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Millenium Minutes-Changes in librarianship over the past twenty years

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Some Thoughts on a Period of Tremendous Change

by Heather S. Miller (Assistant Director for Technical Services and Systems, University Libraries ULB34, University at Albany, State University of New York, 1400 Washington Ave.; Phone: 518-442-3631; Fax: 518-442-3630) <hm766@csc.albany.edu> (please note new email address)

There are some thoughts, but I doubt that they differ much from those of others of my age:

The time I've spent working in libraries has gone by in a flash and has covered a period of tremendous change. I began as an academic library clerk at Michigan State University. I only got that job because the person they really wanted turned up pregnant and, in those days, that was automatic disqualification. I did added copy cataloging and ran a branch library in a dorm complex. The most technologically advanced equipment we had was an electric eraser. I still thought that erasable typing paper was a great step forward. We handled a lot of cards, pulled them, typed copy numbers on them and refiled them. In the dorms we did inventory by reading the shelves against the shelf list cards. I spent much of a summer doing that. Does anyone inventory anymore?

The collection consisted of books and periodicals - printed ones - and recordings of twentieth century American composers. We checked materials out by stamping cards and putting them in files. There weren't any photocopiers. PW actually listed all the new books and I read it every week.

I was at Harvard College Library when that institution resisted joining OCLC because they feared being a net lender. I was trained to catalog "right" and catalog cards were typed by clerical staff. Then I moved to Duke, where I was retrained to catalog "right." The two "right" ways to catalog were different. On my first day I was horrified to find a typewriter at my desk and to realize that I was supposed to use it! We all used the unforgettable pale green NUC books to find cataloging copy. I was there when Duke first began to create a computerized serials list. At the Massachusetts Horticultural Society Library I worked with a unique classification system devised just for its collection. It has since gone the way of homogenization, subsumed by LC and OCLC in the interest of sharing and communication, but to the detriment of specific classification.

I was here at SUNY Albany when the first PC, a gift from a vendor, arrived in Technical Services. It lived for some time in a closet because no one knew what to do with it. Now we have more than 450 PCs and servers and every staff members has a PC that is essential for his or her work. We are on our third automated system and are rapidly moving toward the fourth. Filing in the card catalog has disappeared, but no one noticed any gain in time because of it.

In the early days I was sure my salary would never top $10,000.00. I never thought I would become an assistant director. Although I had considered attending Harpur College (which became SUNY Binghamton), I never imagined working for SUNY until I landed on its doorstep. In high school I refused to take a typing course because I was not going to be anybody's secretary. Nobody has a typewriter anymore, but everyone types more than they ever expected to and that includes me. Some things have stayed the same such as the Baker & Taylor staff book accounts, one of the great perks of this business. And the basic tenets of librarianship remain with us, but the profession is immersed in a very different environment now.
the economics of the marketplace you are operating in. And, finally, you can’t do collection development well if you can’t explain all of the pieces of it to your constituency. You have to not only understand your environment but be able to communicate in a meaningful way. Usage alone doesn’t tell you enough. In the electronic realm, as we look at usage of electronic resources, full text databases or ejournals, we have to keep in mind who our users are and what the population is that is using the resource. That same model translates to other areas of the collection as well and also to print. For example, Philosophers Index has only 5% as much use as Academic Universe. That does not mean that we can cancel it. We have five philosophy faculty and over 12,000 undergraduates. You need to understand your population in order to make intelligent decisions.

**BK:** What are some of the challenges you face in today’s environment?

**MB:** The environment has become so complicated that there is a whole other layer in the supply chain, the consortial layer, both formal and informal. So, not only do we need to know and understand the end user, the library, the vendor, and the producer layers, we now have the consortial layer. How do you buy with whom is a huge part of collection development today. Because of these arrangements, we spend an incredible amount of time in the selection and negotiation process.

**BK:** How has electronic information such as electronic journals and ebooks impacted collection development and/or changed the nature of acquiring information?

