June 1999

Bet You Missed It-NIH, Sears Tower

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Recommended Citation

Rose, Pamela M. (1999) "Bet You Missed It-NIH, Sears Tower," *Against the Grain*: Vol. 11: Iss. 3, Article 30.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.7771/2380-176X.3923>

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Bet You Missed It —

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

Column Editor: **Pamela M. Rose** (Web Services and Library Promotion Coordinator, Health Sciences Library, University at Buffalo) <pmrose@acsu.buffalo.edu> <http://www.acsu.buffalo.edu/~pmrose>

Consumers Rule by **Bruce Strauch** (the Citadel)

The **MP3** explosion has ripped the music industry into two camps—the new artists who want to use the Internet as a powerful tool to break into fame and the big five music companies that see their comfortable world vanishing along with copyright protection. The industry is designing a system—the **Madison Project**—to sell over the Net and still make

money, but the standard is a year away. **Michael Robertson** of **MP3.com** believes evolving technology will frustrate anything the big five companies try to do. He says, “The consumer will have the last word.” See — **Fred Goodman**, “Is MP3 the End of the Music Business?”, *Rolling Stone*, p.25, April, 1999.

Are We Prepared? by **Pamela M. Rose** (SUNY at Buffalo)

Republican **Senator Robert F. Bennett**, Chairman of the U.S. Senate Special Committee on the Year 2000 Technology Problem (year2000@y2k.senate.gov) gives an overview of the Y2K problem with an assessment of

the preparedness of eight vital economic sectors. See — **Robert F. Bennett**, “The Y2K Problem,” in **Policy Forum: Technology section**, *Science*, Apr. 16, 1999, p. 438-39.

Crazy Like a Single Nucleotide Polymorphism? by **Pamela M. Rose** (SUNY at Buffalo)

Are drug companies altruistic? In an extraordinary groundbreaking collaboration, ten large pharmaceutical companies and a British charity are investing \$45 million to create a public domain archive of human variation. Single nucleotide polymorphisms (SNPs, or variable points in the human genetic code) will be used as analytical tools which allow researchers to trace inherited disease risks and abnormal responses to drugs. **TSC** (the official name of the **SNP Consortium**) does expect the project to allow more effective development and marketing of drugs, as well as saving the costs of purchasing private SNP data collections. Still, genome researchers are excited

about this unique private-public collaboration. See — **Eliot Marshall**, “Drug Firms to Create Public Database of Genetic Mutations” in *Science*, p. 406-407, Apr. 16, 1999.

And They Were There from page 64

Library Initiatives: “Consortia and Collections: Achieving a Balance Between Local Action and Collaborative Interest.” With all the changes in higher education and libraries, consortia are seen as a means of increasing access to materials, but there are challenges in making them work well. The problems may range from arranging delivery of materials over geographic distances to the more emotional ones of local control and resistance to change. Consortia will play an increasing role in the libraries of the future because of the increased costs of library materials and the increased expectations of library users. Users can now see far more references to the available universe of information, and they expect to get the materials. Consortia allow libraries to leverage their investments in collections, infrastructure, and personnel in order to enhance service. Some libraries negotiate consortial agreements for electronic resources, document delivery, cataloging and collection development. There must be coordination to ensure that time lines are met and decisions made; support from the library and university administrations; shared bibliographic access; and delivery systems for a consortia to be effective. The process of getting licensing agreements approved is very time-consuming; the

CIC process often takes up to 6 months. The institutions that are most successful in handling these agreements have a task force dedicated to dealing with electronic resources. The role of collection development is to define user needs, define what is possible, identify and remove obstacles, recognize the complexity of issues, and communicate. The **CIC** consortia is made up of 13 **ARL** libraries with more than 60 million volumes and 550,000 serial subscriptions. Their goal is to provide seamless desktop access to information for the 500,000 students and 35,000 faculty, linking different online systems. They have saved over \$2 million on electronic resources. The essential skills are flexibility, adaptability, enthusiasm, and the willingness to change. (See: <http://www.cic.uiuc.edu>)

