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Publisher Profile: HDCN On-line (Hypertension, Dialysis & Clinical Nephrology)

John Long
john-long@worldnet.att.net

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HDCN On-Line (Hypertension, Dialysis & Clinical Nephrology)

by **John Long** (Consultant) <john-long@worldnet.att.net>

Address: HDCN On-Line (Hypertension, Dialysis & Clinical Nephrology) 15 W 560 89th Street Hinsdale, IL 60527	Phone: (630) 325-3276 Fax: (630) 887-1446 Web address: www.hdcn.com
Founded: 1995, An official educational program of the American Society of Nephrology and the Renal Physicians Association	Founder & Publisher: John T. Daugirdas, MD Publication: <i>HDCN On-Line</i> Number of employees: 3

JL: *It occurred to me that ATG readers would be interested in a very successful on-line journal, HDCN, and its publisher, Dr. John Daugirdas. HDCN has been on-line since its inception in 1995 and there is no print equivalent.*

I thought I'd begin by asking Dr. Daugirdas why he got involved in medical journal publishing and what factors attracted him to on-line publishing.

Dr. Daugirdas: I am a nephrologist (kidney specialist) - a Professor of Medicine at the **University of Illinois** School of Medicine at Chicago, and a practicing physician. I attend several meetings a year where new advances in the field are disclosed. The initial phase of disclosing a new result is a presentation at a meeting and publication of an abstract in the meeting proceedings (these usually are also published in a medical journal). Then it may be several years before the full article is published. During the past 10 years, physicians have had less time to attend such meetings, and also less time to scan the 6-10 journals usually required to keep up in a given specialty. The initial concept of *HDCN* was as a newsletter that would highlight key presentations at scientific meetings and key articles, and to present these each week as a digestible morsel to a busy nephrologist to enable him or her to keep up with new therapies and treatments.

In 1995, as we were preparing to launch *HDCN* as a newsletter, the Internet began its explosive growth. We soon realized that using the Internet would allow even faster transmittal of information to people, and would cut out layout, printing, packaging, and mailing costs. So in August of 1995, when *HDCN* was finally launched, it was as an Internet-only medical journal.

JL: *I believe that when you began HDCN your audience was almost entirely comprised of fellow clinical practitioners. You are now conducting HDCN on-line trials at various medical center libraries and biomed/life sciences libraries throughout the U.S. How is that going so far?*

Dr. Daugirdas: *HDCN* is structured as a medical journal with a paid subscriber base, but it also has a number of free features, which are open to anyone who registers on the site and agrees to receive a weekly email update. To-date we have 2,700 paid subscribers to *HDCN*, and 24,000 registered users.

Recently we began to market *HDCN* to major medical libraries in the United States. To-date, UCLA, UCSD, Vanderbilt University Medical Center, Washington University, St. Louis University, University of Connecticut Health Center, University of Chicago, and Medical College of Wisconsin Libraries (Milwaukee) have signed up for free trial institutional subscriptions.

JL: *There must be tens of thousands of patients who undergo a regimen of dialysis. Could you talk about that?*

Dr. Daugirdas: The dialysis population is growing markedly in the United States, which is a cause for great concern. The main driver appears to be an increased incidence of diabetes mellitus, which is due to obesity and non-healthy eating habits and lack of exercise. Currently there are close to 400,000 patients with end-stage renal disease in the United States (some of these have renal

transplants, so not all are on dialysis). By 2010, we expect this number to increase to about 660,000, although the National Kidney Foundation is embarking on a program to detect kidney disease in its early stages with the hope of staving off the need for dialysis in at least some of these high-risk patients.

JL: *Did you realize that you wanted to become a medical doctor at a early age? Did you have a mentor who encouraged you to become involved in clinical medicine?*

Dr. Daugirdas: My role models included my uncle and my grandfather, both physicians. I trained at Northwestern University School of Medicine, and there **Dr. Edward Scanlon** was someone who inspired me deeply, although he was a surgeon, and was partly responsible for an aborted start to my postgraduate training as a surgeon. Later I changed to internal medicine and became a nephrologist.

JL: *I think that ATG readers will be very interested in innovations that have been incorporated into HDCN On-Line. Could you comment on that?*

Dr. Daugirdas: I do believe we were one of the first sites to offer on-line slide-audio lectures. I still think we do it better than anyone else. We now have more than 300 medical talks on *HDCN*, complete with audiofile, transcript, slides, and references from data slides to the relevant abstracts on *MEDLINE*.

We also have on-line CME, where a person can take a post-test, and where the correct answer is available to them along with explanations. Those who score > 75% can print out a CME certificate on their computers. We also have on-line polling software, that enables collection of audience information and opinions on practice patterns where there is no right or wrong answer.

JL: *Sounds like the on-line slide-audio lectures must be a very useful learning tool for the nephrologists. Can you tell us how that idea developed?*

Dr. Daugirdas: I'm a person who likes to sit back and look at slides and listen to talks. So it was natural for me to reproduce this very practical and useful learning methodology. We also transcribe the talks and put hyperlinks below each data slide to the source abstract on *MEDLINE*. More recently, we have begun putting up on-line post-tests and evaluation quizzes, again working with the American Society of Nephrology to offer on-line CME credits and certificates, as well as CEU credits and certificates for nurses (offered through the Renal Education Association).

JL: *You've been on the cutting-edge of on-line publishing since 1995, and I wonder if you could tell us a little about your electronic media vision say five years down the road?*

Dr. Daugirdas: I do believe that presentations at scientific meetings will become very widely available. The problem will continue to be information overload and the need to select the best material possible. Most physicians are very mobile, and I do believe that educational and consulting solutions using mobile computing devices will become more popular.

