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Delivering Lifelong Continuing Professional Education Across Space and Time

The Fourth World Conference
on Continuing Professional Education
for the Library and Information
Science Professions

Edited by
Blanche Woolls and Brooke E. Sheldon

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Recognition for this conference is due to Carol Henry at IFLA who, from the beginning, was our good friend and advisor. We are especially indebted to Dan Jones of NewsBank who allowed us to use his conference facility and to Barbara Westine of NewsBank who coordinated the local arrangements. We are deeply appreciative of the continued support of D.G. Saur Berlag, publisher of the conference proceedings. A special thank you is due to Joan Keith, San Jose State University, who corrected and formatted the conference papers before their final submission to the publisher.

FOREWORD

This Fourth World Conference on Continuing Professional Education for the Library and Information Professions was scheduled for this year and place because the site, within Eastern U.S.A., made it possible for the founder of CPERT, Dr. Elizabeth Stone, to attend. Letters were sent to all preceding CPERT world conference paper writers asking them to participate. Additional calls for papers were made at the CPERT conferences in The Netherlands, Thailand, and Israel and on the IFLA web site.

The theme selected for this pre-conference, “Delivering Lifelong Continuing Professional Education Across Space and Time” matched the IFLA subtheme: Delivering Lifelong Learning Across Space and Time. The papers selected for this pre-conference were placed into three daily sessions under the headings:

- Creating the Delivery Mechanisms: Effects of New Technologies
- Engaging Staff in Lifelong Education over Space and Time
- Where Do We Go from Here?

Brooke E. Sheldon and Elizabeth Stone welcomed attendees to the NewsBank facility in Chester, Vermont, site of the pre-conference. The first day’s session included the keynote by Ken Haycock who presented the results of two Congresses that gathered members of many library associations in the U.S. to discuss competencies for information professionals. Jana Varlejs discussed the models from North American practice and asked if they were exportable. Blanche Woolls made a plea to have providers create distance education experiences using appropriate instructional design. Lesley Moyo brought her experiences in delivering CPE in Africa, while Uma Kanjilal described the Virtual Congress Initiative in India. Anne Ritchie and Paul Genoni offered their research on group mentoring for graduates, and Oluremi Jegede outlined the needs for CPE in Nigeria. Fransie Terblanche described a model for meeting the needs of information workers in South Africa; Augusta Maria Paci explained the National Research Council’s self-learning platform, INFODOC courseware on CD-ROM with Web Communication. Sirje Virkus cited the contributions of Instructional Technology in innovating education. Anne Clyde demonstrated the use of a website as a lifelong continuing professional education experience and Maria Kocojowa described the status of distance education in Poland and the needs for further assistance.

The second day began with a panel presentation by Mihaly Palvolgyi and Edit Csapo on the developing of library and information science network centers in Hungary and Gabriella Dotan reported her research on the assessment of the needs and preferences of public librarians in Israel. Graham Walton and Catherine Edwards discussed the implications for encouraging flexibility and changing skills and the problems that occurred when flexibility was implemented. Ken Eustace, James Henri, and Joseph Meloche explained their method of getting students so involved in the education process that they became responsible for their learning. Jabreel Arishee outlined the needs for continuing professional education for academic librarians if they were going to be of assistance to their international students. Irene Wormell described her experiences in a networked learning environment in South Africa.

Angela Bridgland outlined several models for meeting the needs of information professionals. Tatjana Aparac, Radovan Vrana, Boris Badurina, and Martina Dragija point out how library and information professionals continue their lifelong education in Croatia, and Barbara Immroth described how to conduct a needs assessment. Snunith Shoham outlined the role of academic institutions in creating delivery mechanisms, and Narumol Ruksasuk reported her research on the success of teaching an organization of information course through distance transmission. Tatyana Yanikieva suggested a role for the Library Association in creating a new CPE center, and Dianne Rusch-Feja presented the findings from her research on the information technology training needs in nations around the globe with and without technology.

The third day began with Patricia Layzell Ward's plea for a certification process for library and information professionals who engage in distance education experiences. Mohammed Benjoullen's plan for CPERT and others to help in the development of distance education for developing nations and Clare M. Walker's report on CPE opportunities to improve professional practice in South Africa completed the formal paper presentations.

From the perspective of those who were present at the first world conference, the overwhelming theme that dominates most of these papers is one of progress, and increased confidence, about the future of continuing professional education. Undoubtedly the emergence of new technologies has helped to create this spirit optimism. We hear from educators in several countries that were not represented at the earlier conferences. This bodes well to the future development of CPE in the information professions.

