Rumors

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eBooks ex machina? Dispatches from the New Digital Information Order

by Miriam Gilbert (Consultant, 3121 Seventh Street, Boulder, CO 80304; Hm. Phone: 303-444-5240; Cell: 303-818-7187) <MxGilbert2@aol.com>

"It is not the strongest species that survive, nor the most intelligent, but the ones most responsive to change."
—Charles Darwin

"The future just isn’t what it used to be."
—Woody Allen

When I accepted the role of “guest editor” of the ATG eBook issue at last January’s ALA, the job seemed relatively straightforward. While this would be my first time serving as an official “editor of record,” I had worked on edited collections—many on “political hot spots”—during my career as a book publisher and felt equal to the task. With twelve months to craft an issue on an expanding eBook marketplace, my goal was in easy reach.

I knew the drill. I first assembled a team of interested and willing contributors. I determined a schedule for submissions for concept paragraph, first draft, and final article. With so much lead time, the interval between the steps was generous enough for the most over-committed member of the group, yet motivating enough for the most eager. I looked forward to my role as the project’s “Jewish mother,” administrating a fine mix of intellectual cheerleading and mind-focusing guilt.

One writer completed her piece months before the final deadline, while another pulled out and a substitute was found. Since I was then Senior Director, Publisher Relations at netLibrary, I was in a prime position to observe (and help influence) the growth of the nascent eBook industry and help guide the issue to a meaningful and nuanced conclusion. What I had not anticipated was that our theme would be on a collision course with one of our industry’s most disruptive, if not defining, “cultural hot spots” of the year.

And what a difference a year makes. Between the hype and the hope, all of us in the information industries are now struggling to define (or redefine) a strategy for eBooks and the digital environment. We are all aware (some of us painfully so) of the trajectories of many eBook, rights management, and conversion companies that have impacted the landscape of scholarly communication.

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If Rumors Were Horses

It was Thursday, October 25, nearly five o’clock in the afternoon. I was cutting through the College of Charleston main classroom building, Maybank Hall, when what to my wondering eyes should appear but — Colin Day <colinday@hkuce.hku.hk> once of University of Michigan Press and now Publisher of Hong Kong University Press. Colin looked fit as a fiddle and younger than ever. He was in Charleston for a Biosis Board meeting at which he told me they were discussing the recent review in The Charleston Advisor of Zoological Record (see www.charleston-com.com)! Pretty awesome! Plus Colin said that he is working closely with Tony Ferguson <ferguson@hkuce.hku.hk> so we know that Tony is in good hands or maybe it’s vice versa! Anyway, it’s a small world, isn’t it?

I can’t help myself. One of the most wonderful women in the world has won a richly deserved award. Congratulations to College of Charleston History Professor and Associate Provost Amy McCandless who has won a national award for her book, The Past in the Present: Women’s Higher Education in the Twentieth-Century American South. http://www.cofc.edu/about/news/20011119-1.html.

Confidential report! Shhh, he’s

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From your (whewing) Editor:

There are two things for me to "whew" about! First, with this issue, we have finished volume number 13 of ATG. Whew! The second thing to "whew" about is that the 21st Charleston Conference is over and everything went smoothly. We all had a good time and learned a lot! Whew! So, now it's time for us to have a great holiday and sit down and read, okay? What's in this issue of ATG?

Well, when Miriam Gilbert and I talked about her guest editing an issue of ATG over a year ago, who would have believed what would have happened with the bankruptcy of netLibrary. Miriam is no longer with them, but she still worked her hardest to bring in some excellent papers about eBooks. And, you might imagine that several of the papers had to be reworked in light of the changes at netLibrary! After an introduction by Miriam, we have papers by Kelly Franklin of Wiley, Nancy Gibbs of Duke, Mary-Alice Lynch of Nylink, Mark Bide and Kim Richardson of Rightscom, Sherry Thompson of Majors, and Rick Lugg and Ruth Fischer of R2 Consulting. Michael Young of SUNY-Albany has written us an excellent Charleston Conference report.

There's other great stuff, too!

Besides the regular bam-zowie columns, we have a study of acquisitions positions in libraries by Rob Withers, "The Collection Development Role of the Library Liaison: A View from Both Sides of the Fence" by Jack Montgomery, and "In Search of Fund Allocations" by Norman Desmarais.

Whew! That's a mouthful. Happy reading and celebrating. This is my favorite time of year. I hope it's y'all's too! Happy New Year! See you in New Orleans!

Yr. Ed. 🎉

Letters to the Editor

Send letters to <strauck<at>earthlink.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:

I just discovered your excellent Website and publication today. We are preparing our budget for 2002, and I wondered if you could send a sample issue for our review? It looks like something we'd like to add to our collection of professional journals, but I need to see a copy to recommend it. If this is possible, please send it to my attention at the address above. Thank you for your assistance.

