

Planning for growth: the impact of digital information on libraries in Russia, Europe and the U.S.

Seton Hall University hosted a symposium on Mar. 15, 2007 on the impact of digital information on libraries, both in the U.S. and abroad. While the speakers were from the academic library setting, their comments were interesting to librarians working in other settings as well.

Jared Ingersoll (Columbia University Libraries) argued that electronic formats are not necessarily superior to print. Substitution of e-journals for print does not automatically lead to reductions of library staff numbers, nor to reliable electronic archives or complete reader satisfaction. Retraction of articles from electronic databases, whether as a consequence of the *Tasini v New York Times* decision, or because of discovery of scientific fraud in an article, creates a gap in the historical record. Ingersoll observed that electronic archives maintained by consortia of libraries, such as JSTOR, Portico & LOCKSS have proven more stable than publishers' e-archives.

Prof. James P. Niessen (Rutgers University Libraries) described the Global Resources Network. GRN projects provide bibliographic information about, & sometimes links to newspapers, journals & other resources from sub-Saharan Africa & Latin America, as well as to French, Francophone & German language resources. One of the GRN projects, the German-North American Resources Partnership of libraries in the U.S., Canada & Germany, was formed to increase the availability of German language materials in North America, and to foster closer collaboration among North American & German research libraries. Some journals in the GNARP database, DigiZeitschriften, which Niessen called the German JSTOR, deal with economics, law & librarianship, a fact of interest to law librarians. One-third of the journals are open-access. Therefore, some articles may be available to libraries outside of GNARP.

The symposium ended with a roundtable discussion. Several speakers recommended the Mar. 10, 2007 *New York Times* article by Katie Hafner, "History, Digitized (and Abridged)" for its information about the costs of digitization, and the risk of invisibility for artifacts that are not digitized. Dean Howard McGinn, Seton Hall University Libraries, alerted the audience to the development of a Catholic Research Portal, through which 8 Catholic universities, including Seton Hall, are beginning cooperation on digitization projects.

Attending this symposium validated my belief in the value of attending continuing educational events in a wide variety of settings, both in and outside of law librarianship.

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