FROM THE CHAIR

As the 1994 Annual Meeting is only a few weeks away, I want to especially encourage SIS members to attend the town meeting presenting to the AALL membership the 1994-1998 Strategic Plan on Tuesday, July 12, 1994 8:30-10:00 a.m. While the plan is certainly not without its controversial points, e.g., sponsoring a credentialing program for both law librarians and law library assistants, it continues to recognize the Special Interest Sections and seems to respond to the pleas of several leaders of this SIS in the recent past to allow the SIS a place in the planning of Annual Meeting Programs.

The Strategic Plan is based on six Strategic Directives. The third of these is to “Increase and diversify AALL’s education offerings to members and non-members.” Among other things it calls for providing “members with readily available, high quality, and timely continuing education programs, publications and services in a variety of formats, using all available technologies.”

The sixth initiative under Strategic Directive III is to “revise the annual meeting program selection process to assure program slots for the Special Interest Sections.” The rationale is that “this will allow for more targeted and specific programs and greater responsibility for the SIS’s. The implementation calls for providing each SIS with the opportunity to present programs of its choosing at the Annual Meeting. The Education Committee will work with the SIS Council Chair to determine the number of program slots to be made available to each SIS and will oversee the process for managing the annual meeting program.”

I have written the Chair of the Long Range Planning Committee, Margaret Maes Axtmann, in support of this sixth initiative. I encourage you to attend the town meeting and voice your support of it, or in the alternative to write a member of the Committee: Carol D. Billings, Martha S. Brown, Mary Lu Linnane, Judith A. Meadows, Robert L. Oakley, Roger H. Parent, and Kay M. Todd. Thank you for your support of the LH & RB SIS!
Still In Search of Volunteers

We still need a number of volunteers for the Annual Meeting.

- to sit at the SIS table in the Exhibit Hall and promote the SIS: call Dan Wade or Georgia Sayers [e-mail: danwade@yalevm.cis.yale.edu or (203) 432-1615], for available times.

- to sit at the SIS table in the Exhibit Hall and serve as notables, i.e., discuss your topic of choice; again call for available times.

In the 1994-1998 Strategic Plan, the fourth initiative of Strategic Directive I, to “Rein vigorate the structure of AALL,” asks “special interest sections to find ways to include newer members on all their committees and working groups, and in their governance processes.” While this SIS currently does not have a super abundance of committees or working groups, newer librarians are welcome to join and participate fully in such groups. See the volunteer form in the last issue of the LH &RB newsletter for a listing of opportunities available.

Meet the 1994 Andrews Award Winner

Fred Shapiro

Associate Librarian of Public Services at the Yale Law Library and author of The Oxford Dictionary of American Legal Quotations at the SIS Table in the Exhibit Hall, Monday, July 11, 1994 at 10:00 a.m.

More of Nicholson Baker's Discards

“Can you imagine what the inside of Nicholson Baker's refrigerator must look like?”


A Different Sense of History

“I met Tony Hillerman in the hills around Santa Fe, where St. John’s College rises above the adobe-filled landscape....

“Our conversation about Navajos and his writing drifted amiably....’Navajos have no word in their language for early and late,’ he said. ‘They look at time as a confluence. You’ll meet someone at Gallup, and he’ll show up half an hour after the established time. You’ll say, ‘You’re late.’ He’ll respond, ‘What’s this about late? You’re here, I’m here. What’s the problem?”

Michael Pearson, Professor of English at Old Dominion University, in A Place That’s Known, published by the University Press of Mississippi, reprinted in X1(39) Chronicle of Higher Education B3 (June 1, 1994).
Those who have been following the discussion of what a definition of a rare book is may not have caught a recent development which, to tell the truth, has not been well publicized. I myself became aware of it only because I frequently, and mostly for diversion, peruse the Federal Register. A recent issue, in fact, published a notice stating that the National Bureau of Standards had just formed a committee to develop a standard for determining what is a rare book and what isn't. I think the number given was Z39.99. What was interesting about this was that the notice said a foreigner, one Dr. Ernst Wahnsinn, identified as a philologist and antiquarian from the University of Fasching in Germany (I think this is somewhere in what used to be East Germany) had been appointed as head of the committee to develop the standard. The view was apparently that Americans were too contentious and would never be able to agree, and that a German would be more precise. Well, we'll see.

