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Bet You Missed It/ From the News

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Bet You Missed It

Press Clippings — In the News

Column Editor **ROSANN BAZIRJIAN** (Syracuse University)

Is Your Staff Size Down?

by **Rosann Bazirjian** (Syracuse University)

Of an estimated 1.6 million jobs lost between 1982 and 1990, 680,000 were the result of downsizing. Dan Lacey of Workplace Trends, a consulting firm, predicts that the pace will quicken during 1992 and continue even after the economy recovers. Companies are "flattening their organizations and shrinking payrolls to a core of highly productive primary employees." To stay atop of the trend, we are informed that businesses are developing team concepts in their employment configurations. These "self-managing teams" master every stage of the process for which they are responsible, from repairing equipment to actual supervision. General Mills is utilizing this concept, and has increased productivity by 40%. In

addition, many businesses are turning to "staff leasing" to provide workers when needed. Instead of adding new permanent positions, workers are hired from a temporary agency. We need to be aware of these two very important trends as many of us are experiencing downsizing within our own universities. The concept of self-managing teams is not one we should brush off. As we continue to automate and merge functions within our acquisitions and cataloging and serials departments, aren't we already doing this to a certain extent? Ahead of the times? Probably not, but certainly getting there!

See — Richman, Louis S. "America's Tough New Job Market," *Fortune*, February 24, 1992, p. 52-61.

Save Our Currency

by **Pamela Rose**

(State University of New York at Buffalo)

An urgent plea from seven members of the Russian Academy of Sciences has been sent to the U.S. for help in keeping incoming subscriptions to scientific journals at their 1991 levels. Their letter, sent to the editor of *Physics Today*, cites "the absence of hard currency" as the major problem. Vitalii I. Goldanskii, a physicist in

the Russian group, is director of the N. N. Semenov Institute of Chemical Physics, Ulitsa Kosygina, 4, 117334, Moscow.

See — Holden, Constance. "SOS from Russian Scientists." *Science*, January, 1992, p. 538.

All the Walton That's Fit to Print

by **Lynne BrancheBrown**
(Pennsylvania State University)

Doubleday bid a record \$4 million for the rights to founder and Chairman of Wal-Mart Stores Inc., Sam Walton's autobiography. This is the largest sum ever offered for a business biography. According to the *Wall Street Journal*, Bill Barry (deputy publisher of Doubleday) has been pursuing Sam Walton for nearly four years. John Huey, a senior editor at *Fortune* magazine, will co-author the book with Walton. Other publishers have expressed both surprise and alarm at the high advance. (Lee Iacocca reportedly received a

\$150,000 advance for his memoirs). One losing bidder said "it shows publishers feel compelled to gamble for big hits in a slow time." The *Wall Street Journal* estimates that the book will have to sell 1 million hardcover copies to break even. Doubleday is banking on Mr. Walton's appeal to both the business audience and "the vast number of middle Americans who shop in his stores."

See — "Walton's Book is a Big Winner in Advance," by Meg Cox. *Wall Street Journal*, Feb. 7, 1992, p.B1.

Coalesce Not, Coalition Not

by **Sarah Tusa** (Lamar University)

For those who are following the progress of computer standards, *Business Week* provides an update on the card games, as it were, surrounding Advanced Computing Environment (ACE). Conceived as the ultimate industry standard for all computers, ACE was supposed to be the product of a computer industry coalition that is having trouble coalescing. Stating it in game terms, the object is to minimize the number of "chips" one is left holding. Instead, in order to attract more players to the game, MIPS Computer Systems Inc. has offered three different ACE operating systems. Since

each of the three is designed to accommodate either Intel- or MIPS-based hardware, the reported result is "six possible combinations." Having too many options hinders the critical development of software to run on the "standard" because software developers cannot predict "which combination will survive." Conflicting needs and interests among key players such as Digital Equipment and Compaq Computers are cited as major factors in keeping ACE "in the hole."

