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Sandra K. Paul
SKP Associates

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Chaos

by **Sandra K. Paul** (President, SKP Associates)

Electronic Media: Chaos Prevails, But There's Hope in Sight

Mark your calendars now! On Sunday, June 26, 1994, starting at 9 (or possibly 9:30) A.M., somewhere in beautiful downtown Miami, the ALA ALCTS Joint Committee with the Association of American Publishers (AAP/ALCTS) are co-sponsoring a program entitled "Selecting Products in Electronic Formats: A Dialogue on the Critical Information Librarians Require." AND it will be a dialogue. The concept is that there will be no presentations and lots of mikes around the floor. Each of those invited to participate in the dialogue will be given the five (5) questions that will kick off the dialogue in advance. The co-chairs (and co-moderators) Katina Strauch and I, will coordinate this panel with the RASD Codes Committee developing a Computer-Assisted Evaluation Tool and will ask NISO to consider the outcome of the session as the basis for an ANSI/NISO standard. We're also seeking lots of co-sponsors.

The participants include the following librarians: college/university librarian TBA; **Mae Brotzman**, Glenbrook North High School in Northbrook, IL; **Pam Berger**, Byram Hills High School, Armonk, NY; and **Phyllis Young**, County of Los Angeles Public Library. Electronic publishing participants are **Sonja Gustafson** of Microsoft and **Sherry Sullivan** from the H.W. Wilson Company. Final participant is **Cheryl Laguardia**, the *Library Journal* multimedia reviewer.

It's most appropriate that I'm writing this column on this topic today. Not only do I hope that those of you who buy and sell electronic media will join us and fill the hall, but I have just completed writing two talks which I will be presenting aboard the QE2 when she leaves New York for England tomorrow (and then I'm off to the Frankfurt Book Fair). The talks are entitled "Have You Accessed Any Good Books Lately? Electronic Delivery of Books, Magazines & Newspapers Has Become Reality in the U.S.A." and "The World Within Your Reach: International Information Available Today and Coming Soon to Your

Home and Office." As you can see, I'll be describing some wonderful electronic media and thought I'd cheat and share some of it with you.

FundWatch is a mutual funds screening service from Money magazine which analyzes, compares and ranks over 1,900 mutual funds. It provides the assets, expenses, major shareholdings and portfolio breakdown by industry sector. Updated monthly, it is available through CompuServe.

The *Phone*File* service brings you telephone white pages (address and phone number) PLUS length of residence for 80 million U.S. households, with powerful search assistance by name, state, city or zip code. It is available on CompuServe.

Passport's *World Travel Translator* for Sony Data Discman is a CD-ROM with words and expressions needed to survive and communicate in 10 languages. It includes a special automotive section with digitized graphics. Prices vary by product.

The *DeLorme Global Explorer* CD-ROM has full-color maps of the world, street maps of major cities, topographic maps of the planet, country profiles, world air routes and indexed references to 120,000 places and 20,000 historic/cultural/geographical features. \$169.

Zagat's City Guides are software listings of restaurants, hotels, and landmarks in major cities. It allows you to search and retrieve the listings by price, services, type of food, quality rating and health facilities. Also includes interactive maps.

A Hard Day's Night, in its Voyager CD-ROM includes the uncut version of the Beatles' film, a photo "album", the film trailer, an interview with the director and clips from his earlier works, bios of the Beatles, short pieces about the songs and stories about other people related to the film. While you watch the film, you can follow the script text. \$39.95.

Hell Cab is a CD-ROM game in which the goal is to survive a New York City sightseeing tour guided by Raul, the possessed cab driver. It takes you through 3 centuries with live actors moving around in 3 dimension scenes giving you clues and encouragement.

Make Your Own Comics provides you with a "toolbox" that allows you to create your own comic book, with help in the proper use of dialogue, plot, suspense and character development. Due out shortly.

Barcode Battler is a video game that originated in Japan, has reached the U.K. and we are told is heading for the U.S. What makes it so intriguing is that barcodes on groceries brought home from the supermarket are scanned into the game and become characters in this battle. Which products become the most potent warriors are left to the kids to determine. In Japan a particular brand of noodles sold out because of the strength of the warrior its bar code created.

