April 2012

If Rumors Were Horses

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The Grass Really Is Sometimes Greener

by Forrest E. Link  (Acquisitions Librarian, The College of New Jersey; Phone: 609-771-2412; Fax: 609-637-5158)  <linkf@tcnj.edu>

Some thirty years ago, when Katina Strauch convened the first Charleston Conference, an idea came of age. This idea was that publishers, vendors, and librarians have much in common and should interact more deeply. As this notion took hold, and as the conversations fostered by the Conference and, later by its offshoot, Against the Grain, continued, it became a commonplace that they share not just the usual lofty goals, but also overlapping skill sets. That is, the experiences gained by working in publishing or librarianship are of value to — and transferable to — the vendor community. Likewise, experience in librarianship or the vendor community can be valuable to publishers. Vendors and publishers began to recruit and hire librarians. The boundaries between these communities became more fluid.

But despite the common set of skills and values found at publishers, vendors, and librarians, workplace cultures can differ dramatically. Eighteen months ago (has it really been that long?), when I joined the ranks of academic librarians after a long career in book-vending, I understood some aspects of my work life would be different — going to the same office every day, buying stuff instead of selling stuff, having colleagues physically on-hand, and, most significantly, having supervisory responsibility for a workgroup instead of working independently — but I didn’t appreciate how different. Having spent over 25 years visiting libraries and working with librarians everyday, I thought I knew libraries. I was wrong. What I knew was library acquisitions and collection development. I had the skills, but I needed to learn the culture. It was this realization that different sorts of librarians inhabit truly different worlds that led me to suggest to Katina that some of my observations might be of interest to other librarians curious about changing fields within the profession.

This resulted in an occasional column in Against the Grain. Subsequently, we thought it might be interesting to hear other voices.

In this collection of articles, six librarians who have crossed the vendor/publisher/librarian boundary give us their perspectives on the differences in workplace culture and lessons they learned along the way.

In “Changing Glasses: Does Our World Look Different as a Vendor or a Librarian,” Corey Seeman, the Director of the Kresge Business Administration Library, Ross School of Business at the University of Michigan (Ann Arbor), reflects on his career path which took him from a small, special library to the world of an ILS vendor and then the academic library administration. He proffers his belief that the commercial side of librarianship is not so different... continued on page 14

If Rumors Were Horses

The gorgeous Xan Arch wrote me the other day to say that she would like to have a hiatus from her column for the next few issues of ATG! Why? Because she and her husband are expecting their first baby this June (yay!) and things are getting pretty crazy preparing for leave from work and the new baby. Xan says she doesn’t know how much time she will have to write and maybe baby naptime will be good column-writing time! Either way, Xan promises that she will be back at work by October and should be ready to resume normal writing. And hopefully come to Charleston! Golly gee whiz!

So sad. Deb Vaughn’s mother, Helen “Sue” Vaughn, of Clemson, SC, passed away several days ago. I remember meeting Sue at Deb’s engagement party and she was a kind and caring woman just like her daughter. Our thoughts and prayers are with you and Deb and the family, Deb.

Speaking of Deb, the review of Michael Gorman’s book Broken Pieces in Deb’s column in the Feb issue of ATG, caused a great sensation. Did you see it in the last issue (v.24#1, p.40-41). The Charleston Conference working group had been talking about Michael and how... continued on page 6
Recently went to the Fiesole Retreat which every four years is in Italy. I have a confession to make. I love pasta. And there is no pasta anywhere that tastes as good as the pasta in Italy. I went on a diet so that I could eat all the pasta I wanted for five days. And that’s exactly what I did! And while I was dieting, I had plenty of time to work on this issue of ATG which is edited by the energetic Forrest Link with the theme The Grass Really is Sometimes Greener. Forrest enlisted contributions from librarians who had become vendors, and vendors who had become librarians, and every which way. It was truly fascinating to read all about the experiences of Corey Seaman, Valerie Tucci, Kate Kosturski, Laura Harris, Amira Aaron, and Scott Smith. And many of these authors have also provided a people profile so we can learn even more about them. Our interviews in this issue are with Leslie Straus, Max Phua, and Dr. Mehdi Khosrow-Pour, with accompanying publisher profiles for SkyRiver Technology Solutions and IGI Global.

Leila Salisbury writes a university press column from a different perspective, we have a report on the Association of Subscription Agents (ASA) annual conference from Anthony Watkinson, and more reports from the 31st Annual Charleston Conference written by conference attendees that Ramune Kubilius has compiled. There is another installment of the Richard Abel story, a discussion of the Internet vis-à-vis libraries, tales of a boy and a tribal drum, and there’s even something about dance. Bob Nardini tells of visiting his old library school, Jesse Holden talks about professional ethics, and Tinker Massey has been thinking, “What Are We About?” Greg Tannanbaum went to the Paris of the plains for the SPARC meeting, while Tom Leonhardt was busy reading for Forward Magazine, and Dennis Brunning has much to say about Britannica. And, of course, there is much, much more, so keep reading!