See — "Why Ace May be in the Hole," by Robert D. Hof, *Business Week*, February 17, 1992, p. 132

Computer Images or Bust

by **Lynne BrancheBrown**
(Pennsylvania State University)

Art librarians and museum curators will be interested to know that William Gates is finding that acquiring the electronic rights to fine arts and photography images is tougher than he expected. Gates has been pursuing the art museum and photographic communities for nearly 18 months, but has yet to sign a deal with any major institution. According to the *Wall Street Journal*, Mr. Gates' unscholarly approach, "frequently talking about mixing images of famous paintings with cheesy, naturalistic photos of mountains," may be his major hindrance. A Berkeley, California company, AXS, is having more success. It has enlisted leading artists and educators to act as advisers in developing electronic tools to help museums with managing and preserving their collections. Stuart Marston, CEO of AXS, sees electronic publishing as a by-product of their management services. (AXS has exclusive rights to works in the Frick

and the Brooklyn Museums and is currently working with the National Gallery in Washington, DC). Contenders see vast possibilities for electronic images of art and photographic works; "electronic images in museum displays, software to manage collections, digital libraries that consumers can tap from home computers or portable electronic products." Mr. Gates is intent on building consumer products. He believes that within the next 10 years there will be "a mass audience for electronic still-images of all sorts." But museums and photographic houses seem to be in no rush. Says Michael Ester of the Getty Museum, "we know we may only [transfer images to electronic form] once a generation, so we want to do it right."

See — "Gate's Bid to Acquire Art Images for Computers is Coolly Received." by G. Pascal Zachary, *Wall Street Journal*, Feb. 11, 1992, p. B1.

A Fault Does Not An Earthquake Make

by **Pamela Rose**
(State University of New York at Buffalo)

The National Science Foundation is considering, for the fourth time, the demise of its slick quarterly of cutting-edge science, *Mosaic*. Institutional critics fault publishing costs of \$400,000/year with only 2200 paid subscribers. The National Science Foundation wants to

reach a broader audience, in particular "opinion leaders" according to NSF press officer Michael Fluharty, and would replace *Mosaic* with a more popular journal.

See — Hamilton, David P. ed. "Targeting *Mosaic*." *Science*, January 1992, p. 523.

An Article A Day Keeps the Dean Away

by **Rick Heldrich** (College of Charleston)

An aside listed the top 20 of "The World's Most Prolific Scientists." The startling presentation of these prolific scientists including a column of data on the days between published papers was 8.6, with a range from 3.9 days to 11.3 days. Of the top 20, national representations were 9 Americans, 4 Russians, 4 English, 1 German, 1 Belgian, and 1 Japanese. By discipline, there are more chemists (5) than any other

group. The physical sciences and the life science were about evenly represented. Who was top: the Russian Chemist, Yury T. Struchkov. The top American was, Thomas E. Starzl, in surgery. The list was based on the period from 1981-90 when there still was a Russian empire.

See — "The World's Most Prolific Scientists." *Science*, January 17, 1992, v. 255, p. 283.

Buy High, Sell Low

by **Rick Heldrich** (College of Charleston)

How do university presses cope with current economic realities? What they are not doing, apparently, is abandoning the academicians who might not otherwise get their manuscripts published, or the user who wants the proven, but low-selling classic texts. Instead, they are attempting creative strategies that generate revenue which can support "their primary mission to disseminate scholarly thought." High on the university press want list is the scholarly work that is readable by and of interest to the general public. While these are not easy to find, they appear to be essential for financial survival. The academic text that routinely sold 1500 copies in 1975, is selling somewhere between 1000 and 150 copies in today's market. A compounding problem faced by university presses is the dwindling dollars available to library subscribers and the rising cost of journals. When push comes to shove,

journals do the shoving and pushing at the expense of university press titles. Some presses require author subsidies to publish monographs. Many authors are paying up in the tradition of the publish or perish syndrome. Other presses have given up on monographs of limited interest. Some expect future monographs will be the domain of electronic media.

The good news is that the houses are now afraid of commercial materials with an expected sale of less than 15,000 copies and the university presses are making a play to capture that market. These trade type books will support other activities of the university press and some argue improve the situation with regard to more traditional academic services.

See — Clemmitt, Marcia. "Academic Book Publishers Pursue Survival in Recessionary Times." *The Scientist*, v. 6, no. 1, January 6, 1992, page 1.

