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## Bet You Missed It-Mousecalls and Newspaper Microfilming

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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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### Through A Glass Brightly

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

Exquisitely realistic, about 3,000 intricate glass models of plant species, from simple mosses and algae to complex flowering plants like the carnivorous pitcher plant, are endangered works of art sorely in need of restoration. **Harvard University** will restore the models in a \$2 million decade-long project, which will require learning the unique composition and expansion coefficient of each model.

See — “Rehab for Harvard’s Glass Flowers,” Random Samples section edited by **Constance Holden**, in *Science*, p.2145, Mar. 24, 2000.

### Choppy Data

by **Twyla Racz** (Eastern Michigan University)

The lack of standards, especially for identification and description, is creating problems for smooth electronic resources access. Basing this article on their recently-completed survey, the authors discuss the various issues including usage and privacy and the identification of users. They conclude that in order for standards to be effective the data elements required to describe users must be considered first, and soon.

See — **Liz Potter** and **Mark Bide**, “User Authentication and Access Management,” *Publishing Research Quarterly*, vol. 15 (2) (Summer 1999) p24-29.

### Blood and Oil

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

**Getty Images**, owned by heirs of the oil magnate **J. Paul Getty**, recently launched a takeover that will increase the number of photographic images it owns to 70 million, putting it ahead of its nearest competitor: **Bill Gates’ Corbis Images** with 65 million. The **Getty** company has invested heavily in infrastructure to support digitization of its photographic library. Scanning and giving keywords for each picture costs the company around \$45, and 1.2 million of a planned 3 million images have been converted to date. It will offer the images through four Web sites--targeted to different kinds of consumers—offering not only photographs but software and data. **Mark Getty**, the company head, compares fortunes being made from intellectual property in the 21st century to those of oil barons in the 20th.

See — *The Economist*, March 4-10, 2000, p. 68

### Vernal and Vulnerable

by **Twyla Racz** (Eastern Michigan University)

The author discusses how literary non-fiction writing differs from scientific works, philosophy, and fiction and what attracts readers. It is vulnerable, however, to various factors: reading change from pleasure to information; over-forties in age are the largest reading group; and marketing.

See — **Henk Hoeks**, “The Vulnerability of Literary Non-Fiction,” *Publishing Research Quarterly*, vol. 16 (1) (Spring 2000) p38-42.

### Something In Life Is Free?

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

**Michael Saylor**, billionaire CEO of **MicroStrategy** in Vienna, Virginia, wants to give everyone less fortunate than himself a chance at a free education. Pledging \$100 million, he plans to launch an online university which will comprise a “cyberlibrary” of videotaped lectures from thousands of leading educators and great minds. Distance learning is certainly not a new idea, but free distance learning has sparked many questions from observers, including whether professors will be willing to give their course materials away for free.

See — “Free Online University?,” NetWatch column edited by **Jocelyn Kaiser**, in *Science*, p.2111, Mar. 24, 2000.

### Plus Ça Change, Plus C'est la Même Chose

by **Twyla Racz** (Eastern Michigan University)

The author, son of the founder of **Regnery Publishing**, reviews their publication list to show the firm’s 50 year history. He’s quoted as saying times change but their purpose of publishing books “in direct opposition to the dominant current of the time” remains the same. One of the company’s books *Red Horizons* did have an influence on the overthrow of Romania’s **Ceausecu**.

See — **Alfred S. Regnery**, “From the Henry Regnery Company to Regnery Publishing, Inc.: The First Fifty Years,” *Publishing Research Quarterly*, vol. 14 (4) (Winter 1998/99) p 70-75

### US and EU Vs. WTO

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

Two crucial votes are coming up in the **U.S. Congress** which could have a lasting effect on the **World Trade Organization**.

Congress is expected to vote on whether the U.S. should stay in the WTO and whether China will be allowed to join it. Observers expect approval, though grudging, of continued U.S. involvement, but the vote over China is less predictable. At the heart of the issue is the WTO’s upholding of a complaint from the EU about “foreign sales corporations” (FSCS)—shell companies in offshore tax havens through which American firms channel foreign income to avoid tax—which give U.S. firms unfair trade advantage according to the EU. Other issues between the two trade giants also threaten the future existence of the WTO.

See — “A Tussle over Tax,” *The Economist*, p. 75, Mar. 4-10, 2000.

### New Literary Genre?

by **Twyla Racz** (Eastern Michigan University)

What is literary non-fiction? Is it a new genre? The author discusses some titles which fall into this category and then answers the question of what literary non-fiction does mean.

See — **Eva Cossée**, “What is Literary Non-Fiction?”, *Publishing Research Quarterly*, vol. 16 (1) (Spring 2000) p. 35-37.





