Welcome & thank you for attending Survival Techniques for Art Librarians at Public Libraries. I am Alyssa Resnick the current chair of the Public Librarians Special Interest Group and the moderator & a speaker of this session.

The idea for this session was developed from a discussion at the Boston conference during the Public Librarians Special Interest Group meeting. During the meeting we went around the table and talked about the problems we are facing in our public libraries. It became clear that as libraries of all types and sizes are facing budget cuts and diminishing staff that each of us need to make decisions about our future as art librarians. One of the attendees commented that one option is to oppose the changes we are being asked to make, or adapt to our new environment. And then the idea of presenting “survival techniques” for public librarians to adapt to our new environment was discussed as a possible topic for the Minneapolis conference.

A few of the librarians who were at the Boston meeting and excited to participate in a session as speakers were not able to attend the Minneapolis conference as they had expected and their reasons are reflective of some items I will be presenting later. One could not attend because in addition to being the head of the art department she also acts as a curator of prints and had to organize and attend a fundraising function this weekend. Two other possible speakers had their funding eliminated and they decided not to attend without institutional support. Because these librarians could not attend I included myself as a speaker and looked for an additional speaker to step up. Luckily my colleague Cathy Billings said she would be a back-up if anyone dropped out so we worked together to develop a survey that would help us with our presentations.

I will first briefly introduce you to myself and my presentation and introduce each speaker before their talk. We will wait until the end for questions and if we end early we can open it up for a general discussion since the Public Librarians SIG is not scheduled to meet separately.

For just over a year I have been the Development, Technology & Collection Services Administrator for the Glendale Public Library. Prior to this I was the Senior Library Supervisor for the Brand Library & Art Center – the art & music branch of the Glendale Public Library. I have also worked as an assistant art librarian for a small university, a library salesperson for audiovisual media, a project manager for a retrospective conversion vendor and I began my career at the Getty Research Institute in the acquisitions department. My presentation, entitled Public Library Subject Specialists Survey: Trends & Overview will analyze the survey conducted, discuss general trends about what is impacting libraries and how jobs are changing based on the survey responses with some discussion of digital projects.

Cathy Billings is the art librarian and gallery manager at the Brand Library & Art Center. Prior to working at the Brand Library she was manager of a large scale information systems project at the University of Washington and the Director of Administration at the Mercantile Library of New York in New York City. She currently serves on the finance committee of ARLIS/NA and is the treasurer for the ARLIS Southern California Chapter. Cathy’s presentation, Indispensable: How to Buck the Generalization Trend and Keep doing What You Love, will discuss the importance of having users who will advocate for you and your department in times of tight budgets, as well as the need to make yourself indispensable by putting your unique librarian skills to use for the benefit of other departments within the library. Examples of ways to cultivate users through innovative services and collections and of ways to assist your colleagues in service of the broader public library mission will be given. Examples include outreach to special populations/embedded librarians, aesthetics: publications & graphic design work for print and web, displays and exhibitions, and unique collections.

The final speaker, Mary Stark, is a former colleague of mine at Brand Library and we also had the opportunity to work together during our time at UCLA in library school. Mary is now Fine Arts Librarian at Beverly Hills Public Library. Her book, The Professional A.C.T.—Acting, Communication, Technique, is published by Metamorphous Press. Mary created a one-woman-show, White Ashes: The Life and Writing of Harriet Beecher Stowe, which she performed at the National Portrait Gallery and the National Museum of American History of the Smithsonian Institute, and at the Beecher Family Reunion. Mary’s presentation, Beverly Hills Public Library’s Art Research Library: The Writing on the Wall, will introduce you to the Beverly Hills Public Library and the changes that have incurred at the library in general, changes to the Art Reference Library, and changes to her job since she has been working there. She will provide statistics, budgets, and organizational charts that reflect the changes of the library in general. She will also describe her efforts to add value to the art collection and attempts to ensure the longevity of the art library.
To prepare for this portion of the session, Cathy Billings and I created a survey for Public Library subject specialists that asked questions about whether they are an official specialist, what new duties they have been assigned or are assuming, their efforts to market their specialized collection, and if they have participated in digitization projects. My presentation will focus on a review of most of these questions. Other than basic information about the respondent we asked about 10 open-ended questions. We received a total of 60 completed surveys and those are the ones being used in today’s presentations. Thank you to everyone who took the time to complete the survey and encouraged colleagues to do the same.