Even Horror Sings the Blues

by **Katina Strauch** (College of Charleston)
article courtesy of **Celia Wagner** (Blackwells)

A survey of consumer book-buying habits doesn't bode well for the art of reading or for the art of publishing. This study by the ABA, the AAP, and the BISG "was the first examination of buying habits." It studied the book-buying habits of 16,000 households for one year and found that "60% of U.S. households didn't buy a book last year, and the largest group of book buyers is senior citizens." Moving right along: "Two-thirds of all books

bought last year were popular fiction, and in mass-market paperbacks, almost half the books sold were romance novels."

See — Cox, Meg. "Even Stephen King Might Get Scared By These Figures." *Wall Street Journal*, January 10, 1992, p.B3.

Chemical Market Share

by **Rick Heldrich** (College of Charleston)

At the age of 82, Hans Neurath, the University of Washington (Seattle) biochemist who served for 30 years as editor of *Biochemistry* (1962-91), has started a novel enterprise in the monthly, *Protein Science*. With every issue comes a Macintosh disk with "kinemages." "Kinemages" are 3-D structures and figures which a reader can interactively view on a personal computer. The reader can highlight, rotate, view conformational changes, and obtain distance measurements. *Protein Structure* may soon provide IBM/clone readable discs. At the present time, *Protein Structure* generates the "kinemages" and asks the author to edit/improve them prior to publication. The future goal is to have

authors provide kinemages directly to the journal when submitting manuscripts, but whether or not authors will assume this burden is questionable at this time. *Protein Structures* also hopes the "kinemages" will see use as educational tools. In fact, plans are to make educational examples a part of the journal offering. An added benefit is that the "kinemages" can be used to obtain atom coordinate files for secondary use by the reader in personal databases.

See — Borman, Stu. "Kinemages" Bring Journal Illustration into the Computer Age." *Chemical and Engineering News*, February 17, 1992, v.70, no. 7, pp. 26-27.

The Library That Ate Manhattan

by **Rick Heldrich** (College of Charleston)

An abandoned 13 story department store in New York City will be converted into a Science Library, to be opened Christmas 1995. Called the Science, Industry and Business Library (SIBL), the project is run by the New York Public Library. Collections will include periodicals (60,000) and patents such that it will be one of the world's most complete specialized science libraries. The New York Library system is already rated along with major academic research libraries, and this will only increase its status. A particular strength of the SIBL will be its extensive collection of foreign science periodicals. Planned services of the new SIBL include document delivery and 24 hour online search capability. Support will be provided by disci-

pline librarians (i.e., chemistry, finance, physics, etc.) as opposed to generic science librarians. Users will include local and remote (via phone) patrons, with a heavy expectation for continued use by small business and scientific enterprises. Consolidation of the public collections/services into a single location is expected to make it easier on both patrons and librarians. The total cost of the project will be supported by reserve capital (\$70 million); grants (\$25 million); state allocation (\$7.5 million); congressional support (\$1 million); and state bonds (\$55 million). Total projected cost=\$163.5 million.

See — Eisner, Robin. "A Versatile New Science Library Grows in Manhattan," *The Scientist*, Jan. 20, 1992, v. 6, No. 2, p.1.

Raw Power Meets Common Sense

by **Rachel Miller** (University of Kansas)

With text retrieval based on literal Boolean logic, extracting the perfect piece of information from a database of documents is often a needle-in-the-haystack problem. The answer: intelligent text retrieval software that can combine the "raw power" of computers with the "common sense" of human researchers. Two firms in the smart searching business are Fulcrum (Ottawa, Canada) and Verity (Mountain View, California). Verity's Topic software, a descendant of the "fuzzy logic" school of artificial intelligence, can filter information and rank retrieved documents in importance. It can also make

connections between documents that fit the user's query and loosely related documents. Composing a query on a particular subject requires more effort from the user, but once drafted, the same query can be applied over and over to large volumes of data. Analysts predict the demand for retrieval software will quadruple by 1995 as intelligent searching systems bring corporate users into a market where legal, academic and scientific users now predominate.

See — "Haystack Searching." by David Churbuck, *Forbes*, February 17, 1992, p. 130-131.