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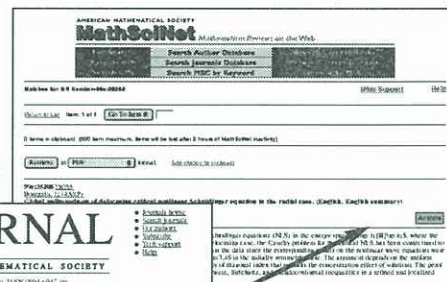
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—C. Ward Henson,  
Professor of Mathematics, University of Illinois

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## Outmodem Technology

by Sandra Beehler (Old Dominion University)

Seattle-based TeraBeam Networks garnered most of the "buzz" at the recent PC Forum in Scottsdale, AZ. The company is offering an inexpensive, practical way to break the communications bottleneck between high-speed fiber optic networks and individual PCs. Using point-to-point laser communication technology and a small transmitter/receiver placed near an office window, data can be received and sent at speeds up to two gigabits a second from PCs in the building.

See — "Communications - Laser-guided," *The Economist*, p.66, Mar. 25-31, 2000.

## Change for a Euro Dollar

by Sandra Beehler (Old Dominion University)

Several more European countries are set to join the 11 that already use the Euro. Greece is eager to join the Euro club, while Denmark and Sweden are moving more cautiously toward a decision. Norway, which is not even an EU member, has recently had a change of government to one more favorable to the EU and the unified currency.

See — "The Euro -- More Takers," *The Economist*, p. 51, Mar. 25-31, 2000.

## Newspaper Microfilming

by Joan Loslo (University of Northern Iowa)

Several years ago Nicolson Baker castigated libraries for discarding their card catalogs as they created online catalogs. Now he attacks the decision of libraries to convert bound newspapers to microfilm and then discard the paper originals.

See — Nicholson Baker, "Deadline: the Author's Desperate Bid to Save America's Past," *The New Yorker*, vol. 76 (20) (July 24, 2000), p. 42-61.

*Against the Grain / November 2000*

## Supreme Court EU Style

by Sandra Beehler (Old Dominion University)

The European Court of Justice already elaborates and enforces a code of European law that is growing in scope and overrules the national laws of EU countries. Now it is requesting changes to the rules that govern it which will give it more flexibility in dealing with its huge caseload. Changes include allowing national courts to rule on questions of European law which they encounter in exercising national jurisdiction and creation of new tribunals for special categories of cases. These changes would allow the main court to function similarly to the U.S. Supreme Court.

See — "European Court of Justice--Eventually Supreme?" *The Economist*, p.50, Mar. 25-31, 2000.



## Mousecalls

by Sandra Beehler (Old Dominion University)

In Europe, where health care is publicly financed, a growing number of private health firms are using the Internet to sell health products and provide information to consumers and doctors. The effect of this effort on health care delivery is incalculable. Such companies must cope not only with different languages but with health practices and medical treatments that vary between countries. Private suppliers are also developing Web services for health care professionals, offering them technical information and software to help them make clinical decisions.

See — "E Health Screening," *The Economist*, p.67, Mar. 25-31, 2000.

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# Something About Books

by Jack Walsdorf (Library Relations, Alibris) <jackw@alibris.com>

When **Willie Morris** died last year (August 2, 1999) America lost one of its finest Southern writers, although **Willie** preferred to say that he considered himself to be "an American writer who lives in the South." With his death has come a number of books, many in the works before his early death of heart failure at the age of sixty-five. Later this fall, the **University Press of Mississippi** will publish *My Mississippi* by **Willie**, with photographs by **David Rae Morris**, his son.

Earlier this year the same press published two other books relating to **Willie**, the first was *Remembering Willie*, a book of memorials collected in the form of twenty-seven eulogies and tributes from President **William J. Clinton**, **William Styron**, **David Halberstam**, **Ellen Douglas**, **Mike Espy**, **Ed Yoder**, **Donna Tartt** and others. The second book, the subject of this review is *Conversations With Willis Morris*, edited by **Jack Bales**, the reference and humanities librarian at **Mary Washington College** in **Fredericksburg, Virginia**.

When **Jack Bales** undertook this project even he did not realize the magnitude of material available. **Willie Morris** was everywhere, on T.V., in books and magazines, in movies and videos. All of his work, and work about him are in the University of Mississippi's Department of Archives and Special Collections, which acquired **Willie's** papers in 1995, all seventeen thousand documents! As **Elizabeth Mullener** pointed out in her 1981 essay "Willie Morris's heart seems to be wherever his typewriter is." And **Willie** added: "I couldn't live without writing . . . I'd have no reason for living. I can't do anything else."

