Bet You Missed It

Rosann Bazirjian

Florida State University
A Dad's Story  
by Twyla Racz  
(Eastern Michigan University)

William MacLeish reminiscences about his father, especially about his father’s years as Librarian of Congress. Originally Archibald MacLeish had refused President Roosevelt’s request because he was immersed in his writing (six years previously he had won a Pulitzer Prize), and he knew this would be a time demanding assignment. When he left Washington after the president’s death,

it was difficult for him to re-adjust and to begin writing again. But he did, and was the recipient of several more Pulitzers. His son writes that in this “anxious time,” his father would want “us to have his greatest strength, his hope.” See — William H. MacLeish, “Remembering Archie,” Civilization, vol. 2 (6) (Nov/Dec., 1995), p. 44-49.

Say it isn’t so? OK, so it isn’t  
by Rick Heldrich  
(College of Charleston)

It had to be too good to be true. And it was. Too good to be true that is. A February paper in Angewandte Chemie reported on the use of magnetic radiation (similar to the form of energy used in medicine to achieve MRI scans) as a means of creating a stereochemical preference in the assembly of organic molecules. If true, this could have given a clue as to the creation of life, which utilizes molecules in stereochemically preferred arrangements. (e.g., Try shaking hands with a colleague by extending your left hand. Your right and left hands exhibit stereochemical preference.) The stereochemical outcome reported in February has not been reproducible, and after examination, the postdoctoral researcher who did the original work has admitted to falsification. Professor Meyers, a well respected organic chemist who tried, unsuccessfully, to reproduce the results, was quoted as saying: “If you are going to cheat, cheat on something so unimportant that no one will repeat it.” See — Daniel Clery & David Bradley, Underhanded ‘Breakthrough’ Revealed, Science, 1994, 265, 21.

A Cartographic Revival  
by Twyla Racz  
(Eastern Michigan University)

In 1891, at the Fifth International Geographical Congress, it was proposed that the entire world be mapped at a scale of 1 to 1 million. This International Map of the World, the IMW, would have uniformity. The project would be called Carte Internationale du Monde au Millionème. After 20 years of debates, the project was started in 1913, and after two world wars, came under the auspices of the U.N. which killed the project in 1987. Over 800 maps, however, were created which are works of art. There is a possibility that the U.N. might revive the project. The author exclaims: “let us begin a new cartographic revolution ... and, this time, finish the job!” See — Simon Winchester, "Taking the World’s Measure," Civilization, vol. 2 (6) (Nov/Dec., 1995), p. 44-49.

The PDA Connection  
by Pamela Rose  
(SUNY Buffalo)

Research at the lake! This article describes a successful pilot project to test the feasibility of using Personal Digital Assistants (PDAs) to provide connection to library OPACs and online search services at the University of South Alabama. See — Clifton Dale Foster, “The Library Without a Roof,” Online, vol. 19 (5) (Sept/Oct 1995), p. 20.

Decisions, Decisions  
by Philip Dankert  
(Cornell University)

Noting that some scholars in the humanities are playing a lead role (although rather minuscule when looking at the “big picture”) in important efforts that are now underway to create electronic documents, this article raises some critical questions, i.e., what kinds of documents, in what form do researchers need, can electronic technology open up new avenues of research, do we want or even need to digitize all the records we use, and, even if we do, would it be financially feasible. Perhaps the most crucial question, however, is “who will make the ultimate decisions about what will be available on the National Information Infrastructure?” See — Raymond W. Smock, “What Promise Does the Internet Hold for Scholars,” Chronicle of Higher Education, September 22, 1995, p. B1-B2.

Virtual Law Library  
by Pamela Rose  
(SUNY Buffalo)

This article provides a brief guide to the growing virtual law library available over the net with addresses and log-in instructions, including law school homepages, newsgroups such as alt.law.oj-simpson, and Project Hermes at Case Western for Supreme Court decisions within an hour of release. See — David Noack, “Law and Order,” Internet World, vol. 6 (3) (March, 1995), p. 69.
Outsourcing: You Haven't Seen Anything Yet
by Rosann Bazirjian
(Florida State University)

This is a special advertising section on outsourcing! The article focuses on outsourcing as a "powerful tool for business growth" and provides a list of the top five tactical resources for outsourcing, as well as the top five strategic reasons for outsourcing. There are then approximately 40 pages of business outsourcing arrangements currently in place for companies such as Papa John's Pizza and AT&T. Although focused on the commercial sector, this was an eye-opening article. See — "Outsourcing: How Industry Leaders Are Reshaping the American Corporation," *Fortune*, vol. 132 (8) (Oct. 16, 1995), p. 173-223.

