



ART LIBRARIES SOCIETY OF NORTH AMERICA

**35<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference**  
**Sheraton Colony Square, Atlanta, Georgia, April 26-May 1**

**Session 1: Backpack to Briefcase: Life after Library School**

**Friday, April 27, 2007**

**Ansley Room, Sheraton Colonial Park Hotel**

**Atlanta, GA**

**Moderator:** Sarah Carter, Circulation Supervisor, Indiana University Fine Arts Library

**Speakers:**

Alessia Zanin-Yost, Reference Librarian/Liaison to the Visual & Performing Arts, Western Carolina University

Kristen Mastel, Reference Librarian, MINITEX

Heather Ball, Head, Art & Architecture Library, Virginia Tech University [unable to attend]

Leslie Kott Wakeford, Catalog & Reference Librarian, Art Institute of Chicago

Tony White, Art & Architecture Librarian, Assistant Professor, Pratt Institute

**Recorder:** Cheryl Hill, Catalog & Reference Librarian, Ryerson and Burnham Libraries, The Art Institute of Chicago

**Summary:**

The moderator introduced the session saying this session was born from the conference last year at Banff, and envisioned something that would help students and new professionals jumpstart their role in ARLIS.

**Making the Most of Library School**

**Alessia Zanin-Yost, Reference Librarian, Western Carolina University**

How to prepare for Art Librarianship while still in school

1. Talk to students about their classes
2. Talk to instructors about how they got to where they are
3. If you don't have an internship or library job, try and befriend someone who does, or form a sort of informal partnership. Ask them questions about the reality of their job, and find out why they are in library school.

4. Take classes to help you decide your career path, if you think you might like cataloging take a class in that to find out.
5. Try and get an internship or volunteer in some area of Art.
6. Try and see if you can attend faculty or other meetings.
7. While working on you MLS join a professional organization: Join local chapters (most have student discounts including ARLIS).
8. Join listservs for jobs, and match your experience against job requirements.
9. Try to find a Mentor
10. Stay informed in both librarianship and the Art world.
11. If you write any papers for class do so with the idea that you will publish them one day.
12. Write letters to the editor, for example if you read something in ALA that you don't like writing a letter to help get your name and voice out there.
13. Don't be afraid to ask questions on listservs to help get you active.

### **Finding the Hidden Job Market**

#### **Kristen Mastel, Reference Librarian MINITEX**

If you are willing to move you should be able to find an Art Librarian position, but what if you aren't willing to move, what if you are geographically bound?

There are the traditional places to look for an Art librarian position. Discussion groups, ARLIS Jobnet, where only 6 non-traditional jobs were recently found. And this might lead one to seek out the hidden job market.

You need to consider your career plan: Are you willing to relocate? Work nights/weekends? Willing to travel? Enjoy risk or stability? Direct contact with the public? What do I want to accomplish in the next 10 years? What skills do I need to gain?

Also don't let jobs that say grant funded deter you, it is important to discuss these things with your employers.

Is the Hidden Job Market for You?

There are many types of employers on the Hidden job market.

1. Career colleges. You will use your skills in new ways, and will probably be a solo librarian wearing many hats, and will probably depend on a local network.
2. Commercial industry. These jobs often have deceptive names like "Digital assistant coordinator" which really means you are in charge of their photo collection.
3. Consortium. Will do reference work, for Example Kristen does Reference work in many areas, including Art for the state of Minnesota, but the level of the questions tend to be more difficult as questions are funneled up after going through others. And she is able to do some Collection development.
4. Independent consultant. Larger libraries or consortiums will hire an Independent consultant for some types of research.

5. Media specialist. Will have a lot of Art requirements, and you will get a lot of collection development experience.
6. Public libraries. Some have an Art or Humanities Liaison.
7. Vendors. ARTstor and other vendors often need librarians.

A lot depends on where you live, but where do you go to look for these jobs?

1. LISJOBS.com is great place as it allows you search by state and keyword.
2. Local papers.
3. Monster.com, but be careful of how you search as certain words will pop up hundreds of useless results, try librarian instead of library.
4. SLA website, especially the student chapter or the state chapter if you are restricted by state.

### **Integrating Theory into Practice**

**Heather Ball, Head, Art & Architecture Library, Virginia Tech University**

Sarah Carter announced that Heather Ball could not attend ARLIS this year. She did send a part of her presentation to Sarah to read to the group.