Catherine Whitney
(Reference Librarian, Andrews & Kirtz, Mayor, Day, Caldwell & Keeton)
<cwitney@akkpl.com>

Dear Editor:

Lately I have had conversations with some vendors who were at the Charleston Conference. The topic of conversation always turns to "were you at that session" or "did you hear..." I think they find the conference as exhilarating as I do. More and more, the publishers and vendors realize that if you want to know what will be happening in libraries as well as what is happening, you go to the Charleston Conference. I've known that for years!

Susan H. Zappen
(Associate College Librarian for Collections, Lucy Scribner Library, Skidmore College)
<szappen@skidmore.edu>

Editor's note: ATG sample issues are available to anyone who asks! This is a reminder! AND, we also have back issues at $10/issue if you need one! — KS

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<http://www.against-the-grain.com>
demographic diversity, including: Ethnic NewsWatch, Ethnic NewsWatch History, Alt-Press Watch, Gender Watch, and Diversity Your World. Ralph Ferragamo, CEO of SoftLine, said, “It was important to us to find a buyer that would commit to expanding access to publications that are underrepresented in databases.” Now, I just hope that my sweetheart, Jim Gilligan, will still come around to visit!

The/netLibrary story continues. On November 15, Bob Kaufman, President and CEO and Rich Rosy, Executive Vice President announced that OCLC Online Computer Library Center made an offer to purchase substantially all of the assets of netLibrary and assume certain netLibrary liabilities. Additionally, on November 14, netLibrary voluntarily filed a petition with the U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the District of Colorado for relief under Chapter 11 of the U.S. Bankruptcy Code. Upon approval of the bankruptcy court, a loan from OCLC, to be repaid upon the completion of the sale, will fund netLibrary’s ongoing operations through the transition period until the purchase closes, which is targeted to occur around year end. See Rick Lugg’s interview with OCLC’s Jay Jordan in this issue, p. 47. Also, see the story in Seybold’s E-Book Zone, November 16, 2001 (“OCLC offers to bail out netLibrary by Mike Letts and Mark Walter (who we all met in Charleston in 1999)."

More on netLibrary. Boston venture capital firm Parthenon Investors has filed a lawsuit in Denver federal court which states that netLibrary overstated its annual sales figures by more than 30 percent causing them to invest millions http://www.thedailycamera.com/business/14 anetl.html. www.charlestonco.com/index.html. This comes from Business Wire (December 7, 2001). SkillSoft Corporation (Nasdaq: SKIL), www.skillsoft.com, a leader in critical business skill e-Learning solutions for Global 2000 companies, has announced that it has signed a definitive agreement to acquire Books24x7.com, Inc., based in Norwood, MA, for a fixed number of shares and fixed amount of cash valued at approximately $32.4 million. Books24x7.com is a leading provider of Web-based digital technical and business reference content, containing 1700+ digitized “best-of-breed” reference books, journals, research reports and documentation. Books24x7’s hosted Web-based platform enables users to search, browse, read and collaborate with vist professional “Referenceeware” libraries assembled through its relationships with more than 65 of the world’s top IT and business publishers, such as Amacom, Harvard Business School Press, McGraw-Hill, Microsoft Press, MIT Press, Sybex, and Wiley. Prominent customers that have adopted Books24x7 solutions include: Bank of America, Lockheed-Martin and Hewlett-Packard.

You now, writing Rumors for ATG is fun and it constantly brings back memories, many bitter-sweet, if for no reason than the fact that the Rumors mark the passage of time. ATG interviewed Jeffrey Kittay, Lingua Franca’s founder. On November 18, 2001, the Sunday New York Times Book Review (p.75) printed a Eulogy for the much-loved magazine, “The Close Reader; Eulogy for a Little Magazine,” by Judith Shulevitz bemoaning its demise as of the November, 2001 issue. Lingua Franca will be sorely missed.

Questa Media cut its workforce in half (number of current employees: 68) in mid-November because demand was lower than expected for its online research and library service. Some $20 million or so in funding the company recently picked up will reportedly go toward TV advertising to convince students to sign up. This according to an article in the Houston Chronicle, November 20, 2001. http://www.chron.com/cs/CDA/story.htm?business/ 1138626. Also reported in PW Newswire, 20 November 2001.

More memories from the past. The wonderfully steady John Long <johnlong@worldnet.att.net> who you will have noticed is now editing the Publishing Profiles in Against the Grain has been inspired by memories of Jolanda von Hagen to write a Profiles of Scientists (see this issue, p. 54). John tells me that on Dec. 29, 2001, it will be seven years since Mrs. von Hagen passed away. She loved the Charleston Conference, and I remember when the CC has eighty people in the audience that she came and spoke and invigorated the audience. She came back nearly every year after that. The Profiles in Scientists (p.54) is dedicated in her memory. Mrs. von Hagen was always trying to create “bridges” between ALL members of our community (scientists, authors, librarians, publishers, serials & book vendors, the famous and not so famous). That’s quite an aspiration!

