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Leaving the Books Behind! -- The Alter Ego

Mary E. (Tinker) Massey

Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, masse36e@erau.edu

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be flawed from the start. **Filtering Facts** made this clear in a report on the methodology published subsequent to the **ALA** report. In it **Christopher Hunter**, a doctoral student at the **Annenberg School for Communication** of the **University of Pennsylvania** and responsible for the **ALA** study, came clean, issuing a statement that his findings were *not* generalizable to the wider Internet. In fact, as has been shown, the exact opposite is true. Unsurprisingly, **ALA** has since dropped the report from its Website but without fanfare or correction. But even if it could be shown that filtering did block 25 percent of good information, the trade-off seems to me a good one. Get rid of 100 percent of the bilge water on the Web and have 75 percent of good information. Again, ten years ago we didn't have access to 100 percent of the Web.

Myth Four: Most People Favor a "Filterless" Internet: As must be obvious by now, even librarians disagree with this statement. Moreover, states issuing requirements for filtering are popping up everywhere. South Carolina, Wisconsin, Utah, Michigan, Alabama, North Carolina and Missouri have filtering laws on the books, or ones pending. In a **U. S. Supreme Court** case brought about by six Virginia professors, the high Court rebuffed them by refusing to take the case and upholding the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit. The state argued that the law prevents employees from wasting time and from creating a sexually hostile workplace and the nation's highest court in the land upheld that ruling just this year. Moreover, evidence mounts that libraries are becoming not only the most readily available purveyors of pornography, but also key targets for pedophiles. The pedophile monitoring group, *PedoWatch.org*, has confirmed that on-line pedophiles are telling each other to use public libraries to download child pornography. Finally, even the argument that this is more clap-

trap from the wild-eyed Right no longer obtains: just three years ago, both **Al Gore** and **Hillary Rodham Clinton** publicly came down on the side of filtering the Internet!

What is clear from all of this is that **ALA** has an odd axe to grind: It wishes to vouchsafe the promulgation of pornography. Two summers ago, **ALA's** annual convention offered a panel on erotica in libraries. The enticement, so to speak, read, "The main focus will be on bibliographic selection along a number of different dimensions [and] ... explicitness: PG, R, and X. Different sexual subject areas will also be covered: 'vanilla' heterosexual, lesbian, gay, vampire, SM, anything goes, as well as factors like literary quality, audience, and trends...." **The Modern Language Association** now has a rival! Since libraries have *never* collected such materials in print (incidentally, the strongest argument in favor of filters), the session should help further **ALA's** argument that such material is "information."

The argument that filters restricted *information* leads to the obvious question, what kind of information? If **ALA** argues that this is sex education, surely no one will agree. What else is there? Nothing. **Horace** understood human nature better than most moderns: "The mind," he wrote, "is more easily stirred by the eye than by the ear."

The issue refuses to go away no matter how hard **ALA** and its minions wish it would. Librarians who flaunt their intellectual freedom credentials may find danger ahead. **The Greenville County (S.C.) Commission** unseated four of the five incumbent library trustees seeking reappointment to the 11-member body. The commission's February 15, 2000,

action came one month after the library board resisted public pressure to have blocking software installed, opting instead to require written parental permission before minors can surf the Internet on the library's unfiltered computers. The library's director also felt the axe fall. Last fall in Oklahoma, after a director made a grand stand for a filterless Internet, local voters rejected by a wide margin the library's bond bill. This could be a trend.

While some librarians increasingly opt for the "tap on the shoulder" approach (also devoutly opposed by **ALA**), parents are becoming increasingly angry at the refusal of librarians to act *in loco parentis* when their children come to call. The end result will be a battle royal. Oddly, a few years ago we nearly destroyed the apple industry because eating 740 alar-treated apples everyday for 70 years *might* cause cancer. We did it for the children. Today, however, apparently 100 million pornographic sites are not too many for our kids. Hey, they might miss those famous dancing hamsters having sex! Librarians cannot hope to win this issue if they unwisely continue to support **ALA's** misguided, wrong-headed and error-filled approach.