**MB:** It has made the entire process far more complicated and it has also simplified things. It has reduced the cost per unit in the case of e-journals if one buys the entire publisher suite. However, we have to take the chaff with the wheat. In other words, we end up with titles that we would not have chosen to purchase, but we are paying a lower average cost for those journals. Our interlibrary loan traffic has been radically reduced because we acquire a lot of electronic journals. Therefore, overall operation expenses within the library have been reduced. The impact on the library operations can’t be looked at just in terms of collection development; there are true organizational savings. Our interlibrary loan statistics are down 30% in the last year because of electronic journals. There is a major staff savings. We do not have to check in, shelve, bind, and check out electronic journals and this represents cost-savings to the entire organization.

**BK:** If you could start over, how would you sell electronic information to libraries? Would you a) package by subject or discipline; b) sell by choosing individual titles; or c) sell by article?

**MB:** If I could really start over, I would say by article, but you wouldn’t really know what to buy until after the fact. By article is not a viable option unless we eliminate this ambiguity. Choosing individual titles is not the best method either due to efficiencies and the inability to provide comprehensive coverage. Packaging by subject or discipline makes the most sense. What we have done with books in terms of approval plans is in effect a packaging model. On the serials side, most publishers do focus on a subject or discipline. Project Muse, for example, allows us to support our humanities and social sciences departments, while the Wiley package helps us to support the scientific areas of our curriculum.

**BK:** Do you think consortia have advanced, stymied, or had no impact on collection development?

**MB:** It has had a tremendous impact. They have given us more bang for our dollar, but it has cost us in terms of our ability to either keep track of in terms of negotiations, communications, and consortial arrangements. It’s going to take another three to five years to determine whether this was a good way to go or not. What has it really cost us in terms of staff time and could the producers have come up with more reasonable pricing structures in the first place to make it more feasible not to use consortia? We appear to have saved through the consortial arrangements, but the cost has been tremendous in terms of library staffing, vendor staffing and publishing.

**BK:** Can you see into the future and predict when and if the scholars will take back publishing from the commercial publishers?

**MB:** If you had asked me 3-4 years ago, I would have said yes. However, with the advent of publisher journal suites, I’m not sure that it will happen. The major incentive is no longer as obvious as it once was. An example is a major journal that we all know and love which is now costs about $20,000 per year for an annual subscription. The faculty at my institution do research and publish in this journal and I have to spend university dollars to buy back the information that we funded in the first place. Being able to purchase the entire journal suite brings the average cost of even the high priced journals down to only about $200.00 per year on an annual basis.

**BK:** Do you see ways in which the publishers have influenced collection development in recent years?

**MB:** Yes. The ability to buy the whole enchilada at a price that not much different from buying a smaller piece has had an impact on collection development. However, I think that we’re in the first stage of this development. The number of titles available in the serial world is going to decrease because both libraries and publishers now have usage data. Libraries are not going to buy little used journals and ultimately publishers are not going to produce them. In the next go around of negotiations, within the next 2-3 years, we might be saying to a major journal publisher that we only want to buy two-thirds of their package continued on page 89
and there will be even more evolution in the price of titles and packages. I don’t think that the current pricing model is a model that is here to stay.

**BK:** You will be retiring from MSU in May 2002. What are your plans?

**MB:** I think that calling it retirement is a misnomer. I am thinking of it as changing my focus. For 30 years, I have done all kinds of consulting and provided continuing education in the profession in addition to my job. I am changing my focus in that I will only be putting one third of my time towards a post-retirement position at Montana State University and the rest of my time towards consulting and continuing education in libraries.

**BK:** What advice do you have for librarians choosing to pursue collection development?

**MB:** First of all, be certain that your skills are appropriate for collection development. By that, I mean, to be successful in collection development you need to be comfortable with a great deal of ambiguity. For every decision that you make, there are two dozen variables. One needs to be skilled at decision making, comfortable with the variables and not be a hand wringer. To do collection development well, intellectual curiosity has to be an energizer for you. You really do have to find all of the pieces and the piece interesting. For example, sitting on my shelf awaiting decisions are the following titles: *The Philosophy of Nothingness, Industrial Cowboys, The Symbolic Politics of Ethnic Wars and Houdini, Tarzan and the Perfect Man.* These topics need to be as interesting to me as the things that I really love, like quilting or poetry. You have to understand the economic models and the history as well as the current context of those economies in order to do collection development. Lastly, something that was initially overlooked in the collection development track is you have to have great people skills, because to do your job well, you have to work well in the vendors, publishers, and consortia. You have to be able to communicate well and that includes listening to your users. You have to be able to work within your organization whether it is 3 people or 300 to coordinate the complexity that is now collection development. You can’t confuse being linear and understanding numbers as a prerequisite for collection development. It’s not about the numbers and acquiring the most stuff. It’s about acquiring the right stuff.

