Bet You Missed It-Press Clippings-In the News

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Bet You Missed It

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

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ERUDITE ENGINEERS

by Pamela M. Rose (University at Buffalo)

If you enroll in the first freestanding undergraduate engineering college in the U.S. now under construction outside Boston, be prepared to take Diana Dabby’s course on Leonardo da Vinci’s scientific and artistic achievements as well as courses on starting a dot-com, fluid mechanics, and thermodynamics. Student-partners will also combine on-campus seminars with monthlong experiences abroad. Head Richard Miller isn’t fooled by the challenge of actually educating rather than simply training future engineers. Opening in September 2002, the goal of the University’s new College of Engineering, which will have no academic departments or tenured faculty, is to produce 150 graduates a year with the ability to predict, create and manage the technology that will shape the future.


THE MISSING LINK

by Sandra Beehler (Old Dominion University)

The “map” is now the size of half the continental U.S. Anoto, the Swedish startup company that owns the “map”, is working to ensure that their system of transmitting handwritten information will be the standard for the future.

Here’s how it works. — A sheet of “digital paper” is covered with microscopic dots that are arranged in such a way that each dot is a unique “location” on the “map”. A pen equipped with a tiny optical device, a Bluetooth microchip and a ballpoint (so you can read what you’re writing) transmits those “locations” through your mobile phone or PDA to one of Anoto’s computers holding the “map” which deciphers them into an image that is then sent to the service provider that owns that portion of the “map.” Presto! — instant transmission of handwritten communications in any language (or none; graphics will be possible too). Anoto makes its money by selling portions of the “map” to service providers and tracking transactions (taking a cut of each transaction payment). Digital paper and special pens are cheap to manufacture and easily distributed to consumers. Industry observers say Anoto’s system, if widely adopted, may provide the final missing link between paper and digital.


Please Note: Additional “Bet You Missed Its” can be found on page 93 in this issue. — KS

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DIVORCE HAPPENS TO LOVE GURUS
by Bruce Strauch (the Citadel)

Megal Bucks authors Ellen Fein and Sherrie Schneider promoted The Rules as a chronicle of their experiences in snagging the wily male animal. Rules II was hot too, and Rules III—holding that marriage through subservience, long hair and low expectations of male sympathy—was due out.

Then Fein let it drop to Warner Books that she was about to divorce her husband. And the action had been filed a year earlier... before she signed the contract. She claims to have kept it a secret hoping for a reconciliation. Now the cover blurb will have to be redone, dropping the claim to Fein’s enduring marriage. Perhaps Devan Spurgeon, “Author’s Divorce Pits Her ‘Rules’ Against Reality” in Wall Street Journal, p.B1, March 23, 2001.

LEATHERSTOCKING TALES FROM MITTELEUROPA
by Bruce Strauch (the Citadel)

Thief and swindler Karl May’s Westerns have sold 100 million copies of 80 books, making him the bestselling German author of all time. His fans included Hitler and Einstein, and especially the German Wild West club. Luftansa recently laid on a non-stop flight to Phoenix to haul all the German tourists to May literary sites. May died in 1912 having never visited the Southwest. All his data came from magazine articles on Indian wars which he first found in a prison library. Now the Karl May cult has hit American campuses—films, exhibits, film festivals—possibly because the white men were usually villains, thus passing the p.e. test. Can doctoral dissertations and deconstruction be far behind? See—Cecile Rohwedder, “Germans Have a Thing About the Wild West, Thanks to Karl May” in Wall Street Journal, p.A1, April 4, 2001.

NICE WORK IF YOU CAN GET IT
by Bruce Strauch (the Citadel)

Sumner Redstone expanded his father’s drive-in movie chain into Viacom. It now owns CBS, Paramount, MTV, Blockbuster and Nickelodeon. And with the help of that necessary “accomplished collaborator” he’s going to tell us all about how he did it. Conveniently, Viacom owns the publisher Simon & Schuster, which is giving him a coast-to-coast publicity tour, network t.v. appearances and a high-priced “lay-down date.” That means the book will be launched, everywhere on a single day, which requires a lot of tricky shipping. Sales staff have been exorted to treat the launch as “A Passion to Keep Our Jobs,” a little word play on the book’s title A Passion to Win. Traditionally, these top exec books were highly suspect and were taken to another publishing house to prove they weren’t total vanities. As you can guess, many don’t sell very well. See—Laurie P. Cohen, “Simon & Schuster Is More Than Excited About a New Author,” in Wall Street Journal, p.A1, April 5, 2001.

BUT DOES HE HAVE A TRUST FUND?
by Bruce Strauch (the Citadel)

Charles Webb was born rich, and his family was contemptuous of his novel The Graduates until it became a movie and a huge success. Irritated by the success ethic and American consumerism, Webb gave the money away to charity and moved with his wife to England, drawn by the English eccentric lifestyle. Now, after forty years, he has published again—New College, with Little, Brown & Co. And he doesn’t care at all for the hype connecting him with his famous earlier book. In fact, he had six novels after The Graduates, all panned by critics as inferior to his big hit. See—Wade Lambert, “Author of ‘The Graduates’ (Finally) Publishes Again,” in Wall Street Journal, p.B1, May 8, 2001.

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