The sad fact of the matter is this: If we do not make the case that hardcore pornography can be filtered defensibly, then others will make the logical deduction that nothing can. **Huxley** once said that the true intellectual is one who finds something other than sex to be interested in. The serious fact of the matter is the anti-filtering position held by **ALA** may result in the loss of librarians' public voice, not to mention our public standing, and, most importantly, our public. 🐘

Leaving the Books Behind! — The Alter Ego

by **Mary E. (Tinker) Massey**, Column Editor (University of South Carolina, School of Library and Information Science, Columbia, SC) <MMassey@gwm.sc.edu>

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All of these complex functions are possible, but developing these systems will be costly. Having standards would mean that developers could create systems that work for an entire market, which makes it possible to recover the cost of development.

Although work on standards for eBooks is mainly on hiatus at this moment while the market for eBooks builds and the industry gains experience, it seems clear that a wider use of books in electronic format will require more standards development. This development will arise from different market sectors and use communities as their needs reach a critical point, yet there will be areas where those needs intersect. It will take a combined effort of the publishing community, engineers and data specialists, and the cultural and educational communities to create the standards needed for our eBook future. 🐘

Wow! Can't believe it is a new year, 2005. Late last year after the course work was completed, I reverted to my alter ego of writer for my grandchildren. Bet you didn't know I have fourteen of those wonderful creatures related to me. Truly a gift, but rough at Christmas. My gift to them is a booklet each year of children's stories revolving around my childhood and that of my deceased husband who is their blood kin. They are full of the mysteries of growing up in the 50's, but also filled with morals and family relationships that seem to be lacking today. We all have such a fun time with them and it is good for me to remember the "rules of living" my parents have given me. I have also begun to write some adult novellas that are full of relationships and wisdom learned through my growing years. It is a way to leave my history behind. The oral tradition has come to almost a complete stop in the world, as we relish technology, speed, separation and "throw-away" life. We have forgotten where we come from or even

where we are going. Libraries are starting to renew our interests in family with programs on lineage studies, genealogy research and an occasional program visitation with older folks in the community who remember certain celebrated times (e.g., World War I or II, the Roaring 20's, Roosevelt, or the Civil War). Every chance I get, I am encouraging new writers to pursue penning their memoirs, or doing stories or poetry around their youthful memories. I also try to encourage Public Libraries to add programs of local history from the folklore of the older residents. Why not? We need to learn from the past and move in positive directions.

My coursework sometimes overshadows the pleasure writing, but I can always find time even through the two jobs, MLIS work and helping a needy family all year long. We find time for the important things in life. My recent work in the Special Collections at **USC Libraries** has led me to a new interest in writing. I have been

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Issues in Vendor/Library Relations — The Book & the Scholar: Celebrating the Year of the University Press

by **Linda Behrend** (Assistant Professor/Catalog Librarian, Subject Librarian for Philosophy and Religious Studies, The University of Tennessee, 306 Hodges Library, Knoxville, TN 37996-1000; Phone: 865-974-0392) <behrend@utk.edu>

Column Editor: **Bob Nardini** (Senior Vice President & Head Bibliographer, YBP Library Services, 999 Maple Street, Contoocook, NH 03229; Phone: 800-258-3774 x. 3251; Fax: 603-746-5628) <rnardini@ybp.com>

In celebration of the "Year of the University Press," a year-long campaign of the **Association of American University Presses (AAUP)** and the **Association of Research Libraries (ARL)**, the **University of Tennessee Libraries** and the **University of Tennessee Press** co-sponsored a two-day public symposium September 23-24, 2005, at the **University of Tennessee** in Knoxville.

"The Book & the Scholar," held in **John C. Hodges Library**, was designed to emphasize the relevance of the university press to the academic community and to focus attention on its importance in faculty publishing and scholarly communication. **Barbara Dewey**, Dean of the **University of Tennessee Libraries**, and **Jennifer Siler**, Director of the **University of Tennessee Press**, welcomed attendees, who included **University of Tennessee** faculty, staff, and students, **UT Press** personnel, and other interested persons from the book and publishing world and from the community.

Day one of the symposium fo-

cused on the relationship between university presses and universities. **Bob Levy**, Interim Vice President for Academic Affairs, served as moderator. **Loren Crabtree**, Chancellor of the **University of Tennessee-Knoxville**, introduced the keynote speakers and stressed the importance of scholarly communication and scholarly publishing, stating, "University presses are critical to sharing scholarly information." **Crabtree**, himself a scholar, said he couldn't imagine the book going away.