Heather Ball's paper begins by defining theory as explanations that attempt to explain relationships among various phenomena allowing for inferences and deductions. It is beneficial to library scientist because it gives the field more weight, respect, and professionalism. Disciplines that create their own theory are considered more scholarly than those who simply borrow other theories or use none at all.

Librarianship is a practitioner-oriented field and there are plenty of reports on projects, but only a small amount of Library science articles use theory. It is important to incorporate theory into Library Science research. Theory provides a framework for successful programs. Theory can be applied to the day-to-day practices of library scientist. Theory can provide better and crucial understanding of phenomena. It can strengthen an argument, and theory can provide consistency. One publication that discusses information theory into practice is the publication Theories of Information Behavior.

When beginning a research project you will need to determine if the research will be exploratory, descriptive or explanatory. You have to ask what is the purpose of your research project and ask why something is the way it is. There are also several things to consider including the length of time this research will cover, and finally what methods will you use to gather your research quantitative experimental or statistic work or qualitative field research or interviews.

For more information or questions please contact Heather Ball.

## **Professional development**

**Leslie Wakeford, Catalog & Reference Librarian, Art Institute of Chicago**

What does professional development mean, and how to demystify and help one advance.

1. Professional Development (PD) is about choice, building on knowledge you are have, and gaining new skills.
2. Blending PD with your job is important, but remember to also blend it with what is interesting to you, pick something that is exciting to you. Blending it with you job in this manner will allow you to bring more to your current position and make yourself useful and indispensable.

How do you gain PD experience?

1. Workplace. Take informal interest and develop them into more formal ones. Join committees to help you gain experience and ideas. Think about how other areas impact your work.
2. Local. Join local chapters, join a local chapter alumni group. Consider joining a statewide organization. Take some classes to help you. Don't forget regional areas as well.
3. National. Join larger organizations that help you bring together different viewpoints. Try and find a mentor in one of these programs, especially in librarianship to help you bounce ideas off of.

How do you get started?

1. Don't be shy, select interests that you will want to explore.
2. Join Committees. Committees are great way to get people to know your name, and for you to learn what others are working on, and this will help you come up with ideas.
3. Tailor your professional development with both you current possible future goals.
4. Strike a balance wit the your individual interests and the interests of your institution
5. Be Open Minded.

## **Promotion and Tenure**

**Tony White, Art and Architecture Librarian, Asst. Professor, Pratt Institute**

The newly employed are being judged by their peers and need to remember a few things.

1. Promotion and Tenure (P&T) varies greatly from one institution to another.
2. Even though every institution is different, the same bad habits apply to all.
3. Remember ARLIS (and most) organizations are small; your mistakes might follow you.

To help with the daunting promotion and tenure procedure there are a few things to help you succeed.

1. Remember the terminology is different depending on institution. Ask questions about the terminology of your position, tenure, reappointment, etc.
2. Before the interview. Read all the information that is sent to you, if the institution hasn't sent you anything about P&T, Ask.
3. Be sure to understand the role HR will play in your P&T and ask questions about special circumstances, 2<sup>nd</sup> master degree requirements, etc.
4. Ask faculty questions about P&T in informal setting to help gain perspective.

Once you are in the preparation and planning part of your position there are many things to remember to help you succeed.

1. Find a mentor. Some institutions will assign them, some won't. If you are on your own find someone from outside your institution to help you.
2. Save all documentation. Save everything, letters from staff and students whom you've helped, save conference attendance information, publications, and symposia. Have a P&T folder and place everything in there because in a year when you have to write your report you won't remember every letter etc.
3. Pace yourself. Focus 1<sup>st</sup> on your job requirements, then move on. Always try and strike a balance with involvement and your position.
4. Read successful P&T dossiers. Ask others what they have done and try and read other's dossier packets.
5. Stay positive. There is going to be criticism and comments. You will be analyzed on everything, and it will be stressful. But it will end.

Question and Answer section:

- You don't need a second masters often to get a job, but if you are being hired into a position that requires one it can be very difficult to get a second masters while working toward Tenure.
- Journaling may help some people keep track of what you've done all year. How you keep track doesn't matter as long as you have something to help you document your involvement. Even if you are not up for tenure, and simple promotion documenting what you do can help prove the importance of your position to superiors.
- Some institutions expect you to publish early on, but it all depends on the institution. Seek out others with publishing experience, and look at places you want to be one day and look at their requirements.
- ARLISNAP has a blog where much of these topics will continue to be discussed. Please take a look at it.