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Bet You Missed It-Meteorites and Star Trek

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Bet You Missed It

Press Clippings — In the News — Carefully Selected by Your Crack Staff of News Sleuths

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Meteorite Custody Fight

by **Pamela M. Rose** (Univ. at Buffalo, State Univ. of NY)

In an agreement between the **American Museum of Natural History** and the **Confederated Tribes of the Grande Ronde Community** of Oregon, the **Willamette** meteorite, the largest ever found in the U.S., will remain in the museum as long as the tribes can pay annual ceremonial visits. See — “Peace Pipe Shared at New York Museum,” in **Random Samples** section edited by **Constance Holden**, *Science*, Jul. 7, 2000, p.41.

Medicine and Space Win!

by **Pamela M. Rose** (Univ. at Buffalo, State Univ. of NY)

The **National Institutes of Health (NIH)** and **National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)** Web sites are the most popular government-sponsored offerings from home computer users according to **Nielsen/NetRatings**, which tracks over 57,000 home computers’ Web wanderings. Surprisingly, only 20% of the NIH hits were for visits to the **National Library of Medicine**; disease fact sheets were more popular. See — “Health and Space Top Dot-Govs” in **NetWatch** section edited by **Jocelyn Kaiser**, *Science*, Aug. 25, 2000, p.1251.

Wanna COPPA plea?

by **Sandra Beehler** (Old Dominion University)

The July 15th issue of *Internet World* is devoted to a discussion of personal privacy on the Internet. “Playing with Plutonium” discusses how a company should handle customer data to protect itself from legal hassles. “Don’t Overlook Data Security” gives an overview of the importance of protecting data collected through Web sites. “Beware the Cost of Regulation” provides information on the costs of complying with government regulations such as **COPPA (Children’s Online Privacy Protection Act)** when doing business on the Net. What information about Net surfers is gathered by a site and whether that information should be made available to others is the subject of “The Long Road to P3P”. See — **Brian Caulfield** and **Nate Zelnick**, *Internet World*, July 15, 2000, cover story.

Loss of Standards?

by **Albert Henderson** (Editor, *Publishing Research Quarterly*)

How do you know when your college has a substandard library? Revising the **ACRL Standards for College Libraries** lost its formulas for print collections, staffing, facilities, and the following passages: “8.1 The library’s annual authorized expenditures shall be at least six percent of the total institutional expenditure for educational and general purposes. (1995 standard)” and “8.1.1 The library’s appropriation shall be augmented above the six percent level depending on the extent to which it bears responsibility for acquiring, processing, and servicing audiovisual material, and microcomputer resources.” See — **C&RL News**, 2000, pp.175-182.

We Didn’t lose Cite of You!

by **Pamela M. Rose** (Univ. at Buffalo, State Univ. of NY)

Citations don’t always correspond to usage according to **JSTOR** (www.jstor.org), an online archive of 117 journals in the arts and social sciences. It depends on the discipline; in Math, where the most viewed papers average 32 years old, theories just don’t go out of style. See — “Uncited But Not Forgotten” in **NetWatch** section edited by **Jocelyn Kaiser**, *Science*, Jul. 21, 2000, p.355.

Muzzle The Metamerger

by **Pamela M. Rose** (Univ. at Buffalo, State Univ. of NY)

While we were all enjoying ourselves at Charleston, the **Association of Research Libraries (ARL)** was asking Uncle Sam to block **Reed Elsevier’s** attempt to swallow **Harcourt General**, a deal which would create a global company with more than 1500 journals, including a large fraction of all biomedical titles. Concerned about previous mergers which drove up prices and reduced the flow of scholarly information, librarians worry about more of the same on an immense scale. The regulatory review of antitrust issues may continue well into 2001, but analysts believe the deal will go through, possibly with conditions. See — **David Malakoff**, “*Librarians Seek to Block Merger of Scientific Publishing Giants*” in *Science*, p910-11., Nov. 3, 2000.

Screen Scrapers!

by **Sandra Beehler** (Old Dominion University)

New companies **Yodlee**, **CallTheShots, Inc.**, **Moreover.com**, **Octopus.com**, and **OnePage.com** utilize “screen-scraping” software to gather bits of information from thousands of Web pages anywhere on the Web, and in the process may turn the existing web business model upside down. While traditional search engines gather whole Web pages, these new services pinpoint information in Web pages and bring it in “bite” form to the end user. This more efficient approach to information retrieval is especially useful in interfacing with wireless devices, which are rising in popularity. **Yodlee** and others are already developing ways to reformat Web information for these devices. In addition to “screen-scrapers,” there are a number of specialized browsers designed to cull information from Web pages to serve special information needs. Separation of content from Web site threatens the standard Web business model, where the number of hits on a Web site determines business success and advertising revenue. Unfortunately one answer to that threat may be for .coms to begin charging for content. However, most of the new content aggregators are choosing to work with content providers, since direct data links are faster and more reliable—not to mention more legal—than stripping content. This issue also contains related stories: “Screen-Scraping and the Law” talks about the possible legal problems of screen-scraping technology, including copyright violation and charges of unfair competition and misappropriation of proprietary information. “The Slicers and Dicers,” enumerates the major forces breaking up Web content: aggregation services (like **Yodlee**), specialized browsers, transformation technology (e.g., **Spyglass Prism**), pocket Web clients and XML. “One Content-Provider’s Strategy” details **Washingtonpost.Newsweek Interactive’s** efforts to adapt to the demand for bite-size chunks of information for Web users and **Wireless Application Protocol (WAP)** devices. See — **James C. Luh**, “Content Goes to Pieces,” *Internet World*, July 1, 2000, cover story.