**BK:** What advice do you have for library vendors?

**MB:** As in any marketplace, the importance of integrity and trust remains paramount. The same products are available from a variety of avenues. It isn’t libraries that do business, it is individuals in libraries that do business. Trust, integrity and communication are critical components of the relationship between libraries and vendors. Secondly, you have to have something to sell and to be honest, you’re selling service more than anything else. I once heard a statistic that the number of mistakes in shipments leaving the loading docks of publishers is somewhere between 15-20% and that the mistakes from a library vendor are less than 1%. That’s the level of quality service that we want and are willing to pay for. Otherwise, it ultimately comes out of our hides. This is becoming more apparent with electronic information. We want you to fight our battles. Dealing directly with producers is not a model that we want to revert to. My library would have to hire at least three people to replace me if we had to deal directly with publishers. We should not backwards just because we are all dazzled by electronic resources. Finally, hang in there ...the dust hasn’t settled yet. The first line providers of information cannot provide the quality and timeliness of service that libraries have come to expect from their vendors. It has been the vendors that have created a niche for themselves by providing that service. Don’t lose track of that.

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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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**TO HELP OR HINDER, THAT IS THE QUESTION**

by Pamela M. Rose (University at Buffalo)

A petition demanding that the government require scientists to publish code under open-source of “free software” licenses was drawn up by three software developers (http://www.openinformatics.org). Advocates say sharing is essential for eliminating duplicative research, and feel results can’t be properly evaluated without looking at source code used to obtain them. Critics warn that such mandatory sharing could reduce financial incentives (thus hindering research) and may violate federal law. A workshop on the licensing issues will be held in January at the O’Reilly Bioinformatics Technology Conference in Tucson, AZ.


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**INDEPENDENCE RESEARCH**

by Pamela M. Rose (University at Buffalo)

A dozen of the world’s top medical journals enacted uniform requirements that seek to guarantee the scientific independence of investigators doing research funded by drug companies. Scientists submitting a study for publication must now sign a statement indicating they take full responsibility for the findings, had access to the data and controlled the decision to publish.


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<http://www.against-the-grain.com> 89
POETIC CRIES FOR HELP
by Pamela M. Rose (University at Buffalo)

Using software that quantifies word use and meaning, psychologists tested key theories about causal factors in suicide by analyzing about 300 poems including those by poets who had committed suicide. The authors claim suicidal poets used "more first-person-singular self-references" in all their poems and seemed more detached from society, and near their deaths signaled increasing isolation by their infrequent use of "we."


IT ONLY TOOK 192 YEARS!
by Pamela M. Rose (University at Buffalo)

James Madison's meteorological diary is the centerpiece of the first exhibit, on view until March 2003, on early American scientific instruments of the American Philosophical Society since 1811.


REduced reefs
by Pamela M. Rose (University at Buffalo)

The World Atlas of Coral Reefs (U. of California Press) offers for the first time a global synthesis and accounting of each country's coral reefs. Estimated total reef area is substantially smaller than past numbers (284,300 square kilometers, or the area of Italy), partly due to including only shallow reefs (those in less than 30 meters of water).


UNIVERSITY PRESS Competition
by Phil Dankert (Cornell University)

Although the evidence up to now may be anecdotal the fact still remains that the financial year ending in June was the worst in recent memory for university-press publishing. Especially hard hit were the University of California and Harvard University presses. One of the problems is that the outlook for sales to university libraries remains bleak. "With little left in their budgets after they pay for expensive journals, librarians are relying on inter-library loan rather than buying their own copies of many books." The editorial director of Columbia University Press points out that not all the blame for poor sales rests with the marketplace. Put simply, university presses may be publishing too many books. "...our books are competing with themselves." Many university presses, as a result, are considering reducing both the number of titles they publish each season as well as the number of copies of each title.


INeT SAYS NO!
by Pamela M. Rose (University at Buffalo)

INeT, a spin-off company of Carnegie-Mellon University (CMU), pulled out of an agreement with India's Department of Telecommunications to set up a high speed network that would have linked over 100 Indian research institutions.


