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Leaving the Books Behind! -- Research and Recycling

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OMNIGOOGLISATION. PRONOUNCE IN FRENCH.

by Bruce Strauch (The Citadel)

Google is about to offer access to 15 million books in five prestigious libraries, and Chirac is in a flap and calling for culture summits. France's chief librarian **Jean Jeanneney** and Culture Minister **Renaud de Vabres** have alerted him to "omnigooglisation" and "crushing American domination in the definition of how future generations conceive the world."

Jeanneney fears *The Scarlet Pimpernel* will become the definitive text on the French revolution (I'm not making this up) and vows to counter-attack. But France's **Gallica** project has a budget less than one thousandth of the 200 mil Google is about to spend.

France already has a mare's nest of laws protecting its culture industries. And here's the great quote: "Only a few voices are ever raised to argue that protectionism can lead to introverted mediocrity."

See — "Chirac Plans French Anti-American 'Counter-offensive' on Internet Culture," **Agence France Press**, March 20, 2005.

AND IF YOU TRULY DON'T HAVE A LIFE

by Bruce Strauch (The Citadel)

Can't settle on a hobby? Do people flee the room when you enter? You can stamp a dollar bill with *Wheresgeorge.com* and other shlubs will post the serial number and where the dollar is now. There are 2.3 million other lonely goofs out there like you who view the Website creator **Hank Eskin** as akin to a "god." He has ridden this wave of approval and expanded his empire to include *whereswilly.com* for those boring Canadians, *doshtracker.co.uk* for the British who find traintspotting too arduous and *osatsu.net* for Japanese too slack for suicide.

And there's potential for social life! "Georgers" hold gatherings and compare zip code lists for where their bills have hit. The rivalry is intense, friendships are spawned and the wild fun has proven a foundation for three marriages.

See — "By the Numbers," **Forbes**, Billionaires Special Issue, March 2005, p.64.

Leaving the Books Behind! — Research and Recycling

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

I have just published an article in *Associates* called "The best dressed book in Academe." <http://associates.ucr.edu/> (March issue). In that article, I touch on the history of book art and book/dust jackets and the usage of them in libraries today. I am completing a year-long study of **USC Libraries'** first jacketed books in the regular stacks and how the jackets affect circulation statistics. Believe it or not, in our academic library, non-jacketed books transferred from Browsing to the general stacks showed an increase of 15% in circulation, while the jacketed books showed an increase of 54% in usage. The administration was concerned about the changes in workflow that left the jackets on the books. Would things change in the stacks, would jackets harm the books in some way or take up too much room? Their worries were dispelled by the great amounts of time, money and personnel the changes saved in the processing. Now their anxieties are smoothed by the realization that jackets actually increase circulation statistics.

All of this work and wonder got me thinking about serials. In Public Libraries, the covers of journals are competitively creating realms of art, a graphic nightmare for some! We are constantly assaulted by color and movement, design and elegance, graphic renderings of words and meanings. Patrons have no problem in identifying their journal of choice. The size, shape and graphic representations tell everything. In academe, we not only have those popularized journals, but we have the scholastic journals as well. Even without pictures, I can readily spot journals I cataloged or have dealt with over the thirty years in libraries. The coordination of color constancy, word placement, font size, issue size and shape, and spine printing give me visual recognition of an old friend. Since scho-

lastic journals' vendors and publishers feel a need to constantly increase cost for the titles we purchase, I recommend to them that they find some graphics to add to the boring words they display. Journal of Toxicology might want to add pictures of people drinking poisoned water, or birds dropping from air pollution, or the ozone holes. Circulation journals might display people using both people check-outs and self-check systems. Rare and Special Collections magazines might want to have facsimiles or mock-ups of old materials or realia on the covers. Astronomy magazines sometimes have solar system events on their covers, but some have nothing. Journals should tell us on the covers what we are likely to find inside. It's not good enough anymore to have just words. We need visuals — graphics! We could get more patrons to look into those magazines if we had graphics. If book jackets work for books, why not cover graphics for magazines?