Meanwhile, back at ATG headquarters, it’s supper time. I need to diet to get over the pasta but maybe tomorrow!

See y’all soon! Yr. Ed. ☺

Letters to the Editor

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

Dear Editor:

I really think I cannot participate as a conference director anymore. My time before retirement is getting shorter and my to-do list is getting longer. Much as I have loved being involved in the Charleston Conference, it is time to say farewell.

As I mentioned when I saw you at Midwinter, Norton died in December. This has thrown my life head over heels and my mind has been mushy ever since, although it seems to be improving, and I have an incredible number of things to pay attention to.

My last day will be Feb. 29, although I will maintain my email address and will have access to my office for awhile. It has been a wonderful experience knowing and working with all the conference directors and attending the conferences since the 1980s.

I wish you all the best.

Heather Miller
<hmiller@albany.edu> ☺

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different and that all librarianship is centered on human interactions.

Valerie Tucci, the Physical Sciences/Engineering Librarian at The College of New Jersey, comes from years of management at a small, very hierarchical corporate library. In her article, “Crossing the Bridge Connecting the Corporate and Academic Library Worlds,” she outlines the cultural and organizational differences between academic and special librarianship and describes her adjustment to academic life.

In “The Refugee Returns Home: An MLS in Corporate America,” Kate Kosturski, Instructional Services Coordinator for Europe at JSTOR, writes of her personal journey to librarianship, painting herself as one of the “refugees” from other fields.

Laura Harris, a Web trainer at Springshare, writes of her move from a large academic library to a small software company in “Joining the Dark Side.” In her article, she comments on the joys of working from a home office and the advantages of smaller organizations.

In “Lessons Learned,” Amira Aaron, Associate Dean, Scholarly Resources at Northeastern University Libraries, writes of a long career that has moved from academic libraries to the vendor world and back. She offers her prescription for insuring success in either camp and discusses the challenges ahead.

Finally, in “The Value of Experience,” Scott Smith reflects on a long career in book-vending and writes of his decision to return to the library world he so clearly loves. Along the way, he challenges the occasionally limited vision of library hiring committees who discount non-traditional experience.

And heard from the lovely Kathryn Suarez who will be moving to ABC-Clio after five years with Neal-Schuman.

The wonderful Mike Sweet caught me up on the status of the scholarly John Dove whose mother was a librarian, John was on his way to the London Book Fair. John is out of the hospital and bicycling away still after surgery on his hematoma from his bike accident and surgery to remove a small growth on his kidney. But you can’t keep a good Credo man down!

Was talking to the focused Audrey Powers the other day about a potential preconference before the 32nd Charleston Conference, and she told me that her son, Austin (remember him?) is curator of an art gallery in China. When he was a boy he fell in love with China and is now doing what he always wanted to do. Anyway, Austin was coming to Florida for a brief visit. BTW, continued on page 26
Kate Kosturski received her MLS from Pratt Institute and is Institutional Participation Coordinator, Europe at JSTOR in New York City. Ms. Kosturski is also a 2010 ALA Emerging Leader and has presented at ACRL, the ALA Annual Conference, and InfoCamp Seattle. More on her work is available at www.katekosturski.com.

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look for the picture of Audrey’s grandbaby in this issue, p.69.

The awesome Gail Schlachter is running for ALA Council. I still remember when Gail told me that she gave her daughter a fax machine for a wedding present! Have I told you all that before?

One more candidate for ALA Council — the wonderful Mary Page! Let’s get out the votes!

Speaking of the Charleston Conference, we plan to open registration in mid-May/early June. Watch for it! And we are trying a new registration system, Constant Contact. Hope you all like it! The call for papers and pre-conferences is already up. Visit www.katina.info/conference.

Several speakers are already lined up for the 32nd. Annette Thomas, the CEO of Macmillan, Ltd, will be our main keynote speaker. Ann Okerson will return for the Long Arm of the Law Panel and she has continued on page 30
as an academic. Since joining Springshare, I’ve attended two large conferences, ACRL and ALA Annual. When attending these conferences as an academic, my focus tended to be on attending (and sometimes giving) presentations. As a vendor, the majority of my time was spent in the exhibit halls. I find this experience to be invigorating, if a bit hard on the feet. It was incredibly satisfying to speak to so many people! In my opinion, networking with colleagues is one of the primary reasons for attending a conference — and I feel I succeed at this goal much better as a vendor than I could as an academic librarian.