Jack Walsdorf, Vice President, Library Relations, Blackwell's Book Services: “How Booksellers are Employing Electronic Innovations to Enhance Collection Development Procedures.” Most librarians assume approval plans began in the 1960s, with **Richard Abel**, but there were early blanket order plans with individual publishers. One of the first seems to have been with **Roycroft Books** in the 1880s; the publisher would ship a selection of his books to people for their consideration. The concept remains, but the technologies change. Walsdorf asked the major approval vendors several questions related to electronic

developments. In what way do you see electronic tools aiding the monographic collection development process? It provides more accurate information that is often annotated about more items than before; it streamlines work for acquisitions and cataloging. Are you supporting electronic ordering, invoicing, claiming, order status reporting, approval management reports? Most are, or are in the development process of all of these. What are you doing to help customers create a more efficient collection development workflow? Communications, clearer statistical reports, improved access to records. Do you offer cataloging services? Yes!

Can records be downloaded electronically directly into a library system? Most said yes. From the vendor's point of view, what are the pros/cons of electronic notification slips? **Blackwell** sent out 7 million print forms last year; electronic forms would save money and even have an impact on the ecology. They feel electronic forms would be easier to share among bibliographers and faculty. They could include more information in the electronic versions. The drawbacks: there will be an infrastructure investment; the response time on the Internet is unpredictable; there is resistance from librarians who tend to sort forms in a variety of locations where computer access isn't practical. 🐼

Process Patent Billionaire by Bruce Strauch (the Citadel)

Monopoly fanatic **Jay Walker** was an entrepreneur from the get-go. After a string of intriguing failures, he's into patenting Web technology and has assembled a team he compares to **Thomas Edison's laboratory**. **Priceline**, the name-your-price Internet business that sells air tickets, cars, hotel rooms and even home mortgages is his first success—valued by Wall Street at \$88 billion. Walker has pulled this off through a business process patent. Mathematical formulas are not patent-

able, but computer software is. Ergo, patents could theoretically protect the application of an idea and not just physical things. Walker is truly pushing the envelope in the area of patent law and there will be mucho litigation over this. He is quick to admit he is unconventional. "It was once unconventional to drill for oil in the ocean," he wryly observes. See — **Dyan Machan**, "An Edison for a New Age?," *Forbes*, p.178, May 17, 1999.

Hiring Smarter Than Thou by Bruce Strauch (the Citadel)

Jeff Bezos exhorts his managers to hire people more talented than they. If they're afraid of superstars, they'll end up getting beat by them when they work for a competitor. Learn not just what they've done, but how they did it.

Find out what they're passionate about other than work. Baroque music. Mountain climbing. See — **Carol Hymowitz**, "How Amazon.com Staffs a Juggernaut: It's Not About Resumes," *The Wall Street Journal*, p.B1, May 4, 1999.

Crackdown by Rick Heldrich (College of Charleston)

The **China Association of Science and Technology (CAST)** has come down hard on abuses of investigators and journals who use plagiarism, fabricate, use politics, or engage in other questionable conduct in efforts to be published. CAST issued a statement to warn those who do not play fair. Under the rules, violators would be boycotted for ten years in future ac-

tivities and the violator's employer and the general public would be informed of the abuse. Journals are also put on notice to treat authors with greater respect. Will the new concern for integrity win? Only time will tell. See — "Chinese Journals Pledge Crackdown", **Justin Wang**, *Science*, Vol 283, No. 5407, March 5, 1999, page 1427.

Going, Going, Gone by Rick Heldrich (College of Charleston)

The *Journal of Organic Chemistry* is trying an experiment aimed at the reduction of pages in the printed journal. With two papers, experimental data has been provided in Supporting Information, accessed via the World Wide Web. The use of the WWW cut down the total pages for the two articles (authored by Heathcock) to 12 pages. With traditional experimental pages, the same two articles would have taken up an additional 12-14 pages. Unless authors or patrons provide negative feedback, the

use of the Web to post Supporting Experimental Information seems likely for all papers in the future. If all experimental pages in this issue of *JOC* had been placed in Supporting Information on the Web, the page count would have been reduced from 326 pages to 227 pages, assuming each paper begins on a new page. See — "Journal of Organic Chemistry uses Web to reduce journal pages," Editorial by **Clayton Heathcock**, Editor in Chief, *JOC*, v.64, no.1, p.1, 1999.

