Minutes of the 2012 RBMS Preconference Program Planning Committee
Sheraton New Orleans-Southdown, New Orleans, LA
June 26, 2011 at 10:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Members Present: Nina Schneider (Co-chair), Shannon Supple (Co-chair), Lynda Claassen (LAC Chair), James P. Ascher, Richenda Brim, Katie Henningsen, Athena Jackson, Mike Kelly (RBMS Chair-Elect), Melissa Nykanen, and Jessica Pigza

Members Excused: Laura Bang, Virginia Bartow, Helice Koffler, E. C. Schroeder, Mattie Taormina, and Sarah Goodwin Thiel

Members Not Present: Jacqueline L. Parascandola and Kimberly Schwenk

Guests Present: Susan M. Allen, Anne Bahde, Danielle Culpepper, Erika Dowell, Jane Gillis, Melinda Hayes, Eric Holzenberg, Laura Micham, Henry Raine, Jennifer Schnaffer, Molly Schwartzburg, Heather Smedberg, and Aislinn Sotelo

DRAFT MINUTES

I. Preliminaries

Co-chairs, Nina Schneider and Shannon Supple, called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m. Athena Jackson volunteered to record minutes and introductions commenced.

The committee approved the minutes from ALA Midwinter 2011 meeting.

II. Timeframe for Committee's Work

The Co-chairs expressed that momentum is building in preparation for the Preconference in San Diego. Conference calls, a wiki (perhaps), and ALA Connect will serve as preferred forms of communication and information dissemination. Interested parties can follow the relevant discussions at the Preconference ALA Connect space: http://connect.ala.org/node/150369.

III. Theme and Title

"Futures!" is the title of the 2012 Preconference.

Theme: The Preconference will explore the possible futures of the book, of information, and of use as we charge further into the 21st century. All ideas will fall under the rubric "futures" and programming will espouse an open and fluid sense of the theme. Ideas proposed by attendees include: the future of humanities, the future as viewed 20 years ago (futures past), the future of bibliography, and the future of collection development vis-à-vis cultural sensitivities.

The Co-chairs encourage suggestions for synthesizing the focus; however, openness is deliberate, as the goal is to explore multiplicities of the futures of our field. In lieu of a narrowed subtitle, a simple descriptive sentence may suffice to crystallize the theme for registrants to better understand its intent.

IV. Local Arrangements Report (L. Claassen, Chair Local Arrangements Committee (LAC))

Hotel: Westin San Diego
(http://www.starwoodhotels.com/westin/property/overview/index.html?propertyID=1762)
Hotel Room Rate: $169.00/night

The amenities at the hotel will make for easier programming, e.g., 2 ballrooms are available for concurrent events, such as one for the Booksellers' Showcase and the other for a plenary. Plenty of restaurants, a nearby YMCA, and other urban amenities will make alternative housing, transportation, and recreation easier. Thursday's events will take place at Balboa Park. The Mingei International Museum (http://www.balboapark.org/in-the-park/mingei-international-museum) will be the Thursday evening reception venue. Balboa Park features ten museums, including the San Diego Zoo and the Maritime Museum. Tour possibilities include: a day cruise, ship tours, day-long tours of Old Gold Towns or to Mexico. The hotel is three blocks for the Old Santa Fe Railroad depot. Those going to ALA Annual in Anaheim can travel by train for ~$25 on this historic railway.

V. Preconference Schedule & Formats

A. Schedule:

- The 2012 Preconference will take place June 19-22, 2012.

- *Leab Awards Display*: Discussion covered how this display might play a more integral part of the Preconference.

- *ABAA Booksellers' Showcase*: May be on Wednesday, concurrent with sessions, rather than on its traditional Tuesday slot, but this will depend on the desires of the booksellers themselves. The intent would be to integrate the showcase into programming by allowing for more opportunities to visit the showcase throughout the day, rather than only during the reception, and offering a tour of the Showcase for those interested lead by a seasoned RBMS member.

- *Technology Petting Zoo*: If the Booksellers' Showcase is moved to Wednesday, this could be held on Tuesday. This event would be intended to be more hands-on than the exhibits at ALA and open to technology and device vendors who target special collections. Including these vendors may also benefit fundraising for the Preconference. Other suggested ideas for additional Zoo items include: tools we use, such as iPad Apps or back-end engineering software used for online exhibitions. The point of the Technology Petting Zoo is to try things out!

B. Session Formats:

Programming will be hybridized. For example, a single timeslot may include the option to choose from a discussion session and three seminars. Session ideas include:

1. *Plenaries*: Three big picture plenaries, with optional break-out discussion sessions to further plenary dialogs
2. *Seminars*: Ten seminars, including another pecha kucha, organized by the RBMS Seminars Committee

3. ***Discussion Sessions***: Multiple discussion sessions (number TBD), two of which would flow from the two non-closing plenaries, and organized by the Discussion Sessions subcommittee, headed by Jessica Pigza

   a. *Unconference session* – One session set aside for attendees to create their own programming, to provide attendees with a space to organically derive subjects for discussion. Preparations could happen beforehand, via a blog or online sign-up (using Sign-up Genius or similar), to allow for more time for substantive discussion during the Preconference session. This session will need an unconference-experienced moderator/facilitator. The Discussion Sessions subcommittee will organize this session.

   b. *Sandbox session* – A session allowing for sharing working projects, which could take the form of "dork shorts" (a term used by unconferences to mean "very short (1-2 minute) presentations where anyone can get up in front of the group and give a quick introduction for a project"). This too might need preparations beforehand but still be open to all attendees to shape as they desire. This session will be explored and, if green-lit, organized by the Discussion Sessions subcommittee.

