

SLA DREXEL

Special Libraries Association

Fall 2005

Drexel University

Toronto Hosts SLA 2005 Annual Conference

by Gary Kaplan

The annual conference is the highlight of the SLA year and Toronto's was no exception. This was my third, and as I've come to expect, there was an overabundance of programs, courses, vendors, tours, parties, and interesting people.

The three main conference days began with an engaging keynote speaker: business authors Don Tapscott (*The Naked Corporation*; Free Press; \$28) and Gary Hamel (*Leading the Revolution*; Plume; \$17) and design guru Bill Buxton. Each speech challenged information professionals (IPs) to fill new roles. Tapscott, for example, told

us that IPs are in the "transparency" business, helping their organizations look their best under the increased scrutiny of today's information-rich environment: "If you're going to be naked, you'd better be buff." In that vein, I went to a lot of programs on blogging and RSS where I saw some great examples of how librarians are using new technologies to showcase the best of their organization.

The conference itself embraced the message with its first ever conference blog, which is available indefinitely at

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Photo of CN Tower, Toronto by Gary Kaplan

Student Chapter Visits CNN

by Dan Lane

On Thursday, May 5th, the Drexel SLA visited the library at CNN's New York Headquarters at One Time Warner Center in Manhattan. The new Time Warner Center was completed in early 2004 at a cost of over \$1.7 Billion. It sits on the west side of Columbus Circle. The 2.8 million square foot building houses a Hotel, three jazz theaters, condominiums ranging in price from \$25 to \$50 million dollars, Warner Publishing, and of course CNN's New York offices and studios. Those who made the trip from Philadelphia included Jo Solis, Gary Kaplan, Delia Tash, Poliana Irizarry, Karen Kozak, Michael

Cooperman, Peter Konin, and Dan Lane. Stepping out of the subway tunnel it was hard to miss the edifice of this imposing new architectural giant. It's easy to see how some critics have compared its style and size to that of an airport

After some confusion determining the correct door by which to enter, we found CNN just a few minutes late for meeting with Shira Kavon, Senior Librarian. Two small explosions at the British Consulate had triggered some extra early morning work for Shira, so we were not missed.

After she greeted us in the lobby, we began the tour in the production

facilities. The production area that she showed us was very open. There were few walls or cubicles. Most everyone worked in the same large flowing work space. Even the editing bays were behind glass doors so that the openness was maintained. Computer terminals, video decks, and monitors occupied almost every horizontal surface. What Shira called the news room was the east end of this floor which had windows facing out onto Columbus circle and central park beyond.

The news writers and other staff sat at desks facing perpendicular

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By *Melissa Bishop*

Message from the New President

I'm just going to come out and say it: I don't know what I'm doing.

Yes, it's true, I *am* the new president of the SLA student chapter at Drexel, but please don't let that keep you from joining our group, because in this situation, I believe a little bit of uncertainty is a positive thing.

I know I'm not alone when I say I haven't yet decided which field of librarianship I'd like to go into when I graduate. All I knew when I began the program at Drexel was that I found tremendous satisfaction in locating, organizing, and dispensing information. I had never worked in a library, and I did not personally know any librarians.

I believe the SLA student chapter definitely is a boon for any student who is in a similar situation—uncertainty about your career goals opens more doors than it closes when you join SLA. It is the ideal venue not only to explore career options, but to make crucial contacts within organizations and form relationships with fellow students that will benefit us, both in our studies as well as when we finally have figured out what it is we'd like to do with our lives.

And if you are one of those lucky people who has already selected a field of librarianship to go into, congratulations, and we welcome you with open arms. We can offer you further opportunities to make connections within your chosen field, and a forum to share your decision-making process with others who may be interested in enter-

ing the same domain.

Our chapter works closely with the Philadelphia chapter in order to offer our members lectures on career opportunities, tours of local libraries, and mentorship connections. We also plan to hold less formal gatherings, such as happy hours and movie nights, because, let's face it, social bonds are just as important as professional bonds when you're in graduate school.

