviewed the top ten priorities that had emerged from the mail survey. During the course of the afternoon, discussions at small tables centered around these ten priorities. Consensus was reached on the following top five: publications, continuing education, standards and accreditation, liaisons and chapters.

Not only was consensus reached on these five priorities, but the discussions also concentrated on specific actions which could be taken by the Association in each of the priority areas. The discussions were very interesting for two reasons: 1) new ideas were generated for programs or directions that ACRL could take in the next five years; and 2) it became evident that, in an organization as large and diverse as ACRL, members working in one section, discussion group, or task force are not aware of the full scope of ACRL activities.



Sharon A. Hogan

It was this second point which suggested the content and organization of my President's letter. I decided to review what the members of ACRL are currently doing in the areas that were designated as top priority. What follows is a review of both the ongoing programs of ACRL in each of these five areas as well as initiatives that have been started during the last year.

Publications

Support for publications was clearly the number one priority in both the mail survey of ACRL members and the attendees at the summer conference. There was support not only for continuing the high quality of publications but also in strengthening and broadening the publications program. Currently, ACRL has three serial publications, a series (*Publications in Librarianship*), and fifty-two separate publications ranging from pamphlets to full-length monographs.

Activities which revolve around or have influenced the publications program of ACRL during the last year include:

- *Support for section newsletters.* Budget allocations for section newsletters were defined in a policy statement by the Committee on Budget and Finance, cooperative procedures were worked out for production of the newsletters between the sections and the ACRL office, and a workshop was held by the editor of *C&RL News* for editors of section newsletters. Currently, four newsletters are being produced at the ACRL office.

- *Publication of Books for College Libraries, 3rd edition.* In response to repeated member requests for a new edition of BCL, an Ad Hoc Committee was formed. The committee wrote an RFP, reviewed the proposals, and recommended to the ACRL Board that the joint proposal from *Choice* and UTLAS be accepted. The ACRL Board voted to underwrite the publication of BCL III using the

ACRL fund balance as risk capital.

• *Trial publication.* Two pilot issues of a new journal entitled *Rare Books and Manuscripts Librarianship* are being underwritten by ACRL. During the last year, an editor and editorial board were chosen, manuscripts were solicited, and articles were chosen for publication. The first issue will be published early this year.

• *Guidelines for publication.* In order to provide guidance to the sections, committees and discussion groups on publication procedures, the Publications Committee drew up "Guidelines for Publications Support Requests," which was published in *C&RL News*, March 1985.

• *Review of Choice.* Under the leadership of Pat Sabosik, the new editor of *Choice*, and with the guidance of the *Choice* Editorial Board, there has been a complete review of the publication of *Choice* including typography, editorial identity, content and scope. To date, changes include a decision to move toward editorial features and theme issues, a complete redesign of the magazine, the addition of LC classification letters to reviews, the development of a marketing plan, and an exploration of additional by-products or services that could be spun off from *Choice*.

• *Member-generated publications.* A partial listing illustrates the wide variety of publications being written, approved and supported by the various units of ACRL.

Academic and Research Library Personnel Study Group, "1985-1995: The Next Decade in Academic Librarianship," a commissioned paper published in the May and July issues of *College & Research Libraries*.

Bibliographic Instruction Section, "Library Instruction Clearinghouses 1985: A Directory."

Bibliographic Instruction Section, "BIS Handbook," 1985 revision (also available in ERIC).

College Libraries Section, "Checklist on Closing College Libraries" (will appear in a future issue of *C&RL News*).

College Libraries Section, "Clip Note #5: Mission Statements for College Libraries, 1985."

Community and Junior College Libraries Section, "Services to Disadvantaged Students Committee Handbook" (in progress).

Education and Behavioral Sciences Section, "Guide for the Development and Management of a Test Collection With Special Emphasis on Academic Settings." 1985.

Education and Behavioral Sciences Section, "Directory of Curriculum Materials Centers," 2d edition, 1985.

Education and Behavioral Sciences Section, "Cataloging Practices and Resource Sharing of Curriculum Collections in Academic Libraries" (in progress).

