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Bet You Missed It -- Press Clippings -- In the News -- Carefully Selected by Your Crack Team of News Sleuths

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to all of our customers, publishers, partners and friends for your notes, calls, and continuing expressions of encouragement and support."

When the mighty fall, encouragement and support rarely are the only feelings expressed. Many bystanders enjoyed the show, and with Goliath already on the turf, Davids everywhere loaded up their slingshots. At a certain point, it was suddenly natural to talk dismissively about eBooks, to say they "weren't ready," to refer to the printed book as an unsurpassed technology platform, and to roll the eyes at the very mention of **netLibrary**. "What? You mean the people in marketing were wrong?" was one facetious listserv header for a posting on eBooks. "What a shock, marketing people over hyping something."

But it hadn't been only the marketing people on this one. Anybody with anything to do with eBooks, it had seemed, briefly, was fully credentialed to offer forecasts at any time and in any medium on the future of the book (none too rosy, in some of them, for the print variety), on reading, education, publishing, scholarship, libraries. The virtual podium got awfully crowded. **NetLibrary** was hardly out there alone.

Should **netLibrary** have done it differently? Could they have promoted their eBooks patiently and quietly, getting to know the market with shoe leather and old-fashioned sales calls, with business cards left on desks, mornings of phone calls, lunch with top prospects? "We think our eBooks might interest you," the **netLibrary** representative suggests to the librarian, as a waitress departs with order in hand. Then the next call, then

write up the day's reports at night, then another day just like it tomorrow.

Their investors must wish that **netLibrary** had done it mostly that way. Which of the rest of us, though, would really have preferred for **netLibrary** to build up the business like some beloved mom-and-pop outfit? Universities, after all, are hardly innocents when it comes to hype. Who didn't enjoy the show? Who wasn't flattered to have such a good ticket for a major production in hype like **netLibrary** staged? Who didn't feel they were witnessing something big, were even a part of it? Who doesn't think **netLibrary** gave it a good go?

And who wasn't half scared to death, for a little while, that the future had come and gone, and pitilessly had left the slow sitting by, caretakers of dusty and undisturbed

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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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JAPANESE LIBRARIES JOLTED by **Pamela M. Rose** (University at Buffalo)

Escalating subscription prices (nothing new to U.S. libraries) combined with unfavorable exchange rates and decentralized collection development have hit Japanese libraries hard. Additional institutional challenges, such as the spectre of sudden gaps in journal runs due to individual professors canceling their subscriptions and multiple individual departmental libraries, mean the extent of the crisis remains to be discovered. Officials are hoping to take advantage of cheaper online access and joint bargaining power to reduce subscription costs.

See — "Libraries Seek Ways to Hold Down Costs" by **Dennis Normile**, in *Science*, p.429, Jan. 18, 2002.

IN NICHE AD SALES, THE SKY'S THE LIMIT by **Bruce Strauch** (The Citadel)

Magazines are dying in batches, but **Vulcan Media's** 30 titles are thriving. Publishing niches target an audience for advertisers, and Vulcan plays to this with six outdoor publications and a grab-bag of others like *Heavy Equipment News*.

Vulcan's founder **Douglas Moore** went from mobile home sales to **Randall Publishing's** trucking and construction magazines. "I learned I'd rather sell sky than widgets," he says.

See — **Monte Burke**, "Staying On Target," *Forbes*, p.94, March 4, 2002.

UPPING THE TENURE ANTE by **Phil Dankert** (Cornell University)

In this Point of View article the author expresses his concern over the "publish or perish" model that exists in academe today. Junior faculty members have to publish more and more these days in order to get tenure. "When someone six years out of graduate school is expected to have written two books...the system has gone beyond absurdity and approaches farce. Aspiring professors may one day have to start roughing out their future books while still in primary school." This coupled with the fact that university presses, primarily for economic reasons, oppose multiple submission of manuscripts causes problems for junior faculty ("It's simply not fair to punish the victims of inflated expectations by making it harder for them to do their jobs in the limited time allotted?"). A suggestion for dealing with this situation is proposed.

See — "Breaking the Unfair Rules of Scholarly Publishing," by **Leonard Cassuto**, *Chronicle Of Higher Education*, January 18, 2002, p. B24.

LATTES AND LEARNING by **Phil Dankert** (Cornell University)

Although much of what is presented in this article should come as no surprise to librarians, it is still interesting to learn what some university libraries are doing to bring students back. These days, more and more of them "are entering libraries not through turnstiles but through phone lines and fibre-optic cables." What might be called the "**Barnes & Noble Model**" - plush chairs, double mocha lattes, book groups, and even music - seems to be working at some colleges. The big question is whether the dollars invested helps students to learn. There is also disagreement among scholars about what the rise of databases means for scholars. As more and more materials go online there is going to be less and less use of the "bricks-and-mortar library." Is this a bad thing? Some would argue that there are "real problems when students aren't touching books and taking them off the shelves." They are troubled by the way students are using information from the Internet. Finally, if trends show that more and more of the information that people need will be on the desktop, what kind of place will the library be in 20 years?

