

**People-to-People Delegation
Journal of Professional Activities
College and Research Librarians
China
March 7 – 20, 2006**

Introduction

What a great opportunity to be able to have fruitful discussions on topics relating to academic librarianship with our Chinese counterparts in Beijing, Xi'an, and Shanghai. The beauty of our professional program was its diversity of venues. We were able to meet not only with library colleagues at academic institutions but also with library colleagues at the Beijing Association of Libraries in Higher Education Institutions, the Chinese Academy of Sciences, and a library and informatics education graduate program.

Our journalists below knew that they would be journaling on specific days/topics way before we left on the trip. They took their responsibilities very seriously, and that is reflected in their journal entries below.

Each session included a brief welcome from our Chinese hosts. Dr. Alire responded by thanking our Chinese hosts for their time and willingness to share thoughts about various topics. She introduced that delegation as a whole and then introduced the discussion leaders and their topics, as appropriate.

When reading the entries, one will find a wealth of information discussed - similarities and differences; some surprises; and a real good sense of what went on in our professional meetings. The primary purpose of the People-to-People Program was met; and that was to provide the opportunity for our delegation to interact with colleagues from China to exchange ideas and thoughts about the academic library profession in each of our countries.

Journal Entries

**March 8
Nancy Dennis
Beijing Normal University
Beijing**

The delegation met with 18 librarians and staff from the Beijing Normal University (BNU), led by Deputy Director, Ms. Wong. Ms. Wong provided a general introduction and overview of the library. The BNU library, organized in ten departments, serves approximately 20,000 students and faculty.

The delegation discussion leaders were Victoria Hanawalt on the role of academic libraries and Frank Bove, on role of information technology in academic libraries. Ms. Hanawalt began the discussion by describing the changing role of libraries and librarians – some are new, some are changing dramatically. However, the expectations remain the same of librarians to be educated with a strong service orientation and subject expertise. New roles of librarians include negotiating licenses with vendors for electronic content, teaching students on the use of electronic library resources, and the development and implementation of digitization techniques necessary to build digital collections.

Ms. Wong agreed that they share most of the changes mentioned and are making good use of technology. Computers are involved in every procedure in the BNU library e.g. circulation, cataloging, reference. They are using the Aleph 500 system. They offer three methods of teaching and service. 1.) Cooperation with teachers and departments to design specific instruction sessions, 2.) Specialized reference service with a 24-hour turnaround, 3.) Librarians working with teachers and researchers to meet their specific research needs. The BNU spends approximately 17-20% of materials budget on electronic resources (US Naval Academy reported spending 25% and Chapman College reported spending 33%) contracting for 70-80 resources, 15 are Chinese-produced sources the remainder from foreign producers. The library is one of 17 libraries in China participating in a joint project with libraries from Egypt and the US to digitize 1 million books. They also participate in consortia purchases, shared cataloging and publication of theses and dissertations. A course management system is not in place, although they are gathering professors PowerPoint presentations as a beginning. A new library building is planned for 2008.

Mandatory library instruction credit classes were offered in 2002; however, that program was stopped in 2004. Currently there are voluntary courses available which are quite well attended and enthusiastically received by students. The Library is actively requesting that the library instruction classes be re-instated. It was noted that approximately 73% of incoming freshmen to BNU are from rural areas and have not used computers previously, so the instruction on how to use computers and search for relevant information in databases is of interest and needed by students.

A lively discussion ensued on the impact of Google Scholar and other mass digitization projects on libraries – are these projects competition to libraries, or creating challenges and opportunities? Most agreed they are force to be reckoned with (commercial databases have seen a 30% increase in use after being indexed in Google Scholar). Libraries and librarians need to re-think about libraries-as place and what value librarians can bring to the education of students and instruction support for faculty and researchers.

The delegation received a tour of the library. It was obvious that the library is heavily used as most seats were occupied by students. The library has wireless networking and some laptop computers were in use by students. The delegation was enthusiastically received by library employees throughout the library.