Well, to be very honest, I have seen some holographic representations on journal covers. They were interesting and fun. Not only can I read the computer magazine, I can spend hours playing with the holograph! When I was young, *McCall's* magazine had **Betsy McCall**, the paper doll at the end of the journal. You were actually invited to clip it out and add to her wardrobe with each issue. Now that meant we were adding usage to the issue by recycling it to other people in the family. Our only problem was being patient enough to wait on the adults to finish the magazine. We have become so specific with our journals that only a narrow focus of people can make use of the issue. I think we could expand usage by adding the graphics.

On another aspect of our collections, newspapers, I just want to add that we can recycle

them very well in our culture. We have blue recycling bins, true, but I am talking of more practical means of recycling. Newsprint has some very good qualities. It is super absorbent, insulating, and a gardening help. As a gardening aid, newspapers can be used as a mulching device buried under dirt and leaves. It also reduces weeds and holds moisture for growing roots. Seems the poor weedy growths don't like the ink and other chemicals in the paper. I have a number of coworkers who use the newspapers in this manner. They are insulating! I used to cook my husband his evening meal, wrap it in newspaper very tightly and transport sixty miles to his workplace as a piping hot meal to maintain his strict nutritional schedule. Our street people stuff their shirts and coats with the newspaper on cold nights. On another side of insulation, I find that the tile floors in the back of my duplex can be covered with newspaper and maintain some bit of warmth in the rooms for winter. It can also seal cracks and drafts. Of course, I do have an elderly dog who cannot endure the twelve hour days I have and that's where their absorbency comes in. The most remarkable newspaper title is the *Wall Street Journal*. Not only does it rate number one for all of these qualities and recycling abilities. Every section in the paper is of nearly equal size/pagings and opens easily to the center of the section. The paper itself is also larger than others and covers a bigger area on the floor and the grade of paper is as it has always been — heavier and more absorbent than all of the others. BTW, if you have a leak in your library, the *WSJ* comes in handy for soaking up those puddles. The disposal is super easy!

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Technology Left Behind — How to Get Your Art Fix

Column Editor: **Cris Ferguson** (Electronic Resources/Serials Librarian, James B. Duke Library, Furman University, 3300 Poinsett Highway, Greenville, SC 29613; Phone: 864-294-2713) <cris.ferguson@furman.edu>

In November 2004, **Kodak** announced the discontinuation of its line of slide projectors. (<http://www.kodak.com/US/en/digital/av/slideProjectors/>) While **Kodak** is only one vendor of slide projector equipment, I fear their decision marks the beginning of the end for slide collections and slide libraries. As more vendors discontinue manufacturing traditional slide projectors lines in favor of digital projectors and other more advanced technologies, the extensive slide collections housed in art departments, museums, special collections, and art and architecture libraries are facing extinction. Replacement parts, like carousels and bulbs, for aging slide projectors are becoming increasingly difficult to find and expensive to pay for. If the equipment breaks and replacements cannot be found, the slides themselves become a virtually useless commodity.

With only five functioning slide projectors (all of which are manufactured by **Kodak**) in the possession of the **Furman University Art Department**, the **Furman University Libraries** and the **Computing and Information Services** department, initiated a project to investigate alternative ways to provide access to the 30,000 images housed in the slide library, once the remaining slide projectors no longer function. Our focus has been on image repositories and the various products available on the market that could help us obtain or provide access to the images we need. We are still in the process of our investigation and we have made no definitive decisions, but for those of you facing the same bleak outlook for your own slide collections, this might help jump start your own investigation.

There are five fairly reasonable ways to fill the gap in access left by broken slide projectors.

1. Hope that 1) the second-hand market for slide projectors and equipment remains strong and 2) there will be enough supply to meet demand.

