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If Rumors Were Horses

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When I think about how the information business has progressed in the last 30 years I can hardly believe how much has changed and how it has changed. Was this at all predictable in 1981? Take a look at where we came from, where we are today and where we are going. When I started in the library business a dial-up modem at 1200 baud was really fast! Who could have predicted where we are today? Certainly what libraries provide for their patrons, and their patrons’ expectations, have dramatically changed the way we do business. The resources and services we now offer have altered what we do and how we do it; every aspect of what we do has been transformed.

In this issue you will find articles about a new delivery method for electronic resources, e-content procurement, access models and technology, and content integration written by some of the most forward-thinking librarians, vendors, and developers in our business. We can always rely on Peter McCracken (ShipIndex) to assist us with thinking “out-of-the-box.” His article about pay-per-use proposes a new approach to procuring content and gives us some insight into where we may be going in the near future. Co-writers Emilie Delquie (Publishers Communication Group) and Cory Tucker (University of Nevada at Las Vegas) wrote an all-encompassing overview of both the methods of acquiring electronic resources and the challenges we face regarding e-content procurement. Lisa Carlucci Thomas (Southern Connecticut State University) and Stephen Rhind-Tutt (Alexander Street Press) wrote about access technology, while content integration is covered by Michael Gorman (EBSCO) and Peter Johnson, et. al. (HighWire Press). What would an issue of Against the Grain about electronic resources be without discussing discovery services or open access?

Several of the topics covered in these articles include provocative issues such as switching from buffer access to a la carte access, moving from a “just-in-case” to a “just-in-time” collection philosophy driven by the end user, adapting to changes in the emerging e-reading culture and the use of mobile devices, embracing digital video in the academy, and improving discoverability with a discovery service and the implementation of interoperable technology to truly integrate all electronic resources.

The Charleston Pre-Conference E-Everything: Putting It All Together, part 2 highlights these writers and presenters in the Pecha Kucha Style, where each presenter will have 15 minutes to deliver their message to you in a short period of time, succinct and to the point. The break-out session at the end will give you the opportunity to pose questions to those speakers that intrigue you.

An archived version of this pre-conference will be available on the following Websites: LibrariesThriving.org
Against-the-Grain.com
My husband and I have two old Volvos ('91 and '92, that's old for cars, right? I mean, I am talking 1990 not 2000). Our flawless Volvo repairman burst my dreaming bubble when he told my husband not to sell the Volvos til the wheels fall off. Needless to say, I guess it will be a while (probably) before I drive a new (used) car. (and, look, I know that a car is not an appliance really, but bear with me)

Moving right along, my husband was heading somewhere without me right after the repairman told him not to get rid of the Volvos, when he was forced to call me to come get him because his Volvo (92) wouldn’t start (hope?). So — I set off in my (91) Volvo to help him out! And I did! (end of hope)

But that was just the beginning of the adventure. That very same weekend we found out that we needed a new washer and dryer. Gulp! (end of hope)

So, your trusty Editor decided to ignore the appliance problems and work on the November ATG! Believe me, it's a lot more fun! This issue is great! Guest edited by Audrey Powers (did you know that her son is named Austin?) and has articles by Peter McCracken, Emilee Beliquie, Cory Tucker, Lisa Carlucci Thomas, Stephen Rhind-Tutt, Michael Gorrell, as well as Mark Johnson, Anh Bul, Helen Szigiti. Our Op Ed about print-based humanities research is by the astute Bob Holley, our Back Talk, as always by the incredible Tony Ferguson, is about real live reference. We have many interviews, thanks to Tom Gilson, with John Dove, David Burleigh, Tim Babbitt and Kevin Sayar, and Stephen Rhind-Tutt. Our Publisher Profile is with OverDrive. We have a fascinating

**Letters to the Editor:**

Send letters to <kstrauch@comcast.net>, phone or fax 843-723-3536, or snail mail: Against the Grain, MSC 98, The Citadel, Charleston, SC 29409. You can also send a letter to the editor from the ATG Homepage at http://www.against-the-grain.com.

