

**Skit Performed at the 2001 ALA Annual Conference
by the ALA Committee on Professional Ethics**

Carpe Per Diem: Whose Business Is It?

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[Players: Director, Associate Director, 2 librarians – one a novice -- & a business manager; Scene: the two librarians who have just returned from ALA in Los Angeles are turning in their travel forms to the business manager in the Administrative office.]

Business Manager: How was the trip to LA?

Librarian 1: Oh it was great. I got to so many programs and I've come back with so many good ideas.

Librarian 2: Yeah, did you hear John Berry speak about the new ALA goals?

L1: Oh yeah, that was great. I've never been to ALA before. There were so many great programs. It's too bad our associate director wasn't didn't get to that one – given our own strategic planning exercises here.

L2: Really? He wasn't there? He told me he was planning to go to that session.

L1: Our ethics committee met twice, and he wasn't at either one of those meetings either.

L2: Hmm, come to think of it. The only time I saw him was at the LA Grille with a vendor, drinking cocktails and eating steak.

BM: [rises from her desk while looking through her papers] That's funny, Assistant Director Bookman, turned in a per diem for every single day he was there.

L1: Come to think of it, I also saw him with another vendor in the bar in the hotel.

L2: What day was that?

L1: Well, it was Saturday, the same day he was supposed to be on a panel. He didn't show up, and somebody else had to pinch hit for him at the last minute.

BM: I have another reimbursement request for Saturday.

- L1: This is very strange; maybe we should talk to him about this.
- L2: No way, not me. He writes our evaluations, remember?
- BM: Well, it's really my job to talk to him. I think I am the one to do it.

[Scene 2 – BM's office – she is alone and Asst. Director Bookman comes in.]

- Assistant Director: I hear you have some questions about my reimbursement request.
- BM: Well yes John, I do. Several of the librarians saw you at meals with vendors, but you have turned in a per diem for dinner for every single day of the conference.
- AD: Uh...uh...who's saying I was wining and dining with vendors?
- BM: That's beside the point. The point is, it looks like you are asking us to pay for meals somebody else paid for.
- AD: Well yeah, I went out and ate with some vendors, but it was Saturday, and Saturday was my day off.
- BM: [BM stands up and tears his reimbursement form in half] Well, then I guess you don't need a reimbursement for Saturday after all.

[Scene three – the director's office]

- AD: You know, I just don't think that new business manager is going to work out.
- Director: Oh? Why do you say that?
- AD: Well, she just doesn't seem like she wants to be a team player. She doesn't understand how we do things around here.
- D: What kinds of things John?
- AD: You know, when I'm working for the university with vendors, I don't think I owe anyone an explanation, and she's asking for one.
- D: Oh, I see.

AD: And you know, we have a couple of junior librarians here too that might be better suited for a different kind of library environment.

[Scene four – the Reference office]

L2: You know, I don't think Bookman went to a single program. And did you see that tan? He didn't have one when he left!

L1: I know. I even left messages on the board but he never picked them up. I do know he took his golf clubs with him—we came in on the same plane together.

L2: Gee whiz, we had to stay in the Holiday Inn four miles out, but I understand, Bookman stayed at the conference hotel. I don't think he shared the room either!

L1: Should we tell Skinner that it looks like he is abusing his privileges?

L2: Well I don't feel real good about doing that; I didn't get to every session either.

L1: No one can really go to all of them.

[MEANWHILE – the Business manager is having this discussion with herself:]

BM: It sure looks like Bookman had a good time on the university's back. I wonder if I should say anything to Director Skinner about this. I need this job, and I can't afford to jeopardize my position. But I have worked with these two librarians and they seem like straight shooters to me. I have no reason not to believe them. If I blow the whistle here, what's going to happen to me?

[The librarians interrupt the business manager]

L1: You know we've been talking about this and we're kind of uneasy.

L2: Yeah, we think Bookman is abusing his privileges but we don't really have any hard evidence.

L1: Is this really such a big deal? I mean, after all, he has to negotiate with vendors, right?

L2: Um...yeah...but does that mean he doesn't have to handle his committee responsibilities? Come to think of it, I really very seldom see him at committee meetings.

L2: They didn't tell us how to deal with this in library school. What do we do?

BM: I don't know what to do. [Looks to audience] What would you do?