Hope you all had a Happy Thanksgiving and will have an even better holiday coming up! Everything seems so much more precious these days. I walk around outside and marvel at all that we in America have. Speaking of John Long (above), he had Thanksgiving with his wife Linda’s 87-year-old father who graduated Courtney (almost 3) and Joseph (1 month), his son and daughter-in-law, Four generations under one roof. Sounds dangerous, to me! How about you?

Did you meet the incredibly knowledgeable Chet Atkins from Texas A&M at the 21st Charleston Conference? Anyway, we have just learned that a collaborative proposal from the Association of Research Libraries (ARL) and the Texas A&M University Libraries for assessing service quality in digital libraries has been approved for funding by the National Science Foundation (NSF). “Developing a National Science Digital Library (NSDL) LibQUAL+ Protocol” is an outgrowth of the LibQUAL+ project, a research and development project undertaken by ARL and Texas A&M to measure library service quality across institutions. The current LibQUAL+ instrument is a Web-based survey of library users’ perceptions of service quality; it identifies gaps between desired, perceived, and minimum expectations of service. The survey results can be used in making local managerial decisions as well as in identifying best practices in library service. Under the grant, ARL and Texas A&M will jointly receive funding of $245,737 over a three-year period to adapt the LibQUAL+ instrument for use in the Science, Math, Engineering and Technology Education Digital Library community. The NSDL LibQUAL+ project goals include: (a) define the dimensions of digital library service quality from users’ perspectives; (b) develop a tool for measuring user perceptions and expectations of digital library service quality across NSDL digital library contexts; and (c) identify digital library best practices that permit generalizations across operations and development platforms. The principal investigators on the project are Duane Webster, Executive Director of ARL; Fred Heath, Dean of University Libraries and Holder of the Sterling C. Evans Endowed Chair, Texas A&M University; Colleen Cook, Associate Dean of John and Mary Wright Professor of Library Science, Texas A&M University; Yvonna Lincoln, Distinguished Professor in Educational Administration and Human Resource Development and Holder of the Ruth Harrington Chair of Education Leadership, Texas A&M University; and Bruce Thompson, Professor and Distinguished Research Scholar in Educational Psychology, Texas A&M University, and Adjunct Professor of Community Medicine, Baylor College of Medicine. In 1999-2000, 105 ARL libraries spent almost $100 million on electronic resources. Libraries seek efficient and effective ways of delivering the highest quality of service using these electronic resources. The ability to assess service quality of digital libraries will allow libraries to improve the retrieval of relevant information, promote librarian preparation for an information-rich society, and promote scholarship and lifelong learning. For more information about LibQUAL+, see the project website at http://www.awl.org/libqual/.

Well, got an email from Jackie Knowles <jlk@aber.ac.uk> of the University of Wales Aberystwyth who is currently com...
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piling a series of Web pages for students at the University of Wales Aberystwyth which act as a guide to electronic journals in librarianship and information science. And—Jackie asked for permission to include Against the Grain on their lists. Sounds good to us! (http://www.inf.aber.ac.uk/pl/ef/lib/).  

I tell you, it is truly impossible to keep up with Chuck Hamaker <cahunck@email.uncc.edu>! He keeps up with everything! This comes from Philip Hunter <p.j.hunter@ukoln.ac.uk> and was sent to liblicense in November.—The current issue of Information Research contains an interesting article on the “Bibliometrics of electronic journals in information science” by Donald T. Hawkins, Editor-in-Chief, Information Science Abstracts, Information Today, Inc. http://informationscience.columbia.edu/docs/71/paper120.html. The article analyses some of the measurable characteristics of e-journals in the field of Information Science, including D-Lib, First Monday, Journal of Digital Information, LIBRES, etc., and the UKOLN magazines Ariadne and Cultivate Interactive. It contains statistical data about contributing authors, their geographical locations and institutions, subject area coverage within the field, etc. The data covers the period 1995 to the present.  

It was great working with Liz Janis <Liz.Janis@Blackwell.com> on the Approval Plan of the College of Charleston. But Liz is changing jobs (good for her, bad for me). Effective November 26, Janis has accepted a new position in the Database Services Department. Shawn Kilburn will be taking her place. Congratulations and good luck to both of you!  

