

Report on IFLA 2016 in Columbus, Ohio, USA¹

Sally Holterhoff and Marisol Florén

Introduction

Several thousand members of the world library community came together in Columbus, Ohio, in mid-August when the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) held its 82nd World Library and Information Congress (WLIC). Following the theme of *Connections, Collaboration, Community*, delegates from 137 different countries spent six days learning, networking with colleagues, and discussing challenges that affect libraries and the information community around the globe. The conference provided over 200 educational sessions on a wide range of topics, as well as a multitude of sub-group meetings and planning sessions. Preceding the official opening of the conference, a number of satellite meetings were held in various locations throughout the United States and Canada. The location of IFLA's annual Congress rotates among the regions of the world. In 2017, the IFLA WLIC will be held in Wroclaw, Poland, and in 2018, in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Opening Session

On the first day of the conference the delegates gathered in a huge hall of the Ohio Convention Center to enjoy an exuberant ceremony to kick off the conference. After greetings and remarks from Donna Scheeder, IFLA President, and Gerald Leitner, new IFLA Secretary General, the proceedings began, led by Olivier Sedra, basketball announcer for the 2016 championship team, the Cleveland Cavaliers. The theme "*Invention and Innovation*," inspired a full program of skits, music, dance, and pageantry to highlight accomplishments of the host state and country in the fields of science, industry, and information. Included were tributes to Ohio's history as "first in light" (Thomas Edison) and "first in flight" (the Wright brothers), and a video message from Ohio native John Glenn (astronaut and U.S. senator). It was no surprise that this annual extravaganza featuring the accomplishments of the host country ran over its allotted 90-minute time period, but, as always, it was quite a show.

Law Libraries Section & Standing Committee (SC)

Members of the Law Libraries Section experienced a busy and successful conference. The Standing Committee (SC) held two business meetings. During the first of these, Chair Sonia Poulin (Alberta Law Libraries, Canada) and other members of the SC reported on action plan items completed and progress made toward the section's 2015-16 strategic plan. Among the items discussed was the proposed appointment of new

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corresponding members and recognition of committee members whose terms have ended. Sally Holterhoff reported on progress with the *Statement on Government Provision of Public Legal Information in the Digital Age*. An initial draft of the Statement was submitted and endorsed in June by an email vote of the Standing Committee members. It is now being reviewed by IFLA policy-makers. Some further revision will be required before the statement is considered for official approval. The meeting agenda also included a review of upcoming conference highlights, including two programs sponsored by the section and an evening reception for section members and guests, organized by SC member Anne Burnett. Looking ahead to IFLA 2017 in Wroclaw, Poland, SC members discussed ideas for programs to fit the theme, which is “Libraries. Solidarity. Society.” After a preliminary discussion of possible topics and programs, teams were formed to consider each topic and present a draft proposal at the second meeting three days later.

At the second meeting, draft program proposals were presented and three of them were approved. One concerns the impact of law libraries and law library associations on society. Another program is on the topic of classification schemes of legal materials under the title “International approaches to legal classification schemes: solidarity or diversion?” This program would be co-sponsored with the recently re-named IFLA Subject Analysis and Access Section (previously the Classification and Indexing Section) and coordinated by H  l  ne Besnier (Biblioth  que Interuniversitaire Cujas, Paris). A third topic for a proposed program was the role of libraries in times of crisis and turmoil. Discussion of projects for the coming year included recruitment of new members, marketing, and finalizing the section’s strategic plan for 2016-17. The Chair reported that the section is planning a workshop on Promoting Open Access to Law in Africa, to be held Dec. 6-7, 2016, in Uganda, organized by Caroline Ilako (Makarere University Library, Uganda) and Sonia Poulin, with financial support from IFLA, IALL and the William S. Hein & Company. Elected as corresponding members for a two-year term were Bard Tuseth (Norway), Claire Germain (U.S., past Chair of the Standing Committee), and John Barij (Hong Kong).