The Appendixes represent papers chosen by a CPERT panel from the three previous publications from the pre-conferences in Palos Hills, Illinois, USA; Barcelona, Spain; and Copenhagen, Denmark as examples of timeless information that is the base of our progress to this point and sets the stage for the Fourth World Conference. We feel that these and our new papers truly reflect the solid beginnings set in place by Dr. Stone in Palos Hills. We must thank Dan Jones, President of NewsBank for providing the conference venue and K.G. Saur for again publishing the proceedings. Finally, we wish the conveners of the Fifth World Conference to be held in Scotland in 2002, much success.

Blanche Woolls and Brooke E. Sheldon
August, 2001

INAGURATION OF CONFERENCE

Welcome by Brooke E. Sheldon...

More than a decade ago at the First World Conference on Continuing Education held in Palos Hills, Illinois prior to the 1985 IFLA Conference in Chicago, the idea of being able to provide continuing education via a practicing librarian's laptop was little more than a gleam in Elizabeth Stone's eye. While it is certainly true today that a very small percentage of the world's citizenry have access to laptops, it is indisputably true that in 2001 more than 400 million people worldwide will regularly use the internet's 4 billion web pages and spend half a trillion dollars on goods and services in the process. Yet as Bill Gates noted in The Economist's publication "*The World in 2001*" (London, 2000) we are still in the horse and buggy stages. He reminds us that the bigger advances in digital technology are still to come.

As we contemplate the growing prosperity of the developing countries (the 2.3 billion people of China and India are expected to double their economies every ten years), amid all of this positive change, Elizabeth Stone is quite accurate in saying that we must not lose the basic principles of adult education that we learned from Malcolm Knowles at Palos Hill, and from other pioneers in adult continuing education.

Knowles and his colleagues taught us well about the nature of the adult learner. Perhaps the most important principle that we must not neglect is the basic need of adult learners for high quality interaction and discourse with the "instructor" and with other students in the class. The old models of "me teacher, you student" will not work in the internet age either, and we must find ways to make distance continuing education a collaborative experience. The technology will help us but it cannot dictate the nature of the methods used. It will take great creativity, and endless experimentation to develop new modes of teaching using high touch as well as high tech. We must not be reactive in this process and simply learn to use new tools developed by others, but rather take leadership roles in making the educational experiences we create more interactive.

In 1985, it seemed a brave new effort to create the Continuing Professional Educational Roundtable in IFLA. The challenge today is to bring new blood into our membership, and to move forward (the technology should help) in creating the collaborative networks we only dreamed about at Palos Hills.

Brooke E. Sheldon
University of Arizona
February, 2001

Welcome by Elizabeth W. Stone...

Sixteen years ago on August 14, 1985, Brooke Sheldon and I, as Co-Chairs, were welcoming you to the IFLA First World Conference on Continuing Professional Education, in Palos Hills, Illinois, U.S.A. The Conference was a huge success.

It led to the IFLA Professional Board approving and supporting the recommended formation of the Continuing Professional Education Round Table (CPERT). The eight-point plan of action proposed by the conferees, and later adopted by the IFLA Professional Board, has served us well as we have grown steadily, building a firm foundation of world leaders dedicated to tirelessly emphasizing the necessity for all professionals to understand that "learning never ends." To meet the dynamic changes constantly taking place as a result of the new technologies, continuing education is not a choice, it is an absolute necessity.

But in our frantic rush to share and make use of the new technologies and reach huge numbers of persons around the globe, let us be sure to remember and apply the basic principles of adult learning enunciated to us by Cyril Houle, Malcolm Knowles, and Alan Knox, and the practices of leaders in the art of distance learning from The Open University, the University of Tubingen, and The University of South Africa.

In the Age of the Internet, it takes a range of talents from different disciplines. To be effective, it takes a project manager who leads a team through a cycle of planning, prototyping, testing, and constant revision to produce an effective online course. It takes not just one teacher, or just one website; A course has to be adaptable to be taught in multiple sections in different locations; constantly maintained and kept up to date as it is evaluated and re-evaluated to be sure that the standards of accessibility and practicability are met. The courses offered should be fine-tuned like a well-polished jewel; they should generate enthusiasm in all who sign on for the learning experience.

We echo the hope for this Fourth World Conference on Continuing Education that was expressed at the opening of the First Conference in 1985: that the conference "will be an enormous success so that subsequent events may follow to increase collaboration and sharing of expertise worldwide."

We owe a special debt of gratitude to Blanche Woolls for her initiatives in planning for this 2001 meeting of CPERT. We are also deeply appreciative of the generous support of K. J. G. Saur, publisher of the papers of this conference and of the three preceding World Conferences.

Elizabeth W. Stone