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BREVE NOTES



Newsletter
Southeast Chapter
Music Library Association

No. 59

April 2000

It's Not All Blues:

Music Collections in the University of Mississippi Music Library

When people think of special music collections at the University of Mississippi, what usually comes to mind is the University's Blues Archive, the only one of its kind located at a public institution. However, thanks to the Department of Archives and Special Collections and the efforts of the current Music Librarian, Edward Komara, the Music Library at the University of Mississippi has acquired some special collections of its own. Two of the more notable collections in the Music Library are the Arthur Kreutz Collection and the William Parks Grant Collection. Arthur Kreutz, a composer and performer, taught at the University of Mississippi from 1952 until his retirement in 1972. William Parks Grant, best known for his Mahler scholarship, was a member of the music department's faculty from 1953 until his retirement in 1973.

At the time Kreutz and Parks Grant, as the latter was known, became members of the university's faculty, enrollment at the University of Mississippi was roughly 2,000 students. The music department was located in Brady Hall, a building that no longer stands, and included at least ten faculty members and instructors. Students could work towards a Bachelor of Music degree with majors in piano, organ,

voice, theory, and public-school music. Graduate degrees were also offered.¹

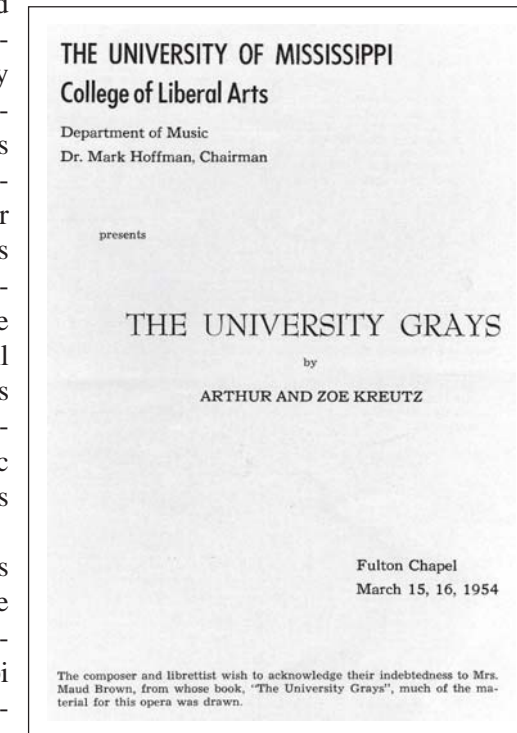
Arthur Kreutz arrived at the University of Mississippi in 1952 as Associate Professor of Violin and Composition.

His teaching duties included all levels of violin lessons, composition, conducting, orchestration and string classes. He was also the conductor for the symphony orchestra.² A year later, William Parks Grant joined the music department faculty as Associate Professor of Music Education. During his first year at the University, Parks Grant was responsible for teaching all of the music education courses the department offered. The next year counterpoint and music history were added to his teaching obligations.³

By the time of Kreutz's appointment to the University faculty, he was already a distinguished composer, conductor, and violinist. Although he received a Bachelor of Science degree in chemical engineering from the University of Wisconsin in 1930, he never pursued a career in this field. When not

working toward the engineering degree, he was touring Europe with jazz bands during the summers, which he continued doing after graduation in 1930. To no one's surprise, he returned to school to study music. In 1933, Kreutz began working on a music degree at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He studied violin and composition with Cecil Burleigh, who taught there from 1921 to 1955. After studying for two years with Burleigh and doing some teaching at the Teachers College at Columbia University in New York, Kreutz received his Master of Arts degree in music educa-

continued on page 12



Contents . . .

From the Chair.....	3
2000 Directory of SEMLA Members.....	7
Member News.....	15
Key to January's Crossword.....	15

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New Members

Lee Orr is Professor of Music and Chair of the History and Literature Area of the School of Music at Georgia State. He works in 19th-century American choral music and recently had his book, *Choral Music in 19th-Century America*, published by Scarecrow Press.