We sent the survey announcement to ARLIS-L, the ARLIS-CA chapters listserv, the MLA listserv, and a listserv for CA libraries. We intentionally tried to get more respondents from CA since the session speakers are all from CA and we are all sharing the same economic challenges because of the state’s debt. In fact 72% of respondents are from CA and we received multiple responses from Illinois, New York, Ohio, and Pennsylvania. We also opened the survey to specialists other than art since we knew that would broaden our pool of respondents and most subject specialists in public libraries are facing the same challenges.
42% respondents answered Yes to “Are you “officially” a subject specialist (i.e., according to your job description or title)?” *(With the results shown on the slide).*
57% of respondents answered NO to “Are you “officially” a subject specialist?” Which means that they fall into the category we defined in the survey as “librarians whose job title or job description does not require or specify subject expertise and are functioning as “unofficial” subject specialists”. For those their subject expertise included …. *(With the results shown on the slide).*
44 respondents answered the question “In your opinion, what are the major trends in libraries/librarianship that are affecting specialized collections and services?” and all of the answers were either reflective of trends from within the library or trends from the public.

Within the area of Library trends the comments could be further categorized into administrators decisions, budgets, service trends, and technology. Within the area of trends from the public the answers could be categorized into perceptions by the public, the needs of the public and technology.

I will describe trends mentioned in each of these areas and some specific comments by the librarians who answered the survey.
GENERAL TRENDS ABOUT WHAT IS IMPACTING PUBLIC LIBRARIES

- Library Trends
  - Administrators’ decisions
    - Generalization - Single, centralized reference services point
    - Consolidation of services
    - Review of Collections/ Weeding /
  - Budgets
    - Reduced hours of operation
    - Reduced materials budgets
    - Reduced staffing budgets/vacant positions not being filled

Generalization vs specialization -- Single, centralized reference services point
**General Trends About What Is Impacting Public Libraries**

- **Library Trends (cont’d)**
  - **Service Trends**
    - Youth Services
    - Movies – Game tie-ins
    - Spanish language services or other languages based on community
    - Local collections
  - **Technology**
    - Ebooks
    - Digital Media
    - Online resources

Online resources – make specialized resources available beyond the library’s walls

Technology comments:
“The shift from physical to digital media is creating copyright & cost challenges for library service.”
“Constant obsession with technology, pushing patrons who do not have computers and/or gadgets aside; downplaying the importance of materials for such patrons.”
“Everything is going online! Digitization, downloading and cloud computing are going to be a strong way for libraries to demonstrate their importance.”
“Keeping abreast of what is online and what is still only available in paper is still an issue. Downsizing is making us less effective all around.”
Comments:
“Societal devaluing of knowledge”
“We need to begin marketing our services and find a way to become engrained in the community as an information center.”
“We are in a "keyword" universe: high school/college students and young adults don’t understand the concept of paid content on the web and they don’t understand or care about concepts like indexing and subject classification.”
HOW PUBLIC LIBRARIAN JOBS ARE CHANGING: NEW RESPONSIBILITIES BY ASSIGNMENT

- Circulation
- Clerical
- City Services
- Collection Development
- Collection Maintenance
- Database Maintenance
- Digitizing Collections
- Electronic Collections
- Local History
- Manager in Charge
- Marketing/Publicity
- Mergers
- Preservation
- Programming
- Reference Services
- Social Media
- Strategic Planning
- Technology Support
- Volunteers
- Young Adult & Teen Services

53 respondents answered the question “What duties are you asked to do that you were not asked to do 2-3 years ago?”

Circulation: assist
More Clerical tasks due to loss of staff
Collection Development – in more subject areas, other than specialty, such as music, graphic novels, rental DVDs, young adult, sports some system wide or centralized CD
Collection Maintenance – weeding, lost/missing items clean up, shifting, sorting & shelving – due to layoffs of staff who did this
Database Maintenance
Digitizing – prepare, do the actual scanning
Electronic Collections – eBooks, eAudio, -- doing collection development, collection management
Responsible for Local History Special Collections
Manager in Charge / Duty Officer – in case of emergencies, or when administration staff are unavailable
Marketing/Publicity – sometimes for the whole library system, not just subject area
Mergers – departments, positions (due to retirements, layoffs), including city services such as passports, & some finance items like payroll & requisitions (due to loss of department)
Preservation, in-house binding, repairs
Programming – increased programming responsibilities or new responsibility, including displays, community outreach and readers' advisory
Reference Services
- More general desk shifts
- Shifts on other subject desks
- More shifts
- Roving reference
- Virtual Reference: email, chat, text
Social Media – using Facebook, Twitter, Blogs, creating online content such as training modules, bookmark list, Wiki, podcasts
52 respondents answered the question “What duties have you voluntarily assumed in the past 2-3 years?” – the majority of the responses were very similar to the previous question “What duties are you asked to do that you were not asked to do 2-3 years ago?” The additional duties include …

- Advocacy -- Frontline advocacy; Writing articles about library projects; Present live book reviews to the public; Public speaking about the collection; Writing articles about library projects
- Cataloging -- special collections, "unknown" and hidden collections; while the specialist is still employed and has the expertise needed; Retrospective conversion of a special collection
- Volunteering to be on Committees - Library-wide teams; System wide committee work; Serving on committees about general library trends (e-services, digitization, etc.).
- Conferences - Loss of funds for attendance, paying own way to ARLIS
- Donations - Review donated materials to add titles to collection to supplement lost materials budgets
- Grants -- Grant writing and grant oversight when awarded
- Graphic design & publications -- Cathy will discuss more
- Spanish language programming
- Teach computer classes
- Tutoring
- Website development
- Writing & research assistance to HS students
50% of respondents have been involved in digitization to make special local collections available online
Most respondents described the collections that their library is initiating. Though the survey question was “Please describe this project and the role you played.”