Dear Editor:

First off, thanks again for being so generous with your time and allowing me to call you. I enjoyed our conversation!

I am a first semester Master’s of Library Science student at San Jose State University of California. I came across Against the Grain while researching for a paper on Patron-Driven Acquisition. I was so happy to see an entire journal issue dedicated to this topic! I was even happier when I was able to spend some time reading different issues. The articles were informative and interesting — presenting insider looks at library acquisitions with writing accessible to the non-library professional. I’ve learned a lot just by reading. I also really enjoy the blog aspect of your Website — I feel like that really opens a dialog between readers and writers, which is what librarians help to do, whether electronically or in person. I especially like the Multigrain and Wondering Wednesday sections. I’ve added Against-The-Grain.com to my blogroll!! Thanks for making this possible!

Yours, Nicole Fitzhugh (Berkeley, CA 94709) <nicolem@yahoo.com>

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Reference Publishing  September 2012  06/22/12  07/13/12

Charleston Conference  November 2012  08/22/12  09/12/12


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September 10. The wedding was in Asheville at the same place where Anna and her husband met which was also where Beth and her husband met. Anna is in Asheville working and considering hospital administration. Her husband James Arthur Hodan is also in the medical field, working with prosthetics. Obviously, these two young people know where the money is from the aging baby boomers, don’t they? Congratulations to Beth and Anna and the husbands too.

Speaking of September 10! Was talking to the wonderful David Magier who is the brains behind the “flaming” preconference (see below). He told me that his wife and he have the same wedding anniversary as my husband Bruce and I do! September 10. But we have a few years on them — 26 to be exact! And now we are joined by Anna and James! Congratulations, everyone!

Speaking of which, we had to cancel the “flaming issues” preconference but watch for our blog on these issues and for the updated preconference (or main conference panel) in 2012! So sorry that it didn’t come together this year!

We are still getting registrations for the 2011 Charleston Conference. Right now, we have 1,305 people registered 226 more than were registered at the same time in 2010! Hmmm. It’s gonna be fun and something’s gotta give!

Was sad to learn that the incredible Amanda Harmon (UNC-Charlotte) has retired and this is her last Charleston Conference. Maybe not? Have been asked to have a registration fee for retired librarians, and why not? What do y’al all think?

Other preconferences, however, are taking place! Can’t wait to see how the E-Everything preconference and Webinar come off! Did you notice that this issue is guest edited by the razor-sharp Audrey Powers? Many of the papers in this issue are by speakers at the e-everything preconference.

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www.katina.info/conference/

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Pelikan’s Antidisambiguation — “Content Producer Goals vs. Public Perception”

Column Editor: Michael P. Pelikan (Penn State) <mpp10@psu.edu>

What’s a computer? Or rather, what’s a computer for?

It’s an interesting question because its outcome tends to define a subclass: not just of users, but ultimately, of devices and of market segmentation.

Early uses to which computers were put, such as artillery ballistics calculations or code breaking, bespoke a very serious purpose for such devices. Prototypical attempts to model and predict weather, economic trends, or election outcomes underscored the “largeness of purpose” reasonably associated by the lay public with the idea of a computer. The image was the antithesis of something that might be used for personal or even frivolous purposes.

As this column goes to print, the death of Michael S. Hart on September 6, 2011 provides occasion to note just how radical what he did in 1971 really was. His account on the University of Illinois mainframe was created on July 4, 1971, and, ruminating on that fact, he opened a file on the system and typed in what he knew called “a glorified typewriter.” And of course, there were the games.

It has often been the case that in game programming one may find the most focused, creative, and industrious use of computer capabilities, simply because there has been such an incentive to reach and exceed the inherent capabilities of the available computing power (ironically, some of the most powerful math processors available today are found in the graphics cards in game-oriented personal computers; these have been integrated by enterprising hardware hackers into bench-built machines of genuinely awesome processing power).

One could make a strong case that once potential buyers were convinced that a particular category of use was practical or even just available on computers, it was demand for those uses that drove computer adoption and sales. “Software sells hardware,” was the refrain of the 1980s and, if one look closely, remains true today.