ORDERED AND DISORDERED BRAINS
by Sandra Beehler (Old Dominion University)

Researchers at 19 universities and 6 hospitals in 10 countries are cooperating on the Human Brain Project, which aims to create a database for sharing information on the brain. They hope to improve our understanding both of how we think and of how brain disorders impede or distort that process. This article focuses on UCLA's Brain Mapping Center, where scientists are conducting experiments to help build a clear picture of the brain's structure—with the hope of someday accurately relating structure to function. Part of the difficulty is the lack of distinctive features in the brain's physical structure, along with the inadequacy of existing imaging technology. Besides obvious possibilities for curing brain dysfunction, this research has the potential to enable us one day to deliberately increase functionality (for example, mathematical ability or artistic skill) by stimulating the corresponding portion of the brain—an idea which poses significant ethical questions.


DESPERATE BUT NO LONGER ALONE
by Sandra Beehler (Old Dominion University)

Faced with a life-threatening diagnosis, many patients these days are taking to the World Wide Web. And by doing so, they have changed the nature of medical practice. This article chronicles the efforts of four parents who used the Internet to organize worldwide responses to autism, Rett syndrome, and the genetic diseases known as 18q- and PKE. They launched websites, helped organize clinical trials and raised funds for research. Sharing information freely over the Internet is an integral part of the effort, which has caused consternation among doctors and medical researchers. Some doctors actively discourage their patients from going online, fearing the effects of misinformation. Many others embrace the trend and have called for an online public library of medical journals. Most important of all — with the Internet many desperate people are no longer alone.


LICENSED TO BILL
by Sandra Beehler (Old Dominion University)

Cleverly disguised as a "reader license agreement" (you have to tear open the pages to read the entire article), this article dissects the new field of digital rights management technology. As information in purely electronic form offers a whole new revenue stream, media conglomerates need to control usage—and match usage to payment.

Enter digital rights management (DRM) technology. Roughly it works like this. The user/buyer has a license manager on a PC. The seller has the encrypted files on a content server and the usage restrictions on a license server. (They're separate so that restrictions can be responsive to customer demand.) Purchase access and the license manager downloads content and license files to the PC, decrypts the file and enables playback. The technology enables the sale of specific uses of content to a customer based on a subscription model keyed to the individual user. Content is controlled right down to the moment when the user quits paying for a subscription and content goes away.

Leading the movement to DRM is the music industry, with MusicNet and pressplay at the head of a long line of digital rights management providers. Both companies have partnered with major music labels and expect to launch their music offerings in late 2001. Other media types are bound to follow.

Problems: No standards yet; the two systems mentioned above are incomparable. DRM technology is pretty invasive of privacy. "Right of first sale" and "fair use," which libraries rely on when they share the content freely among their patrons, could fall victim to the DCMA's Section 1201(a)(1)(A) making it illegal to bypass DRM. And no one is sure if there is a paying market for digital music content anyway.

AD REVENUES IN THE TOILET
by Bruce Strauch (The Citadel)

Fabulous advertising growth in the 1990s caused 1,000 (!) magazines a year to be launched. Now it's all doom, gross indignity and bigger discounts as publishers grovel for a few pitiful pages of ads. Editorial independence is shamelessly swapped for "favorable coverage" as once-proud journals scramble for the measly bucks available. For publishers, junkets to Tuscany and helicopter skiing in Sun Valley are history. Under the shadow of massive lay-offs, it's four sales calls a day and ghastly drives to New Jersey to personally give grateful thanks to advertisers.


"WELSH RABBIT IS AMUSING & RIGHT, & WELSH RABBIT STUPID & WRONG"
by Bruce Strauch (The Citadel)

Very entertaining article on H.W. Fowler and his "Dictionary of Modern English Usage" which you really should look up and read.

The massive 13-volume O.E.D. was published in bits from 1879 to 1933 although the over-worked editor James Murray died in harness in 1914 after "Trink—Turntdown." Since few folks would buy a 16,000 page dictionary, smaller versions were done as spin-offs.