He could, of course. He could be the magazine editor he was, the youngest editor of *Harper's*, America's oldest magazine. He could be the teacher he was at the **University of Mississippi** where he would introduce his students to **William Styron**, **Shelby**

**Foote**, **James Dickey**, **Peter Matthiessen**, **John Knowles**, **George Plimpton**, **Beth Henley** or **Ellen Gilchrist**. The introduction to these writers came through their books, but better yet in person as visiting writers. And sometimes his class would have a young and unpublished writer attending, **John Grisham**, who used **Willie** as his first reader of *A Time To Kill*.

But in the end **Willie** was a writer of stories, be they novels, memoirs or short stories. "I happen to be perhaps the United States' oldest living sixth grader. I'm obsessed with childhood and I've written a lot about it . . ." This may have been true of **Willie** all his life, but at a very young age he had his most famous book, *North Toward Home*, published to much critical acclaim, and **John Kenneth Galbraith** summed it up by saying: "No one at thirty-two should write his memoirs; **Willie Morris** is the only exception."


Along with **Willie's** life long passion for writing came his belief in the written word. As he said, "the written word, when well done, is one of the few endeavors of the human race that lasts and matters. If you write something good, it's going to last; it's that simple."

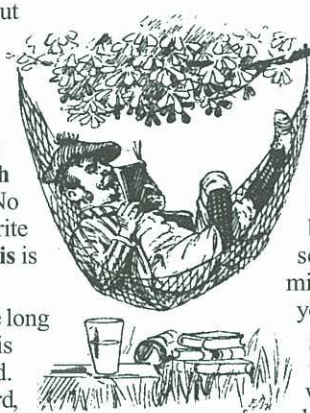
**Willie's** words will last, and finding his published works is easier than ever. A quick check of the **Alibris** website found hundreds of **O.P. Willie Morris** books for sale, and the **Amazon** site offered over 40 titles, while **e-Bay** listed a few items up for auction. But it is the spoken works, the interviews, the out-of-the-way newspaper articles, which may be more easily lost in time. And it is with these sources that **Jack Bales** has done such a masterful job of finding and reprinting the often lost or forgotten works by and about **Willie**.

In *Conversations with Willie Morris*, (University Press of Mississippi, 2000) we find a total of twenty-five interviews starting in 1967, with one of the earliest pieces by **Leslie Cross** of the *Milwaukee Journal*. There are two television interviews with **Charlie Rose**, along with a delightful and entertaining interview done in 1966 by *Whad'Ya Know* host **Michael Feldman**. Feldman asked **Willie**: "What if Faulkner had been born in Hibbing, Minnesota? Would that have changed the course of Southern literature?" To which **Willie** replied: "No, his name would have been **Garrison Keillor**. He would have written *The Sound and the Snow*."

**Studs Terkel**, during a 1983 radio interview got **Willie** to talk about his multi-layered book, *The Courting of Marcus Dupree*: "I began to perceive that it really wasn't a book about football, although football is the thread that runs through it. It's a book about two Mississippians; a seventeen-year-old black and a middle-aged white. The seventeen-year-old black's odyssey into the great outside world almost coincided with the middle-aged white's return to his soil after a long exile."

This book ends with **Jack Bales** own 1997 "Conversation with Willie Morris." This is the longest single section of the book, twenty-eight pages, and in many ways the most informative, covering, as it does, the whole range of **Willie's** life as editor, teacher, and writer.

On a personal note, I knew **Willie** somewhat, helped get his limited edition book, *My Two Oxfords*, published; spent one memorable night with him and his wife, along with **Larry Brown** and his wife at the **Warehouse**, a pub in Oxford, Mississippi, talking about books, writing, publishing and bookselling. I will miss him dearly, but he will always live in his written words. 



## Click One, Get One Free

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

Internet commerce in books is forcing changes in the book club business. When **Doubleday Direct**, one of the main U.S. book clubs, saw a big drop in enrollment in 1999, it moved quickly to grab a piece of the Web market. Though general-interest clubs find it hard to compete with online retailers, the Internet offers advantages to clubs which cater to special interests. Several specialty clubs offered by **Doubleday** online late last year have already exceeded expectations in online enrollment.

See — "New Life in the Old Club," *The Economist*, p.74, Feb. 26-Mar. 3, 2000.

## SLIC FOR NIC

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

A startup company called **Alacritech** is offering a new way to connect computers to the Internet that could increase server performance by 800%. Its **Session Layer Interface Card (SLIC)** would replace the **Network Interface Card (NIC)** that has been standard for the last 20 years. The **SLIC** includes an **Internet Protocol Processor (IPP)** and 8 mbs of memory, which takes over the burden of protocol processing from a server's CPU. Test results have been very positive, though there are still some technical problems to be worked out.

See — **James Karney**, "Cut the Chatter," *Internet World*, July 1, 2000.