Member News

An NC Tar Heel becomes a GA Peach . . .

Roberta Chodacki began her appointment as Columbus State University's first music librarian on April 3 in the Simon Schwob Memorial Library. She will eventually move from the main library to a branch music library located in Columbus, Georgia's new RiverCenter for the Performing Arts upon completion of the facility (c. late fall/winter). The RiverCenter will house a 2000-seat hall for the Columbus Symphony and touring attractions, a 450-seat recital hall and the magnificent custom mechanical action Jordan Concert Organ (Opus-60 by Orgues Letourneau of Quebec, Canada), an intimate 150-seat studio theater, the downtown home for the Columbus State University Schwob Department of Music, and support facilities for many regional organizations. Roberta came to CSU from East Carolina University where she had served as Music Librarian for eleven years.

Answer key to puzzle appearing in Issue no. 58 (January 2000)

Test your SEMLA knowledge



- | Across | Down |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| 1. 7 1/2 ips | 2. Music distributor |
| 6. 25th-anniversary locale | 3. Swamp woman |
| 8. Current MLA Recording Secretary | 4. SC university |
| 9. SEMLA Member-at-Large | 5. Newly elected SEMLA Member-at-Large |
| 10. Current SEMLA Chair, eh? | 7. Directory of SE Collections compiler |
| 11. MLA Shop item | 13. MLA's E-mail Digest Editor |
| 12. Zava's university | 14. Knoxville's Bayne |
| 17. One of 10 SEMLA states | 15. Lois's horn |
| 18. 2000 SEMLA meeting site | 16. Duke's librarian |
| 19. MLA Members' Publications Editor | 20. Coscarelli's instrument |
| 22. 1998/2000 MLA Member-at-Large | 21. Hymn expert |
| 24. University in Atlanta | 23. Blues expert |
| 26. UNC-Chapel Hill's Pettit | 25. Cataloger's club |
| 27. New Orleans school | |
| 28. 1998 SEMLA Treasurer | |

Chair's Report . . .

continued from page 6

SEMLA members **Diane Pettit** (UNC Chapel Hill), **Sarah Dorsey** (UNC Greensboro), and **Tim Cherubini** (Emory University) have drafted a sample SEMLA brochure that the Board will have reviewed and made comments on by the time you're reading this issue. I want to take this opportunity to thank them again for their fine work on this, which will be an inexpensive and effective way to increase our visibility in Southeastern library and information schools and perhaps also at state and/or regional generalist library meetings. They clearly put more than just a bit of thought and effort into the brochure, and I hope we'll have a finished product to show you all at our . . .

Meeting in New Orleans, LA, October 26-28, 2000!!!

Be there, or be, like, real square, eh? **Member-at-Large Margaret Kaus** is this year's program chair, and co-chairs of local arrangements **Laurie Phillips Gibson** and **Jeannette Cook Thompson** are pulling double duty and serving with Margaret to pull together a wonderful program for us, featuring lots of *très chaud* local music and musicians, music libraries, and FOOD! (Can you tell what my priorities are? Never mind . . .) Our New Orleans colleagues are nationally famous for their hospitality and their unique ability to "*party-down avec joie de vivre et dans le bon genre.*" Y'all come. It will be the library meeting of the year, to say nothing of the social season.