Henry Fowler, a literary failure, moved to the Channel isle of Guernsey, and with his brother wrote the "Concise Oxford Dictionary" (1911) and the "Pocket Oxford Dictionary" (1924). And on his own, Henry produced the "Dictionary of Modern English Usage" (1926). This supreme eccentric sat on his lonely isle writing the accepted pronunciation of "anchovy" and the special connotation of "pawky."

He taught us never to start a sentence with "but," never end a sentence with a preposition and never, ever split an infinitive. But it's better to occasionally break a rule than go out of your way... not to.


CONGLERATE SPATS
by Bruce Strauch (The Citadel)

AOL Time Warner Inc. owns Warner Bros. that produced "Harry Potter." It also owns Time which owns Entertainment Weekly. But Warner wouldn't let Entertainment preview "Potter" because Entertainment had called Warner "rudderless." So Entertainment sneaked into the preview. And now people aren't returning each other's calls and Warner says the magazines staffers are too cocky and adversarial. Hollywood is just a buzz with gossip. And some are chafing, and some want heads to roll, and others hope to ease the situation.


DEALING WITH THE ELEPHANT IN THE ROOM
by Bruce Strauch (The Citadel)

The necessity of commenting on Sept. 11 presented special challenges for trade journals such as those in the soap and taxidermy fields. But for others, the angle was obvious. Pit & Quarry cast aside its planned October issue to address the rebuilding of Lower Manhattan. Cheese Market News focused on the diversion of milk from normal delivery routes. Goat Rancher Magazine screened herds for biological tampering. And as you guessed, Plants Sites & Parks covered the new skittishness for trophy high-rises.


TAKE THE MOOLAH AND SHOVE IT
by Bruce Strauch (The Citadel)

Fatigued by academic writing, Stephen Ambrose turned out a blockbuster titled D-Day and launched a history writing industry that includes Citizen Soldiers and Band of Brothers. Ambrose Historical Tours, the Eisenhower Center for Oral History and $40,000 speaking engagements. Simon & Schuster has printed 3 million copies of his books, and profit-wise, he is only exceeded by the Tom Clancy level authors.

Now he says he is going to quit, but Simon & Schuster aren't taking him seriously. That's just his little joke," says his veteran editor. No doubt nervously.


Wandering the Web —

Selected Online Resources for Teaching Children about Money and Finance

Compiled and annotated by Roxanne Myers Spencer (Head Librarian, Green County Public Library, Cedarville, Ohio)

Column Editor: Jack G. Montgomery (Coordinator of Collection Services, Western Kentucky University, Library Automation and Technical Services, 309 Cravens Library Complex, W.K.U. Libraries, One Big Red Way, Bowling Green, KY 42101) <Jack.Montgomery@wku.edu>

The economic boom in the United States of the past decade and the development of the Internet have brought many changes to the way computer-literate Americans view money. Children of all ages have to ability to plan, save, and spend in ways that previous generations could not. But which tools can parents, students, and educators rely on to teach the value of money, to avoid temptation or disinterested operators? These selected online resources represent some of the better known, easy to navigate sites useful for parents, educators, and librarians seeking reliable information on introducing money and finance topics to students from the early grades through high school. Included are interactive games, teacher lesson plans, and additional links that make this selected online bibliography a good jumping-off point for novice or experienced Web-searchers. Adults, take note: Ever find your eyelids drooping wearily when reading those small-print stock prospectuses? Most of these resources are so well designed and so easy to navigate and comprehend, you may find yourselves wanting to jump right in and sign on!

Selected Websites

AskEric www.askeric.org is one of the primary resources for educators. Lesson plans for Applied Mathematics http://www.askeric.org/cgi-bin/lessons.cgi/Mathematics/Applied_MATH are excellent resources for teachers seeking novel ways to introduce money concepts such as comparison shopping, spreadsheets, and other practical tools to the math curriculum. A sample of the lesson plans includes Money Values, continued on page 92