Peter Givler, Executive Director of the **American Association of University Presses**, and **Sandra Yee**, Dean of Libraries at **Wayne State University**, addressed the importance of a university press, expectations of the university regarding the press, and strategies for ensuring the vitality of the press in a program on "The University Press on the Campus and in the Academic Community."

Givler gave a historical overview of university presses, which were started in the United States around 1870-

1875 to disseminate the work being done in university laboratories. In order to share the very specialized work they were doing, the universities subsidized their presses. According to **Givler**, there are approximately ninety to ninety-five university presses in the United States and Canada today. Total membership of the **AAUP** is 124, including associate members such as research institutions, scholarly societies, and museums. Characteristics of university presses are that they are nonprofit scholarly publishers, their imprint is under the control of some faculty or university body, an editorial board and peer review ensures the quality of their publications. The mission of university presses is to publish scholarship, with the decision to publish based on whether a work will make a significant contribution. University presses help knowledge advance, **Givler** said, and, despite tight finances and a small readership, are freed from the necessity of making publishing decisions based on purely financial reasons. They can publish on subjects with a limited market and often, by publishing books of regional interest, are the means of cementing a good relationship between the university and the local community.

Sandra Yee, Dean of Libraries at **Wayne State University**, talked about "The Value of a University Press in Academia." University presses, she said, provide an opportunity for young scholars to share their knowledge. Other reasons she cited for the existence of university presses are to publish for small audiences of specialists interested in concentrated fields of research and to publish important authors from around the world in translation. Some university presses have created niches or specialty areas for which they are well known. **Yee** mentioned **Africana Studies**, **Jewish Studies**, **Labor and Urban studies**, and the **Great Lakes of Michigan** series as specialties of the **Wayne State University Press**. At **Wayne State**, the university press reported to the University Library system until 2001, when it was transferred to the Provost's office. Among the issues affecting scholarly publishing that **Yee** highlighted are radical changes in higher education, declining budgets in academic libraries, the importance of faculty research and the dissemination of newly discovered or created knowledge, and the need to preserve scholarly work.

Saying that she sees university presses in transition, **Yee** cited modern innovations in scholarly communication such as institutional repositories, **MIT's Cognet** collaboration, **DSPACE**, **Internet-first University Press**, **EScholarship** at the **University of California**, **BiblioVault**, and **Project MUSE**, a joint university press and library project. **Yee** concluded

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toured through the **Fitzgerald Room** in our Department and found it fascinating. There are books, manuscripts, papers and all manner of the gifted writer, to be sure. What I find truly fascinating is the ambience of the room. When the door opens, you walk into a world of the 20's and 30's. There is no mistaking the smells, the memorabilia, and the sheer excitement of the atmosphere. We have just acquired the original screenplays **Fitzgerald** worked on, with his personally penned notes in the margins, and they are a biographer's dream. Got me to wondering why we do not introduce our American adult writers to the younger generation, unless they have written for youngsters. Second through fifth graders are simply not aware of these great writers. I have begun sifting through biographical materials on **Fitzgerald** and I think I have found a way to introduce these writers. There are many homes and rooms and special collections around the United States that are open, like museums, to the public and to researchers. There is a simple storyline that can be used like a series of visits to look briefly at these people and build excitement toward reading and learning of these authors. I am beginning to explore that hole in our literature and release the children's minds into venturing through our homegrown literature. My mother taught us to

read from the only books we had, my grandfather's English editions of the masters. We inhaled the leather bindings, marveled at the construction of the book, and were transfixed by the "words" that were used. It fueled my need for poetry and descriptive prose. It fueled my need for understanding people, places and things. It gave me a love for libraries and vaults full of leather bindings. My grandmother was a Law Librarian and she took me to her library most days of the week. I became a super shelfer (at four years old) with help from her "Law boys," and learned a new appreciation of the materials. Later in school, I worked my way through a BA learning the Technical Services end of the Library. When my first chosen field of endeavor found my research to be too good for publication (they felt it would put them out of business), I returned to my first love — Libraries. They have been my home and my passion ever since. At the **Charleston Conference**, I find so many wonderfully passionate people and I soak up all the emotion I am able to carry away. The Conference and this journal have refueled my energy banks year after year. Now, it is my turn to energize the world with words. I will be graduating in May 2005 and will carry with me the associations and mentoring of many people. I hope to continue writing for **ATG**, as it fills a void in my life, but we shall see. At any rate, the next column will return to issues, hoping that this digression has not been too boring for the reader.