And how about our very own *Breve Notes* Editor, **Jennifer Ottervik** (University of South Carolina)? She was selected from among presenters at recent chapter meetings around the country to be one of three who presented their papers at the very first Best of Chapters session at MLA/Y2K in Louisville. Jennifer's "Jazz in Opera: It Ain't Over 'til the Fat Lady Swings," first presented at our SEMLA meeting in Columbia, SC, in 1997, was reportedly a big hit with the Louisville MLA crowd. We're proud of you, Jennifer! (Well, we were anyway, but this just gives us added incentive.) Jennifer reports that the session was well-attended and all the papers were well-received, which gives one hope that the Best of Chapters session will be something that the MLA Board elects to keep as a permanent part of MLA's annual meeting. And I personally hope that each of you feels willing to serve if asked this year, on SEMLA's chapter-level nominating committee for the session, which will have to begin its work immediately after our NOLA meeting this fall and quickly come up with a name or names to put forward. Why do I hope this? Because Donna Arnold, Chair of the Texas chapter and I are co-chairs of the national Best of Chapters committee this year, that's why. Sit by your phone, and wait for my call. . . .

One last goody: **Dana Jaunzemis** and **Jean Clinton**, co-owners of **Music Library Service Co.** in Wilmington, NC, have generously offered to underwrite our reception at the New Orleans meeting. We welcome **MLSC's** kind support of our activities, and we hope that Dana and Jean will always feel welcome at our meetings. (I'm sending them letters of invitation to join SEMLA formally even as you read this. Call me shameless.) Please be sure and thank Dana and Jean on behalf of SEMLA when you're in touch with them about your A/V approval plans or any other matter.

Have a truly happy Spring 2000. (That's the season, not the semester, though please do have a happy semester too, if that applies to your situation!) We'll have lots of conference and election information for you in the next issue, as well as all those great articles about your libraries and collections that I know you're drafting this very minute for submission to Jennifer Ottervik.

Finis.

¹John Ralston Saul, *The Unconscious Civilization* p. 88-89 (New York: The Free Press, 1997). Other best-selling voices now being raised against the business model applied indiscriminately to all fields of human endeavor, and particularly in higher education, include Peter Sacks in *Standardized Minds: The High Price of America's Testing Culture and What We Can Do to Change It* (Cambridge, Mass.: Perseus Books, 1999).

²I include traditional MARC bibliographic and authority records and their relationships when I say "metadata."

³A couple of years ago, the editors of *Wired* ran an article in which they dismissed traditional library cataloging as being of little value for Internet resources because only one controlled subject term may supposedly be assigned per item--thereby revealing that they didn't even apprehend the basic difference between assignment of a classification-based shelf number to a physical item and assignment of multiple subject terms to an online surrogate for it. Yet this is the sort of "evidence" that administrators are citing as proof that all our existing assumptions about access are now invalid.

From the Chair . . .

Neil Hughes

University of Georgia

Here we are, back home safe, sound, and fresh (?) from Louisville (Luhvul, Loouhvul, Looveyvil, etc.), the lingering high notes of that last shot of Wild Turkey™ still echoing around our tonsils, and it's already time to prepare for another issue of *Breve Notes*. It was great to see so many of you at the interim chapter meeting, to renew old friendships, to make some new acquaintances, and to welcome new members. We proved once again that SEMLA is one of MLA's most active and involved chapters by filling our assigned room at the Hyatt Regency to capacity—do I need to ask for a room with more than forty seats at the Hyatt Grand Central in New York next year? I think so . . . I'll shoot for fifty and hope that **MLA Convention Manager Don**

Roberts doesn't shoot me. (He shouldn't, because it's only when we ask for a lot more than we really need that the MLA Board gets upset with the chapters, and we are a chapter that has routinely put its money where its mouth is.) Thanks to Don for taking care of us so well this year, and thanks to you for showing up and supporting SEMLA the way you did.

Speaking of being active and involved, thank you all so very much for the outpouring of support and affection for soon-to-retire SEMLA stalwart **Karl Van Ausdal** (Appalachian State Univer-

sity). SEMLA raised over \$600.00 in Karl's name that will go to the MLA Fund (formerly the General Endowment) in support of our national organization's growth and continued strength, and our gift will be listed in forthcoming MLA publications as a gift from Karl's chapter as a whole. Please join me in also thanking **Laura Dankner** (Loyola University, for those of you who are really, *really* new to SEMLA and MLA and don't know Laura!) for coming up with this inspired and meaningful way in which to honor Karl. A straw poll at the Louisville meeting indicated to the SEMLA Board that this is something you



Neil congratulates Karl Van Ausdal

would like to do for retirees in the future, too, so consider yourselves all to be part of a new trend. (We may not do the "secrecy" part, which although great fun, was just a *whole lotta* messin' around. But the fund drive looks like it's here to stay.)

