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Bet You Missed It-What do pirates and baseball have in common?

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Bet You Missed It

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

Column Editor: **Bruce Strauch** (Retired, The Citadel)

Editor's Note: Hey, are y'all reading this? If you know of an article that should be called to *Against the Grain's* attention ... send an email to <kstrauch@comcast.net>. We're listening! — **KS**

AVAST, ME HEARTIES

by **Bruce Strauch** (Retired, The Citadel)

Pirate libraries hold millions of scholarly journal articles in violation of copyright. And they hand it out for free.

They began in Russia with the samizdat culture where scholars passed lit and scientific info underground to evade communist censorship.

Then they shifted to English-language works. And grew to be ginormous. A neuroscientist from Kazakhstan created **Sci-Hub** that jumped the fence of journal paywalls via donated passwords.

Elsevier began litigation against **Sci-Hub** and **Library Genesis** in 2015 claiming a loss of millions of dollars in profits. The pirates argue that their users could never afford the price of buying the articles so **Elsevier** really lost nothing.

See — **Sarah Laskow**, “The Rise of Pirate Libraries,” *Atlas Obscura*, April 21, 2016.

NEVER A BAD TIME FOR A NEGRONI

by **Bruce Strauch** (Retired, The Citadel)

The **Strauch** daughter — **Ileana Jacks** — returned from Venice a Negroni enthusiast. And starting June 1 is Negroni week. The classic has equal parts sweet vermouth, Campari and gin. Rocks. Garnish with orange twist.

Or for a mod taste, smashed cucumber, Bonal vermouth, gin and beer. Cucumber ribbon wound through inside of glass. Salted rim.

See — **Jim Kearns**, *Wall Street Journal Podcast*, 4-24-17.



AND LET'S READ ABOUT BASEBALL

by **Bruce Strauch** (Retired, The Citadel)

Jim Boulton, *Ball Four* (First exposé book on infidelity, drinking and drug use by ball pros.) (1970); (2) **Robert Peterson**, *On the Ball Was White* (First book about the Negro Leagues. Inspired special Hall of Fame entries at Cooperstown.) (1970); (3) **Bill Veeck**, *Veeck as in Wreck* (3-foot-seven pinch hitter gets walked because he has no strike zone.) (1962); (4) **Ted Williams**, *The Science of Hitting* (Ted's legacy still in print.) (1970); (5) **Michael Lewis**, *Moneyball* (Mgr. uses stats to find undervalued talent.) (2003).

See — **Paul Dickson**, “Five Best,” *The Wall Street Journal*, April 22-23, 2017, p.C10.

GROUNDBREAKING BIOGRAPHIES

by **Bruce Strauch** (Retired, The Citadel)

William Godwin, *Memoirs of the Author of 'A Vindication of the Rights of Woman'* (Husband writes of **Mary Wollstonecraft**, feminist, travel writer, children's author.) (1798); (2) **Elizabeth Gaskell**, *The Life of Charlotte Brontë* (**Liz** actually interviewed Charlotte.) (1857); (3) **Michael Holroyd**, *Lytton Strachey* (1967-68); (4) **Robert Caro**, *The Years of Lyndon Johnson* (Four volumes of a study of power.) (1982-2012); (5) **Stacy Schiff**, *Véra* (The Nabokov marriage.) (1999).

See — **Richard Holmes**, “Five Best,” *The Wall Street Journal*, April 1-2, 2017, p.C10. (Holmes is the author of *The Long Pursuit: Reflections of a Romantic Biographer*.)

Things That Keep Us Awake at Night from page 10

9. **Trust**. This conversation needs trust to move forward. There is a lot of mistrust in the system — not in OSI, which is widely seen as something of a unique refuge and a unique and valuable opportunity to speak across the aisle — but in the larger scholcomm system which has been so polarized for so long. Still, even within OSI, we still haven't cracked through to where we're having frank and open exchanges yet (at least in the annual meetings) about fundamental disagreements — issues like APCs, for example. How and where to have these conversations is to be determined — maybe not in full-group meetings in front of live audiences, but we can certainly continue to make progress in this regard. **Scott Plutchak** noted that we can't get to this level of trust (and engagement) by meeting only once a year for a few days — more meetings and more engagement will be needed.”

All restful music to my ears. Rock on, OSI!

The next three topics proved particularly frustrating as I was unable to find anyone willing to

write about them. Now, I am sure you are out there, and I simply failed to look in the right places or ran out of time before I did so. But, please, identify yourselves loudly and proudly and come out of the wordwork. For example, consider submitting a proposal to speak at the **Charleston Conference**: <http://www.against-the-grain.com/2017/04/2017-charleston-conference-call-for-papers-now-open/>.

What especially gave me sleepless nights were the reasons provided by some real experts in these areas about *why* they were unwilling to write on the key stressful topics identified. Now, of course they are all busy people being experts, so perhaps these are polite cover stories, but what do you think of some of these responses:

- **Rights** — there's nothing new to report or discuss, nothing much has changed in the last 5-7 years. This left me depressed, and if things are so entrenched surely this must be a sign of problems in itself.
- **Data and preservation** — this is new and hard and so understandably difficult to write about, but what depressed me was the huge willingness to write about the preservation of publications. The preservation of publications is *not* something keeping me awake at night when we have wonderful services like CLOCKSS and

Portico and national libraries with legal deposit collections. Let's please not waste our energy on duplicating effort, and instead really embrace and overcome the new challenges facing us all on data.

- **Big data and privacy** — there is clearly lots of shared angst that needs to be surfaced, and pragmatic steps for resolving this need to be found. Again, the **Charleston Conference** is a good place for this to happen. For example, **Elsevier's** privacy policy was published partly in response to an excellent session **Ann Okerson** organized there on this topic two years ago. Thank you, **Ann**. So... a little more conversation and then some action, please (to mangle **Elvis Presley's** tune just ever so slightly).

And then finally a hopeful and thoroughly pragmatic and positive note to end on, by the wonderful **Maggie Farrell**. She reflects, from her position as a Dean of Libraries, on the importance of establishing a strategic vision and for all the necessary things to drive change through to a successful conclusion. If there is one certainty we all share, it is that change is all around us and more is coming. Inspirational, successful leadership is essential for us all. 🐼