Rare Books and Manuscripts Section, "Guidelines on the Selection of General Collection Materials for Transfer to Special Collections," in *C&RL News*, July/August 1985.

Rare Books and Manuscripts Section, "Guidelines on Theft" (in progress).

Women's Discussion Group, "Women's Study Collection Development: A Checklist" (in progress).

Continuing Education

Rather than being viewed only as coursework, continuing education should encompass a broad range of activities that contributes to professional development. These might include reading the professional literature, attending national, regional or chapter conferences, or participating in courses or workshops. The importance of professional development to the members was underscored during the President's Program with attendees stressing the need for more activity at the regional and chapter level and delivery of courses and workshops at the lowest possible cost.

ACRL provides a variety of opportunities for professional development from the publications discussed above to the programs and activities listed below:

• *Conference Programs.* 18 programs were put on or co-sponsored by 13 sections, 1 committee and 3 discussion groups at the ALA Conference in Chicago last July. Of these, 12 were taped and are available from ALA; papers from the Law and Political Science Section, the Slavic and East European Section, and the University Libraries Section programs are to be published.

• *Research Clinic.* The Task Force on Research held a fantastically popular Research Clinic at the ALA Conference in Chicago which drew 230 participants. Another clinic is scheduled to be held in New York.

• *CE Courses.* Nine courses that drew 127 participants were offered as pre-conferences in conjunction with the ALA Annual Conference.

• *Fourth National Conference.* The Conference Committee for the ACRL Fourth National Conference, "Energies for Transition," to be held in Baltimore, April 9-12, 1986, continued their second year of hard work in planning for the conference. National conferences are intended to provide an opportunity to listen and reflect on issues in academic libraries away from the hubbub of the business and committee meetings of the ALA conference; but they require a concentrated effort both by ACRL members serving on the Conference Committee and by the ACRL staff to plan and execute.

• *Workshops on Humanities Programming.* With the support of grant funds from NEH, workshops are being held to train academic and public librarian teams in the art of humanities programming. The goal of the workshops is to describe joint applications for grants to encourage the use of humanities resources for adult programming in libraries. Four workshops were conducted this year.

• *Accreditation Vists.* The Committee on Stan-

dards and Accreditation is working on a CE package to help librarians who are preparing for accreditation visits by either university accrediting teams or an accrediting team for a specific department or program.

- *Chapter Programming.* ACRL chapters are in part supported by funds allocated by ACRL as a whole. Approximately \$6,000 was allocated last year. In addition, ACRL provides funding for Chapters Special Programming, a competitive program reviewed and recommended by a committee of the Chapters Council that makes recommendations to the ACRL Board. Last year, \$6,459 was allocated toward special programming.

- *Future Offerings.* The CE course offerings developed by ACRL are now being made available to regional conferences, to chapters and to single institutions. This will make courses more available to members who cannot attend national conferences.

Standards and accreditation

Standards and Accreditation was rated as the third highest priority by attendees at the President's Program. It was clear from the discussions that members look to ACRL not only to provide standards for libraries and library services but also to be an active promoter of those standards. Standards, guidelines, and information about accreditation is coordinated by the Committee on Standards and Accreditation, but many sections are at work on standards or guidelines or checklists which define more specific services. Recent activity in this area includes:

- *Free standards.* The ACRL Board passed a motion stating that all standards should be provided free to anyone requesting them.

- *Type-of-library standards reconfirmed.* The ARCL Board accepted the recommendation of the Committee on Standards and Accreditations not to adopt standards with a subject (discipline) orientation.

- *Current hearings.* Hearings were scheduled by the Audio-Visual Committee on the "ACRL Guidelines for Audio-Visual Services in Academic Libraries" and by the College Library Standards Committee on the revision of the "College Library Standards."

- *Other reviews.* Eleven other standards or guidelines are currently under review by the Committee on Standards and Accreditation or committee units designated by them.

- *Aid for librarians preparing for accreditation visits.* A CE package is being developed, as described under continuing education.