This just in from Tom Peters <tpeters@cic.uiuc.edu> and the CIC. In a new initiative that will shape the future of scholarly publishing and scholarly communication, the Committee on Institutional Cooperation (CIC) will convene experts from its member universities to (1) identify collaborative models for university press operations and (2) develop and test a pilot cooperative e-publishing venture. A fundamental underpinning of the initiative is the understanding that the presses will maintain their individual identities. The task forces will present preliminary findings, recommendations, and a beta version of the e-publishing venture in the summer of 2002. Initial plans call for the e-Books and other e-content to be freely accessible to the entire CIC community via the existing CIC Virtual Electronic Library (VEL). As part of the study, sustainable models will be developed providing access to the content by the worldwide scholarly community. The CIC is an academic consortium that comprises the members of the Big Ten Athletic Conference and the University of Chicago. This resolution directs the CIC presses to explore opportunities for collaboration that result in cost savings while sustaining and even enhancing quality. In 2000, CIC university presses collectively published 1,065 new books and 118 scholarly journals, with net sales of over $66 million. Together, CIC member universities confer nearly 15% of the Ph.D. degrees awarded in the United States annually, employ more than 33,000 faculty and enroll nearly one-half million students. CIC member institutions include the Universities of Chicago, Illinois, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, and Wisconsin-Madison, as well as Indiana, Michigan State, Northwestern, Ohio State, Pennsylvania State, and Purdue Universities. For more information, visit http://www.cic.uiuc.edu.  

And, when I was reading more about the CIC, I noticed two familiar names. Remember Douglas Armato? The thing I remember about Doug, who was at the U. of Georgia Press at the time, I believe, and who is now Director of the University of Minnesota Press and current member of the Board of Directors of the Association of American University Presses, was on that year at the Conference, everyone had typed out papers, but Doug had the old familiar, yellow legal pad loaded with good-old personal script! Also, Paula Kaufman, University Librarian at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and Chair of the CIC Library Directors Group who was our spectacular keynote on Charleston when she was Director at U. of Tennessee back in Judy Webster days. The times they do a change, don't they?  

LexisNexis and Knight Ridder Digital have announced the formation of an interactive-content alliance. Through the relationship, Knight Ridder Digital is syndicating its content available to LexisNexis users; and LexisNexis is powering access to on-point information to 17 Knight Ridder newspapers in 28 markets. Twenty-eight full-text daily Knight Ridder publications from top media markets throughout the country now will be available to LexisNexis customers, many same-day or and within a day of publication, powered by Knight Ridder Digital. The offering includes major metropolitan papers such as The Miami Herald, The Philadelphia Inquirer and Daily News, the Detroit Free Press, The Charlotte Observer, the Pioneer Press in St. Paul, MN., and The San Jose Mercury News. In a separate agreement, Knight Ridder newspapers and LexisNexis announced a new, centrally-administered information services contract to enable Knight Ridder professionals access to the LexisNexis suite of information solutions. That contract brings wide exposure to LexisNexis research databases to the desktops of thousands of professionals at Knight Ridder, including nxis.com for journalists and editors conducting research, lexis.com for Knight Ridder's legal staff, customized solutions for professionals in Knight Ridder's corporate offices, continued on page 12
This issue of ATG is guest edited by the remarkable Miriam Gilbert <Mx Gilbert2@aol.com>. With all that is happening in her life, she managed to put together a series of bam-zowie papers. Plus, she now has a new middle-schooler. Ben is 11 and is in sixth grade. If you call her on the phone, you will get Ben on the answering machine. Thank you, Miriam! And, hey, Ben!

Blackwell’s Book Services has introduced Blackwell’s Online Bookshop (BOB) in a US version to the academic community. The British version of Blackwell’s Online Bookshop was established in the UK in 1995, and gained a following among academic and scholarly readers in the United States. BOB in its US version enables customers to purchase both US and UK titles through the online bookshop. BOB is a comprehensive source for scholarly titles, out-of-print books, popular titles, and resources created expressly for the academic community. BOB enables users to search the book catalog online, read reviews, add titles to a personal e-bookshelf, place orders, and pay with a credit card. Academic librarians and other institutional customers have the option of establishing a Blackwell: account as an alternative to credit card purchasing. The BOB US site is located at http://www.bookshop.blackwell.com.

More about eBookstores! Taylor & Francis Group plc, the academic publishers whose imprints include Routledge, Garland Science, Psychology Press and Europa, are pleased to announce the launch of the Taylor & Francis eBookstore. eBook buyers are able to browse, select and download an initial list of over 400 of the company’s most popular titles. By September, the list will expand to include over 1,000 titles, and it is expected that more than 2,500 titles will be available by the end of the year. Three eBook formats are available at: Microsoft Reader (for PC and Pocket PC use only), Adobe eBook Reader (for use on PC and Mac), Mobipocket (for use on Palm Pilot, Psion, PC).

And Taylor & Francis Books Limited purchased London-based Curzon Press Limited on 5th December 2001. Curzon Press, known for its Asian and Middle Eastern Studies publications was owned and developed by Malcolm Campbell who was formerly Marketing Director at Routledge. He will remain with the Press as it is integrated into the area studies list of the social science division of Taylor & Francis Books Limited, under the combined imprint of Routledge Curzon. Alongside its core output of scholarly monographs, Curzon’s program contains a growing number of reference works and upper-level textbooks. Two new journals have been added in the last year with a further two planned next year. Curzon was originally founded in 1970 and was acquired by Malcolm and Martina Campbell in 1991. Curzon has a backlist of over 800 titles and now produces 100 new titles a year. http://www.tandf.co.uk/news.html.