It's good to reflect at times like this that the chapters exist primarily to support the national organization. When we funnel our collective strength as a chapter, whether through a fund drive to honor a retiree or through a continuing education program that we take "on the road" in our region, we enhance not

only SEMLA but the national MLA as well. It is a testimony to Karl's career, which affected for great good the lives of countless music lovers (including his colleagues in the Music OCLC Users Group, which he helped found, and MLA) that we raised these funds, and we each hope that whenever Karl's travels bring him close to one of our institutions, home towns, or future SEMLA or MLA meetings, that he will stop in and (as we say in Georgia) say, "Hey!" My wife Marty and I have a spare room for you in Athens, Karl, as long as you don't mind sharing it with a very large, stuffed Mickey Mouse™ that Marty has had since she was eight. (Actually he can go sleep on the piano bench. Mickey, not Karl.)

The April "From the Chair" column is normally a bit of a hiatus for the SEMLA Chair. This is primarily the Directory issue, and the business resulting from our interim meeting at the national MLA, wherever that may have been in a given year, is generally left to the Board and a handful of other chapter individuals to pursue between now and the annual fall meeting, when the elections are also held. But I'm feeling feisty, and since what has my dander up are some current trends in higher education and their effects on libraries, I'm going to share some of my thoughts on those trends with you now.

Everywhere one turns these days, from management classes in graduate schools of library and information studies to Web pages produced by various campus agencies around the country, one reads not only articles but actual policy documents with titles like

continued on next page

Chair's Report . . .

continued from previous page

"Customer Service in Higher Education: Fostering a Student-Centered Campus." (That one's from a Web page published by the University Management Association (UMA) at the University of Oregon.) These articles and policy documents all say things like:

Our goals are to:

1. Increase the awareness that customer service is an important part of every job on campus;
2. Provide a mechanism for institutionalizing the importance and value of customer service in campus departments;
3. Consider concrete ideas for assessing and improving our service.

(The preceding is also from the U. of Oregon/UMA page cited above, which may be found at: <http://darkwing.uoregon.edu/~oaa/workshop.html>.)

All very lofty-sounding goals, but I have two questions about their current adoption at so many institutions. The first is: how is this different from anything we have been doing all along? And the second is: what is really driving this sudden interest in what seems very much to be a business-oriented view of the whole notion of "serving" the students, faculty and public on our campuses?

There may be a single answer to both questions, but let's begin at the beginning: how is this *substantially* different from anything we are already and have been doing? And why is there seemingly a corollary assumption, nationwide, that some sort of failure in public

service or in meeting our educational and research missions has taken place that suddenly cries out for redress by us ne'er-do-well public servants? (Note that I called us public servants, a name that fifty years ago carried the noblest connotations as its only baggage, rather than "bureaucrats," a term borrowed from Soviet-era political rhetoric that has unfortunately become synonymous with "public servants.")

The answer to my initial question lies partly in the transcribed texts of legislative debates, particularly at the state level, over funding for higher education. Colleges and universities have reacted to the finger-pointing found therein (and I admit that not all of it is unfounded) by undertaking self-studies which take as their basic premise that failure has already taken place, or that the need for self-effacing groveling, as if failure has taken place, is the only acceptable *Realpolitik*:

Rising skepticism toward many types of U.S. institutions has not exempted higher education, even though polling, enrollments and economic indicators show sustained, broad support for colleges and universities. This paradox deserves further examination to guide educators and others in providing proper systems of accountability. (Gregory Fusco, vice president for government relations and community affairs, Columbia University, quoted in *Columbia University Record*, vol. 20, no. 22 (March 31, 1995))