You can’t sell folks something they don’t want, at least, not for long. Certainly it takes some base number of adopters to take you, the hardware maker, up on your offer for your product to fly. If that same number simply ignores your product, you’re sunk. Conversely, if you’re a hardware maker of enormous influence, you can probably introduce almost anything and get at least a few of the True Believers to testify that the latest thing changed their lives. You might even get trade writers to credit...
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Rumors
from page 8

he is still involved in civil aviation and consumer representation. John said his email to me bounced back — was this sign to him? I am sincerely hoping that he will write now and then for Against the Grain. His regular column As I See It has been a great contribution to our conversations for many years! Good luck, John, but we hope this is not goodbye! Also heard from Stephen Pugh who will not be in Charleston this year. Stephen has conducted a survey of librarians for the LIANZA (Library and Information Association of New Zealand) conference in Wellington beginning October 30. The survey is about Value for Money projects in which libraries are participating and Stephen says he was impressed by the percentage of libraries that are already engaged in these kinds of projects. A summary of the results is now at Oranjarra Value for Money/ROI Survey Results (https://www.surveymonkey.com/sr.aspx?sm=24hf3JslARCtHCMDDkpbPs8It46xhC5zmad2hvH0Z6Y_3d). The full results will be posted at The Oranjarra Website shortly.
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Pelikan’s Antidisambiguation
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your product with “legitimizing” the product category, if not inventing it outright.

Take Apple’s iPad. Apple didn’t invent the tablet computer — everybody knows that Gene Roddenberry did, and that James T. Kirk was one of its early adopters. Chief Science Officer Spock could explain how an early adopter of a product category in the 23rd century could influence product development in the 20th. Spock, of course, was one of the first to use a USB Drive. Those early 23rd-century models were kind of big and boxy, but they were hot-pluggable, non-volatile memory — every kid knew that! And don’t forget how the flip-form communicator warped into our time and space, once Motorola worked out how to build one.

Seriously, these things have taken off not because some company jammed them down our throats (with the possible exception of the iPad), but because people decided they wanted them, had to have them, and were willing to part with the coin to get their hands on them.

But let’s get back to eBooks for a moment. Right about the time we were hearing of Michael Hart’s death, speculation was heating up about the details of Sony’s and Amazon’s coming Android tablets.

Sony’s machines are going to be drop-dead gorgeous pieces of hardware, and are coming from a gigantic company that has been in mass media for years, selling not just consumer electronics, but also occupying a key throne in the motion picture industry and owning one of the world’s last remaining Large Record Labels. Sony’s advance blurbs prominently state that their tablets will run the latest version of Android — meaning Honeycomb for certain, and holding out a tacit promise of a timely upgrade to Ice Cream Sandwich when available. (Sorry — if Honeycomb and Ice Cream Sandwich don’t resonate: Android OS versions have been using food names — Gingerbread, Honeycomb, Ice Cream Sandwich…)

Amazon’s widely expected decision to build their new machine around the open-source core of an earlier version of Android that is running on most other Android tablets marks a potential fork in the evolutionary path of the Android operating system, and given the sheer mass of Amazon and the size of the shadow they cast, this is no small development.

People have been confusing software for hardware for years. Executives wishing to sound “with it” used to walk into early computer stores and tell the bemused pony-tailed salesman, “Say, I’d like to buy one of those Visicals.” Visicalc, you see, was the first commercially significant spreadsheet programs. It ran on an Apple II. The suit had seen someone in the Finance Department running Visicalc on an Apple II and asked, “Say, what is that,” and having received the answer “Visicalc” thought they ought to have a Visicalc on their desk, too.

One may expect that Amazon’s plans for their Android-based tablet will give us something somewhere between the Kindle and the iPad. It will ultimately, if not immediately, have a beautiful color screen. The stock Android store will be replaced with Amazon’s Android app store. There will also be Amazon’s Music Store, Cloud Drive, Prime Instant Videos — oh, and eBooks, for those in the audience who haven’t forgotten how to read. Actually, that’s hyperbole, and I admit it. The Kindle is a huge seller precisely because millions of folks still love to read.

