

The Frederick G. Kilgour Award for Research in Library and Information Technology, 2014.

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The Frederick G. Kilgour Award for Research in Library and Information Technology is sponsored by OCLC Online Computer Library Center, Inc. and the Library and Information Technology Association (LITA), a division of the American Library Association. OCLC asked for a brief statement responding to a set of questions.

My name is Michael Buckland and I am a retired professor in Berkeley's School of Information, formerly the library school. Before that I was a librarian in England, Indiana, and California.

Frederick Kilgour was a man to admire: a chemist, historian of technology, intelligence agent, librarian. Above all he was creative and a leader. So to be associated with him is a special honor.

I first met Kilgour in 1971, a couple of months after OCLC went online. I was a young English librarian visiting the United States. My first call was at the Council on Library Resources in Washington, DC, to report on what we had done at Lancaster with a grant from them. The Council then was dominated by some distinguished elderly men: Fred Cole, Verner Clapp, Foster Mohrhart, Sir Frank Francis. They asked me if I intended to visit OCLC. I said not. They said that they thought that I ought to visit OCLC. I explained that I was not particularly interested in catalogs and that I had already made other plans. Minutes later they told me that they had made arrangements for me to visit OCLC. So I went.

I was welcomed by Fred Kilgour. He sat me down at a terminal. He gave me some books and he told me to look for them in the database. It was the quickest, most effective introduction to OCLC imaginable. Fred reminded me of Maurice Chevalier in the movie *Gigi*, but without the French accent. Fred looked like Chevalier. He had the same plummy voice and twinkle in his eye. And one could imagine Fred performing onstage with a straw hat and cane.

I don't know what specifically led to my nomination for this award. I assume it is more a reward for persistence than any one achievement. But I do know what Fred Kilgour would have nominated me for: Work at the University of Lancaster Library on how – precisely how – a library's books could be made more available by making circulation policies and duplication policies responsive to changing patterns of demand. We wrote the book, literally, on demand-driven collection management, mathematical models and all. When I mentioned this work to Fred he became excited and he announced his decision that I should move to Columbus, Ohio. Overnight he arranged for me to spend all for the next day interviewing at Ohio State for the position of Associate Director for Public Services.

Fred and his wife, Eleanor, were kind and gracious. They took me back to their home and they took me out to dinner. Then Fred drove me around, showing me the neighborhoods they thought my wife and I would want to live in when we moved to Columbus.

The Ohio State appointment did not work out, but the experience did encourage me to take the position of Assistant Director for Technical Services at Purdue University Libraries a few months later. On arrival in Indiana, I attended a meeting of the administrators of the libraries of the four state universities at which Marcelle Foote, the Indiana State Librarian, asked for a task force to answer the following question: If OCLC was good for Ohio, what would be good for Indiana? I joined the task force. We set up the Indiana Cooperative Library Services Authority (INCOLSA), we hired Barbara Markuson, and we contracted with OCLC to start providing services outside of Ohio, an historic strategic step for OCLC.

I chose librarianship when I was a teenager, but it was not because I wanted to be a librarian. My parents kept asking me what I was going to do when I grew up. I thought if I gave them an answer – any answer – they would stop asking. I thought that libraries were socially beneficial and, probably, congenial places to work, so I announced that I was going to become a librarian -- until I found something more interesting to do. After fifty years in the field that is still my position. I might still take up something else instead. But in the meanwhile, changes in technology have given my generation the opportunity to

redesign library services in a profound way. And right now the intersection of digital libraries and digital humanities offers excellent opportunities to change the world. I can see lots to do in the coming year and beyond.

I am very grateful to the people and the institutions that have allowed my explorations and to the funding agencies that have enabled them.

Awards like this are valuable because they renew awareness of the leaders of the past who can serve as inspiration and who deserve to be remembered – like Frederick Kilgour. I am grateful to be a part of it.