From: Philip A. Metzger, Linderman Library, Lehigh University, May 31, 1994

There's been so much interest in the qualifications of Dr. Wahnsinn for the task which has been laid on him that I've done a little digging and have come up with this: Wahnsinn received his doctorate, in fact from the University of Fasching, in 1967, where Dr. Ohrfeige was his thesis director. His work was on the little known printer Fabricius Witz, who is known to have worked in nearby Bad Fasching in about 1492. His account book is in the University Archives, where it is revealed that he was planning an edition of Sebastian Brandt's Das Narrenschiff. As far as the record indicates, this edition was never actually printed, and no other Witz imprints are known. This Wahnsinn was dealing with the rarest of all books: one that not only no longer exists, but in fact never existed at all. (Although I suppose that there are a lot more of these than we have evidence for. His dissertation was apparently mostly a bibliographical study. But it seems clear that he is a man with great qualifications to grapple with the issue of rarity....

From: Philip A. Metzger, Linderman Library, Lehigh University, May 31, 1994

I am thanking Philip Metzger for making known the work of the ANSI Committee Z39.99 on the defining of what is a rare book. To serve in this position is a great honor to me and to the memory of my late teacher and mentor Dr. Ohrfeige. Please communicate to me at e-mail address if you have thoughts on rare books. I also ask please be, how to say, succinct, and make sense. I promise to give out the report by 1 April 1995, or I say to myself, I am not better than Fabricius Witz.

From: Dr. Ernst Wahnsinn, Ausserordentlicher Professor, Facultat der Gravitas, Universitaet Fasching, D-1033765 Fasching, Germany, E-mail: erwahn@fasch.nn.qq.xoy.yy.vax1.don.ner.wetter.noch.mals.ge June 1, 1994

I regret to announce the premature passing of Dr. Wahnsinn after a brief but glorious career. To honor him, may I request that further correspondence on this topic be closed? Thank you.

From: Peter Graham, Rutgers University Libraries, Moderator, ExLibris, June 1, 1994
Pick Up a Guide to Seattle

If you have not already captured it on your e-mail, pick up a copy of Michael Maben's Personal Guide to Seattle (revised edition) and view the exhibit on the historical tourist attractions of the city at the Legal History and Rare Books SIS Table in the Exhibit Hall. The author himself will be at the table on Sunday morning between 10:00 and noon to share his ideas and opinions with you. Look on the message board for a list of distinguished guests who will be at the SIS table at different times throughout the week. The SIS table affords an excellent way for newer librarians to meet some of the great librarians in our field.

Grossman Honored

Following the hopefully short Legal History and Rare Books SIS Business Meeting, 3:00 pm Sunday, there will be an informal panel to discuss George Grossman's new book, Legal Research: Historical Foundations of the Electronic Age (Oxford University Press, 1994). After the author introduces the work, Warren Billings, Department of History, University of New Orleans; and Morris Cohen and Fred Shapiro of the Yale Law Library will discuss its contribution to modern scholarship and the field of legal research. Katherine Hedin of the University of Minnesota Law Library will moderate the panel. Join us to celebrate this important new book!

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Book Shop Hop

Join us for the book shop hop to visit two of Seattle's most famous bookstores situated in two of Seattle's most famous attractions. We will leave from the message board on Wednesday at 2:00 to go to Shorey's, a used book store adjacent to the Pike Street Market and the Elliott Bay Book Company in Pioneer Square.