But there are several interesting things going on here. First, unlike Apple or Sony, Amazon is primarily a retailer, not a hardware manufacturer, nor a software house. “They’re a content retailer!” You can practically hear the scoffing — except that no one’s scoffing. For Amazon is a Very Big content retailer. And we all have to watch and see what happens.

What’s more, they’ve signaled a move toward a subscription-based model for content distribution, like Netflix (by which I mean both Netflix and Qwikster) but for eBooks. But again, folks’ reactions to this news so far seem very quiet. We have to watch and see what happens.

The “what happens” part of this relates to the adoption or non-adoption — no, that’s too dry: the seizing or non-seizing of these offers by the people with the money. That’s us. Well, in some the case of some Against the Grain readers, that’s our customers, er, your customers. In other cases, the people with the money are the kids with the backpacks, getting younger every year (the kids, not the backpacks). They’re the one whom we believe we’ve chosen to enhance service to by opening coffee shops in our campus libraries. They’re the ones who vote with their feet.

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A Proposal to Improve ...
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tainty what resources patrons will need. It is worth it, whenever financially and practically possible, to offer as many of those resources as we can. This solution makes that possible.

The proposal is not perfect. First, databases that are not available via discovery layers would not be available for pay-per-use access. But as discovery moves more and more quickly to Web-scale layers, it will behove all but the most complacent database vendors to make their content available through multiple discovery layers. Expensive databases that are rarely used but even more rarely canceled will be in trouble: if they cannot justify the content they offer, it would seem that they will be the big losers in this scenario.

Pricing will be an interesting challenge, and will certainly take some time to figure out. Not only will vendors need to set prices for views and clicks, they’ll also need to set list prices for each library that adds their database as an a la carte database. It would make the most sense if vendors set a standard price for views and clicks for each given database, and not vary that price based on the institution in question. (PPVs and PPCs will, certainly, vary from database to database.) Perhaps some sort of percentage discount or surcharge could be applied on an institution-by-institution basis, to address currency exchange inequities, or other institutional subscription variations.

There’s no doubt that many content providers will see an initial drop in subscription revenue as libraries move from buffet access to a la carte access whenever they feel their bottom line will benefit from this switch. But at the same time, many more libraries will be willing to try offering access to a narrowly-focused database, as these libraries will have nothing to lose if no one uses the databases. Instead of always feeling that they don’t have any dollars with which to add new resources, libraries will be able to easily try out many different databases at once, and see which ones their patrons actually use. Over the course of several years, it will become readily apparent which databases have content that is actually meaningful and useful to library patrons, and which do not. If a database is only useful to a small number of users, that’s no longer a problem, as the library can add access to the database in question, and only pay for the limited use that the library finds. A library can now offer content that is as varied as its population and their interests, and must no longer only offer the content that primarily serves the center.

What is necessary for this to happen? Discovery layers must build administrative tools that allow them to track PPV and PPC statistics and fees for each database in their collection, track which databases are managed in what fashion by library, track discounts offered by content providers to libraries, bill libraries for usage on a monthly or quarterly basis and distribute funds to content providers on a similar schedule, and much more. Libraries must be willing to try this new approach, and be comfortable with much of their content dollars going to content providers by way of their selected discovery layer; and do a fair bit of soul-searching about which databases they want switched from buffet access to a la carte access, as well as choosing many more databases to offer to patrons through this system. Content providers must be willing to take a risk with the data they offer to their subscribers. They must be comfortable enough with the quality of their content to accept that, unless their database is a core database, many libraries will drop direct subscriptions to their databases. On the other hand, they should feel comfortable in believing that other libraries will be willing to try their databases on a pay-per-use basis. I believe that content providers would find that, if their content is good, they’d find many more users (and thus revenue) through institutions that don’t realize their patrons need the content they offer. By getting content into discovery layers, getting those discovery layers into use among many patrons, and making their content available even to those who wouldn’t otherwise subscribe to the database, vendors with quality content will, I believe, see usage and revenue increase.

