

2008 Library Assessment Conference
Seattle, WA
August 4, 2008

Opening Remarks by Martha Kyrillidou, Conference Co-Chair

Welcome to our 2nd Library Assessment Conference. Rest reassured we have already started planning our 3rd library assessment conference that will take place in 2010 on the east coast in the Washington DC area where ARL headquarters are.

Following Steve's lead, I carefully collect, study and analyze the weather data and preliminary conclusions steer me away from a summer conference and into a fall timeframe (late October/early November).

Given the increasing popularity of our conference, the registration will be by sealed bid and the first 300 bids will be accepted. Keep an eye for the early announcement and place your participation bid early on. We will be delighted to see everyone in 2010!

We have something new this year at our conference: the Library Assessment Conference Career Achievement Awards. These awards are an indication that library assessment is maturing—like wine getting better with age.

We are recognizing three pioneers in library assessment who made significant contributions to the field. We want all of you to recognize these people when you see them amongst you during the next three days and take the opportunity to interact with them and taste some of their wisdom. So, don't miss to connect with the three individuals we are recognizing this year: Shelley Phipps, Amos Lakos, and Duane Webster.

I will ask them to also stand as I am presenting their pictures on the projection screen.

Shelley Phipps is standing in front of the inaugural LibQUAL+® booth in 2004 ACRL conference. There are numerous occasions I remember with Shelley on the podium—I strongly remember her speech at our LibQUAL+® gathering in New Orleans where she pointed out that surveys by themselves will not move us forward, rather it is our own personal efforts towards examining our systems, policies and procedures and towards changing ourselves that will move us forward. Thank you, Shelley, for all your support throughout the years.



Amos Lakos—an inspiring and committed voice with an eastern European accent (not to be confused with the southern European accent you are listening to). Amos found his way into Canada and then Los Angeles, California, as his love lured him into a life of marriage—here on his wedding day.



Both Shelley and Amos are known for articulating and promoting the Culture of Assessment concept—a concept that has inspired improvements at our organizations over the last decade.

At the library assessment conference in Charlottesville I had the honor to introduce our opening speaker, Duane Webster, and here's a picture from Duane's opening speech (notice his hand movement—Duane always uses his arms to make a point). Duane's career has many distinguishing characteristics. The one we recognize and celebrate at the Library Assessment Conference is his vision in supporting the implementation of practical and effective library assessment tools that have impacted

library assessment on a worldwide, global basis. Under his leadership, ARL has been recognized internationally for the innovative and distinguishing library assessment services it provides.

On a personal basis, Duane has given me the freedom to experiment, innovate and achieve like few library professional from other countries have opportunities to do—for example, take a note of the languages we now support through our LibQUAL+® service operation and our reach to countries like Japan, China and Singapore.

[And as a personal request, please take a look at the conference roster and offer your own personal welcome to our international participants—they traveled many miles to enjoy Seattle and be part of our community.]



As a reminder, we will have the opportunity to enjoy a plenary session tomorrow afternoon at 3:30 where Shelley, Amos and Duane will offer to us their reflections on library assessment. Colleen Cook and Brinley Franklin (the current and past chairs of the ARL Statistics and Assessment Committee) stand ready to facilitate this enriching exchange. The official recognition of our first Library Assessment Awardees will take place at the reception that will take place at the Olympic Sculpture Park on Tuesday evening.

Now . . . from introducing Duane Webster at the 2006 Charlottesville conference to introducing Crit Stuart at our 2008 Seattle conference.

Crit is not to be confused for the beautiful Greek island—he is dear colleague with a gracious, agile and gentle nature that is contagious—Crit pulls threads and ideas together with a magnificent quilt-like making ability.

You can find Crit Stuart's official bio and the complimentary press release announcing his ARL appointment on the Web but here I will offer to you a more personal introduction of Crit and his connection to library assessment.

Crit Stuart, ARL's program director for Research, Teaching, and Learning, became a disciple of assessment toward the end of his 33 year career at Georgia Tech Library. As that library worked to become more essential to undergraduates, Crit came out of his shell and began to much more deeply engage students and faculty in conversation and discovery. Early in these discussions, in a focus group with students over pizza exploring ideal study environments, Crit was dumb-struck by the students' ability to almost magically, and without effort, imagine what a perfect learning environment would be. He calls this early focus group experience his "assessment epiphany." The extraordinary impact of that one engagement with students convinced him there was a world of wisdom to tap into, in the form of students and faculty who were passing by his office door every day.

His hope for each of you is that this conference might provide personal epiphany, inspiration, and conviction for all the good work we might do.

Please join me in welcoming Crit Stuart.