



I'm so excited that the Annual Conference this year is in my hometown. As a passionate steward of government information in Chicago, here are a few highlights of my city and my collection.

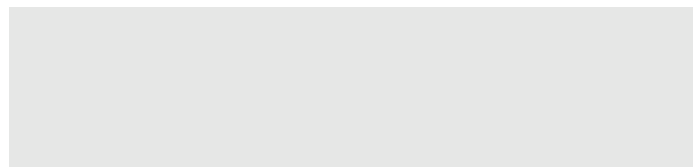
The last time the American Library Association conference was in Chicago was the Midwinter Meetings held in February 2015, when attendees got a taste of Chicago's winter. Between Saturday night and Monday morning, more than nineteen inches of snow fell as librarians settled into hotel rooms and bars from Streeterville to McCormick Place.¹ In winters past, such storms have at times been politically significant. After the Blizzard of 1979, Jane Byrne won the mayoral election in an unprecedented upset. Chicagoans had re-elected the incumbent mayor in the five previous elections (Richard J. Daley served from 1955 to 1976). Michael Bilandic's term as mayor could have been the start to another dynasty, if not for the snow. You could take Whet Moser's word for it, in "Snowpocalypse: How the Blizzard of 1979 Cost the Election for Michael Bilandic."² Or you could use the government information expertise and collections of the Chicago Public Library.

If you are interested in mayoral history, there are biographies and inaugural addresses from the first mayor to the current one on the "Chicago Mayors" page of the Chicago Public Library website.³ Perhaps you want to see local newspaper articles; if so, the Municipal Reference Collection's clipping file is still the best way to find articles organized by subject. Doubt the election results? Try viewing the Chicago Board of Elections returns from 1886 to 1981 on aperture cards, which are a type of microform especially suited for folio-sized hand-written ledgers that had the vote totals. Chicago's weather records? The National Weather Service has a webpage devoted to Chicago's Official Extreme Weather Records.⁴

At the most recent Midwinter Meeting in Atlanta in January 2017, some attendees marched with the Atlanta March for Social Justice and Women.⁵ The city was prepared for the protest. The beautiful lawns and gardens of Centennial Olympic Park were fenced off, and marchers were kept on streets that were closed to traffic. Police officers and protesters were giving high fives to each other. I can't help but reflect on the contrast between this protest and protests held in Chicago during the summer of 1968.

If you're unfamiliar with what happened when Chicago hosted the Democratic National Convention in August 1968,

it was pretty much the opposite of what happened in Atlanta. But you don't have to take my word for itpic



Note

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