The Western European Studies Section Newsletter contains reports on the meetings and activities of discussion groups and committees. It offers articles on various topics relating to Western European studies. Columns focus on electronic information resources and services related to Western Europe, new publications of note, personal and institutional news, and announcements.

Other WESS-initiated publications include:

- Western European Studies: Current Research Trends and Library Resources (1990)
- Migration in Society, Culture and the Library (2005)

WESS volunteers have abstracted, reviewed, and edited the Reference Reviews Europe Annual since its inception in 1994.

Why and How to Join WESS

WESS contributes to the advancement of Western European studies both in North America and abroad. Through its programs, discussion groups, conferences, and publications, it furthers research on Western Europe and fosters collaborative projects. For librarians and other professionals, WESS provides a stimulating forum for discussion and opportunities for professional enrichment.

For information about current WESS officers and committees, refer to the ALA Handbook of Organization, a recent issue of the WESS Newsletter, or WESSWeb.

To join, write or call the Association of College and Research Libraries for application forms and information:

ACRL/ALA
50 East Huron Street
Chicago, IL 60611-2795
(800) 545-2433, ext. 2523, toll free
(312) 280-2520 fax
e-mail: acrl@ala.org
http://www.al.org/acrl.html

Western European Studies Section
www.dartmouth.edu/~wessweb

The Western European Studies Section is a unit of the Association of College and Research Libraries, a division of the American Library Association

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In 1997, WESSWeb was cited by a major German newspaper as one of the key sites worldwide in the emerging digital library.

**What is WESS?**

The Western European Studies Section (WESS) represents librarians and others who are professionally involved in the acquisition, organization, or use of information sources related to Western European countries. Our aim is to promote the improvement of library services supporting study and research on Western Europe from ancient times to the present day.

For more detailed information about WESS, please visit WESSWeb, our Internet site, at http://www.dartmouth.edu/edu~wessweb

**A Brief History**

WESS grew out of a discussion group started within the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) in 1973. The original focus included European countries not already geographically associated with the Slavic and East European Section of ACRL. The Western European Language Specialists Discussion Group (WELS), renamed the Western European Specialist Section (WESS), became an ACRL section in 1978.

Now identified as the Western European Studies Section, WESS sponsors major programs at each ALA Annual Conference and also holds its own international conferences for specialists.

WESS promotes cooperation between libraries and scholars in Western European fields and publishers and book dealers in Western Europe. WESS and its members are instrumental in advancing transnational collaboration and digital initiatives.

**Recent Programs from ALA Conferences**

- “Italian Studies and Italian Cultural Presence in North America: A Tribute to the Life and Contributions of Mario Casalini” (2000)
- “Exploding the Spanish Canon: Including the Voices of Spain’s Excluded Communities” (2001)
- “Mapping the Future of Historical Scholarship about Europe” (2002)
- “Digitizing Medieval Manuscripts: East and West” (2005)

**Recent Conferences**

- “European Links: Sources of Information in Western European Studies for Academic Libraries” (ALA Preconference, 1997)

WESS also plays a role in organizing and staffing the exhibit at the Frankfurt Book Fair which ACRL sponsored from 1999 to 2005. For more information visit WESSWeb. WESS plays a role in coordinating participation in other international book fairs and organizing European study tours.

**Committees, Awards, & Discussion Groups**

Within WESS there is an Executive Committee, composed of the Chair, Vice-Chair, Past Chair, Secretary, Member-at-Large, and Chairs of the three standing committees: Membership; Publications; and Research and Planning.

In addition, ad hoc committees are appointed to carry out special projects, and discussion groups meet regularly at ALA conferences to converse on topics and issues of common interest. Established discussion groups include: Cataloging; Classical, Medieval, and Renaissance; College and Medium-Sized Libraries; General Membership; Germanists; Romance Languages; Scandinavian; Social Sciences and History; Special Topics (for other geographic or thematic topics).

In cooperation with ACRL, WESS annually awards the Coutts Nijhoff International West European Specialist Study Grant to an academic librarian. The grant supports two weeks of research and study in Europe on topics pertaining to Western European librarianship or the book trade.

**Electronic Discussion Groups**

WESS also sponsors several electronic discussion groups that allow members to continue to communicate year-round (see WESSWeb for complete sign-up instructions):

- WESSList: general topics and news
- WESSCMR-L: Classical, Medieval, and Renaissance studies
- WESS-CML: College and medium-sized libraries
- German-E: German studies
- NORDLIB: Nordic area studies
- WESS-Rom: Romance-languages
- WESS-SSH: Social sciences and history