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Money.com, www.money.com is the interactive Website for Money and Fortune magazines. Like many commercial sites that haven’t caught onto that sometimes less is more, the site’s splash page is dazzling busy. When wanting to search the site, one has to search for the search function, not readily apparent among all the information presented. A stock quote search box where one might expect the general search function to be leads to a false start, as it only searches stock symbols, not the entire site for articles. Parents, educators, and high school and older students will get the most out of using this site. When searching the Money database, again using the broad Boolean search terms “kids and money,” offers up far too many returns to review in a reasonable amount of time. Hits can be sorted by relevance, date, and with or without article summaries displayed. An auxiliary search of Fortune www.fortune.com for the same terms is also a possible selection. By contrast, the Fortune returns numbered 363, compared to Money’s 3515 hits. A quick scan of the Fortune hits indicate a far broader scope, following the more specialized content of Fortune magazine, in the articles that come up. Money’s hits include more than a dozen articles in the magazines special columns: “Money 101: Kids and Money” www.money.com/money/101/lessons/12/saving_and_spending.html, “Money Talk: Mutual Funds for Kids” http://www.money.com/depts/investing/moneytalk/archive/000609.html and “MoneyTalk: Investing” http://www.money.com/depts/investing/moneytalk/archive/990590.html in the first two dozen relevance-ranked returns. This makes targeted searching more succinct. Both Money and Fortune sites are valuable, but as a teaching tool, Money.com’s more general target audience offers more direct possibilities.

The Learning Network www.learningnetwork.com/ returned several interactive, easily searched and well-categorized features of interest to teachers, parents, and students. FamilyEducation www.familyeducation.com provides parents with several sections divided into articles and activities. These include: Learning Finance through Stories, www.familyeducation.com/article/01120.37.1476-0.00.html produced in partnership with Reading is Fundamental www.rf.org; a section on Budgeting www.familyeducation.com/topic/front/0.1156.37.13279.00.html teaches the use of coupons to save and the value of a dollar; the Credit Cards www.familyeducation.com/topic/front/0.1156.37.13383.00.html section teaches responsible use, discusses debt consolidation, and explains payment time frames and interest accrual. Teacher resources include lesson plans, and interactive games, such as ChangeMaker learningnetwork.funbrain.com/cgi-bin/shtml.cgi?A1=/cash/register/index.html, an online game that teaches children to make change in different currencies; PenguinWaiter learningnetwork.funbrain.com/cgi-bin/shtml.cgi?A1=/penguin/register/index.html, which teaches teens how to calculate restaurant bills and tips. A related Website is FunBrain, www.funbrain.com, which bills itself as “the Internet’s #1 site for K-8 teachers and kids.” The site includes resources for students, parents, and teachers. Games that are noted above are linked to this site. As a resource for teachers, who sign on for free, there are quizzes in eight subjects, sent in by subscribers; and interactive educational games ranked by grade level and divided into subject areas.


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and commercial and educational Websites. This site is a good jumping off point for new teachers seeking creative ideas to introducing understanding of measurement, counting, and basic decimal math concepts.

EEdWeb edweb.unomaha.edu/teach.htm, the Economics Education Website from the University of Nebraska at Omaha www.unomaha.edu/, offers K-12 teachers and college level instructors resources for teaching basic economics concepts. Some materials are free and for immediate use, others are available for a small fee. The site is well organized with more than 18 addresses of links to economic education resources. Older students should enjoy challenging online games, such as The Stock Market Game www.smg2000.org/. Younger students, will enjoy activities in PDF format such as Wishes and Rainbows edweb.unomaha.edu/vlibrary/WISH.PDF, from the Federal Reserve Bank, Boston, and My Money edweb.unomaha.edu/mymoney.pdf, from the Federal Reserve Bank, Richmond.

Other general teacher resources, from Awesome Library www.awesomelibrary.org/, including curriculum standards from several states, contain the Math Forum's Internet Mathematics Library forum.swarthmore.edu/library, Teacher's Net www.teachers.net/, with subject-area and grade-level search capabilities, Scholastic's Teacher Resources for Math teachers scholastic.com/plp/index.asp?SubjectID=3&SubheadlineID=32&TopicID=79 offers games, reproducible forms, and professional resources for teaching money concepts in a stimulating variety of games at all grade levels. Although this is a drop in the bucket of the educational resources ocean available on the Web for students, parents, and teachers, this list is a good starting point for anyone looking for the basics of money management in fun, interactive, and clearly understood language and graphics.