After the tour, gifts and business cards were exchanged. The delegation was very impressed with the knowledge of the BNU librarians and the similarity of issues and challenges that face librarians in the North America and China. "We have come half-way around the world to hear our questions mirrored by our colleagues in China."

March 9

**Joanne D. Hartog
Renmin University
Beijing**

The People to People ACRL delegation visited Renmin University, where Chief Librarian, Professor Ni Nang, thanked the group for being a "breath of Spring that will bring greater development to the librarian profession in China." Established in 1937, Renim University is a comprehensive institution with special focus in the social sciences and humanities. The University is constructing a new library and will "try their best" to have it completed by 2008, when we are invited for a return visit.

Professor Hu Yue, President of the Beijing Association of Libraries in Higher-education Institutions, welcomed the delegation. Other representatives from BALHI included Deputy Librarians, Professors and Researchers from Renmin University, Beijing University, and from the Tsinghua, Peking, Beijing Normal, Beijing Science and Technology, Beijing Agricultural, Beijing Astronomy, Beijing Medical, and Beijing Chemical Universities. Professor Yue presented a brief overview of BALHI, whose 100 members cooperate in discussion and training seminars, policy formulation, and informational exchanges with counter-parts abroad. "We share more similarities than differences," he summarized. Dr. Alire responded with an overview of ACRL goals and responsibilities.

Barbara A. Butler, Oregon Institute of Marine Biology, introduced the discussion topic, *The Status of Academic Librarians in the Chinese Higher Education System* and offered three questions regarding 1) the status of librarians within the institution, i.e. how they are perceived and supported; 2) how librarians are perceived and promoted within the profession; and 3) the expectations of librarians to stay current and assume leadership roles. The responses indicated Chinese librarians do not enjoy the same support or standards as do their American counterparts, and new recruits are not required to have a background in library study. BALHI is encouraging recruits to pursue a library science degree through night classes, as well as participate in conference presentations--which

will be funded--for promotion. Further development of communication and management skills for team leadership are also needed. Contrary to America's challenge to recruit new librarians, Beijing libraries have acquired "new blood" due to the fast-paced development of higher ed institutions. New graduates with masters degrees in related majors (as science and engineering) are hired, then later trained as Librarians. In 2005, 150-200 candidates applied for 5 library jobs; in 2006, over 150 have applied for 2 jobs requiring a masters degree, however few applicants are acceptable. The Chinese are addressing three other issues: promotion of the library as profession; "physical support" or guaranteed incomes for librarians in the new market economy; and more specialized, academic training for different types of libraries requiring expert subject knowledge. The ACRL website's Issues Advocacy button was recommended for user needs.

Dan Tonkery, EBSCO Information Services, introduced the topic, *Mass Digitization Projects*. Describing technology as a friend/enemy for the library, since users are now insatiable, he posed three questions: 1) How many libraries in China are actively developing digital projects? 2) What is the process to select materials to digitize? 3) Does BALHI organize standards for digital projects? Discussion indicated most Chinese libraries are still in the stage of purchasing digital resources. The Chinese Documents Preserving Group in Higher Education is organizing the purchase of digital resources for 500-600 universities, which now have approximately 70 databases. Special libraries are beginning to select their own digital resources within copyright rules. The One Million Books Project, a Sino-American project in which both parties are responsible for ½ million books, is to be completed this year. Another goal is digitizing academic reserves, also hampered by copyright issues. Where there are limited copies, print books are rotated with the teacher assignments. Some colleges are devoted to digitizing books of long history, e.g. The Rubbings. To manage digital resources, some institutions get management systems from abroad, while others create their own.

For future digitization, the Chinese recognize the need for shared standards and regulations. Subdivisions at the Beijing University of Science and Technology have completed the first phases of an index to cover a code of conduct. Affiliated organizations will contribute suggestions to the BALHI in their specific fields. BALHI makes suggestions to government departments regarding the country's laws and legislation, seeking a balance between copyright and users.