Got a note from Ean <cleece@nus.edu.sg> (Mrs. Lee Cheng Ean, Head, Serials, Technical Services Division, Central Library, National University of Singapore) who tells me that she has been using the PowerPoint slides from the 2001 Charleston Conference and has found them to be very useful! Have you seen them? The PowerPoint slides are loaded at http://www.cofc.edu/library/conference. Also, the actual 2001 Conference Proceedings (edited by the wonderfully efficient team of Rosann Bazirjian <rbv9@psu.edu> and Vicky Speck <vs@abcclio.com>) will be published again this year by Against the Grain Press with lots of help from EBSCO and Leigh Marie Lunn’s <ilmun@ebsco.com> awesome team! In the meantime, like Ean, if you haven’t seen them, you might want to take a gander at the TOC of the 2000 Charleston Conference Proceedings which will be loaded up on the ATG Website shortly http://www.against-the-grain.com.


And, write this down! The 2002 Charleston Conference will be October 30 (preconferences and The Charleston Advisor Vendor Showcase), October 31-November 2, 2002 (main conference). In 2003, I promise that the Conference will be back in November. We were trying to avoid the Citadel homecoming crowd, but, hey, there is always a crowd in Charleston these days, so we abandoned the idea! Oh for the recontinued on page 14
Library, Stamford, CT; Malikah Dada Lumumba, Franko School, Mt. Vernon, NY; Tracie Hall, Hartford Public Library; Sherelle Harris, Norwalk Public Library; Toni Trent Parker, Coauthor and Founder, Black Books Galore; Denise Lewis Patrick, Author, Red Dancing Shoes; Sandra Payne, New York Public Library; Veronica L.C. Stevenson-Moudamane, The Dunbar Library. For questions, contact: the dynamo Athena Michael, Cochair, <amichael@wiley.com>, phone: 540-722-0823.

Elsevier Science B.V./Elsevier Science S.A. and John Wiley and Sons, Inc. have announced the initiation of litigation against Kessler-Hancock Information Services, Inc., a document delivery service, and its president Brian J. Hancock, for unauthorized photocopying from the publishers' journals for resale to the service's customers. The complaint, filed in federal district court in Boston, alleges that Kessler-Hancock solicits and fills orders for copies of copyrighted materials distributed by the publishers without their authorizations, and even collects purported copyright fees in connection with the copies without returning them to the copyright holders. The complaint includes counts of false advertising for the ways in which Kessler-Hancock represents its business practices. The matter is being coordinated by Copyright Clearance Center, Inc. (CCC), the largest licensor of text reproduction rights in the world and a licensing agent for both publishers.

More news. CCC and Cahners Business Information have recently launched Rightslink, CCC's digital rights management portal, on Cahners' TVS.com portal with these online publications: Multi-channel News, Broadcasting and Cable, and Cablevision. Cahners is implementing Rightslink across all of its Internet publications. These include market-leading business-to-business publications in 15 vertical industries, including entertainment, manufacturing, and retail. This launch comes on the heels of two announcements in October: MSN.com's selection of Rightslink as its digital rights management solution and CMP Media LLC's implementation of Rightslink on InformationWeek.com. According to industry estimates, the U.S. digital content market is expected to grow from approximately $1.8 billion today to $7 billion by 2005. CCC's Rightslink lets publishers and other content owners determine how their copyrighted information can be reused. They decide whether to license use of their materials in electronic media such as email, Internet, intranet or CD-ROM; in print media such as reprints; and for republication. Copyright holders can also specify distinct rights, terms, and conditions for each piece of content.

It's official. Sirsi Corporation and Data Research Associates (DRA) have successfully integrated their operations. This announcement follows a careful internal evaluation, which was undertaken after Sirsi completed the DRA acquisition in late August 2001. Details include that the company will be known as Sirsi; (2) it now has an integrated management team; and (3) its future technology strategy will focus on revolutionary solutions for serving library users, while standardizing integrated library systems (ILS) development efforts on the open, modular Unicorn® Library Management System. Sirsi has now integrated its product development, customer service, and sales and marketing operations to capitalize most effectively on the combined resources that have resulted from the Sirsi-DRA merger. The management team includes executives from both organizations: Ben Nelson and John Dickson, vice presidents of product development; Mike Casale, vice president of customer service; Terry Jarnagin, director of customer care; Andrew Morrice, vice president of sales and marketing and international operations; Charles Farley, director of sales; Larry Smith, chief financial officer; and Maggie Bell, vice president of human resources. For three months, the company conducted a thorough and objective evaluation of all Sirsi and DRA products to arrive at a technology strategy. While no additional development will be done on Taos as a separate product stream after the general release of Version 1.2, scheduled for February 2002, Sirsi will incorporate many of the truly visionary concepts from Taos into future products.