See — "The Deserted Library: As Students Work Online, Reading Rooms Empty Out—Leading some campuses to Add Starbucks," by **Scott Carlson**, *Chronicle Of Higher Education*, November 16, 2001, p. A35-A38.

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shelves of printed books? All the hype had one sure effect: nobody wanted to be that. The hype threw a spotlight and cast an interrogation lamp too. What was your library doing? Lots of libraries took up with **netLibrary** and bought some eBooks. They learned in a hurry — this was not a distance education opportunity — and figured out how to use them, how to catalog them, how to promote them, how to integrate them into everything else the library was doing. There were some real successes.

Librarians learned a lot about eBooks. Some things they learned were, that there weren't very many of them, that the use model was restrictive, that they were not a bargain, that there were preservation questions, and above all that their patrons' degree of urgency about the need for eBooks was well below that of people in the industry. The hype had been a good teacher.

Should **netLibrary** have done it differently? Should **Clay** have been polite to **Liston**? That would have disappointed everyone, probably even **Liston**. But **Muhammad Ali** always knew something that **netLibrary** now knows too: If you enter the ring with hype, you'd better win.

No two faces are alike

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NUCLEAR KNOWLEDGE
by **Sandy Beehler** (Lewis & Clark College)

Preserving knowledge about nuclear weapons may seem a dubious goal to some, but it could prove crucial to the U.S.'s defenses — an uncertain future that includes rogue nations with nuclear arsenals. In addition to the problem of maintaining millions of paper documents and thousands of electronic files, there is the problem of passing on the knowledge that is held only in the heads of an aging population of nuclear weapons scientists. To address these problems, the U.S. is mounting both digitizing projects and training programs to ensure this information will be available to future generations.

See — "This is Not a Test" in *Wired* 10.03 (March 2002).

LIFE AFTER THE PROPAGANDA MILL
by **Bruce Strauch** (The Citadel)

The Russian intelligentsia makes a come-back for big bucks and the status it brings. In a Moscow dominated by nouveaux riches capitalists, the eggheads moped in destitute squalor. Then **Grigory Chkhartishili** created a 19th-century gentleman sleuth and suddenly found he had foreign language deals, movies and a T.V. series. This was followed by **Tatyana Tolstaya's** experimental novel *Kjs* and **Alexei Slapovsky's** T.V. screenplays, until there are as many as ten (!) authors pulling down 100 to 500K a year.

Chkhartishili was previously employed translating Japanese and piddling with a magnum opus "*The Writer and Suicide*." Enjoying nothing so much as a good walk in a graveyard, he got the idea of his **Slavic Sherlock Holmes** living in what Russians now regard as a Chekovian golden age. Now a nine book superstar, he has T-shirts and a cologne named for his hero for sale online. And a new Peugeot in the drive. But he still thinks in terms of Five-Year Plans.

See — **Guy Chazan**, "Roll Over, Dostoyevsky: Serious Russian Writers Reinvent the Thriller," *Wall Street Journal*, p.A1, Feb. 25, 2002.

ENGINEERED EVERGLADES ECOLOGY
by **Sandy Beehler** (Lewis & Clark College)

It's an interesting question: can a vast and unique ecological system, brought to the brink of ruin by human progress, be saved from ruin without endangering that progress and the human beings it sustains? This article provides a fascinating overview of what ecologists are attempting to achieve in the Florida Everglades. The plan calls for a gradual restoration of the original hydrological systems that sustained this huge wetlands area-including freeing the **Kissimmee River** from its man-made banks, storage of potential flood waters in underground wells, and creation of a marshland to filter pollutants from water flowing into the park area.

See — "Re-engineering the Everglades" *Wired* 10.02 (February 2002).

LET THEM EAT TOAST
by **Bruce Strauch** (The Citadel)

Napster's been KO'd, but music thieving teens are still at it in a major way. **Roxio** produces 70% of the CD "burner" software which is cutely named "Toast." And **Roxio** lusts to branch out into phtos, video and DVDs. But the music empire has struck back with CDs that can't be copied.

Roxio is striving to convince the industry that burning is a positive thing for them. They're only showing a profit on 10% of new music releases anyhow. So why keep backlogs of music inventory that will never sell?

EMI has been won over. For a fee, users can burn music from **Roxio's** Website. The biz plan? Make legit burning easier than stealing.

See — **Nicole Ridgway**, "Let Them Burn," *Forbes*, p.88, March 4, 2002.