The session concluded with this Chinese question: The Chinese People's Congress is faced with a 5-11 year economic plan that involves technology, the internet and Google. What is the American plan for developing the library of the future? Nancy Dennis, University Libraries of New Mexico, answered it involved better application of technology by librarians, who would bring an increased knowledge of technology and communication to the job.

March 9
Pamela Snelson
Library of Chinese Academy of Sciences
Beijing

Each People to People delegate received a gift bag on entering the meeting room. Chinese representatives included Mao Jun, Zhang Xioli, Yan Xiangdong, Sun Ping, and Wang Hui. We met in a beautiful conference room on the 7th floor of the library. The program was conducted in English; this gave Wendy Hou, our national guide and interpreter, a well-needed rest! Zhang Xiolin, a Columbia University graduate, welcomed our delegation on behalf of the Chinese Corporation of Library Science and LCAS. The Corporation is made up of public and academic libraries. It organizes programs of exchange and invites library directors from other countries to have meetings with local librarians and library school students. Mr. Zhang described the organization, mission and services of the newly named National Library of Science. Their services are broader than usual including publications and information analysis. Dr. Alire thanked our hosts for their gracious welcome to our large delegation and introduced the delegation in general terms. Dr. Yan Xiangdong explained that he asked for a joint meeting with NCAS once he read the dossiers of our group.

The first speaker, Professor Sun, Qinhua University Library, discussed information literacy (IL) in Chinese academic libraries. IL started late in China but its importance is increasing each year as evidenced by a large growth in publications. In 1999, the Chinese government advocated the importance of IL. This speaker referred to the ACRL Information Literacy Competency Standards and the contribution of IL to inquiry-based learning. The Ministry of Education recently defined a course of information retrieval. A formal association of libraries has been created to promote IL.

Second to speak was Daniel Marquis, on the topic of information literacy in French Canadian undergraduate libraries. Some librarians are involved in the teaching aspects of the colleges using a variety of methods. Many People-to-People delegates described efforts at their institutions. It would be wonderful to have the ACRL science and technology IL standards translated into Chinese – perhaps by a volunteer in the audience.

Thura Mack, the third presenter, spoke on helping scholars to self-archive in institutional repositories. She described the purpose of repositories and the process of self-archiving. Brisk discussion of SPARC and Open Access followed.

The afternoon's fourth speaker, Dr. Wang Hui, described the digitization of local history documents at the National Library of China. A very good collection of pre-1949 local histories are represented. The documents are scanned and watermarks are added for copyright purposes. Ancient characters cannot be read by OCR so manual intervention is required. Close to two million pages have been

scanned. The delegates asked questions about cooperation and the selection of material.

The final presenter, Dr. Mao, explained the mission of CSDL, a scientific database of digital documents. One useful feature is remote access via authentication. CSDL is a combination of commercial material and locally produced data. As in many other situations, researchers appreciate simple, easy and fast service. Dr. Mao concluded with an online demonstration of CSDL. Authentication certification to use full-text is held on a thumb drive. Q & A focused on future plans for the project.

March 13
Barbara Butler
Northwest University
Xi'an

Northwest University was established in 1902, and is one of the leading multi-disciplinary schools in China, a participant in the "211" program, and has 20,000 students. We met with eleven Chinese counterparts (many of whom graduated from the Northwest University Library Science program) and were welcomed by Ren Huilian (Executive, International Programs). During our visit Mary Ellen Davis moderated a discussion on scholarly publishing and copyright, and Jane Treadwell guided the discussion on intellectual freedom.