Law Libraries Section 2016 programs

Bringing the Law to the Library: Connections, Collaboration, and Community in Support of Access to Justice and the Rule of Law

This session was organized and moderated by Yolanda Jones (Florida A&M University College of Law). The panel included eight speakers, whose names and papers can be found on the Law Libraries Section [webpage for the program](#). They came from Nigeria, Croatia, the United States (Michigan and Ohio), Turkey, Australia and Zimbabwe. Each speaker provided information about collaborative efforts among different types of libraries to connect people with legal information, thereby providing access to justice and the rule of law. Professor Brian Anderson (Ohio Northern University) stressed that access to justice is a component of the rule of law. He spoke of experiences he has had working with the court system in Rwanda. In that country he saw that public libraries can

be better entities for providing access to legal information because they offer a better open and welcoming environment to citizens. Another speaker presented examples of successful U.S. community programs, one being the Michigan Legal Help project to assist self-represented civil litigants, created by a Solutions on Self-Help (SOS) Task Force that included librarians. Training was offered to the state's public librarians, so they would be better equipped to assist patrons with legal questions and to use the Michigan Legal Help website. Through the support of the Michigan State Bar Foundation, training programs for public libraries were developed and conducted throughout the state, which brought Michigan law libraries and public libraries together in ways they had never been before. Another example is a cooperative project in Detroit, Michigan, involving Wayne State University Law School's Arthur Neef Law Library, Wayne State law librarians are assisting community patrons in metropolitan Detroit by providing them with self-help legal materials. Another collaborative approach has been developed at the State Library of New South Wales (NSW) in Australia, as explained by speaker Jan Richards (presenting for Phillipa Scarf). The State Library's Legal Information Access Centre (LIAC) in Sydney has collaborated with the Law and Justice Foundation of NSW in a joint initiative. They have developed a five-step-legal information pathway to create simple, plain language, legal information resources, that help to "demystify the law", and make it accessible and understandable to non-lawyers.

Privacy Law in the Digital Age: Governments Rethink the Meaning of Information Access Policies

Roberta I. Shaffer (Law Librarian of Congress) moderated this two-hour session. A panel of three speakers discussed various aspects of privacy law and the effect of information access policies on the public generally and on libraries and library users in particular. Professor Dennis Hirsch (Moritz College of Law, The Ohio State University) pointed out that privacy has political and cultural contexts in different countries. Specifically, he discussed the different cultures of privacy found in Europe and in the United States, with Europe focused on dignity and the U.S. focused on liberty. He also referred to a law review article: James Q. Whitman, *The Two Western Cultures of Privacy: Dignity Versus Liberty*, 113 Yale L.J. 1151 (2004). In the countries of Europe, privacy is related to the dignity of the person, reputation and honor. In the United States, privacy focuses on liberty, individual freedom to make decisions, freedom from state imposition, and the belief that the state cannot invade the individual privacy. Europe has enacted comprehensive legislation dealing with commerce and data protection. The United States is focused more on consumer protection, and does not have comprehensive legislation, only specific statutes in certain areas. Professor Hirsch expressed the hope that a creative way could be found to blend or synthesize the values of dignity and liberty in regard to privacy. He recommended a 2015 book, *Intellectual Privacy: Rethinking Civil Liberties in the Digital Age*, by Professor Neil Richards (Washington University School of Law). He closed by quoting the 2015 IFLA

Statement on Privacy in the Library Environment: “Privacy is essential to enable access and use of information without fear of consequences. Electronic surveillance, interception of digital communications and mass collection of personal data negatively impact on freedom of expression and freedom of information.”

Anne Klinefelter (University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill) focused her presentation on privacy, information access, and law libraries in the U.S. She reflected on the impact of the right to privacy on access to information in the digital age and on the users of information. The privacy of library users in the U.S. is shrinking. Data shared with any third party in the U.S. can be monitored without a warrant. There has been growth in data brokers who collect and combine private data from the web and then produce information on individuals that is sold to third parties. As librarians, we want to increase the privacy of our users and to limit surveillance, including watching what people are accessing. But we also want to increase access to content. In the U.S., there is no overarching federal privacy law; privacy laws are found at the state level, some of which were passed in the wake of the Freedom of Information Act. She pointed out that legal research itself is part of client-lawyer confidentiality. Among the privacy issues affecting libraries and their users are invisible tracking, “free” research services that combine personal data, ineffective web browser privacy settings, and broad federal government access to information that is “voluntarily” shared with private “third parties.” On the other hand, the European Union’s 2014 “Right to be Forgotten” ruling concerning personal data served to expand the privacy of individuals in records. She mentioned how libraries are being affected by that ruling, which does include exemptions for “archiving...in the public interest, scientific...historical research or statistical purposes.”