Scanned material, updated guidelines, trained staff & volunteers

I supervised the data entry of image description, using staff and student interns to do the work.

Activating the Archive, which involves organizing, creating a database for, and digitizing the archives. We are also creating at least six new websites based on these materials. My role, as archives manager is to oversee the physical archives, to devise protocols for interaction with and access to the archives by curatorial staff, interns and independent researchers. I have also played a part in the design and the populating of the archive database, training interns, co-ordinating with technical staff. We are an artist run space so I am also our 'librarian'.

Worked with intern on scanning and data entry/migration. Not as great a role as would have been preferred. Planning was done by ITC. Project still in development, hoping for enhancements after review.

Wrote the grant, received grant, directed work of two librarians helping me on a part time basis, attended required trainings, wrote up evaluations. The items will appear on Calisphere this summer and we will have a link from our website. It isn’t yet available.
DIGITIZATION PROJECTS

- LAPL http://digital.lapl.org/
  - Bookplate collection
  - Casey Fashion Plates
  - Fruit Crate Labels
  - Hollywood Movie Posters
  - Menu collection
  - Travel Posters

- NYPL http://digitalgallery.nypl.org/nypldigital/index.cfm
  - Arts & Literature
  - Cities & Buildings
  - Culture & Society
  - History & Geography
  - Industry & Technology
  - Nature & Science
  - Printing & Graphics
In 2005-2006 I participated in the Local History Digital Resources Project. This CA state project is supported by an LSTA (Library Services and Technology Act) grant administered by the California State Library and coordinated by the Califa Library Group. This multi-year project provides a "solution in a box" for public, academic, and specialized libraries seeking to become conversant with developing digital primary resource collections. Each year, a group of institutions awarded the grant, select, scan, and catalogue approximately 200 items for publication through the Online Archive of California, Calisphere, and local websites. The digital assets are also maintained for the long-term in the California Digital Library -managed Digital Preservation Repository.
The Collection of Historic Photographs and Documents Related to Leslie C. Brand depict Brand and his family while he was still living in his home El Miradero, now the Brand Library in Glendale CA. It includes images of the rooms within the mansion, and scenic views of the property. The collection includes photographs and documentation related to Mr. Brand’s funeral, the Brand family cemetery, the Brand Lodge, Brand’s 1921 fly-in party, his airfield and airplanes, his automobiles, and his camp in Mono Lake. The collection also includes photographs of the Brand Library and Park that was created from his home and property deeded to the City of Glendale.
I was the main person who wrote the grant application, attended the required trainings, and administered the project & grant requirements. I selected the 225 items to be scanned, prepared them for shipment, cataloged the items, worked with the digital asset management tool, loaded them to the OAC, wrote the finding aid, and spent the $5000 and wrote & submitted the required reports. The cash award was spent on 2 large bed scanners and accessories and various archival supplies.
Glendale Public Library is applying for this grant again to digitize materials from their Special Collections that depict the growth of Tropico, a city that is now part of Glendale, and the early years of Glendale. We selected this topic because the photographer Edward Weston had a studio in Tropico and many of his photographs were used in promotional materials for the young town. It also represents a unique collection for the city and we think this will appeal to the CA State Library’s desire to have local history documented.

Opportunities like CA’s Local History Digital Resources Project is an example that may appeal to art librarians working in public libraries even if that is not their official role since there would be an opportunity to utilize their knowledge of photographs and other skills and perhaps an opportunity to promote a hidden part of the library’s collection. It is also an opportunity to collaborate with other staff, for example Cathy will be partnering with a reference librarian from the central library to co-manage the 2011-2012 grant if it is awarded. It is also an excellent way to publicize the library and its local history collection to the community, city leaders and other city departments and show that the library has more to offer than books and computers.
Jobs ARE changing,
Services ARE changing
Public needs ARE changing, but
Librarians are lifelong learners

By accepting these changes we utilize our unique skills, we can promote our unique collections, we can accept the changes and challenges as learning opportunities, and expand our knowledge base for future growth as librarians and information professionals.
I adapt well to change and always like to be challenged so that is why I left my position as an art librarian and accepted a promotion to the role as an administrator in order to be an integral part of the service changes and challenges that lie head of us.