Buy and Cell by Pamela M. Rose (SUNY at Buffalo)

Elsevier has purchased **Cell Press**, publisher of the journals **Cell**, **Immunity**, **Neuron**, and **Molecular Cell**. The purchase is

expected to propel each journal into electronic publishing. See — "Sold!," in *ScienceScope* section, *Science*, Apr. 16, 1999, p. 411.

The Life of Paperbacks by Twyla Racz (Eastern Michigan University)

Since 1984 **Georgia State University's** library has added paperback books to the collection without binding them. Validity studies were done in 1985 and 1989. This article discussed these studies and the conclusions

reached. See — **Joan M. Stephens**, "The Life Expectancy of Paperback Books in Academic Libraries: Eleven Years Later," *Technical Services Quarterly*, vol. 15 (4) (1998), p. 17-25

Man-shotgun Marriage Brings Publishing Lucre by Bruce Strauch (the Citadel)

Deep in an article on the surging side-by-side shotgun industry is a niche publishing saga of *Double Gun Journal* — the Architectural Digest for lovers of extremely crafted shotguns that sell from \$34,000 to \$134,000 and even higher. **Daniel Philip Cote** was told he was crazy to start the magazine. Too narrow a subject. Now it's got 32,000 paid circulation. Appears quarterly at

\$12.98 an issue. 190 gold-edged pages and a simulated leather cover. Demographics are average reader over age of 50, net worth of \$2.2 million, earns \$220,000 a year. Yes, luxury goods advertisers adore it. See — **James Sterba**, "It Shoots, It's Costly, But, Please, Don't Call It a 'Weapon'," *The Wall Street Journal*, p.A1, May 4, 1999.

Cast Them Out! by Pamela M. Rose (SUNY at Buffalo)

The **China Association for Science and Technology (CAST)** has embraced a new code of conduct which asks Chinese journal editors to: refrain from publishing poor-quality, questionable authorship articles; warn plagiarism perpetrators, and boycott repeat offenders. Along

with stamping out misconduct, CAST hopes to affirm the role of authors and promote better communications between journals and the scientific community. See — **Justin Wang**, "Chinese Journals Pledge Crackdown" in *Science*, p.1427, Mar. 5, 1999.

Going Tabloid by Bruce Strauch (the Citadel)

Former Deputy Treasury Secretary and Clinton pal **Roger Altman** is buying American Media, owner of the *Enquirer* and the *Star* for \$300 million plus assumption of a load of debt. He will push them into teen and Spanish language versions and onto the Internet. He sees them as the two largest "undermar-

keted, underpromoted papers in the country" with enormous potential readership waiting out there. And despite perception, he says libel costs are low. See — **Wendy Bounds**, "New Owners Of the Enquirer Vow to Expand," *The Wall Street Journal*, p.B1, Feb. 17, 1999.

Turnabout is Fair Play? by Pamela M. Rose (SUNY at Buffalo)

Professors stealing from students? Graduate students at **Cornell** and **Columbia** have raised the prickly issue of who owns ideas in lawsuits alleging that professors have misappropriated the students' research in or-

der to publish their own papers or to get research grants. See — **Eliot Marshall**, "Two Former Grad Students Sue Over Alleged Misuse of Ideas," *Science*, April 23, 199, p.562-63.

-Lo- and -Ga- Become -Bi- (A Dollar to the Reader Who Knows Why!)

by Pamela M. Rose (SUNY at Buffalo)

So you thought gigabytes were big? Metric prefixes kilo-, mega-, and giga- refer to numbers ending in zeros. But computers use binary, which accumulates as a power of 2, not 10. So a kilobyte is really 1024, not 1000. The correction involved just two let-

ters: B and I. So from now on, computer campers, it's kibi-, mebi-, and gibi-! See — "Computer Gibberish," in Random Samples section edited by **Constance Holden**, *Science*, March 12, 1999, p.1631.