At about this same time (the early-to-mid 1990s), state funding for public institutions of higher learning began to decrease and it is now in a nose-dive from which it appears it will not soon recover, despite many states having record budget surpluses. Institutions began turning to corporations and private donors for greater and greater percentages of funding, and, concurrent with that, one began to hear the mantra "customer service" repeated over and over again in the academy's hallways, as if the new sources of funding were already beginning to try to change the culture of the modern university into one that matches that of the nation's boardrooms and corporate headquarters. "And what real public good could come of that," one might reasonably ask? But the idea of the public good is not necessarily a concern of many of these new sources of funding. The following is a quotation from philosopher John Ralston Saul, writing in 1997:

The concept of arm's length is evaporating. Government services are slipping into private hands. And [governments are] adopting private industry standards and methods . . . Now listen to the first three aims of the corporatist movement in Germany, Italy, and France during the 1920s. These were developed by the people who went on to become part of the Fascist experience: 1. shift power directly to economic and social interest groups; 2. push entrepreneurial initiative in areas nor-

Parks Grant's personal papers is correspondence with, among others, Harold Meek, William Grant Still, Howard Hanson, and Ruth Watanabe.

Unfortunately, Grant returned the photocopies of the Mahler scores he worked with as he was editing, so there are no copies of Mahler manuscripts in the collection. However, unlike the Kreutz collection, the Parks Grant collection contains both manuscripts and copies of all of his musical compositions as well as many of the published and unpublished articles, lectures and research projects he devoted himself to during his career.

In a paper that he presented at the AMS Southern Meeting held at the University of Alabama at Birmingham in February 1999, Edward Komara addresses the issue of why the materials in the Parks Grant collection can be useful to Mahler researchers. He writes that the collection and its contents can "with its secondary sources, pose questions on the nature of pre-WW2 research in America; describe the role of college record clubs in promoting Mahler and other composers; perhaps suggest new factors in the public warming to Mahler's music in the 1950s; and document the processes behind the Mahler Society editions."

Upon his death, the collection was willed to the University of Mississippi and placed in the library's Department of Archives and Special Collections. It was housed there until it was transferred to the Music Library Branch of the University Libraries in 1995.

As the Arthur Kreutz Collection and the William Parks Grant Collection were being transferred, inventories of the collections were compiled. The resulting catalogues:

Arthur Kreutz: A Classified List of Works (Preliminary version) by Edward Komara and Lynda McNeill (Music Library and Blues Archive, University of Mississippi, May 1996) and *William Parks Grant: A Catalogue of His Works* by Edward Komara and Lynda McNeill (Music Library and Blues Archive, University of Mississippi, February 1997), are available to visitors to the Music Library.

The Music Library at the University of Mississippi is open Monday - Friday from 7:30 a.m. to 9:00 p.m., on Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., and on Sunday from 1:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. Materials in the Arthur Kreutz Collection and the William Parks Grant Collection are part of the Music Library's Archival Collections and are available for study and research during the normal weekday hours or on weekends by appointment.



¹Bulletin of the University of Mississippi: Announcements 1953-1954; General Catalog Issue 1952-1953 (University, MS: University of Mississippi, May 1, 1953) Series LI, Number 7.

²Ibid.

³Bulletin of the University of Mississippi: Announcements 1954-1955; General Catalog Issue 1953-1954 (University, MS: University of Mississippi, March 1, 1954).

⁴David Ewen, "Arthur Kreutz," in *American Composers: A Biographical Dictionary*. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1982.

⁵Edward Komara. "Mahler Materials in the William Parks Grant Collection: A Report for Musicologists," paper presented at the AMS Southern meeting, University of Alabama at Birmingham, February 1999.

