June 2001

Desperately Seeking Website-A discussion between Eric Albright and Amber Williams about electronic journals

Amber Williams

American Society for Bone and Mineral Research, amber@jbmr.org

Sandra K. Paul

SKP Associates, Sandy@SKPAassoc.com

Albert Simmonds

SKP Associates, awsimmo@ibm.net

Follow this and additional works at: <https://docs.lib.purdue.edu/atg>

Part of the [Library and Information Science Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Williams, Amber; Paul, Sandra K.; and Simmonds, Albert (2001) "Desperately Seeking Website-A discussion between Eric Albright and Amber Williams about electronic journals," *Against the Grain*: Vol. 13: Iss. 3, Article 37.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.7771/2380-176X.3517>

This document has been made available through Purdue e-Pubs, a service of the Purdue University Libraries. Please contact epubs@purdue.edu for additional information.

Oregon Trails from page 91

audience, reminds me of more than one conference program and more than one speaker. Yes, there is a dark side to **Linkwood's** writings (in another piece on an acquisitions conference in the mountains, someone is actually murdered or at least turns up dead—murder is such a harsh word) but they make me laugh, too, and remind me not to take myself too seriously.

The family photos in my office will come with me along with one other that will help warm the atmosphere in my new office. There I am, one of a group of four. From left to right, **Marion Reid (CSU San Marcos)**, **Frank D'Andraia (University of Montana)**, **Tom Leonhardt (TBA)**, and **Arnold Hirshon (NELINET)**. We are sitting on a wagon to which is hitched a striped donkey. We were attending an **EDUCOM** meeting in San Diego and on a whim, took the train to Tiajuana, one of the few places in the world where striped donkeys are indigenous. If we didn't look like *tourists* before we climbed aboard the wagon and donned our Mexican *sombreros*, we quickly rested our case.

The books in my office will go into storage. They are too heavy and too many. I will miss them, old friends, but I know how sweet the reunion will be when we are together again

at the end of my adventure. But although they are heavy, too, I will take my paperweight collection to my new office. I will either pack them with my clothes or have my children mail them to me later on. I must have a dozen of them, some from a visit to England years ago but most with some kind of conference association. In other words, I am not an active paperweight collector (bookmarks are another story) but an occasional collector. Someone once noted that once you get three or four of something you have a collection. As I grow older it is easier to discard those inadvertent collections so that I can better concentrate on books and bookmarks. The paperweights are really mementos and do not seem to be propagating as my wife's spoon collection is. She claims it is my collection but I am only the delivery boy, bringing back a spoon from whatever city I happen to have been in. They, too, will go into storage. Let's just hope that I don't, I mean, she doesn't acquire any duplicates as a result of their inaccessibility.

I'll take my two **Dilbert** heads, too—**Dilbert** and the **Boss**. They used to say things when you pressed down on them. Their batteries are dead now but their spirits live on. They also remind me not to take myself too seriously and to reflect on how I behave. I don't want to become like some administrators I know who love to share **Dilbert** cartoons with

the rest of us but fail to see that they have met the enemy and it is them. They only think that **Dilbert** is funny. How sad.

From the opening paragraph you have guessed that I am on the move again but this is not an ordinary move and not the usual job change. On May 1, 2001, I will begin my duties as Director of the Information Resources Center and University Librarian at the **International University Bremen (IUB)**. This is the chance of a lifetime for me, starting a new library at a new university in a country where I went to high school (albeit an American high school) and whose language and literature I have studied for many years. Finally, I have the opportunity to really learn the language and I will be able to browse regularly in German bookstores.

I am not sure if I will be in San Francisco for the **ALA Annual Conference** in June but I plan to attend the other midwinter and annual meetings for the next three years, just as I have done for the past twenty-five years. I also hope to continue writing for *Against the Grain* and hope to hear from my readers once I have my new e-mail address. In the meantime, you can get in touch with me, from May on, in Bremen, Germany. See this URL for details: www.iu-bremen.de.

Aufwiederssehen!

Desperately Seeking Website

by **Amber Williams** (American Society for Bone and Mineral Research; Phone: 919-620-0681)
<amber@jbmr.org> www.jbmr-online.org/

I spoke with **Eric Albright**, Head of Acquisitions at **Duke University Medical Center Library**, and I realized our perspectives on the matter of online access are not so divergent. It is my hope that the paths of librarian and publisher can come together in more places than in print.

PUB: *In your opinion, what is the most difficult aspect of accessing online journals?*

LIB: Negotiating the license is usually the most difficult portion of this process. When we purchase print materials from our various publishers we know the restrictions, i.e. copyright and fair use, but that is not the case with a site license. Just as you have many customers with varying concerns we have various publishers each with different concerns which lead to the site licenses looking very different.