Sirsi has made the decision to standardize on the Unicorn platform because (1) Taos still requires significant development effort to complete basic-level ILS functionality; and (2) Unicorn is already an industry-standard, comprehensive, and scalable system that provides full ILS functionality to all types and sizes of libraries around the world. http://www.dra.com/.

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Was talking to Ellen Finnie Duranceau (Digital Resources Acquisitions Librarian, MIT Libraries) <efinnie@mit.edu> a while ago. She was saying that she had a strong feeling that the library profession's terminology is not meeting our current needs. What is an “aggregator database,” for example? We're talking about various gateways (SwetsNetNavigator, Ingenium if they even go together in the same group), publisher interfaces (Project Muse, etc.), true aggregators (ProQuest, Academic Universe, etc). These all got lumped into the category of “aggregator.” There is also not a list for new services like Serials Solutions which offer “aggregator” title lists. Even the names “electronic database” and “e-journals” seem to be breaking down. AARRRRGGGG! “Do you think it would be interesting to try to use an article or 4.7G to get agreement in our profession about what to call these various things?” What do all of y'all think? Write <strauchk@earthlink> or Ellen <efinnie@mit.edu>.

Moving right along (but don't forget the above!) – ebrary™ www.ebrary.com will distribute Penguin Classics, its library of literary masterpieces, to new online markets via ebrary's software, ebrarian™. Kathryn Court, President of Penguin Books, an imprint of Penguin Putnam Inc., commented, “Our new relationship with ebrary represents an exciting marketing opportunity for our Penguin Classics titles. Giving online access to the Penguin Classics via ebrary is a secure and brand new way to help these titles reach new customers. We look forward to working with ebrary and realizing the benefits of this partnership.” www.penguinclassics.com. ebrary is privately held and is funded by Random House Ventures LLC, Pearson PLC and The McGraw-Hill Company. www.ebrary.com.

To continue, ebrary™ has signed agreements with Greenwood Publishing Group and John Wiley & Sons to distribute their titles through multiple online channels, including libraries, institutions and other online organizations. The announcement of the relationships with Wiley and Greenwood add two significant names to ebrary's roster of over 80 key publishing partners signed to-date. www.ebrary.com.

This looks like a cool project to me. ABC-CLIO Schools, an award-winning publisher of social studies resources for grades 6-12, and the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) are offering Teaching with Documents, a 13-unit, curriculum-aligned teaching series. Each unit focuses on a significant period of U.S. history and is designed to teach students to develop a historian’s approach to analyzing primary source documents. From the Constitution and Bill of Rights to letters written by Abraham Lincoln about the Civil War to World War II recruitment posters and beyond, the series encompasses documents, photographs, posters, letters and other primary source materials from the holdings of the National Archives. Teaching with Documents encourages students to examine undated artifacts of the past to better understand the history of the United States and the present state of affairs. www.abc-cliо.com/schools or www.nara.gov.

This comes from Sharron Brown <sharron.brown@strath.ac.uk> SCURL (Scottish Confederation of University and Research Libraries) has received funding from the Carnegie Trust for the Universities of Scotland to undertake a 6-month study from November 2001 to determine the optimal model for a collaborative storage and delivery service for valuable but low-use research materials held in Scottish university libraries. CASS (Collaborative Academic Store for Scotland) aims to address pertinent library issues in terms of reducing storage costs, reallocation of space, enhancing access, preservation, and increasing cooperation between academic and, if feasible, public libraries and archives, to benefit the research community. Key deliverables will include the wide dissemination of project findings in the form of a final report and a detailed business plan for a collaborative facility. CASS will enable the viability of a collaborative storage facility within Scotland to be identified. Information professionals and members of the research community will provide CASS with the majority of its findings. Additional study will focus on literature reviews and similar collaborative ventures in Europe, Australia and America. Project documentation, resources, and general information will be disseminated via the CASS Website at http://scurl.ac.uk/projects/cass/index.html.

Well, the eBook space seems to be morphing (or is it widening?)! At 2001 Charleston, there was a very interesting presentation by Anthony Watkinson <anthony.watkinson@btinternet.com> and Oxford University Press regarding Oxford Scholarship Online. Now Wiley InterScience is offering OnlineBooks. Does this represent the next step in the evolution of digital information resources: the complete contents of essential print works repurposed for the online environment? This is the intent of the Wiley InterScience offering. More than 290 frontlist and recently published backlist titles are being clustered into Libraries and Collections that will serve as user-friendly, convenient reference tools featuring broad searching capabilities, subject categorization, and logical interface. http://www3.interscience.wiley.com/bookfinder.html.