Lynda Aldana
Assistant Professor and Catalog/Preservation Librarian
University of Mississippi

University of Mississippi Music Collections . . .

continued from page 1

tion from Columbia in 1940.

As a composer, Arthur Kreutz wrote music for many different media, and jazz was a dominating influence. In David Ewen's entry for Arthur Kreutz in *American Composers: A Biographical Dictionary*, Kreutz is quoted as saying, "My compositions proceed from early experience in jazz and serious music. It is difficult to find or create a new emotional area in music, but jazz offers this opportunity. . . . It seemed to me the only really new mood that has happened to music in the last century." His *Dixieland Concerto* (1949), *Quartet Venuti* (1954), *Jazzonata no. 1* (1961), and *Sinfonia Violin Concerto* are among his most famous jazz-oriented works.⁴

Kreutz won many regional and national awards for his compositions and violin performance. Perhaps the most notable honor was the Prix de Rome he received in 1940 for two of his compositions: *Paul Bunyan*, an orchestral dance poem composed in 1939, and *Music for Symphony Orchestra*, composed in 1940.

In 1954, the chancellor of the University of Mississippi, John D. Williams, commissioned Kreutz to write an opera. He composed *University Greys*, a two-act opera adapted from Maud Morrow Brown's account of the University Greys, the company of soldiers from the University of Mississippi who fought in the Civil War. Most of the young university students who fought with the University Greys were killed in action. Zoë Lund Schiller, a novelist and librettist whom Arthur Kreutz married in 1950 and who frequently served as librettist for his operatic works, wrote the libretto for the *University Greys*. The opera premiered on March 15, 1954, and the first telecast was by the Memphis television station WMCTV on May 8, 1954. Unfortunately, the University's collection does not include a manuscript of this work or of many of his more famous works, and the present location of them is still pending.⁵

During his lifetime, Kreutz had the opportunity to work with many talented musicians, orchestras, and conductors. This is reflected in the collection by the numerous personal papers and memorabilia. The catalog of compositions that Arthur Kreutz kept is also part of the collection and was an integral part in processing the materials. The papers, programs and photographs that are found in the collection reflect how active Kreutz was as a member of the university community and as a composer and conductor. There are several programs with Arthur Kreutz conducting compositions of William Parks Grant, his colleague at the University of Mississippi.

Before his death in Oxford, MS, in 1991, Arthur

Kreutz placed many of his manuscripts, papers, and catalog of compositions with the Department of Archives and Special Collections at the University of Mississippi. In 1995, while extensive renovations were being done to J.D. Williams Library, where Special Collections is located, the materials were transferred, along with the William Parks Grant Collection, to the Music Library branch at the University of Mississippi.

William Parks Grant was a composer, scholar and music educator. He was born in 1910 in Columbus, Ohio. He received his terminal degree from the Eastman School of Music in 1948. His teachers at Eastman included Howard Hanson and Harold Gleason. By the time Parks Grant arrived at the University of Mississippi as a faculty member in music education, he was already a prolific composer. Also, he had just authored his book, *Music for Elementary Teachers*, which was a major contribution to the field of music education. During his tenure at the University, Grant had less and less time to devote to composing, as more of his time was increasingly taken by his Mahler scholarship.

In 1964, Parks Grant began his work as editor of Mahler's Symphony no. 9. He was in Vienna from 1965-1966 where he corrected over 250 errors in Mahler's Ninth Symphony. Additionally, he worked on Mahler's Second, Third, and Eighth Symphonies. With funding provided by Leonard Bernstein in 1970, Parks Grant was able to later work on the Third Symphony. Due to the growing public interest in the 1950s and 60s in Mahler's music, Grant wrote much about his research on Mahler, especially in articles for the Bruckner Society journal, *Chord and Discord*.

As with Kreutz, Parks Grant wrote for many different media. Fortunately, while there are lacunae in the Arthur Kreutz Collection, the William Parks Grant Collection presented fewer problems. Also, when Grant's dues expired in 1996, the American Composers Alliance sent what it had, which filled in many of the remaining gaps in the collection.