Star Trek is Research!

by Pamela M. Rose (Univ. at Buffalo, State Univ. of NY)

Science fiction predicting reality is not new, but now the European Space Agency (ESA), the OURS foundation (a Swiss space-culture group) and Maison d'Ailleurs (a Swiss science fiction museum) are formalizing the process by commissioning reports on various leitmotifs in science fiction books, movies and art, including a Web site (itsf.spaceart.net) where the public can submit fact sheets on sci-fi ideas which will be reviewed for feasibility. Get those light sabers ready! See — "Plan 9 From EuroSpace" in *Random Samples* section edited by Constance Holden, *Science*, Jul. 7, 2000, p.41

Desk Top Cops

by Sandra Beehler (Old Dominion University)

Companies offering Internet filtering services to educational institutions and parents have found a growing new market: large corporations. It is estimated that 92% of employee Internet use is recreational, and this use often interferes with employee productivity. Many companies are finding that the cost of filtering is easily regained through the resulting boost in productivity. Several filtering services involved with the corporate market are profiled. See — Itay Hod, *Internet World*, August 15, 2000, <http://www.internetworld.com/print/current/business/20000815-desk.html>.

Online Pluses and Minuses

by Twyla Raczy (Eastern Michigan University)

An interesting discussion of the advantages and disadvantages of online bookselling and the major players. Studies show that books, computer hardware and software are the items purchased the most online, and the college market is one of the fastest growing. Since there are no geographical barriers to online bookselling, copyright protection is a concern for publishers. See - Anita Hennessey, "Online Bookselling", *Publishing Research Quarterly*, vol. 16 (2) (Summer 2000) p 34-51.

Web Publish or Perish?

by Twyla Raczy (Eastern Michigan University)

In spite of all the problems associated with the magazine industry today, the number of new titles produced increases each year, and at least half will fail within a year. But magazines have survived movies, radio, TV, cable and now the Internet. Magazine publishers will have to be more innovative and one important factor is to have a Web presence in addition to print. See - Lisa M. Guidone, "The Magazine at the Millennium: Integrating the Internet," *Publishing Research Quarterly*, vol. 16 (2) (Summer 2000) p14-33.

Who Reads What and Why?

by Phil Dankert (Cornell)

This "Point of View" article says that an important failing in libraries today is that librarians don't know enough about why people read and what they like to read. The author, a professor at the School of Library and Information Studies at the University of Wisconsin at Madison, writes that librarians "lack a deeper understanding of how libraries already serve readers, and they miss evidence that they could use to convince state legislatures and other sources of financial support that spending money on stories is important." He notes that part of the blame for this "tremendous professional oversight" belongs to library schools which have generally ignored the literature on reading. Today these schools focus almost exclusively on how to give users "access to useful information" rather than to the stories they want. Mr. Wiegand ends by stating that the vast majority of new graduates of schools of library/information studies "will eventually learn who reads what stories, but they won't understand why, in spite of the abundant literature that addresses that question." It will be interesting to see whether there is general agreement with his critique. See — Wayne A. Wiegand, "Librarians Ignore the Value of Stories," *Chronicle Of Higher Education*, October 27, 2000, p. B20.

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If We Can Put a Man on the Moon...

by Sandra Beehler (Old Dominion University)

This article asks why government information such as congressional hearings, drafts of legislation, voting records or CRS reports (among others) aren't readily available online, despite the ease and affordability of making them so. It states that public interest groups such as DC's Center for Democracy and Technology and the Center for Responsive Politics, along with librarians and researchers have long been putting pressure on Congress to post more documents online in a timely manner with a notable lack of success. Both non-profit (cryptome.org, vote-smart.org) and commercial (hearingroom.com) companies are attempting to fill the vacuum in areas of special interest. Unfortunately, while decrying the lack of congressional efforts to get documents online, this article never once mentions the accompanying "archiving problem" that haunts librarians. Also lacking is any mention of GPO Access, though THOMAS pops up occasionally. See — David Corn, Washington editor of *The Nation*, "Filegate.gov," *Wired* 8.11, November 2000, p. 226-237.

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