We already have several events lined up for this year, including a Meet & Greet/Mini-Lecture on September 29 and a pilgrimage to the Library of Congress in October. Our goal is to design future programming based on member input in order to best serve you in your career development.

If you are interested in becoming more involved in SLA, there are also leadership positions available (and you don't have to know what you're doing to participate.) Please feel free to contact me at mjb952@drexel.edu if you'd like more information about the SLA student chapter at Drexel

-- Melissa Bishop

SLA Conference
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<http://www.sla.org/conferenceblog>. Drexel's Marti Smith and Philadelphia Chapter Secretary Jack Morris were among the many contributors providing first-hand accounts of the action

After a full day of sessions and programming, vendor parties were great places to catch up with friends and colleagues in Toronto

attractions. This year, Elsevier/Lexis-Nexis brought revelers to the Hockey Hall of Fame; Thomson held their party at the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation.

Peter Konin, chapter president, attended the conference as a first-timer thanks to the Philadelphia Chapter's Knower Award. Anita Chiodo, our chapter's founder, came to the conference this year representing her new employer, Heritage Microfilm.

The 2006 conference will be in Baltimore. Take advantage of the geographic proximity to experience firsthand all there is to learn and do!

SLA Drexel Leaders

Melissa Bishop
President

Peter Konin
Web Administrator
SLA/PHL Board Liaison

Delia Tash
Program Chair

Megan Manchester
Secretary & Treasurer

Loretta Dunne
Newsletter Editor

Rachel Fryd
Incoming Newsletter Editor

Gary Kaplan
Alumni Advisor

Tim Siftar
Faculty Advisor

CNN Tour cont.

to a wall of windows. A camera was in front of these desks, pointed at a woman behind a desk and in front of the south most group of windows. This was not the main studio; there was only room for one camera and a small desk where a commentator could sit. She said that the production staff felt that the eastward view out these windows had to be taken advantage of. When we walked into this room the crew was not actually shooting but rehearsing for later in the day. Those moments in CNN news programs when they turn the camera on the news room aren't staged. The writing and research staff actually work right there in the studio.

After a brief look at some other facilities, we returned to the library. It is almost entirely comprised of videos. A small room houses some print materials, mostly news periodicals, used primarily to provide cover shots for backgrounds during broadcasts. The library also has computers for accessing on-line databases such as Lexis-Nexis, so that librarians and other staff can search for news and historical information needed for stories. Video decks and monitors are available in the library so patrons can view a tape before deciding whether they can use any of its footage. CNN and the library in particular have been exploring new electronic means of arranging and making available their content within the corporation. Though their system is not entirely tapeless, they have made a great deal of video content available to the editors and other production staff at their desktop computers and editing stations. They have been using two different systems to do this.

Pinnacle Vortex is a prefab

video storage, retrieval, viewing, and editing system that allows multiple users access to news footage that has been ingested into CNN's system. Footage for active projects is available to access from multiple desktop systems throughout the New York branch. CNN has been considering making this connectivity available between the New York and Atlanta branches as well. For more information on this system visit

http://www.broadcastbuyer.tv/public/article_4287.shtml or go to Pinnacle's website at

<http://www.pinnaclesys.com> and look under broadcast products.

MIRA, or Media Information Retrieval Application, was created by IBM especially for CNN. MIRA was developed to handle the ingesting, cataloging, searching, selection, and fulfillment of the production team's archival video needs. Based on DB2 architecture, the database is searchable using keywords taken from video annotations created by a cataloger, and user added control vocabulary. It can be browsed by key frame (still frames captured from the video content) and by low resolution video segments which allow faster download times and are less taxing on network bandwidth. MIRA is also used to keep records on audio, graphic, and text. For more information on the MIRA system go to <http://www-03.ibm.com/industries/media/doc/content/casestudy/355709111.html?type=rhc>

After our tour we were served pastries, juice and coffee in the break room in the back of the library and said goodbye to Shira. We then did some shopping in the CNN store downstairs. The most

popular item was the CNN coffee mug which looks perfect for the top of any anchorperson's desk. We enjoyed a cafeteria style lunch in the Whole Foods Market on the lower level before making the trip home to Philadelphia.