PUB: *What do you think publishers can do to change this?*

LIB: I offer either the adoption of mutually agreed upon model licenses or doing away with licenses altogether. What have either of us really gained from them?

PUB: *You suggest the adoption of mutually agreed upon model licenses for publishers or to do away with the site license altogether, but doesn't the site license offer*

protections/ guarantees for the library customer as well? Shouldn't these needs be addressed in some medium (such as the site license)? I don't know how often you purchase online only subscriptions, but if you do, don't you need some kind of security that the product will be available and maintained for you?

LIB: In the ideal world where we are full partners in the pursuit of academic endeavors, I would love it if we could do away with them altogether. Unfortunately, yes we do need simple agreements that say we agree to pay you and make it only available to certain IP ranges and to follow copyright and you agree to deliver the product and ideally guarantee archival access. That takes but a page or two. Some licenses we see go on for many pages about liability, indemnification and prevailing court authority. When we subscribe to a print title, we have expectations that you will deliver the title and its content to us. But we have yet to sign an agreement with you stating that we expect you to maintain an editorial board of such and such caliber and have it delivered by the 13th of every month with X number of minimum pages on glossy paper. We can do that in print because there are accepted norms in the publishing industry which we and the courts would uphold. In this emerging electronic world those norms have yet to be established.

I am not even certain that they ever will.

PUB: *What is favorable about electronic journals?*

LIB: As opposed to print? The obvious advantage for us is the link from our indexing sources directly to the article. Our patrons, like most of society, want instant satisfaction.

PUB: *Are you happy in general with the service you receive from publishers when subscribing to online journals?*

LIB: At the turn of the year when the subscription agents cause us to lose access to a journal, it is rather frustrating but in general we are happy. We also do not get clear information about when some of the larger sites are down or experiencing difficulties. The electronic environment requires more communication than the print because of enhanced expectations.

PUB: *How do the subscription agents cause you to lose your subscription/access? Is this because they do not make payment in a timely manner or because they are responsible for getting online access for your institution?*

LIB: We renew a title with the vendor but negotiate the site license with the publisher. Often it seems that the publisher cannot make the link from the vendor renewal request to

continued on page 93

Back Talk from page 94

a student and loved using full text journals, I can't wholeheartedly support the idea that digital access in the absence to the originals is bad. Looking at our full text download statistics also convinces me that full text is extremely popular with all users—not just me. Yes, I understand that the OCR technology that is going on behind my searches, and then reading PDF versions of the original pages, is a joke; but such indexing lets me scan so many more articles than I would have otherwise. And I find that I am equally enthusiastic about electronic reference works, monographs, and especially electronic dissertations. But if I didn't have sufficient funds to do both (Columbia does), I would feel justified in buying only digital and hope that the student who wants/needs to use the printed version will be able to borrow it from libraries than can afford to do both or who are anti-digital.

So in the end I enjoyed reading Baker's hyperbolic diatribe in a self flagellating sort of way, although I totally protest/condemn his personal attacks on Pat Battin. She has vision and integrity, rare qualities and rarer to be found in the same person. She is guilty of taking part in promoting the *Slow Fires* hype, but she is not alone in her use of this technique to draw attention to a problem that she feels strongly about. Mr. Baker is equally guilty of this sin as well. He made several points that are worth serious consideration.

Desperately Seeking Website from page 92

our online account. It happens every renewal that we lose 2-10 journals, then have to contact the publishers to re-establish access.

PUB: Would you like to see the print and online subscription process even more consolidated so that the subscription agents handle everything from payment of subscriptions to handling of site licenses?

LIB: I hate giving up the authority but relish the idea of time saved. Of course, the ideal would be for you to throw the online access or print in for free. The future of subscription services is a difficult thing to predict. The large publishers could make it economically attractive to deal directly with them. In the short term, yes, I can see the agents doing this for us.

PUB: In what ways do you see the online environment improving for library customers?

LIB: I foresee that in the future the access points will likely be more standardized, in particular in regard to access from various citation indexes. Also I see handheld and wireless technology as potentially having a significant impact upon the future online environment in libraries.

You can ring me at (919) 620-0681 or email me at <amber@jbmr.org> if you would like to add to this discussion or suggest topics to address in future columns.

DIVORCE HAPPENS TO LOVE GURUS

by Bruce Strauch (the Citadel)

Megabucks authors Ellen Fein and Sherrie Schneider promoted *The Rules* as a chronicle of their experiences in snagging the wily male animal. *Rules II* was hot too, and *Rules III*—holding that marriage together through subservience, long hair and low expectations of male sympathy—was due out. Then Fein let it drop to Warner Books that she was about to divorce her husband. And the action had been filed a year earlier ... before she signed the contract. She claims to have kept it a secret hoping for a reconciliation. Now the cover blurb will have to be redone, dropping the claim to Fein's enduring marriage. See—Devon Spurgeon, "Author's Divorce Pits Her 'Rules' Against Reality" in *Wall Street Journal*, p.B1, March 23, 2001.