Parks Grant kept very detailed records of his compositions. Edward Komara, the Music Librarian at the University of Mississippi, has noted that Parks Grant used three different numbering schemes during his life. He began his final opera scheme in 1943 and used it until his death in 1988. This scheme does not include many of his juvenilia, which are also preserved among his manuscripts.

The William Parks Grant Collection contains many of his papers, both published and unpublished on a variety of topics, including those on Mahler and music education. Also, thanks to Ohio State University, the collection now includes a photocopy of his thesis, which was one of his earliest writings on Mahler and a pioneering work in its own right. The collection also contains many programs and photographs. Among

mally reserved for public bodies; 3. obliterate the boundaries between public and private interest—that is, challenge the idea of the public interest. (*Traute Rafalski*) This sounds like the official program of most contemporary Western governments [today].¹

O.K., so I may be paranoid—alarmist, even—to think that this fashionable, jingoistic push for "customer service" orientation in which we find ourselves is a symptom of something so insidious as a deliberate assault on public institutions and the idea of the public good in general. Saul's wonderful book does give one pause, though. And I don't think it hurts for us to be just the slightest bit vigilant, which brings us closer to the answer to my second question above, and that is, what's really driving all this?

Item: I heard not long ago that one president of a Southern university requested the campus police to be more tolerant of underage drinking and violations of the surrounding municipality's open-container laws, especially on home football game days, because the entire faculty and staff of that school supposedly need to think of the violators in question more as customers—in other

words, more as potential well-heeled alumni donors and as the current progeny of same—than as young adults who are still in need of some reminders of, if not actual guidance regarding their responsibilities toward the greater society of which they are mere (and I do not use the adjective loosely) cells or components. This is an especially egregious example of the misapplication of "customer service" concepts at the institutional level.

Which brings me to "customer service" as it has infested our libraries. However well-intentioned and even in many cases properly implemented this notion may have been at the campus or umbrella-institution level in recent times, it has certainly suffered a lot in the translation by the time it has fallen to our libraries and their administrations. I find myself picking up a recent *American Libraries* and reading (and here I paraphrase from memory), "We should probably be thinking about giving up library catalogs as we now know them, because *our customers tell us* that existing search protocols and index structures are too complex, and because *our customers tell us* that they are familiar with searching AltaVista, Lycos, amazon.com, etc., and so that's how we should be designing our catalogs."

The word that bothers me the most in that entire assertion is the conjunction "because." Nothing could be less clear to me. I know, from holding

an advanced professional degree and from years of experience, that bibliographic information is extremely complex. (Just take a gander at Sherry Vellucci's and Richard Smiraglia's recent writings on the nature of bibliographic relationships and "works," if you'd like to touch the tip of this particular proverbial iceberg. In a recent e-mail discussion of this issue with two colleagues from UCLA, I proposed a new bumper sticker for librarians: **COMPLEXITY HAPPENS.**) I know too that as the information universe expands, ever-more-and-better technology holds out little hope for the non-mediated search by the novice or even moderately-experienced patron, in terms of reducing said complexity, which is inherent to the information sought (especially on the Internet) and which cannot be wished away. I know that complex information retrieval systems built around broad, deep, and precision-oriented index structures are required in order to do even *partially* exhaustive searches—even known-item searches—for information in medium-sized libraries. I know that staff trained in the intricacies of both the metadata² structure and the search protocols will always need to be on hand to assist library users—"customers"—in the use of systems designed to retrieve this information with any degree of accuracy and completeness.

But now that the library comprises so much more than just those

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Chair's Report . . .*continued from previous page*

buildings housing traditional library materials on my own campus, I'm supposed to assume that the "customer" has a better idea how to find this stuff *or how to design proper systems to find it* than I do?

I don't think so, folks.