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pression 1929-1940 (2001, 0313306184, \$90) by **James S. Olson** provides straightforward explanations of more than the economic fallout from the stock market crash of 1929. In over 500 brief essays he discusses the political, social and cultural impacts as well as many of the personalities who grabbed the national spotlight. In short, coverage is rich and varied. Topics range from New Deal programs like the WPA and the CCC to popular movies like *Public Enemy* and *Frankenstein*. There are also articles that discuss individual countries ranging from Ethiopia to the Soviet Union as well as essays on people as diverse as sport legend **Jesse Owens**, renowned lawyer and activist **Clarence Darrow**, film star **Claudette Colbert** and secretary of labor **Frances Perkins**. In addition, there are entries that describe events like the Berlin Olympics and the London Economic Conference of 1933 and landmark legislation like the Banking Act, the National Labor Relations Act and the Social Security Act. Added features include a chronology and a general bibliography. This is one of those books that could benefit from a thematic list of entries. For example, the only way to discover which articles discuss popular radio programs is to look entry by entry. The general index is little help in this regard. A look under radio reveals only a listing for the *Radio Guild*, a specific program.

The *Historical Dictionary of the Great Depression 1929-1940* can be relied on for both quick facts and as a source that provides an overview of the topic. Depending on need, this title could find its way on to either reference or circulating shelves.

Another recent one-volume work deserving serious attention is a second edition of a book published by **Scarecrow**. The *Historical Dictionary of Terrorism* (2002, 0810841010, \$90) is a timely work illuminating a topic that has captured headlines

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JL: Finally, you not only publish *HDCN* on-line; you are also a professor and teach medicine at the University of Illinois School of Medicine, Chicago; and you are a practicing physician. How do you manage to coordinate all these activities?

Dr. Daugirdas: Working very hard including nights and weekends! Since I am also a consumer of the information that *HDCN* generates, however, it does save me some time. For example, I edit a *Handbook of Dialysis*. With the material we put on-line on *HDCN*, it will be much easier for me to update the book when it comes time for the next edition. It is also somewhat a labor of love. 🍷

worldwide. Beginning with an introductory essay that points to the international dimensions of the phenomenon, authors **Sean K Anderson** and **Stephen Sloan** provide clear, precise descriptions of concepts, theories, specific terrorist groups as well as useful biographical sketches. From the Aryan Resistance Army in the United States to Khmer Rouge of Cambodia, from the IRA in Ireland to the Moro Liberation Front in the Philippines and from Hezbollah to the Tonton Macoutes of Papa Doc Duvalier's Haiti, this book discusses terrorist groups globally. It also defines phenomena like Islamic Fundamentalism, concepts like revolution and Jihad, methods like arson and kidnapping, as well as terms like narco-terrorism, homeland de-

fense and the Jewish underground. The coverage offered in this book is comprehensive while the approach scholarly and the writing is clear. Features like a useful chronology and a well designed, selected bibliography add to the *Dictionary's* value. My only problem is with the lack of access points. There are no indexes and although this is a *Adictionary*, the content is so rich and in many cases unfamiliar, that it demands more location tools. Both a thematic list as well as a general index would enhance this work and raise it to the level of an exceptional one-volume reference. Still, the *Historical Dictionary of Terrorism* is a title that a number of libraries, both public and academic, will want as part of the collection. 🍷

Book Reviews — Monographic Musings

Column Editor: **Debbie Vaughn**
(Reference Librarian, College of
Charleston) <vaughnd@cofc.edu>

Editor's Note: This issue's column showcases books that deal with all sorts of issues in all types of libraries. The Haworth Press is an Old Faithful of library and information science resources; the information that this publishing house provides to our profession allows us to stay abreast of issues such as online academic research and off-campus library

services. Scholarly communication is imperative in all things academic, especially in fields in which technology plays a star role. Technology is information's bedfellow, and as librarians we are in the business of both technology and information. Thank goodness the books reviewed here can help us deal with information technology's challenges. — DV

Academic Research on the Internet: Options for Scholars and Libraries.
Helen Laurence and William Miller, Eds. New York: Haworth Information Press, 2001. 0789011778. \$49.95. 386 pages.

Reviewed by **Debbie Vaughn** (College of Charleston)

Even the most gifted wordsmith would not be able to deny that *Academic Research on the Internet: Options for Scholars and Libraries*, edited by **Helen Laurence** and **William Miller**, is a webliography. In its majority, this book is little more than a list of links to Web sites on various topics. Print Internet guides are often obsolete by the time of publication, so my hesitancy to review this title was high. A brief initial investigation curbed my fears, though, and after thoroughly delving into its content, I find *Academic Research on the Internet* to contain a cornucopia of valuable information, even over a year after its publication date.

Co-published simultaneously as *Journal of Libraries Administration*, volume 30, *Academic Research on the Internet* "seeks to assess the real value of the Internet for scholarly research." **Laurence** and **Miller** divide their volume into subject-based sections; anthropology, art, business, education, engineering, history, legal information, literature,

medical resources, natural science, philosophy, and political science all get coverage. If this volume were simply an annotated list of links to free-Web information, it would not be worth purchasing. The value of this book, however, is what fills in the cracks. **Laurence** and **Miller** asked their contributing authors (who are, not surprisingly, subject specialists, and almost all of whom possess either a doctorate or a second master's degree) not only to supply links to canon-like sites, but also to "assess the extent to which Internet sources can currently support scholarly research." The result: subject-based scholarly assessment of the quality of information on the Web.

Each section begins with a summary and is followed by information broken down into various sub-categories. For example, **Michael Seadle's** chapter, "Sound, Image, Action: Remaking History on the Internet," is divided according to resource type. Discussion groups, multimedia collections, pho-

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