LEATHERSTOCKING TALES FROM MITTELEUROPA

by Bruce Strauch (the Citadel)

Thief and swindler Karl May's Westerns have sold 100 million copies of 80 books, making him the bestselling German author of all time. His fans included Hitler and Einstein, and he sparked all the German Wild West clubs. Lufthansa recently laid on non-stop service to Phoenix to haul all the German tourists to May literary sites. May died in 1912 having never visited the Southwest. All his data came from magazine articles on Indian wars which he first found in a prison library. Now the Karl May cult has hit American campuses—symposiums, exhibits, film festivals—possibly because the white men were usually villains, thus passing the p.c. test. Can doctoral dissertations and deconstruction be far behind? See—Cecilie Rohwedder, "Germans Have a Thing About the Wild West, Thanks to Karl May" in *Wall Street Journal*, p.A1, April 4, 2001.

NICE WORK IF YOU CAN GET IT by Bruce Strauch (the Citadel)

Sumner Redstone expanded his father's drive-in movie chain into Viacom. It now owns CBS, Paramount, MTV, Blockbuster and Nickelodeon. And with the help of that necessary "accomplished collaborator" he's going to tell us all about how he did it. Conveniently, Viacom owns the publisher Simon & Schuster. Which is giving him a coast-to-coast publicity tour, network t.v. appearances and a high-priced "lay-down date." That means the book will be launched everywhere on a single day, which requires a lot of tricky shipping. Sales staff have been exhorted to treat the launch as "A Passion to Keep Our Jobs," a little word play on the book's title *A Passion to Win*. Traditionally, these top exec books were highly suspect and were taken to another publishing house to prove they weren't total vanities. As you can guess, many don't sell very well. See—Laurie P. Cohen, "Simon & Schuster Is More Than Excited About a New Author," in *Wall Street Journal*, p.A1, April 5, 2001.

BUT DOES HE HAVE A TRUST FUND?

by Bruce Strauch (the Citadel)

Charles Webb was born rich, and his family was contemptuous of his novel *The Graduate* until it became a movie and a huge success. Irritated by the success ethic and American consumerism, Webb gave the money away to charity and moved with his wife to England, drawn by the English eccentric lifestyle. Now after forty years, he has published again—*New Cardiff* with Little, Brown & Co. And he doesn't care at all for the hype connecting him with his famous earlier book. In fact, he had six novels after *The Graduate*, all panned by critics as inferior to his big hit. See—Wade Lambert, "Author of 'The Graduate' (Finally) Publishes Again," in *Wall Street Journal*, p.B1, May 8, 2001.

ADVERTISERS' INDEX

61	ABC CLIO	37	BOOK HOUSE	35	INSTITUTE OF PHYSICS
25	ABSOLUTE BACKORDER	7, 21	BOWKER	95	KLUWER ACADEMIC
45	ACADEMIC PRESS	41	CAMBRIDGE SCIENTIFIC ABSTRACTS	79	MAJORS
27	ACM	73	CASALINI LIBRI	71	McFARLAND
48, 49	ACS	83	THE CHARLESTON ADVISOR	96	MIDWEST LIBRARY SERVICE
13	ALIBRIS	10	THE CHARLESTON REPORT	8, 9	NETLIBRARY
2	ALFRED JAEGER	77	CHOICE	81	MARTINUS NIJHOFF INTL.
59	AM. INSTITUTE OF PHYSICS	69	WALTER DE GRUYTER	87	NISO
17	AM. PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOC.	43	EASTERN BOOK COMPANY	67, 75	OCLC
33	AM. SOCIETY OF PLANT BIOLOGISTS	53	EBSCO INFORMATION SERV.	47	RITTENHOUSE
51	ASME INTERNATIONAL	55	ELSEVIER	16	SCHOENHOF'S FOREIGN BOOKS
5	ATG	31	EMERY PRATT	63	M.E. SHARPE
12	AUX AMATEURS DE LIVRES	85	ERASMUS	15	SWETS BLACKWELL
14	BASCH SUBSCRIPTIONS, INC.	23	FAXON, ROWECOM	65	THOMSON LEARNING
19	BELL & HOWELL	29, 57	IEEE	89	WORLDWIDE BOOKS
3	BLACKWELL'S BOOK SERVICES	11	INGENTA	39	YBP

Ad Manager: Edna Laughrey Internet: elaughey@aol.com
phone: 734-429-1029; fax: 734-429-1711