Three Commissars Behind Every Worker by Bruce Strauch (the Citadel)

At last! Lazy, classroom-dodging profs are not the cause of outrageous college tuition increases. It's what you already knew—legions of administrators. Four admin types for every teacher in the Mississippi public university system. 3.7 per prof in

N.C. 3.7 per prof in N.M. The D.C. system runs one to one — but get this — that's due to a partial shut-down and financial crisis(!) See — **Peter Brimelow**, "The Paper Chase," *Forbes*, p.79, May 17, 1999.

Nit-pickers Delight by Bruce Strauch (the Citadel)

Incredibly droll article on the fact-checkers for the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* and all the cranks and obsessives who challenge facts in the articles. **Caligula** didn't make his horse a senator, but he did build him an ivory manger. **Martin Luther** didn't nail his theses to a door; he circulated them. And the height of

the **Sears Tower** is off by four feet in the tourist brochure. Article also gives a look at the travails of *Britannica Online*. The first disgruntled employee saboteur has struck. See — **Michael J. McCarthy**, "It's Not True About Caligula's Horse; *Britannica* Checked," *The Wall Street Journal*, p. 1, April 22, 1999.

Going to Hell in a Handbasket? by Jane Tuten (USC Aiken)

The insightful premise is that higher education, as most of us have known it, is facing the ultimate "algorithm." With new and intriguing procedural influences of IT and information literacy comes the demise of the traditional academy. **Talbott** argues that in society today "information is designed more for manipula-

tion and doing than understanding, and this helps to explain the convergence of business and education." With genuine concern for the academy, **Talbott's** supreme question is "What the hell is going on?" See — **Steve Talbott**, "Who's Killing Higher Education", *Educom Review*, March/April 1999, p. 26-33.

NIH Wants an E-Print Piece by Pamela M. Rose (SUNY at Buffalo)

Physics was the first discipline to establish an incredibly successful preprint network. Now it looks like Biology could be next, as **NIH** is considering investing in a one-stop, public source for biomedical research papers. The "e-print" repository would be loosely modeled after the Physics archives at **Los**

Alamos, and would include a "streamlined" version of traditional peer review. The idea appears to have the support of scientists, but journal editors are skeptical. See — **Eliot Marshall**, "NIH Weighs Bold Plan for Online Preprint Publishing," *Science*, March 12, 199, p.1610-11.

Manage your Collection Money by Twyla Racz (Eastern Michigan University)

Publication increase and funding decrease complicates collection management. This useful article discusses Web-based resources which can assist in selection decisions. Sites covered include publisher, review, jobber and vendor, bookstore and bookseller, association, awards, core

lists and bibliographies, library catalogs, and antiquarian and out-of-print dealers. See - **Shelley Arlen**, **Ann Lindell**, **Razia Nanji**, and **Colleen Seale**, "Web Tools for Collection Managers", *Collection Building*, vol. 17 (2) (1998), p.65-70.

Bioterrorism? by Rick Heldrich (College of Charleston)

Do you ever wonder how real the threat of bioterrorism is? Should you worry? All those bioterrorism novels are not coming from out of left field. If you want a stark and frank review of this area of international concern, you should definitely take the time to read this article. How do we know that Iraq really has biological weapons? Are there any active groups who have actually

attempted to use biological weapons in terrorist attacks? What are the differences in reaction to chemical and biological attacks? Can the threat of bioterrorism get any worse? You'll have to read this article to find out. See — **Donald A. Henderson**, "The Looming Threat of Bioterrorism", *Science*, Vol. 283, Feb. 26, 1999, pages 1279 - 1282.

Unwieldy Instructions by Jane Tuten (USC Aiken)

The conversion of a graduate course in the College of Education at **Oklahoma State University** provided the "lab" for an experiment in online learning. While instructor support in the online learning environment is critical to a successful experience, the instructors hoped that a threaded discussion group would assure interaction and the exploration of diverse opinions, i.e.

successful community building outside of the classroom. The process for these students proved to be "unwieldy and frustrating." Lessons learned and advice for faculty contemplating such an adventure provide the basis for the article. See — **Sharon G. Solloway** and **Edward L. Harris**, "Creating Community Online" *Educom Review*, March/April 1999, p. 8-13