It's a small world! I caught a glimpse of her in Charleston, but we really didn't get to talk! Last time I really talked to Isabella Hinds <isabella.hinds@webct.com> I think, was at the Boston Society for Scholarly Publishing meeting and she was with Copyright Clearance Center. Well, Isabella is now with WebCT, as Director of Publisher Relations and was a speaker on Eamon Fennelly's <efennelly@att.net> Panel on Distance Learning in Charleston!

This is a pretty interesting site. It's called FACULTYOF1000 www.facultyof1000.com and was available for free trial from BioMed Central until the end of December. It's an online scientific literature evaluation service that posts recommendations and evaluations of the most interesting papers in biology from over 1400 leading scientists; immediate rating of individual papers by the authors' peers, providing a first real alternative to the indirect assessment provided by the journal; impact factor; sophisticated Search and Browse Facilities; organized and searchable by subject areas (Faculties); personalization Features to allow saved searching and email alerting of new evaluations; links directly to PubMed and PubMedCentral to view full abstracts.

Well, it's truly the end of an era. After an exemplary 28-year career in the library and library services industry, Heather Steele has announced her plans for early retirement! Heather currently is the Co-CFO of Swets Blackwell's North American Region, will return home to the United Kingdom at the end of the year. Heather joined Swets Blackwell in April 2000, during the joint venture between Blackwell's Information Service and Swets Subscription Service. Heather held many positions during her 21 years at Blackwell's Information Service (BIS), including Customer Service and Sales Manager, International Commercial Director and finally, Chief Executive Officer. Prior to joining BIS, Heather worked as the assistant manager of the acquisitions department of the University of Calgary Library. Heather comments: "I very much wanted to see the joint venture transition through along with my co-CEO, Philipp Neie, and to assist in its success. Now that this is done, I am looking forward to returning home to Oxford to become reacquainted with my husband [Chris Tzack]. Immediate plans include a couple of months in our little beach house in Crete during olive season, finally learning to speak Greek and reading my way through the stack of books I have accumulated over the past years, while I decide what I want to do next." Lucky, lucky woman! Please keep in touch, Heather! We can speak Greek over the telephone! Heres...
Given the problems listed with digital records from Longnow and with the addition of the power of EMP weapons, many copies of digital records widely dispersed is a first step. We are accomplishing that first step now but without any systematic plan worthy of the serious costs of the problem before us. A copy of these digital records in a suitable format should also be put off planet—in space. A digital archive on the moon would create a threshold problem like that discussed in the science fiction libraries with the obelisk on the Moon in 2001: A Space Odyssey—knowledge above a certain level is required to open the record, thus making the copies safer. In addition, they are removed from our attention when those monsters of the id are roaming the earth. However, a digital format that would last on the Moon would require research. Longnow, by the way, has purchased land in Nevada as a site for its activities. This location is not as isolated as the Moon would be but more reachable.

Digital records are now only satisfactory for text, and, arguably, some genres of performed music. We do not have a format for digitally preserving buildings which is satisfactory. The energy that was at one time behind the Virtual Reality Modelling Language seems to have faltered but work on virtual reality with helmets may pan out so that one could experience what it is (or was) like to walk through a building using digital records. The original buildings, of course, are not susceptible to storing but the digital copies would be. Painting is a hard problem and we do not seem close to anything adequate. My test is when I can see a full-sized rendition of Remon’s Lancheau of the Boating Party12 from a digital file that is as compelling as the original. Meanwhile, what we have is only good for reminding one what the original looks like.

Given the problems with digital records, it would seem that the original are the items we must pay particular attention to and to preserve our heritage, we need to move originals of archival works out of cities when digital versions exist. Art museums are in cities for a number of reasons, the most important is that more people can see works of art there. But cities are vulnerable and many human artifacts—like Jao’s manuscripts or paintings—are unique.

In North America, we can contemplate moving pieces of traditional libraries, such as the Library of Congress (LC), out of cities, when publications exist digitally. In fact, consider the general proposition: when acceptable digital editions exist of archival works such as books, paintings, and artifacts, the originals should be moved to where they can be protected. The ARL libraries are a natural part of the mix because they have large collections dispersed over the continent. Ubiquitous networks can supply much of the materials needed by those at LC and other libraries in cities; with the increasing number of digital records, more original records can be moved. Of course, North America is only a part of the human saga and this is a human problem that needs consideration.

For most of our history, macropreservation, to the extent it occurred at all, was happenstance. We can now understand the problem, and it is up to us to do something about it.
Based on the criterion of availability, only six of the original eleven vendors were deemed suitable, and of those six, only four have stated anticipated fill times quick enough for rush orders. So far, UMBC Library Acquisitions Department has tried three vendors and found two suitable. We will continue trying out vendors as time allows.