Foreign Aid

by Pamela Rose (SUNY, Buffalo)

Proposals to support scientists in the former Soviet Union are under review by the current administration. One such plan proposed by Richard Getzinger, Director of International Programs for AAAS "would extend, free of charge, subscriptions to Western journals..." The time required to obtain approval, determine the number of subscriptions and get the program rolling could mean help too late, as the need is critical and immediate.

See — Dickman, Steven. "First Aid for Russian Science." *Science*, February, 1992, p. 793.

Serial, Serial, Go Away

by L.K. Carr (Boston Univ.)

In 1990, Margaret Hawthorn, serials librarian with the University of Toronto library system, surveyed 223 general academic libraries in the U.S. and Canada to determine the existence and use of policies for serials selection and deselection. The responses were tracked according to type of library: larger research-oriented institutions with more than 5,000 periodicals subscriptions or smaller curriculum-oriented libraries with 1,500-4,999 subscriptions. Questions focused on the serials selection and review processes. In addition to information about the existence of specific policies, the survey sought responses regarding allocations for new serials, the status of those responsible for initiating new subscriptions, the criteria used in the assessment of possible new subscriptions, and the criteria used in reviews of established subscriptions. A copy of the questionnaire is included, as are charts and graphs illustrating the responses to the survey.

See — Hawthorn, Margaret. "Serials Selection and Deselection: A Survey of North American Academic Libraries." *Serials Librarian*, 1991, v.21, no.1, pp. 29-45.

Legally Speaking

continued from page 7

wish it had been decided on the merits, rather than the lack of "standing" of the plaintiffs and the lack of "ripeness" to their constitutional claim. The chances of enforcement, even wrongful enforcement, against any of the plaintiffs do seem very remote. Whether these chances are remote or not, the severity of the potential consequences may in fact lead to self-censorship of protected erotic material. If that is so, does that render the statute unconstitutional, or even undesirable? Can the legitimate aim of curtailing child pornography be accomplished without casting some chill on borderline material? If not, how do we balance the societal goal of protecting children from exploitation with the constitutional protections of free speech?

I am not sure how we should balance those objectives. The ALA and ABA seem to take the position that no chill on protected speech, no matter how remote, and no matter what the

competing objective, is acceptable. That seems extreme to me. The behavior which the government seeks to control here is the use of "minors" in "sexually explicit" productions. "Sexually explicit" is defined as one or more of the following: 1) sexual intercourse; 2) bestiality; 3) masturbation; 4) sado-masochistic abuse; and 5) lascivious exhibition of genitals or pubic area. I recognize the problems associated with this definition, particularly in the vagueness of the term "lascivious." Further, the seizure provisions of the law are open to abuse, as happened when the FBI raided the San Francisco home of photographer Jack Sturges, seizing both expressive and non-expressive materials.

Yet, pornographic exploitation of children does take place. Is some First Amendment "chill" an acceptable price to pay to prevent such exploitation, and if so, how much? Again, I am not sure. As librarians, publishers and booksellers, we should think about it. I, for one, cannot just follow the lead of the ALA and ABA on this one. ☹

Decision-Making

continued from page 18

mission statements as guidance for appropriate activities.

A perhaps disturbing piece of information revealed at the conference was the fact that Rutgers, due to a staffing shortage, is passing the work of bibliographic verification along to their vendor.

Question: *Is bibliographic verification an appropriate role for vendors? What are the implications of this blurring of roles?*

7) Decide who is going to monitor the results of the decision, how frequently and on what basis.

Once a decision has been made, some mechanism must be devised for evaluating the consequences of the implementation.

Question: *How often do we decide to make a change then neglect to test the results? Is that vendor really getting our rush orders as quickly as we expected?*

8) Be conscious of the need to share the decision.

Effective decision-making is not complete until all of the parties involved/affected are informed regarding the change. A theme throughout this conference and those past is the need for continual communication among the parties.

Question: *Are we sharing our assumptions/decisions with one another in our daily grind the way we espouse this open sharing at the conference?*

The value of questioning assumptions and sharing information/experience are implicit to the Charleston Conference and to an effective decision-making process. If each of us leaves Charleston with a little better understanding of the issues before us and the perspectives of others, and applies this enhanced knowledge in our daily transactions with one another, we improve our abilities to effectively influence the future that lies before us. ☹