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Lists Available
Intriguing New Titles


Isaac, Thomas, Pre-1868 Legislation Concerning Indians: A Selected and Indexed Collection, Saskatoon: Native Law Centre, University of Saskatchewan, 1993.


Have You Seen?

Many Happy Returns? 2,500 Years of Democracy (January, 1994), 44(1) History Today (January, 1994) a celebration of Kleisthenes' reform of the Athenian Constitution in 508-507 BC, with articles on the history of democracy over the next six months.

Don't Miss the SIS Table in the Exhibit Hall

Don’t miss stopping by the SIS Table in the Exhibit Hall. In addition to meeting a fellow member of the SIS, take a look at the exhibit on the historical tourist attractions of Seattle. Michael Maben, Indiana University School of Law Library, Bloomington and author of the electronic guide to Seattle, will hand out guides on Sunday morning, 10:00 a.m.-12 noon.

Quotations


"A nation's values and problems are mirrored in the ways in which it uses its ablest people. In Japan, a country only half our size, 30 per cent more engineers graduate each year than in all the United States. But Japan boasts a total of less than 15,000 lawyers, while American universities graduate 35,000 every year.

"It would be hard to claim that these differences have no practical consequences. As the Japanese put it, "Engineers make the pie grow larger; lawyers only decide how to carve it up."


"What chance has the ignorant, uncultivated liar against the educated expert? What chance have I ... against a lawyer?"

Mark Twain, On the Decay of the Art of Lying, 1882, in The Mark Twain Reader 623, 824 (1981)

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The SIS wishes to thank the newsletter's advertisers for their support of the work of the SIS.
Few countries have been more copiously described than Japan, and perhaps few have been less thoroughly understood.

Sir George Sansom in Japan by S. O. Reischauer

There are times when they seem so small! And then again, although they never seem large, there is a vastness behind them, a past of indefinite complexity and marvel, an amazing power of absorbing and assimilating, which forces one to suspect some power in the race so different from our own that one cannot understand that power. And...whatever doubts or vexations one has in Japan, it is only necessary to ask oneself: "Well, who are the best people to live with?"


For the building of a new Japan
Let's put our mind and strength together,
Doing our best to promote production,
Sending our goods to the peoples of the world,
Endlessly and continuously,
Like water gushing from a fountain.
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In fact, the whole of Japan is a pure invention. There is no such country, there are no such people.... The Japanese people are....simply a mode of style, an exquisite fancy of art.


In view of the nature and scope of Japan's successes, it is remarkable how little interest Americans have shown in profiting from Japanese example.

Ezra Vogel, JAPAN AS NUMBER ONE
The Asian American Law Librarians Caucus
Invites You to a

Celebration of Japan

Tuesday, July 12, 1994

1:30 p.m.
Program: Japanese Legal History

Cosponsored with Foreign, Comparative & International Law and Legal History and Rare Books Special Interest Sections

The influence of Anglo-American and continental European legal traditions on the modern Japanese legal system has been significant. However,

"what one tends to forget is that French, German and Anglo-American law were grafted upon a society which had at least thirteen centuries of legal culture behind it, and held ideals and social forms which the imported laws could bend, but not break. This legal tradition began in Antiquity and carried on until 1869, when feudalism was abolished, and a massive modernization program begun..."


This program is designed as a basic introduction to Japanese legal history for those doing reference, collection development, or just having an academic interest in the topic. Three professors from the internationally renowned University of Washington Asian Law Program will give presentations, and a bibliography of Western language works will be provided.

3:15 p.m.

5:30 p.m.
Tour the world famous Asian law collections at the University of Washington Law School Library.

7:15 p.m.
Dinner at the Tatsumi Japanese restaurant near the University of Washington.**

* Register on an AALLC Participation Form. Cost is $2.25 to be paid at the AALLC business meeting, 5:00 p.m. Sunday, July 10, 1994.

** Order your dinner in advance at the AALLC business meeting.