

# ◆ Highlights of the 47th Annual Meeting

## Access Now and Into the Future

**Christine A Arturo**  
2003-2004 Program Chair

The 47th annual conference drew 338 attendees to Vancouver, British Columbia, to participate in the sessions and short courses offered from 14 to 18 May. On Sunday night, our New Member and Welcome Reception opened the meeting with a good number of new attendees, judging by the ribbons.

Vancouver and its surrounds were quite a draw too! With excellent restaurants and shopping only blocks away from the Hyatt Regency, in addition to the cultural opportunities at the University of British Columbia's Museum of Anthropology and Botanical Garden, it was the classic case of "too little time, too much to do".

The meeting's thought-provoking keynote address was delivered on Sunday by Shirley M Malcom, head of the Directorate for Education and Human Resources Programs of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) and recipient of the Public Welfare Medal of the National Academy of Sciences for her work in education reform and access to scientific and technical education, careers, and literacy. Malcom stressed not only the need for better access to scientific information but also better public understanding of the various needs of the community at large in accessing scientific ideas.

On Monday, plenary speaker John Willinsky, director of the Public Knowledge Program and professor in the Department of Language and Literacy Education at the University of British Columbia, ignited the crowd with his



PHOTO BY JOHN WACHTER/CPS MEDIA

### Keynote speaker Shirley M Malcom

argument for an open-access model as a way to improve the public, educational, and political impact of research. The democratic "right to know" and the "serial crisis" that has eroded library access to journals underscored his petition for open access of literature.

At the close of the conference on Tuesday, Linda MacDonald Glenn, a bioethicist, attorney, and professor at the University of Vermont School of Allied Health, delivered a scintillating plenary address on bioethics. The convergence of nanotechnology, biotechnology, information technology, and cognitive neuroscience has produced some interesting results—some say "science fiction". The unfolding ethical dilemmas clearly illustrate the need for greater awareness and understanding as science stirs the uncharted waters of our landscape.

The annual meeting's theme, "Access Now and Into the Future", has been the hot topic in publishing lately. To date, 1,111 journals are listed in the Directory of Open Access Journals. Three sessions were specifically designed to investigate the economics, rights and permissions, and changing role that researchers, librarians, secondary publishers, and users may experience as online access evolves. Other sessions addressed specific "in the trenches" needs for our daily professional lives. With 30 concurrent sessions scheduled, it was hard to choose just one from the offerings. My only "conflict of interest" was too much choice.

I would like to thank the Program Committee for assembling quite a wonderful group of seasoned, talented speakers and for shaping what proved to be a fantastic meeting!