Adam Eisgrau (Office of Government Relations, American Library Association) explained how his office does advocacy work with the U.S. Congress on library and information issues, including protection of privacy in libraries. He reviewed several laws that are relevant to that topic, starting with the 2001 USA PATRIOT act, which was enacted in the wake of the 9/11 attacks. Section 215 of the act, commonly referred to as the “library provision,” raised alarm in the library community because it would permit the federal government to secretly request and obtain library records for large numbers of individuals without any reason to believe they were involved in illegal activity; however, it ended up being used primarily by the National Security Agency (NSA) to collect bulk phone data. In 2015, the passage of the USA Freedom Act restored some parts of the Patriot Act that had expired briefly, including Section 215, but ended the NSA mass phone data collection program. Now phone companies retain the data and the NSA can only obtain information about targeted individuals with permission from a federal court. Also enacted in 2015, the Cybersecurity Information Sharing Act makes the NSA the collector of the information and also makes it easier for companies to share personal information with the government, especially in cases of cyber security threats. But, with respect to privacy, the law doesn’t include provisions for preventing the act of sharing data known to be both personally identifiable and irrelevant to cyber security. Eisgrau also mentioned current efforts to update the 1986 Electronic Communications Privacy

Act (ECPA), which covers government access to private electronic communications, including computer data. One provision of the ECPA currently still in effect says that if data is over 180 days old, a warrant is not needed. In 1986, people didn't store data long-term, but that is no longer the case. Congress is considering some much-needed changes to this act and librarians should continue to be advocates for more privacy protection. Another issue he mentioned is encryption (digital "back doors"), currently the subject of a huge debate in the U.S. People want stronger encryption but the government wants to get around it in cases it deems to be of national security concern and would like to be able to compel a company to break encryption. Privacy of student education records is another major issue in the U.S., under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

The program concluded with some lively questions from the audience. It was coordinated by Robert Newlen (Chief of Staff, Library of Congress).

Social events

Over 50 members of the Section and invited guests attended the annual Law Libraries Section reception on Monday evening at the Thomas J. Moyer Ohio Judicial Center, home of the Ohio Supreme Court, in the beautiful Native American Lobby. The reception was organized by Standing Committee member Anne Burnett and generously sponsored by the William S. Hein and Company. The guest speaker was Paul Beck, Professor Emeritus of Political Science, at The Ohio State University. He provided an engaging overview of the United States electoral system, including discussion of current presidential election. His remarks were well-received and sparked some lively conversations afterward. It was a great time to relax with law library colleagues and friends from around the world, as well as some local law librarians who were not attending IFLA but joined us for the evening.

This year's traditional Cultural Evening was held Tuesday at the Center of Science and Industry (COSI). Following the theme "Coast to Coast," the event highlighted the food, entertainment and experiences of five regions of the United States: Midwest, West Coast, South, Mountain West and East Coast. COSI is located on the Scioto River and some of us enjoyed the food and music outside on the terrace overlooking the river and the Columbus skyline.

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Standing Committee (SC) members and other WLIC delegates

(L to R): Christine Weidenslaufer (Library of Congress of Chile), Sonia Poulin (Alberta Law Libraries, Canada), Marisol Florén (Florida International University), Radu Popa (New York University), Yolanda Jones (Florida A&M University), Helene Besnier (Bibliothèque Interuniversitaire Cujas, Paris, France), Hélène Besnier (Bibliothèque Interuniversitaire Cujas, Paris, France), Margo Jeske (University of Ottawa, Canada), Sally Holterhoff (Valparaiso University, Indiana), Leslie Street (University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill).



Cultural Evening

(L to R): Yolanda Jones (Florida A&M University), Leslie Street (University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill), H el ene Besnier (Biblioth eque Interuniversitaire Cujas, Paris, France), Margo Jeske (University of Ottawa, Canada), Anne Burnett (University of Georgia), Sonia Poulin (Alberta Law Libraries, Canada), Sally Holterhoff (Valparaiso University, Indiana).



Speakers for program, *Bringing the Law to the Library*

(L to R): Yolanda Jones (Florida A&M University), Brian Anderson (Ohio Northern University), Edita Bacic (University of Split, Croatia), Oludayo John Bamgbose (Ajayi Crowther University Library, Nigeria).



Speakers for program, *Privacy Law in the Digital Age*

Seated, (L to R): Roberta I. Shaffer (Law Library of Congress), Anne Klinefelter (University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill). Standing, (L to R): Adam Eisgrau (American Library Association), Dennis Hirsch (The Ohio State University).



Reception

IFLA Law Library Section members and guests enjoy reception and listen to speaker Paul Beck at Ohio Judicial Center