Along with changing to online vendors for rush and unfulfilled orders, our service improvements required significant departmental reorganization and re-tooling. The Acquisitions Account Clerk, who also holds the Acquisitions Department's campus VISA procurement card, was trained to search Websites and to place VISA orders via the Web. Some of her duties were shifted to the library's Accounting & Receiving Department; this freed her to handle a greater volume of VISA orders, and also increased our audit compliance by separating some key responsibilities. A low-level library technician who previously spent half of her time searching and inputting orders, and the other half processing government document requests, was assigned completely to acquisitions and re-classified to a higher level to manage the routine Acquisitions workflow. The other library technician, who had managed the routine workflow as well as special ordering, was freed to spend all of her time on rush and other special orders. A number of Acquisitions student assistants were given Lead Student status (with a higher pay rate), and assigned more complex work with greater responsibility. Rush procedures were re-written to allow placing rush orders before documentation is fully prepared, and to include regular back up for all tasks necessary for rush ordering. Acquisitions staff, who had all participated in the planning from the beginning, enthusiastically accepted the significant changes to their jobs, and have been invaluable in making the overall improvement effort a success.

We also put forth greater effort to find out faculty members' priorities and to better align our acquisitions efforts with the needs of the faculty.

On our order form, we began allowing faculty to designate orders as "Priority" or "Collection Building" in addition to "Rush." Since our selectors are almost all faculty, these designations are helping us to distinguish what faculty really need from what they just think would be nice to have in the collection. On the order form a chart clearly explains the differences between the order types. This online book request form can be viewed at http://aok.lib.umbc.edu/cgi-bin/bookreq.pl.

### Priority of this order

- **Rush** — Usually arrives within a month. Use this for times you need in 1-2 months.
- **Priority** — Usually arrives within 3 months. Use this for items you need in 3-6 months.

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**Collection Building** — Arrival times vary. Use this for quality items for the library collection.

Moreover, faculty notification procedures were established for all delayed orders, and follow-up procedures were put in place for all orders. Rush orders remaining unfulfilled after two weeks go through a follow-up procedure each week until the order remains open, and, if necessary, we cancel the order with the original vendor and re-order from one who can supply. "Priority" orders remaining unfulfilled after two months go through the follow-up procedure each month. "Collection Building" orders remaining open after four months go through the follow-up procedure once every three to six weeks, but less often if time does not allow. Faculty notification procedures allow the faculty to upgrade the status of their order whenever they want to speed up an order that has been delayed.

Departmental reorganization, improved procedures, and the use of online vendors have allowed the UMBC Library Acquisitions Department to achieve significant improvements in fill-time. Rush orders are now filling, on average, in less than ten days, and other orders no longer languish for extended periods of time. As we had anticipated, demand has grown: the number of rush orders has risen almost 250% since we publicized our faster service. Further, the average price we paid for a book last year did not increase at all. Most importantly, our faculty no longer ask why it takes us so long to get books that they could get in a week from Amazon.com. Instead, they compliment our service and thank us.

Significant questions arise regarding the future of library acquisitions, traditional library vendors, and online vendors. Amazon has started marketing to libraries via direct mail, and both Amazon and Barnes & Noble now offer corporate accounts and accept purchase orders from libraries. Will traditional vendors improve services to match the speed with which online vendors provide books? Or will the online vendors take over the library rush order business, with traditional vendors supplying the bulk of our materials along with the special services we require? How will the traditional vendors compete if the online vendors start offering us the kind of discounts and services we get from the traditional vendors? For more information on these questions from the vendors' perspective, see Dana Alessi's informative article, "Raising the bar: book vendors and the new realities of service," in the 1999 Journal of Library Administration, pages 68-69. (Ms. Alessi worked with Baker & Taylor when her article was published.) Not only does Alessi point out the need for library vendors to provide materials more quickly, but she describes difficulties and pitfalls they face in trying to do so, such as the limitation of library vendors' stock.

### Fast notes

Fast notes the difficulties vendors face with many publishers who take outrageously long periods of time to fill orders.

Are Amazon.com or other online vendors a public relations problem for you? If so, email me at flinchba@umbc.edu, and tell me what you are doing, or planning to do, about it. Responses from all types of vendors and libraries are welcome.

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### Endnotes


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**Rumors from page 46**

stuffed the packets in Charleston in 2000! And, Nancy spoke in Charleston in November, 2001, and also has an article in this issue of ATG, see page 22!

Second installment on running for ALA President by Katina. It's nearly two months later and I have talked to a lot of people, made a lot of statements, and learned a lot. Sandy Paul is my campaign manager and A TON of you are working with me! Thank you. For those of you who I haven't talked to, please send me your ideas for what are the issues that you think ALA needs to focus on and whatever you think I need to hear, okay? The Katina for President Website is at www.katina.info! And, best of all, there will be a champagne and dessert reception at Katina's suite in the Marriott on Friday, January 18 from 8-11 p.m. in New Orleans. You are all invited! See you there!

In the meantime, Happy Holidays to all of you and may you have absolutely the best NEW YEAR ever! From Yr. (Loving) Ed.