WEBWORTHY

Column Editor: Pamela M. Rose, M.L.S. (Web Services & Library Promotion Coordinator, Health Sciences Library, University at Buffalo, 3435 Main St., Buffalo, NY 14214-3002; Phone: 716-829-2408 x129; Fax: 716-829-2211) <pmrose@acsu.buffalo.edu> wings.buffalo.edu/~pmrose

Websites selected for broad appeal, depth of information, and ease of access. Sites are organized by broad subject area and are visited just prior to publication. Please let the editor know of any sites that are not accessible. Comments and suggestions welcome to Pamela M. Rose, Health Sciences Library, University at Buffalo, 3435 Main St., Buffalo, NY 14214-3002; 716-829-2408 <pmrose@acsu.buffalo.edu>. Unless otherwise noted in square brackets following the description, Internet addresses were published in Science, NetWatch column edited by Jocelyn Kaiser. — PR

Archaeology

Aside from the usual membership and merchandising pitch and relevant news items, the revamped Web pages of the Leakey Foundation include a nifty interactive timeline that traces the key discoveries (Leakey-funded discoveries are identified by an "L") in human origins from 1847 to the 2001 fossils which pushed Ardipithecus back to one million years older than previously thought. Visit the audio archives and hear Diane Fossey talk about her years with the mountain gorillas in 1973, or Jane Goodall discuss the mother-child relationship of the chimpanzees. There's also an Educational Resources section including a visual glossary. — http://leakeyfoundation.org/

Charity

It's tough figuring out where you want to donate all those hard earned dollars. Philanthropic Research, Inc., a public charity founded in 1994, makes it easier! With a mission to revolutionize philanthropy and non-profit practice, the GuideStar Website offers in-depth information about IRS-recognized non-profit organizations. There is section for non-profits to register and update their information, as well as donor sections and a fully searchable database of over 80,000 charities.

Financial information includes the IRS 990 form in pdf format. — http://www.guidestar.com/

Chemistry

Flasy fun with reactive materials is what makes chemistry entertaining and memorable, according to University of Leeds chemist Mike Hoyland. The Delights of Chemistry Website offers animations of some of his most spectacular experiments (most involve fire!), as well as 40 experiments carefully explained for primary school teachers everywhere. — http://www.chem.leeds.ac.uk/ delights/

Health

Global health, "health problems, issues, and concerns that transcend national boundaries ... and are best addressed by cooperative actions and solutions," is a major concern of the Health and Human Services (HHS) Office of International and Refugee Health. Their global health portal site offers a wealth of information on current partnerships and programs, a complete listing of government agencies dealing with global health, an extremely current list of upcoming events (such as Secretary Thompson's upcoming visit to Africa on December 1st) up to one year in advance, a section with situational information for international travelers, data resources including links and basic information for 42 countries, links to world health statistics, and fact sheets, current news items, and hot topics such as bioterrorism. An extremely useful site for up to date information on health for all nationalities! — http:// www.globalhealth.gov/

Linguistics

In an effort to halt the extinction of 50-90% of the world's languages over the next century, the Rosetta Project is creating an online Rosetta stone, capturing in print and audio an

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I have been trying hard not to write this column about globalization. It’s not the sort of topic that one expects to find in *Against the Grain*. But it seems so many things have happened lately in my part of the world that talking about globalization and libraries is unavoidable — for me.

It started with a recent taxi ride in Beijing. A local acquisitions librarian was taking me to lunch at to eat borscht and other Western delicacies. I had just finished giving a talk about American-style collection assessment. I had described the RLG/WLN/OCI.C conspectus methodology hoping that I might have a new career spreading the gospel of that particular form of collection assessment (a inside joke made for the benefit of all my old friends who know me as one of the few Conspexit true believers). As I got into the taxi, I learned what globalization means: for what to my wondering eyes should appear, but a little red box with 8-10 McDonald’s French fries left on the floor by the previous customer. I thought, wait a minute. It is one thing that the Chinese and U.S. students all dress alike, listen to the same kind of music, and seem to like to spend their time hanging [out] with their friends; it’s one thing that our libraries are all filled with the same Elsevier, Cambridge, and Springer *journals*; but what has happened to the China that I love when I can now find leftover McDonald’s fries in a Beijing cab? Globalization, that’s what!