Liaisons

Members felt very strongly that the Association of College and Research Libraries should serve as the voice for members and their libraries to other organizations of higher education or groups who are influential in higher education. The range of

activities in this area includes visits by members to other organization/association meetings, programs presented at non-library conferences, discussions with executive directors and elected officials of other organizations, and responses to publications or reports which concern higher education. Attendees at the President's Program in July felt that these liaisons should be broadened and strengthened. Activity by ACRL during the last year includes:

- *Support for member activity.* The ACRL Professional Association Liaison Committee was created to promote cooperative efforts with other higher education associations. The committee is to carry on the work of the Bibliographic Instruction Liaison Project on a broader scale, i.e., to help librarians participate in the programs of other associations. There are funds in the ACRL budget to support registration fees and partial travel for librarians who will give papers on library-related topics at meetings of non-library professional associations.

- *Other conferences.* The executive director made visits to the national conventions of ASIS, SLA, MLA, and ARL. Ten key members participated actively in the AAHE national conference in April.

- *Contacts with national organizations.* Visits to the headquarters of the American Association of Higher Education, ACE, AAC, and the Chronicle of Higher Education were made in January by the ACRL President and Executive Director.

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• *Washington contacts.* Sharon Rogers attended regular meetings of higher education representatives in Washington.

• *Written responses.* The ACRL executive director responded to publications by NIE and the Carnegie Association.

Chapters

ACRL Chapters represent a unique organizational pattern among ALA divisions and provide a mechanism for the participation of academic librarians in the mission and goals of ACRL without necessarily attending national conferences. During the last year, chapter-related activities included:

• *New Chapters.* The addition of two chapters in Nevada and Montana, bringing the total of ACRL chapters to 35.

• *Funding.* Continued support for chapter activities through the Chapter Allocation formula adopted as part of the ACRL budget. In addition, the ACRL Board at the Chicago conference passed a motion stating that the minimum allocation is to be \$100 beginning with the 1986-87 year.

• *Special Funding.* In the second year of the Chapters Special Programming, funds were awarded to ten chapters.

• *ACRL Officers/Staff Visits.* There were a total of ten chapters visited by ACRL officers and staff.

Awards, membership, and governance

An organization which exists under the aegis of a larger organization or which is a complex as ACRL cannot hope to operate for one year without attention to membership, governance and structure. This last year was no exception. Noteworthy actions are:

• Recognition of outstanding service or research:

Academic or Research Librarian of the Year: Jessie Carney Smith.

Oberly Award: James E. Simon, Alena F. Chadwick, and Lyle E. Craker.

Samuel Lazerow Award: Anne L Highsmith.

Doctoral Dissertation Fellowship: Joanne R. Euster and Vickie L. Gregory.

Miriam Dudley Award: Carolyn Kirkendall.

• Approval of two new awards:

Martinus Nijhoff International West European Specialist Study Grant (awarded by WESS).

Exhibition Catalog Award (awarded by RBMS).

• Increased attention to membership needs and recruitment processes resulting in a 4.2% increase in personal members and a 3% increase in institutional members.

• Continued ACRL initiative in the administration of the Divisional Leadership Enhancement Program funded by the J. Morris Jones Award. In its second year, the program has encouraged cooperation and understanding among the divisions and between divisions and ALA. ACRL joined with the other divisions in recommending a contin-

uation of this program by staff of ALA.

• Participation by members of the ACRL Board in a planning session as part of the ALA strategic planning process.

• Participation by members of the ACRL Executive Committee in reviewing the Operating Agreement between ALA and its divisions.

• Approval of an election cycle to implement the by-law change which restructures the membership of the ACRL Board of Directors.

• Approval of a separate reserve fund for *Choice*.

Even a brief review of the activities of ACRL remind us all of the breadth, depth and amount of activity engaged in by the membership. It is this strength which enables ACRL to garner the resources for redirection back into the organization—to support ongoing activities, to expand those activities or to undertake new initiatives. In order to choose among the many possible alternatives, the ACRL long-range strategic plan will set a direction so that there will be a careful balance between meeting the current needs of the members and providing a transition for their future needs.

Sharon A. Hogan
ACRL President



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