Who Are You Betting On?
by Rosann Bazirjian
(Florida State University)

This article discusses the current state of affairs between cable and telephone companies. Not too long ago, there was talk of mergers and partnerships aimed at creating large digital networks that would bring movies, e-mail, television and computer files into our living rooms. Now, however, we see the opposite occurring. We see telephone companies and cable television attempting to get into each other's business. Andrew Kupfer discusses the pro's and con's for each side, and analyzes some of the obstacles they are both facing. See — Andrew Kupfer, "Can Cable Win Its Phone Bet?" *Fortune*, vol. 132 (6) (Sept. 18, 1995), p. 175-188.

Newtoniana Collection
by Pamela Rose
(SUNY Buffalo)

The Dibner Institute for the History of Science and Technology at MIT and Babson College in Wellesley have amalgamated their Newtoniana collections to be permanently housed in Dibner's Burdy Library. All the important editions of all of Isaac Newton's writings, as well as his death mask, are under one roof, making it the largest collection of Newton material outside the United Kingdom. See — Constance Holden, editor, "Newton Goes to Cambridge," in Random Samples section, *Science*, vol. 270 (Nov. 3, 1995), p. 739.

It's on the Web
by Pamela Rose
(SUNY Buffalo)


Dell: On the Road Again
by Rosann Bazirjian
(Florida State University)

This article is about a computer prodigy other than Bill Gates! It is about Michael Dell and Dell Computers. The article discusses possible reasons for the businesses' 1993 decline in sales and their current strategy for success. Dell is now focusing on direct marketing of their computers, rather than retail sales, and concentrating on customizing computers for its customers via phone and fax through a direct-sales force. This change in strategy, combined with a new group of experienced executives, has set Dell on the path to success. See — Rahul Jacob, "The Resurrection of Michael Dell," *Fortune*, vol. 132 (6) (Sept. 18, 1995), p. 117-128.

Lights, Cameras, Action?
by Twyla Racz
(Eastern Michigan University)

The Library of Congress is leading the efforts to preserve old films. It is a race against time because both old and new films face disintegration. Therefore, in 1993, the National Film Preservation Plan was developed which includes a federally charted foundation to raise money for preservation. In order to heighten public awareness, the National Film Registry was established which adds 25 films with "cultural, historical or aesthetic significance" each year to its list. In addition, 30 of these films will tour to be seen in public theaters all over the country. See — James H. Billington, "The Race to Preserve Old Films," *Civilization*, vol. 2 (6) (Nov/Dec 1995), p. 91.

From the Other Side of the Street
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it red ink?) that it is hard to tell the difference between the cutting and the bleeding edge.

Libraries are very far more ready to receive and use electronic publications than are the rest of the markets we serve. The critical mass of customer base is not there yet for many of us to push ahead. We continue to watch, and learn, and feel that is an appropriate strategy.

But, I digress, back to Charleston. Not only were publishers not heard from the podium, they were also not heard from the floor. I simply do not understand why the publishers in attendance by and large did not speak up more often or ask questions. I would think it was a conspiracy of silence, if it wasn't working against us. Consequently, a number of misconceptions about publishers went unanswered.

One of my colleagues said, "This is a tough conference for publishers," and admitted to not wanting to come back. This is clearly not the answer. Tough or not, the Herculean goals of this conference are circumvented by publishers not attending and not speaking up. I agree with Judy Webster who said at the close of the conference that there are still tough issues that are being danced around. My experience is that the conference is good enough to take them on. I think it serves everyone best to continue to bring up these issues, come out into the open and discuss them rationally, leaving out the unfair potshots, and giving everyone their chance to be heard.

Who knows, if my parents had done that, perhaps they’d still be married.