Globalization can mean a lot of things. A one end of the spectrum, Noam *Chomsky* defines it as “a conspiracy of the Western elite to establish private tyrannies across the world” (or so he is reputed to have said this according to information found on the Web (http://www.globalism.com.au) the current premier tool of global cultural imperialism). At the other end is the *Disneyland* definition found in the song “It’s a small world.” In between these two extremes is the reality that world-wide we all have a great deal in common and the threads of commonality are increasing even in the face of counter trends toward cultural exclusivity and isolation, as exemplified by fundamentalism of all kinds.

Chomsky is perhaps most concerned with the economic and political forms of tyranny practiced by Western business and government interests in their ever expanding quest for larger and larger markets and resources. Cultural tyranny, however, is also possible. Our television sets have of late been saturated with the news of the clashes between opposing cultures. On the one hand, we librarians look with pride at the peace that exists in our libraries although philosophies radically opposed to each other are separated by inches and feet of shelving. On the other hand, we are also the agents of a worldview that values providing students with access to what some would define as correct and incorrect/dangerous views. We even go to great lengths to guard our right to give readers access to what many would define as Web and paper porn.

What should we be doing? Should we collect only those books affirming the cultural mores of those who pay our bills? An anti-globalist might claim that it is the right of an indigenous culture to provide only those resources affirming the regime’s legitimacy, which do not lend students philosophically astray. This happens, of course, all the time. I was interested in the pre-bombing CNN newsfeed footage of a *Taiwan* university library. While it looked very modern, I assumed its contents were carefully selected to support the views of the ruling party. An anti-globalist might have clapped for joy. A globalist would have done just the opposite. What should we be doing? Should we as librarians stick to our freedom-to-read beliefs and make sure our readers have access to the full spectrum of the good, the bad, and the ugly?

I suppose while I can sympathize a bit with the sentiments of the anti-globalists, I find that I have to side with those who believe that readers should have the right to read freely and make up their own minds. Recently, I came across a letter from a Chinese scholar who had recently spent several months using our library. While noting that the library was wonderful, he said something very profound which confirms the importance of libraries as well as publishing and bookselling: He said: “reading is never exclusively a passive experience. I have to bring the whole of myself to the experience… what I have been doing here is not a monologue, but has become a dialogue between the authors and me.” I don’t know the degree to which his home library is able to collect and present all points of view, but I do know that decades of war and civil unrest have taken their toll in China and weakened the ability of many libraries to provide the raw materials needed for scholars like this to commune with the millions of authors who have worked before them. You can’t dialogue with absent authors.

But the ravages of war aren’t the only causes of lost content. I fear too often we forget the importance of what is going on in our libraries. We forget that readers are entering into a dialogue with authors past and present. This truth gets lost in our librarian talk about e-learning and e-journals, resource sharing and collaboration, MARC and metadata, etc., etc. Since reading this reader’s words, my own views of what is happening in the minds of our Gap-clothed students who sprawl their books and Sony laptops across library tables (very universal, very global in design), have changed. I try to remember that when my colleagues and I make decisions about selection, acquisitions, cataloguing (the non-American spelling is the result of UK globalization power on my Hong Kong configured computer), reference, and preservation — what we are really doing is making decisions which will impact the dialogue that takes place between our readers and the thousands/millions of authors whose words inhabit our library.

Of course all of this is “the sky is blue” thinking. Libraries have and will always be critical to the learning process. Karl Marx and Robert Morrison, the first Protestant missionary to China, both sat in the same British Museum library and dreamed dreams based upon the dialogues they were having with the authors of the past. We just need to make sure we are physically and virtually making such dreaming/thinking possible.

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**Reference**

For international research in African studies, *Africa Research Central*, a clearinghouse of African primary sources, is the tool of choice for locating primary research materials. Founded in 1998 by Ph.D.s Susan Tscharbun and Kathryn Green, the site offers a fully searchable database of repositories by type (archives, library, museum), country, and 15 types of primary sources (such as ephemera, film, grey literature, manuscripts), and the ability to simply browse by country. The persistent links offer a Preservation section for institutions to publicize their preservation needs, as well as a Resources section with links arranged in five categories including Guides to African Studies Resources, Other Sources of Repository Information, Organizations and Associations, Preservation and Conservation Information, and Information for Archivists. — http://www.africa-research.org/mainframe.html

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**Webworthy**

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