Maria Oldal, Head of Cataloging and Database Maintenance at the Morgan Library & Museum gave a presentation about the latest developments in applying Cataloging Cultural Objects (CCO) in the MARC format. CCO became available in the summer 2006. Its main audience is the visual resources community, but it can be used by museum professionals and librarians as well. A show of hands in the audience indicated that many ARLIS members have access to the printed version at their institutions, and one of them even used it to enhance descriptions of prints and photographs. Ms. Oldal has been experimenting with formulating MARC records according to CCO principles in the Morgan Library & Museum’s online catalog, CORSAIR. A code in the 040$e field can indicate that CCO was used as a description convention (the MARC code is “cco”). While not a perfect fit, CCO proved to be more suitable for the identification and physical description of cultural objects, artworks, and non-published realia than library cataloging rules that focus primarily on text-based and printed materials. However, she found that CCO records in MARC fit best in the library catalog when access points were formulated according to AACR2. She suggested that special collections with more varied holdings of objects and ephemera might especially benefit from incorporating CCO principles in their cataloging. The application of CCO in MARC has been a topic of numerous conference presentations, among others ARLIS (2005, 2007), ALA (2005, 2006), and IFLA (2008). The special issue of the VRA Bulletin devoted to CCO (v. 34, no. 1, Spring 2007) includes an article on CCO and MARC by Elizabeth O’Keefe of the Morgan Library & Museum. The upcoming Encyclopedia of Library and Information Sciences will include an article on CCO written by Elizabeth O’Keefe and Maria Oldal. As word spreads about CCO, Ms. Oldal has received several inquiries in the past years about turning to CCO for guidance in object descriptions. To supplement the printed version, the Visual Resources Association maintains a website called CCO Commons (http://vrafoundation.org/ccoweb/index.htm) devoted to CCO. The site, which is available to non-VRA members, includes a section containing examples. While respecting the fact that CCO is format independent, Ms. Oldal would like to contribute examples of MARC records applying CCO, since these would be most helpful to librarians. The Morgan Library & Museum has several examples in its online catalog, CORSAIR, coded cco in the 040 field. A simple keyword search for cco produces a list. However, it would be best to collect a wider variety of examples from various sources to illustrate the applicability of CCO in library catalogs. She has been working with a
couple of institutions on generating a set of example records, and she encouraged audience members to volunteer to work on this project. The CCO MARC records in CORSAIR were loaded into OCLC WorldCat in November 2008. While the Institution Records remained intact, Ms. Oldal was surprised to find that the Master Records lost their cco code in the 040 field, and they were downgraded from full to less-than-full level. WorldCat on the web (http://www.worldcat.org) provides instant access to these object records. Unfortunately, the default display labels, such as ‘Author’ and ‘Publisher,’ do not serve object records well. Also, visual material records currently do not display the main entry, only added entries, a bug that was reported to OCLC in January 2009. Despite all these issues, CCO records in WorldCat provide an unprecedented exposure of an institution’s holdings of objects, artworks, and realia. As the community continues adding CCO MARC records to WorldCat, OCLC will have more examples to work with when finetuning their display and retrieval on the web.