4. ***Short Papers***: Short paper sessions will be included – number of panels TBD. More explicit instructions in the Call for Papers will ensure that submissions are about research results and not case studies. The Short Papers subcommittee, headed by Mike Kelly, will organize these sessions.

5. ***Workshops***: RBMS Regional Workshops Committee Chair Jane Gillis will work with the Workshops subcommittee, headed by Athena Jackson, to identify candidate workshops to include in the programming. Workshop suggestions include: German for Catalogers, a Diversity Committee Toolkit, working with audio-visual materials (access and preservation), coding basics, linked data and the semantic web, metadata formats, and assessment in special collections.

C. Program Planning Subcommittees:

The committee created three subcommittees to develop programming in three session format-based areas and committee members were assigned subcommittee responsibilities. Additional committee members will be added.

1. **Workshops Subcommittee**: Athena Jackson (Chair), Jane Gillis (*ex officio*) (This subcommittee will be coordinating with the RBMS Regional Workshops Committee, chaired by Jane Gillis.)

2. **Short Papers Subcommittee**: Mike Kelly (Chair), Katie Henningsen, Melissa Nykanen

3. **Discussion Sessions Subcommittee**: Jessica Pigza (Chair), James P. Ascher, Richenda Brim

VI. Speaker Ideas (for Plenaries and Others)

Plenary One. Digital Humanities and the use of special collections: What are these new(ish) crop of humanists doing with special collections materials? Where (and when) do special collections libraries and archives fit into the scholarly process?

- Format suggestions include: 1) one digital humanist introducing the digital humanities and the kinds of projects involved and two library/archives professionals heartily debating the role of special collections in the process, or 2) two/three digital humanists introducing the digital humanities and discussing far reading, text mining, and other projects, along with a knowledgeable moderator. The group preferred the latter format.

- Speakers to be considered include:
  - Matt Kirschenbaum, Associate Professor of English and Associate Director of the Maryland Institute for Technology in the Humanities
  - Dan Cohen, Associate Professor in the Department of History and Art History at George Mason University and the Director of the Roy Rosenzweig Center for History and New Media
  - Bethany Nowviskie, Director of Digital Research & Scholarship at the University of Virginia Library and Associate Director of the Scholarly Communication Institute
  - Andrew Stauffer, *NINES*
  - Ian Bogost, Georgia Institute of Technology, School of Literature Communication and Culture
  - Someone from the Electronic Literature Organization or the Text Creation Partnership
  - Johanna Drucker (speaker and/or moderator)

Plenary Two. Book Futures.

- The history and future of the book as a narrative device. One option is to have two people (such as Neal Stephenson and Michael Suarez) present and then openly discuss the possibilities.

- Speakers to be considered include:
  - Neal Stephenson, science fiction author and explorer of interactive books, both in his writing (*The Diamond Age, or a Young Lady's Illustrated Primer*) and in the collaborative creation of narrative (*The Mongoliad*: http://mongoliad.com/).
  - Michael Suarez, Director of Rare Book School (speaker and/or moderator)
  - Kevin Kelly, *Wired* magazine
  - Ted Nelson, hypertext
  - Bob Stein, if:book
  - Carolyn Kellogg, *LA Times'* Jacket Copy columnist
  - Jennifer Howard, *Chronicle of Higher Ed*

Plenary Three. To be determined.

- While the committee has had some excellent suggestions, it has not yet determined the topic for the third plenary. We want to keep all three plenaries in the realm of big picture.

- Ideas include:
  - Collaborative Collection Development (Jackie Dooley)
  - The future of the humanities and higher education (Susan Allen)
  - Analog futures – the future of paper-based information systems

- o Lewis Lapham on *Lapham's Quarterly* and its use of archival, historical, and contemporary sources to ruminate on a theme (Jessica Pigza): http://laphamsquarterly.org/. (This could fit well into analog futures.)
- o Artists' books and fine press books Jennifer Schaffner and Molly Schwartzburg) (This could also fit into analog futures.)
- o Other speaker ideas include: Brewster Kahle of the Internet Archive (N.B. Kahle spoke to RBMS at a previous preconference), Tony Marx of NYPL, Don Randall of the Mellon Foundation, Steve Koblick of the Huntington Library, Jaron Lanier (author of *You're Not a Gadget*)
- o Futures past or, the future in the past
- o The potential twenty-year black hole of lost cultural evidence as we struggle to manage emerging digital content (Henry Raine)
- o Sensitivity via cultural heritage sharing (Athena Jackson)
- o What will curation be like in the future?
- o Using special collections materials in new or unusual ways (e.g., *Lapham's Quarterly*'s use of historical sources, video game designers using historical materials, etc.)

Finally, committee members and guests reminded themselves to seek diverse speakers when composing panels.

VII. Marketing and Advertising the Preconference / Fundraising Support (M. Kelly and L. Claassen)

Chair-elect Kelly and LAC are actively considering ways to market the Preconference and LAC has begun fundraising and securing venues for the events.

VIII. Adjournment

The Co-chairs adjourned the meeting, suggesting that a longer timeslot for this meeting would be extremely helpful to planning.

Respectfully submitted,
Athena N. Jackson
LSU Libraries – Special Collections