You can always use online auction sites to purchase parts and bulbs. (**eBay** has a whole category devoted specifically to slide projectors.), a tactic that certainly has its appeal. Find-

ing a way to replace efficiently a slide collection consisting of many thousands of slides can be a daunting task, made all the more difficult by the fact that most institutions are restricted by time and money. It is tempting to stick with our slide projectors, just buying replacement pieces and parts as we find them. If the truth be told, with the slide projectors having only just been discontinued, we could probably go for at least a couple more years before we at **Furman** are completely unable to utilize the slide collection.

2. Purchase / subscribe to collections of images made available in an online database to use in place of your traditional slide library.

This has been our library's primary area of investigation. To my knowledge, there are only a few products that consist solely, or at least primarily, of images. Some examples include:

- **Oxford University Press' Grove Art Online** — <http://www.groveart.com/>
- **Princeton University's Index of Christian Art** — <http://ica.princeton.edu/>
- **The Mellon Foundation's ARTstor** — <http://www.artstor.org/>
- **Art Museum Image Consortium's AMICO Library** — <http://www.amico.org/>

This past winter the **Furman University Libraries** focused on the evaluation of **ARTstor**.

We conducted a university wide trial and solicited feedback from faculty across campus. Through the course of our evaluation, we found a great deal to recommend the database. The database currently contains over 300,000 images and is expected to have half a million by 2006. The images, which include pictures of paintings, photography, sculpture, and more, can be downloaded for use in PowerPoint presentations

and classroom lectures. In addition, professors can create collections of images augmented with their own personal commentary for use in a class or homework assignment. There is also a handy zoom feature that allows users to zoom in and focus on some of the more minute details in a picture. The drawbacks of the **ARTstor** collection include a noticeable gap in coverage of art from the 20th and 21st centuries and the fact that the interface is not very intuitive and still fairly clunky.

While **ARTstor** is quite an impressive collection and offers an excellent approach to obtaining access to digital images of art quickly, it was apparent from the beginning that no single database could even come close to replacing every image in our slide collection. Even with a subscription to all of the resources listed above, we would still be missing access to some of the unique images in our slide collection. Consequently, simultaneous to the examination of **ARTstor**, **Furman's Academic Computing Committee** began investigating the feasibility of building our own databases of images.

3. Create your own database of images, building the interface and metadata from scratch.

The benefit to building your own database from scratch is that you get exactly what you want. You can include only those images you need and incorporate whatever metadata you want, formatting the interface and the search feature to perform exactly to your requirements and specifications.

A quick search of the Web reveals a plethora of home-made image databases with varying degrees of sophistication and complexity. Below are some examples, including one from **Furman**. Not all are specifically art related, but the technology used in the creation of the databases could just as easily be applied to digital images of art.

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Those pesky CD's that get superseded so often, also have some recycling benefits. Gardeners have found them to make so much reflection of light, that it scares raiding birds after our seeds. Sign of the times: you can see strings of the CD's swinging in the breeze, flashing their lights everywhere. I have actually used regular LP's as borders for gardens. Even the black ones are rather interesting and neat as the outline to your garden. It helps a little to keep weeds or

grass from dancing into your growing area.

I have used microfilm to make Christmas ornaments, but owing to the degradation of the material chemically, I am not about to risk spontaneous combustion for an ornament. It is probably best to do away with this product in whatever recycling bin will allow it. I think it is too early to talk about DVD's, but I see them in the same category as CD's and their recycling should be equivalent. Books, journals and other interesting pamphlets can be recycled to nursing homes, churches, schools and other places that don't mind old reading or having pictures

to clip. Day care centers are good for this, as they have a great many crafts that require pictures. I talked about computer trash in articles published by *Associates* and *Library Mosaics* (Delete to Where?). Fellow workers are still convinced that the deleted materials go to the rings of Saturn and now to Jupiter's new rings. We will be doing data mining in the future. I just hope that the viruses will all be converted to more useful products! Have some more recycling hints? Give me an email sometime and let me know your methods. Thanks for listening! 🐼