Meet & Greet Thursday, September 29

5 PM

*Rush Building
4th Floor*

*Meet incoming officers,
mingle and learn about
plans for the coming
year—including the first
library tour*

Library of Congress Tour

Washington, D.C.

*Friday, October 7th, at
1PM*

Join the SLA Drexel Student chapter for a day in D.C. touring the Library of Congress. This will be a special tour that you will not want to miss.

Do You Need An E-Portfolio?

If you are in graduate school, it is probably time to create an electronic portfolio that presents your qualifications and experiences to the world. An electronic portfolio can detail important classes you have taken, papers that you wrote, work and volunteer activities. This is a valuable tool for job-hunting. You might think that it is enough to have a quality resume, but a resume must be concise and businesslike. There is no room to discuss that great research paper you did in your content representation course nor the article you had published in an informal journal. Neither is there the opportunity to exhibit a bit of your creative flair to stand out among a group of job applicants. A

portfolio can do this.

Portfolios used to be paper, tangibles that you could bring to an interview. Now, portfolios are mostly electronic and referenced on one's resume. However, you can still bring portions of your e-portfolio on an interview, if it seems appropriate.

An e-portfolio is not just an electronic version of your resume. However, like a resume, you might want to tailor your e-portfolio for the job that you are seeking. A good article on portfolios by Katie Dunneback on [liscareer.com](http://www.liscareer.com/dunneback_portfolios.htm) can get you started in the right direction.

When researching e-portfolios, I

By Loretta Dunne

sent out an SOS asking for information about e-portfolios on NMRT, the ALA New Members Roundtable and discovered that an e-portfolio is required for graduation in a number of MLS programs. Drexel does not have such a requirement, but it might be a good idea to require one for yourself, to sum up the valuable skills you have acquired while at school.

Drexel has portfolio software, Folio, by ePortaro <http://www.eportaro.com/product.html> available to students. I have not investigated this, but it is definitely an option to consider as you design your portfolio.

By Karen Kozak

We all know that Drexel SLA happy hours are a great place to meet new people and enjoy refreshing beverages. They are also a great place to make key networking contacts for future jobs. I am currently conducting a new career search. Part of this process has included networking with as many people as I possibly can. At a Drexel SLA happy hour I asked if anyone had contacts within the healthcare insurance industry. Tim Siftar put me in touch with the Manager of Market and Healthcare Intelligence at a leading healthcare insurance company in the Philadelphia area.

This very important contact invited me to meet with her at her place of business. During our meeting she described the priorities and functions of her team. She spent two hours describing the type of work her team does and showed me the information portal that her group uses. Members

of her team receive news feeds throughout the day. They summarize articles that are of importance to the various business units throughout the company. The articles and summaries are posted on the company's intranet site and each article is rated on a one to five star scale for importance. Articles are grouped by type in order to make searching easier for users of the system.

During our meeting, I learned valuable information about how competitive intelligence teams work in the real world. I also gained a key contact that will undoubtedly be very helpful to me as I pursue a competitive intelligence role.

The bottom line is – attend networking events and do not be shy! Ask others for help in finding key contacts that will help you reach your personal career goals. You may end up landing your dream job much sooner than you thought.

Networking, Networking, Networking

Mission Statement

The SLA Student Chapter of Drexel University is a platform for students to explore special librarianship and the information profession; an opportunity to engage with library and information professionals; an opportunity for networking, interaction, and community building; a promotion of the Special Libraries Association.

Website:
www.cis.drexel.edu/sladrexel/