Ms. Davis described scholarly publishing as we know it in the US and pointed out that researchers select their own research topics, but must publish in order to advance within the academic system. When asked how Chinese researchers choose research topics and where their results will be published Ren confirmed that publishing in distinguished journals is a requirement (in addition to good performance in day-to-day activities), that promotion from lecturer to associate professor to professor is a strictly enforced process, but that researchers have freedom of choice regarding research topics "within their discipline". When the topic of scholarly societies was posed, the discussion turned to librarianship, rather than research-related scientific societies. We learned about the various library-related societies and that their publications are underwritten by membership fees. When asked if there was a reluctance to publish in e-only venues we learned that print is still their main format for journals. At Northwest University there are bonuses for publishing, and the amount of the bonus is tied to the prestige of the journal (this process varies from institution to institution). A junior librarian would not lose their job if they failed to publish, but they might not be promoted. At Northwest University an employee would progress from assistant librarian to associate librarian to research librarian. The research librarians are expected to publishing in important academic journals. We learned that, like us, our senior Chinese counterparts mentor their younger colleagues.

During the course of the above discussion we touched on the availability of indexing for Chinese journals, the exchange process followed by Northwest University, and asked for any questions they might have of us.

Our counterparts wanted to know how we might establish relations with them, and had questions on database availability, circulation policies (CDs that come with books), and the management of public and community college libraries. We clarified that while OCLC is a non-profit, they do charge membership fees. Many of us agreed that we simply place CDs inside pockets within the books whereas we used to try to back-up the content. Dan Tonkery from Ebsco confirmed that publishers will no longer issue data CDs and will be relying on the web to share such material. Our Chinese counterparts have been attempting to back-up and provide access to datasets on their campus networks and have found this an unacceptable solution. Frances Kaufman described the nature of a community college; and in answer to their first question, Dr. Alire described the "sister library" program of ALA/ACRL.

Jane Treadwell introduced the next discussion topic, describing intellectual freedom as the "cornerstone of librarianship." She stated that libraries in the US promote a free exchange of ideas and protect the privacy of patrons. She said she didn't want to put our counterparts "on the spot" but asked what types of material they collected, what material they preserved and what material is made available to patrons. The question of Google (censored or un-censored) in China was also posed.

In our trip orientation session, our guides said our Chinese counterparts might answer uncomfortable questions in a tangential manner. This might have shaped their response when describing how they acquired books (bookstore, publisher, or exchange). They also offered that both students and faculty like to use Google. Daniel Marquis then presented a question in the form of a scenario. He asked if a student in China and a student in the US both used Google to search for research on the history of Tibet, would they obtain the same results. Our Chinese colleagues answered that of course they would obtain the same results, because "it is the same internet".

One member of our delegation described how US law protects copyright and asked about the process used in China. While we didn't get exact details we learned that in China a work is protected for a period of time (50 years and/or death of the author). We asked about the growing trend for authors to retain their copyright (rather than assigning it to the publisher) and if this might be happening in China as well. The answer was yes—writers come to an agreement with a publisher and allow them to own the material for a period of years (10 or 20) and then ownership will revert to the author.

Our counterparts asked about the relationship between intellectual freedom and intellectual property. Ms. Treadwell clarified that information freedom is the right

to say what you believe and read what you want without interference and that intellectual property refers to the holder of copyright (publisher or author). This led our counterparts to ask about unpublished manuscripts such as theses or dissertations and we confirmed that copyright protection begins at the point of creation, even if the work is not published.

The discussion was fruitful. Our Chinese colleagues were discussing topics among themselves before answering and despite some difficult questions they responded in a way that facilitated exchange while avoiding controversy.

March 13, afternoon
Victoria Hanawalt
Xijing University
Xi'an

The delegation's afternoon at Xijing University began with a bus tour of their beautiful, recently built campus, located on a plateau to the west of Xi'an and offering a panoramic view of the city. We drove past two enormous teaching buildings, apartments for foreign visitors, dormitories, a campus supermarket, playing fields and basketball courts, and a park with a lovely rock waterfall.

The library building, completed in 2002, is an impressive glass-domed structure sited at the center of campus. Mr. Hei Lin, official representative of the university, greeted us at the entrance over which hung a festive red welcoming banner. After introductions he provided us with an overview of Xijing University, a private institution founded in 1994 and administered by the Ministry of Education. It is a comprehensive university, offering over 40 majors and focusing on the BA degree. The school emphasizes student life and growth and is somewhat unusual in its targeted approach to individual education.