FORCING FCC FREQUENCIES by Sandy Beehler (Lewis & Clark College)

Since 1934 the FCC has had the final say on who has access to broadcast frequencies. **Dewayne Hendricks** contends that the FCC is standing in the way of inexpensive, high-performance broadband access for all Americans. He is challenging the FCC licensing monopoly by developing a wireless network on a Chippewa Indian reservation—technically sovereign territory not subject to U.S. regulations—in an effort to force the FCC to open up the whole spectrum to everyone. He contends that current technology provides the ability to share spectrum space more efficiently and without interference between users. Many agree that the time for reform has come.

See — “Broadband Cowboy” *Wired* 10.01 (January 2002).

THE JOHNNY APPLESEED MODEL IN EDUCATION by Bruce Strauch (The Citadel)

Acting semi-locally, Charleston’s own **Mary French** wants every South Carolina third grader to have a dictionary. And for the third year running, she’s pulled it off.

With South Carolina’s 45% near illiteracy in fourth graders, it’s hard to see the impact. But for a devoted small-time philanthropist like **Mary French**, the proof is in the delirious enthusiasm of the kids. She has no doubts about her mission wrangling with dictionary publishers over price and soliciting donations in such dribble-sizes that most people willingly kick in. On Charleston’s elegant Tradd Street, **Harriet McDougal** and her blockbuster novelist husband **Jim Rigney** (pseud. **Robert Jordan** - *Wheel of Time* series) were so shocked by a request for only \$500 that they gave her \$5,000.

“We’re putting words in the hands of children,” she says.

See — **June Kronholz**, “The Dictionary Lady Is Spreading the Word To South Carolina Kids,” *Wall Street Journal*, p.A1, March 4, 2002.

International Dateline — Age of Knowledge Calls for More Qualified Librarians in Chinese Academic Libraries

by **Hu Ming Rong** (Associate Dean of The Library of Chongqing Normal University, Chongqing, China) <humingrong@yahoo.com.cn>

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The Need for Upgrading Chinese Librarians

The new millennium has ushered in the Age of Knowledge. Unlike its lingering predecessor, the Information Age, it requires that one not only knows how to access information, but also knows how to process and analyze information so that it becomes knowledge. In a knowledge-based society, one strives to be competitively marketable, trying to acquire the knowledge and capabilities that others do not have. For this reason, users are no longer satisfied with mere access to information resources. They want information services delivered to them when and where they want them in order to increase their knowledge base more efficiently and cost-effectively. All libraries, academic libraries in particular, bear the brunt of the oncoming tide of digitization under the network environment. The extremely urgent task is to keep up their efforts in automating, wiring and digitizing libraries, thereby bringing about fundamental change to them so that a great number of them will be modernized. Indeed, it is incumbent upon all Chinese librarians today to face the challenge and seize the opportunities it may offer in the process of modernizing their libraries.

It is true that funds and equipment are crucial to library modernization, but the human factor is equally, if not more, critical. It is a consensus among scholars of librarianship that the modernization of librarians is at the core of library modernization. A British librarian observes that even a world-class library will find it hard to provide its users with extensive and effective services without full use of its collections, efficient operation, and well-trained staff. The famous Chinese nuclear scientist **Qian Xuesen** also states, “Librarians in a modernized library ought to be information experts or engineers, builders of information systems, and consultants guiding users through the maze of information.” A vivid analogy depicts a librarian in the 21st century as a “navigator in the sea of information resources.” The point is that modernized libraries require qualified librarians.

How are the Chinese librarians doing today? According to statis-

tics, academic libraries in China each have an average of 40 librarians and staff. If temporary and part-time personnel are included, the number will average 60. Only a few large libraries each have as many as 200 to 300 people. Chinese academic librarians and staff come from four different backgrounds: (1) college graduates from schools of library and information science, (2) college graduates of disciplines other than library and information science, (3) people with diplomas of continuing education in various disciplines, and (4) people without post-secondary education. An overwhelming majority of the Chinese academic library personnel belongs to the third and the fourth categories. In the past few years, some efforts have been made by academic libraries all over the country to upgrade their library staff. Unfortunately, the impact of these efforts on improving library efficiency and services has been limited, which worries scholars of librarianship. They point out bluntly that there is no time to delay in bringing up high quality librarians in China!

What Qualities Should Chinese Librarians Have in the Age of Knowledge?

First, let us take a look at top library administrators, namely, deans, directors, and other members of the administrative team. As policy-makers and leaders, they play a decisive role in the day-to-day operation, in particular, and the modernization, in general, of Chinese academic libraries. There are a few outstanding top library administrators who do have a clear vision of their libraries’ future; an open mind for changes; and high levels of library, computer, and foreign language skills. They know what they are doing and are doing it well. Unfortunately, they amount to a very small percentage of the tens of thousands of academic library administrators in China. A large number of them are not equal to their responsibilities, owing to the following reasons:

Without sufficient knowledge of librarianship they often find their abilities fall short of their best intentions. The overwhelming major-

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