It is difficult for me to know if this proposal will come to pass. I am certainly not in a position to make it so, and while I have proposed it to a number of different discovery layer vendors, I have not seen a response that suggests any vendors are actively working on it. But in the spirit (though not the complexity) of Adam Chandler and Tim Jewell’s DLF-ERMI documents, in which they outlined what they felt vendors should offer when creating an ERM module, I aim to define what I believe would benefit all members of the electronic resources supply chain, and hope that it will generate discussion, further improvements, and perhaps eventually a new delivery mechanism that will help all library patrons find the resources they seek. Especially in maritime history.

Endnotes
1. Though I co-founded Serials Solutions, I was not directly involved in Summon development, and I have had no connection with its promotion or sale since I left the company in September 2009.

Rumors
from page 10

We are happy to have Cris Ferguson back as a contributor to Against the Grain with this issue. Cris has been busy with little baby and children issues! But in this issue of ATG she tells us in her inimitable way about her stint working for Borders and how she decided to go to library school. RIP, Borders! See this issue, p. 100.

We just got a new next door neighbor here at the Citadel, probably our ninth (at least) since we have been in this apartment on the Citadel campus for over 26 years! And the neighbors are Greek! Another column in this issue is by Fred Jenkins/Collecting to the Core on the Greco Persian Wars, some must-read books. In fact, just had lunch with one of my favorite people, Darryl Phillips a classics professor at the College of Charleston (he has written book reviews for us). Darryl is not Greek, unfortunately for him, but he has a fantastic blog. http://blogs.cofc.edu/phillipsd/

Speaking of which, seems like everybody, either Greek or not, is a librarian! The favors and goodies that we get for the Charleston Conferences, thanks to our many advertisers, come from Concorde, Inc., which is a company owned by Chris Mansfield. Chris was telling me that her 90-year-old mother was a librarian as well as an aunt who is a librarian and wants to come to the Conference! Gosh! How unbelievably cool!

Speaking of cool, the other day, met Tevis B. Vandergriff, IV, who is account manager at Mergent. Tevis is based in Fort Mill, SC (where salesman-extraordinaire Craig Flansburg of Faxon, The Economist, OCLC, etc., lives with his lovely wife Ronnie). Anyway, Tevis’ first name is Irish and his last name is Dutch and he was born in the Louisiana bayou and he has a great accent. And, guess what, he will be at the 2011 Charleston Conference!

Driven Acquisitions: History and Best Practices, part of the series Current Topics in Library and Information Practice just published by De Gruyter. The book was a Book of the Week on the ATG NewsChannel for October 17, 2011 (did you see it? and also the ATG Broadcast a week before that). The book includes essays by many noteworthies, many of whom are here at the Conference — Rick Lugg, Bob Nardini, Michael Levine-Clark, Kari Paulson, Rex Steiner and Ron Berry, Tim Corbett, Sue Polanka and Emilie Delquie, Doug Way and Julie Garrison, Dennis Dillon, and David Swords. Pretty impressive!! continued on page 34

There is a reception at the Charleston Conference (in fact there are many receptions)! Congratulations to David Swords for the launch of his book, Patron-
Perhaps though the most telling examples of the importance of video in the academy are the most simple. Is it enough to judge someone just by what he’s written? Doesn’t it make more sense to get a feeling for the person by seeing him, too?

Video does more than enrich academic debate. It’s part of the argument. Imagine if we could see Cook argue with Peary, see Montagnier confront Gallo, or Keynes debate Hayek. Such evidence should surely inform the record, not just illustrate it. Perhaps video of these encounters even exists. I was unable to find any. Yet another example of the problem.

I don’t know how we feel about it, but tomorrow’s students may well prefer to create and consume a video than a letter, paper, or idea. At the very least, they’ll think that publications absent video are less exciting, less easy to digest, and perhaps even boring. Rightly, they will demand that knowledge is created and conveyed in a medium-agnostic way.

My request is simple. It’s time for all of us in the academy — publishers, librarians, faculty, and students — to respect and embrace video. It’s time to integrate it into library catalogs and indices, develop standards on how it should be cited, make it part of syllabi, cherish it, and preserve it.