In fact, the idea that the customer knows better than I do is just about the dumbest recurring assertion I've read in any professional literature in recent memory. I find it embarrassing, and I invite you all to think about publishing articles in refereed journals to rebut *and* refute this assertion, which cynicism leads me to believe may be part of an agenda with no higher motives than to curry favor with administrations and their corporate masters, none of whom wants to hear that we need more (and more highly paid and trained) staff in our libraries.

We must do better than that. Our administrations must lobby to restore lost positions and create new positions, so that we can enforce existing standards through vendors so that they will in turn design bibliographic information systems that actually work. We can teach our students, faculty, and public (I will not stoop to insulting them further with the use of the inappropriate epithet "customers") to use such systems to better their lives, even though such systems will never consist of a touch screen or clickable link that reads, "HERE'S WHAT *YOU* WANT, JANE/JOHN Q. DOE!" We have been trained to do this. It's not easy, but then no one ever said it would be (or at least no one with a lick of sense or awareness of the issues ever said it would be). We must not permit external interests and those who advocate blanket application of business principles to all services to dictate to us how our professional responsibilities are to be managed, especially when their in-

formation about issues like "bringing order to the Web" often comes from newspaper articles or the wild punditry of *Wired* magazine³ and its philosophical soul mate, *Fast Company*.

I could cite many more such current examples of the badly-applied business model in libraries; the one I chose here is just one that has personal resonance because I am a cataloger. I have always been, and will always be, service oriented. I didn't go into librarianship to become rich. I did it because I wanted to use my knowledge of music to help people, and I saw that librarianship offered a richly rewarding path to that goal. And I'll make this assertion: I have a heck of a lot better idea of how to organize, access, preserve and disseminate what my library's users are looking for (information) than they do, and that's no slight to them. So if I don't act on that knowledge, I can hardly be customer-service oriented, now, can I?

So there's the rub: we have allowed a drive to for-profit oriented models of service to enter an arena where a very different, and generally more deliberative process (if not the end result itself) ought to be what we all seek. Not only that, but we have allowed the idea of customer service to become twisted into a parody of itself based on a loose concatenation of untested precepts: "The customers know exactly what they want, and so when they tell us what they want, we should redirect all our efforts into trying to realize that. We may never assume that they are not fully informed about the true nature of the task at hand or its enormous complexity, and we may certainly never assume that they are actually misguided or misinformed; we must just scramble around demonstrating in a high-profile manner (so that our donors notice) that when the customers say 'Jump!' we immediately cower and ask 'How high?'"

By doing this, we show that we are responsive to their *feelings* (which may or may not have any direct correlation to their actual needs for information)."

Our patrons deserve better from us, and far too many library administrations nationwide should be ashamed for having succumbed to pressures to adopt such strategies without developing proper, concomitant tactics, of which I have personally seen few. Please give serious thought to publishing rebuttals to all such nonsense, which clutters our days with stress and does great harm to our educational and service—*real* service—missions.

Enough from the April soapbox. Next issue will find a return to the nuts-&-bolts of SEMLA operations, which will no doubt be a relief to at least some of you. A few business items now, before I close:

SEMLA Board **Member-at-Large Anna Neal** has formed a nominating committee for our fall election, consisting of herself as chair, **Joyce Clinkscales** (Emory University) and **Nancy Zovac** (University of Miami). They will be drawing up a slate of candidates for our fall elections for the positions of Vice Chair/Chair-Elect and Member-at-Large. Please give careful consideration to serving if they approach you and ask you to run. They won't do so lightly and they'll already have considered carefully your qualifications before they contact you, so when they do, the ball will truly be in your court! Serving SEMLA is one of the most pleasurable experiences I've had as a music librarian, and I've done it as a Member-at-Large, as a member of a local arrangements committee, as chair of a cataloging interest group, and now as Chair. It really doesn't take a whole lot of time—especially if you don't write columns about customer service. I recommend it highly.

continued on page 14

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