

# Ohio Valley Group of Technical Services Librarian Annual Meeting

This essay documents some of my experiences at the Ohio Valley Group of Technical Services Librarian Annual Meeting, Bloomington (Indiana), May 11 & 12, 2006. In a sentence, I believe I saw in this meeting a turning point -- a point where most technical services things were about digital instead of analog.



Sample Gates



Lilly Library



stone bridge

## The Meeting

**Roxanne Sellberg** (Northwestern University) opened up the conference on Thursday with "Thriving at the crossroads". She defined and described "crossroads" many times in many ways, and I particularly identified with the Robert Johnson allusion. Most importantly, she described crossroads as not an either/or situation, but a gathering of people and trends. She outlined four trends in technical services world of Library Land relating to acquisitions, cataloging, preservation, and serials management. In acquisitions we are seeing higher volume ("mass acquisitions") and the direct delivery of information ("ILL is changing"). Cataloging has been co-operative for a long time, but it is leaning towards metadata creation and that meta is embedded in the objects being cataloged. Digital preservation is really data migration, and serials management may totally change as the scholarly journal, as a whole package (no puns intended), gives way to individual articles as the item of delivery.

**Jenn Riley** (Indiana University, Bloomington) and **Sarah Shreeves** (University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign) outlined a number of best practices for metadata (OAI-PMH) repositories and harvesters in "Metadata for you and me: Moving towards Shareable Metadata". A number of points I took away were: 1) share metadata because you can't expect users to know about your collections nor expect them to visit you, 2) metadata should be understandable and useful outside of its context(s), 3) there needs to be a balance between the practices of data providers and aggregators; aggregators need consistency and normalization where data providers need accuracy. I also liked this quote, "If a user can tell you what the record describes, then you have good sharable metadata."

In "Digital Semantics: Automated metadata capture, translation, and discovery" by **Tony Chirakos** (OCLC) I learned two things. First, OCLC Connection seems to be an almost indispensable tool for doing I/O against OCLC. Maybe OCLC should support other I/O facilities. Second, I learned about the existence of RDA: Resource Description and Access which is being touted as "AACR3".

**Carrie Preston** (Ohio University) shared her experiences with cataloging electronic resources in "Five years of electronic resources cataloging at Ohio University Libraries." From my perspective, her older process seemed fraught with the issues you find in any group of people when new ideas are encountered: politics, strong personalities, inconsistencies, communication challenges, etc. Electronic resources cataloging in her institution is improving and she advocates more policies, getting input from a wide range of people, written documentation, and the establishment of procedures.

In "Oh, so we're going to be just like Amazon, huh?" by **Ross Shanley-Roberts** of Miami University (Ohio) I was pleased to see somebody besides a techno-weenie reading raw MARC records and creating reports from them. Shanley-Roberts pointed out quite a number of errors in catalog. Some of those errors are human input errors. Some of them are system errors left over from migrations. He was dumping is

entire set of MARC records (about 2 GB of data), reading it with MARC::Record, and creating reports. Nice. Very nice!

After the day's meetings and before the dinner, I went for coffee with Jenn Riley. We talked about TechEssence, digital libraries, universities, the DLF, collections & services, institutional repositories, Google, and "next generation OPACs". The conference dinner was nice, the music was relaxing, and the presentation describing the librarian portrayed in film was informative as well as entertaining.



Venus of Bloomington



Monroe county seat



Monroe county seat

The next day I listened to **Jodi Perkins** of Miami University (Ohio) outlined a process for cataloging digital collections in "Metadata design, planning, and implementation for digital library projects". Her presentation enumerated five steps: 1) design, 2) planning, 3) creation, 4) launch, and 5) evaluation.

**Alison Roth** (Swets Information Systems) described the role of the subscription agent in "Data hunters, gatherers, and deliverers". In short, subscription agents provide EDI services for easier billing, participate in standards development, and are increasingly providing customers with unified usage statistics.

I was then expected to wrap up the conference with summaries and reactions of what I heard. I had little to add. Instead I simply tried to re-enforce the ideas and themes I had heard through the two days with the following outline and supplementary demonstrations:

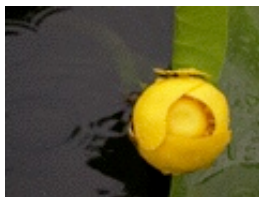
1. Librarianship has a bright future. You just have to be flexible.
2. XML is a very powerful data structure
  - Convert MARC to MARCXML and then MODS
  - "Catalog" texts with TEI and transform them
  - XML can be a part of the data
3. Open source software is empowering
  - MARC to MyLibrary
  - MyLibrary to swish-e
  - Alex Catalogue of Electronic Texts
4. OAI provides a means for high volume acquisitions.
  - DOAJ to MyLibrary
  - Images to MyLibrary
  - Aggregating content from IR systems
5. Libraries are about the combination of collections and services
  - Services against the content of the IRD
  - A "next generation OPAC"
6. OpenURLs are unique identifiers enabling services - COinS
7. Statistical analysis supplements human added value
  - Did you mean?
  - Possible synonyms
  - Automatic keyword creation
  - Find more like this
8. A recipe for making these things production services
  1. Spend time playing.
  2. Be positive.
  3. Think outside the box.
  4. Discuss the results.
  5. Go to Step #1

## Summary

The weather was cold and rainy. Bloomington was relatively empty. The Meeting was well attended with close to 120 participants. The conversation was stimulating. I spent a lot of time thinking about the "next generation OPAC", bought a guitar, took a few nice pictures, and ate at Nick's. I was sincerely impressed with what I was hearing, and I hope I have the opportunity to attend OVGTSL again.



Shower Park



water lilly



Shower Park sculpture

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**Source:** This page was never formally published.

**Date created:** 2006-05-13

**Date updated:** 2006-05-13

**Subject(s):** technical services; Bloomington, IN; OVGTSL (Ohio Valley Group of Technical Services Librarians); travel log;

**XML source:** <http://infomotions.com/musings/ovgtsl-2006/ovgtsl-2006.xml>