Six members of the library staff were introduced. Mr. Sung, an associate librarian, provided an overview of the staff and building. The chief librarian supervises 25 library staff and reports directly to a university vice president. The library organization is divided into five departments: acquisitions, circulation, reference, information technology and administration. The five-level building features a central air conditioning system, 15 reading rooms, a seating capacity of 2080, and 250 public access computers. The open shelf collection includes 762,000 print volumes, 324,000 digital documents, 1300 journals and over 100 newspapers. The ILAS automation system supports all library functions.

After this introduction, we toured the library, accompanied by library staff and a number of university students who were eager to speak with us about their student life and a wide range of other topics. Delegates welcomed this chance for interaction with the students and happily posed for many photographs.

When we finally reassembled in the meeting room, Marcia Grimes launched the discussion by asking about cooperative efforts in Chinese libraries. Our hosts spoke of their work with the Chinese Association of Libraries in Higher Education and of the provincial partnerships that allow students to borrow materials from any academic library in the province. The Go West Campaign also supports a project working on the sharing of digital resources.

Our hosts asked about the state of digitization and planning for digital libraries in the U.S. Various delegates described state projects in New Mexico, Missouri and Ohio. Both countries still have work to do in developing national standards for these efforts.

The Open WorldCat approach that leads a user from a Google search to the location of an item in a nearby library is not yet available in China. Users need to go first to a university web site and get information about holdings from there.

While U.S. students have a growing preference for online resources, Chinese students still prefer print because of the limits in the availability of electronic resources. This observation led to a discussion of the relative merits of electronic books. All agreed that it is still too difficult to read an entire book online, but they can be useful for research consultation. Western publishers are moving to make electronic format a preferred form of distribution. Chinese institutions are also working to digitize many theses and dissertations to make them more widely accessible.

The session ended with expressions of gratitude to our gracious Chinese hosts and warm goodbyes to our newfound student friends.

March 15
James Wade
East China Normal University

The last library visited by the delegation took place on March 15. The sites visited were the School of Informatics and Library of the East China Normal University in Shanghai. For an urban campus the grounds of the ECNU were nicely landscaped with tree shaded groves and many water features. The buildings were quite cold, as has been the normal in China, but the welcome received from our Chinese counterparts was quite warm indeed.

The meeting opened with the traditional exchange of greetings, with the ECNU delegation being lead by Ms. Huang Xiuwen, Director of the ECNU library. Ms. Huang seemed quite excited by our visit, often interjecting additional comments to enhance the responses of her colleagues. Also part of the Chinese delegation

were several department heads and subheads from the ECNU library as well as some faculty members from the School of Informatics.

ECNU is a fairly young school by the standards of China and the United States being founded only in 1951. Even though the school is fairly young, the library has an impressive collection of over three million volumes in print and subscriptions to more than 150 electronic databases. Of these databases, some 60 are foreign language sources. It is interesting to note that when the Chinese speak of foreign language databases they mean English language databases. Even more impressive (at least in my eyes) is their Rare Books Collection, or as the Chinese like to term them "Ancient Books Collections". The collection includes over 320,000 rare volumes some of which date to the Sung Dynasty. During our library tour we were shown some of these ancient books which were not only in the Chinese language but also in early forms of Korean and Japanese. While the languages used in these books were Korean and Japanese they were written fully in Chinese characters. The Rare Books curator explained to us that most Koreans were unable to read the book in that language as the alphabet currently used in Korea has changed too much in the 500 years since the books were written. The curator also showed our delegation an early example of Chinese movable type printing and gave a brief explanation of how the printing process was carried out. As a rare books librarian, I thought the preservation conditions were not the best. It was clear to me that there was no shielding against UV light on either the windows or the fluorescent lights. Some of the books showed clear signs of fading due to exposure to sunlight. I also found no evidence of proper climate controls. I worry that these collections will continue to deteriorate.