At Alexander Street we’ve begun several initiatives. We’ve already launched ten major video collections in a wide range of disciplines. We’re building a fully-indexed, 20,000-title project that we hope will be the video equivalent of the standard journal databases. We have more than 50,000 academics and scholars who’ve cited and embedded video from one or more of our databases. We’re working with the Open Annotation Collaboration to develop a standard way to annotate video and share annotations across platforms. We’re about to launch a metadata repository for our video content that will allow third parties to easily link to any of our streaming video publications.

These are exciting times for video. New uses are legion. A video encyclopedia of human people. A database of video experiments. Tomorrow’s students should be able to see video of recent historical figures as easily as they can find newspaper mentions of them. They should be able to incorporate video into their papers as easily as they do images. And it’s up to us — publishers and librarians — to ensure that this happens.

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**Endnotes**


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**Rumors**

Speaking of which, how many of you are paying attention to the ATG NewsChannel? I have gotten many notifications from friends on the ATG Facebook page! Thanks to you all!

Speaking of which, I am horrible with social media even though I enjoyed The Social Network. It’s a matter of time! I rarely check my Facebook page and I seem to have two LinkedIn accounts, one of which I can access and the other I can’t. So — I apologize to people who I haven’t answered back. Just chalk it up to my lack of social media skills and time!! Wish that there were more of it. Ah! If there were world enough and time …

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Get so many calls from Great People (the capitals are not a mistake, they are on purpose!). The other day heard from Lisa Larson, remember her? Used to be at CQ and now works with Alix Vance at GeoScienceWorld database. Remember when I met a guy in publishing who told me that everyone in publishing just moved around a lot and stayed
by print of their own making but also library and course textbooks. What they finally had was a convenient space to engage all the learning tools provided them.

Likely, this scene is unique to library space and place everywhere. Other place and space may aspire to this — all the student unions everywhere who because of technology are one with the campus library as well as the universal library steadily being built. What the library had that a union lacks is the aura of learning that persists in our libraries despite changes that felt like loss.

It’s Friday, this library is full. The lights are on and the students — their minds and computers — are bright.

Rumors
from page 34

in publishing, didn’t I know that? Oh well. Lisa and Alix will be in the Charleston Vendor Showcase along with many (93) other great vendors! Did y’all realize that we have expanded the Vendor Showcase space this year? Let’s enjoy it while we can!

Oh! I CANNOT believe it! After many problems, all my fault I am sure, the 2009 Charleston Conference proceedings are available!! Should be available for purchase soon!! Hooray! And Yay!! And like WoW! We all are saying! http://www.barnesandnoble.com/w/charleston-conference-proceedings-2009-katia-pstrauch/1105847152?ean=9780983404309&itm=1&usr=9780983404309

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And a little Something for Everyone:

Develop partnerships with course management systems. Pretty much every undergraduate course that’s offered on-campus also has an online component. On a small scale, we could simply ask faculty to include links to our resources in the course materials online. On a grand scale, it might be possible for vendors and publishers to directly market their resources to faculty through a course management system. Think online advertising space in the CMS—has it ever been done before?

In 2009, Kathy Sierra was a keynote speaker for the New Media Consortium Summer Conference. In her address, “Creating Passionate Learners,” she explained that technology users need to feel like they’re good at using the products (or resources) they want or need to use. If they don’t feel like they’ve achieved a certain level of mastery, they’ll simply discontinue using the product. I think this is especially true of the undergraduate’s experience with scholarly resources. They don’t see the utility in learning how to use a clunky database, for example — even if they’re required to use it; even if it’s the only resource that answers their research questions; even if it’s the greatest, most powerful database ever created — if their experience in using it doesn’t make them feel like they’re great. Their success is the key to ours. I think that’s something we need to keep in mind, whether we’re creating, designing, teaching, or managing scholarly resources.

Adriana Parker earned a Master of Library and Information Science from Drexel University in 2007. She is an instruction librarian at the J. Willard Marriott Library, University of Utah.

Endnotes


Rumors

Another I CANNOT believe it! Is this Knut Dorn’s last Charleston Conference? We have an Against the Grain Special Preprint