Spaceship Princess combines an interactive pictorial history of Her Royal Highness the Princess of Whales with a science fiction fantasy. As the story opens, Princess Diana is trapped on Planet Chucksmum and your job is to assist her in a daring escape onto an alien spaceship rechristened *Spaceship Princess* in her honor. Many adventures follow, including outrunning the evil Tabloidians and foiling assassination attempts by the bomb-throwing Shamrockers. It has fascinating facts, engrossing stories and clever quizzes "that will keep Anglophiles and royal-watchers glued to their screens." \$39.99

Seven Days in August focuses on the week leading up to the construction of the Berlin Wall — August 10-16, 1961 — from the perspective of Berliners, biographies of such politicians as JFK and Nikita Krushchev, as well as what was happening in America at the time from the hit TV shows and funny papers to a baseball trivia quiz and matching outfits Jackie Kennedy wore for official functions. \$79.98

Power Japanese is a language course on 14 floppy disks, with sound-adaptor plug headphones, a dictionary, flash cards

and exercise book. The course covers phonetic syllables, two grammar sections, sentence patterns, grammatical concepts, translation and reading. It includes pronunciation tips and etiquette lessons as well. \$389

The Rosetta Stone is described as a foreign language teaching system on CD-ROM, available in Spanish, English, French and German versions. It allows the users to select from 12 modes of learning and does so through the use of color, pictures and text, with sound that allows the users to record their own pronunciation and compare it with the instructor's. \$395

Complete House covers a wide spectrum of information including such subjects as the history of the bathroom since Roman times. A section called "House Design" explains design concepts and construction techniques. The CD-ROM includes a simplified Computer-Assisted-Design (CAD) program that allows you to create floor plans. \$99

Have you read any good TV lately? *Journal Graphics Online* provides transcripts and videos from ALL CNN shows, 11 ABC News programs, 4 National Public Radio news shows, 4 CBS radio news shows, five syndicated programs including Donahue, 12 PBS shows, etc., with easy to access program. Demo available free — and great!

The Archivo General de Indias in Seville Spain houses a collection of over 90 million pages of historic written documents relating to Christopher Columbus, housed in over 5 1/2 miles of shelving. To preserve these deteriorating materials and improve access, the Archive is currently placing the materials on optical discs and is providing access through a computerized system.

Mayo Clinic Family Health Book CD-ROM — from Interactive Ventures (800/356-5000) includes: a Self-guided anatomy lesson; instruction on infant CPR; comprehensive information on health and disease; and over 45 live videos and animations.

Compton's Interactive Encyclopedia is priced at \$400 and includes: any word available in Meriam-Webster dictionary and Thesaurus; an interactive world atlas; more than 33,000 articles, 10,000 images, and nearly 100 video animations and sound montages and is available for the Mac, DOS and Windows. It competes with Microsoft's *Encarta* & Grolier's *Multimedia Encyclopedia* at the same price.

The Lifestyles of the Rich and Famous Cookbook is Compton's multimedia food extravaganza, with recipe cards and party books.

Musical Instruments, from Dorling Kindersley, contains words and pictures that one reads and reflects on just as with printed page — but also sound, and movement.

NTC's *Languages of the World* is a dictionary with definitions, translations and synonyms among 12 languages, including Chinese, Danish, Dutch, English, Finnish, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Norwegian, Spanish and Swedish. It contains more than 17 million words.

Isaac Asimov's The Ultimate Robot, with 50 years of magazine and book covers, the complete text of all he wrote on robots, bibliography, movie footage, and the ability to design your own robot. \$50 - \$70

The International Herald Tribune Guide to Business Travel in Europe (on CD-ROM) has information on money, language, hotels, restaurants, nightclubs, transportation, phone numbers, tipping, sports, shopping, tourism for more than 33 cities in 25 countries, with map-linked access and lots of indexes.

Stuart Moulthrop's *Victory Garden*

contains hypertext links to create fictional retelling of the Persian Gulf War, moving from place to place with the help of a map, based on a premise of Argentine writer Jorge Luis Borges' *Garden of the Forking Paths*.

Warner Books' *Desert Storm: The War in the Persian Gulf*, a joint venture between *Time* magazine and Warner New Media — Multimedia Magazine on CD-ROM. *Time* correspondents' files, audio reports, active time line, 300 full-color photographs, indexed chronologically and by subject matter.

Newsweek InterActive is a quarterly magazine on CD-ROM for Sony's Data Discman and Electronic Book Players. It started publishing in April, 1993 and blends text with video, sound, graphics and computer simulations. Each issue is dedicated to a single topic and includes 3 month's worth of relevant clippings from the *Washington Post*. It also contains multimedia ads from such advertisers as AT&T, IBM, Sony and Ford-Lincoln-Mercury.

So, catch me at the 1993 Charleston Conference for information about the QE2, the Frankfurt Book Fair, but particularly about the upcoming AAP/ALCTS Program. ☞

Request for Information

This is a request for help from any readers of *ATG* who can supply information about the history of purchasing books [but not excluding periodicals], by academic libraries.

I have been asked to write an article for a forthcoming encyclopedia on publishing. My subject is "the history of book marketing to academic/scholarly libraries."

I would welcome bibliographies of books and periodicals [or articles] that in any way shed light on the history of the way academic libraries purchased materials, especially from an historical standpoint. Having been in this business for over half of the current century, I am particularly interested in the history of library book buying in the nineteenth and preceding centuries. I will welcome all information and will certainly acknowledge source of same in my article.

Please sent information to:

Lyman Newlin
P.O. Box 278
Lewiston, New York 14092
Phone: 716-754-8145
FAX: 716-754-2707