The ECNU School of Informatics has what would be called in the United States a school of library and information science. This school was founded in 1979 and the school had created a masters degree in library science by 1980. The school does not seem to have a large enrollment as there have been only around 1600 graduates from the program since its inception. Of those graduates only some 600 were awarded a master's degree. From the discussion with the members of the Chinese delegation, I was lead to believe that a professional degree is not required to work as a full librarian in the Chinese university library systems. Promotion and position are based on one's scholarly and the number and quality of publications produced. Bonuses are also awarded for publishing in a scholarly publication.

The use of electronic materials in an academic library setting was one of the main points discussed between the two delegations. The American discussion leaders in this round of talks were Richard Werking and Martha Kruey. Our Chinese counterparts primary concerns in this area centered on the accuracy and reliability of the information retrieved from the online sources. As they see it the internet allows access to two types of digital information:

1. Databases which are well organized ordered and maintained. They are also seen to contain the most reliable information.
2. The Internet as a whole, especially when accessed through a search engine like Google.

What they are hoping to achieve in their ideal search system is something that combines the ease of use of a Google with the reliability and accuracy of a subject specific database.

Another point of discussion centered how much access the students of ECNU had to the electronic materials. During our library tour we saw several computer labs that seemed to be well used by the students. Our Chinese counterparts told us that only about 50% of the students owned their own personal computers. Personal computer ownership was also heavily skewed towards the older students. One of the Informatics instructors estimated that around 80% of the senior owned computers. The library had wireless internet access through out the building but few students took advantage of it. Even those with laptops seem to make more use of the wired connections.

After the morning session the group broke for lunch in the university dining hall.

March 15

Jane Treadwell

East China Normal University, afternoon session

I. Presentation by Nancy Dennis, Assistant Dean, University of New Mexico Libraries on "Role of Information Technology in Academic Libraries within the U.S."

Ms. Dennis noted that two factors are important to consider in implementing information technology in academic libraries:

- Shifts in end-user service expectations (desire for 24/7 remote access, desire to use multiple communication devices and preference for self-service and convenience) Library responses to these increased end-user expectations have included: creating and maintaining comprehensive web-based environments, offering sophisticated search tools, electronic reserves, and end-user training and instruction.
- Changing role of libraries as producers/publishers of information (digitization and description of collections) Two types of library "publishing" are becoming common in the U.S.: the digitization of various special collections resources, which are then often brought together under the umbrella of a state digital archives, and the creation and maintenance of an "institutional repository" of the works of faculty and other members of a particular university community.

Ms. Dennis provided examples of how both of these challenges have been addressed at the University of New Mexico and offered suggestions concerning infrastructure requirements and resources for addressing changing end-user expectations. ECNU librarians agreed with Nancy's analysis and had a few questions about specific aspects of her presentation.

II. Charlene Baldwin and Nicole Covone led a discussion on "Library Management in Academic Libraries." Ms. Baldwin offered an overview of the issues that library managers in the U.S. must address, including: strategic planning, budgeting, assessment, organizational design, and recruitment and retention of librarians and staff.

Ms. Covone posed the question, "What specific benefits and incentives have you found to motivate staff?" Ms. Huang, Director of the ECNU library responded:

- the promise of promotion—with achievement, librarians can advance
- motivation by reputation—librarians who perform well will receive the title of "honored librarian"
- monetary incentives—librarians who do well receive extra salary

A discussion followed concerning management training and mentoring in Chinese and U.S. libraries. A key difference that emerged during the discussion is that in China many beginning librarians have a bachelor's degree in library science; those who do an excellent job are encouraged to complete their master's degree. Librarians in Chinese academic libraries are encouraged to attend seminars, including international seminars, and to go to other libraries for training. Ms. Huang noted that mentoring of those who are perceived to be especially capable is important. Helen Spaulding shared with the group various mentoring and leadership development practices and opportunities in the United States.