### What I Miss About Academia

Although I’ve discovered and embraced the many advantages to being a vendor, I must admit that I sometimes miss academia. Specifically, I miss interacting with students and faculty. I am perpetually curious about students, their information needs, how they go about fulfilling those needs, and how their information-seeking strategies differ from my own. I loved working with faculty, especially learning how they use technology to enhance their teaching and how library resources can contribute to their work. Thankfully, working for a vendor has not prevented me from learning about students’ information needs and faculty’s use of educational technology — but it has, by necessity, put me slightly farther away from the conversation.

### Conclusion & Reflections

In the introduction to this piece, I stated that I had never imagined working for a vendor. I think this is not an unusual mindset; many librarians deviate from and often outright shun this career path. I’d like to encourage people to reconsider this attitude. I think all vendors that serve libraries need to hear the voices of librarians — and sometimes, we have greater influence than our colleagues. I am perpetually curious about information-seeking strategies different from my own. I miss interacting with students and faculty. I am perpetually curious about students, their information needs, how they go about fulfilling those needs, and how their information-seeking strategies differ from my own. I loved working with faculty, especially learning how they use technology to enhance their teaching and how library resources can contribute to their work. Thankfully, working for a vendor has not prevented me from learning about students’ information needs and faculty’s use of educational technology — but it has, by necessity, put me slightly farther away from the conversation.

### Lessons Learned

by Amirah Aaron (Associate Dean, Scholarly Resources, Northeastern University Libraries)

As a “seasoned” librarian who has transitioned more than once between the academic library and vendor world, I have been thinking lately about several themes which unite all of my work experiences to date. In the past, we’ve often concentrated on the differences, but I think now that the similarities are really more important.

First, just a little about my background. I’ve had the good fortune of being on the staff of several excellent academic libraries, including UCLA, MIT, Harvard, Brandeis, and, currently, Northeastern University. But my career was also greatly enriched by the opportunity to work for serial vendors including Faxon (twice), Readmore and Blackwell, and to consult for some others.

So here are the major themes I’d like to discuss in this context:

1. Leadership
2. Innovation and Entrepreneurship
3. Customer Service
4. Collaboration
5. The Bottom Line
6. Trust, Transparency, and Respect
7. Need for Market Research and Prioritization
8. Technology
9. Organizational Culture and Staffing

#### Leadership

I am fortunate to have worked with a few incredible leaders in the industry — both at vendors and libraries. These leaders had clear vision and were willing to take serious risks. I think about Dan Tonkery and Russell Shank at UCLA who foresaw the potential early on of automating the library and made it happen. Dan then went on to expand his vision and leadership at more than one serials vendor. I can also point to Will Wakeling at Northeastern, who has a vision of transforming the library’s value proposition on-campus and is guiding us carefully through that transformation. I never had the opportunity to work for Ex Libris, but have observed the vision of staff such as Oren Beit-Arie, bringing to the industry developments such as SFX (openURL linking), integrated search, recommender systems, and now a cutting-edge ILS in the cloud. These leaders are not content to accept the status quo and are always working towards an improved future and better service for their clients.

But one caveat here. It’s not enough to be visionary. Leaders need also to know their market, know how to effectively undertake successful projects, and know how to hire and motivate staff who will make it all work. Unfortunately, many of us have seen and lived through examples of vision (think Faxon) which was not based on reality and destroyed entire enterprises, both companies and libraries.

#### Innovation and Entrepreneurship

Coupled with the clear vision of a successful leader, I have found that the most exciting and successful organizations are those which foster a level of innovation and entrepreneurship among the staff. I was so fortunate to participate in the in-house development of one of the first integrated library systems, Orion, at UCLA, and the formation of the innovative back issue services, Backserv and Backmed, at Readmore (still ongoing at Swets). With the help of my colleague, Marilyn Geller, we also mounted the first vendor catalog on the Web, ReadICat.

Another driver for innovation is that of competition. I remember that Marilyn and I had great fun and a good deal of motivation going head-to-head with Fritz Schwartz, then at our competitor, Faxon. Our library clients were the beneficiaries of our hard work, entrepreneurial thinking, and efforts to best each other. Similarly, at UCLA, Dan Tonkery and Russell Shank were driven partly in competition with other campuses and especially the statewide Division of Library Automation. Unfortunately, efforts to commercialize Orion were not approved by the campus administration. Today, libraries face steep competition with Google, Amazon, and other information services. We need to step up to the challenge and, as a profession, work on innovative projects for our patrons — witness the development of the Digital Public Library of America and some of the work being done at the Innovation Labs at Harvard. We also need to work more closely and aggressively with our competitors to insert our own expertise and innovative services into our users’ preferred information environment.

#### Customer Service

The ethic and practice of excellent public service must permeate the culture of all types of organizations. At Faxon the customer service account representatives were the face of the company, and it was they who were directly responsible for the retention or loss of clients. The wonderful, personal service they provided led to close relationships with the library staff they served and made the demise of the company all that more painful on both sides. Similarly, in libraries, it is the staff who work closely with the faculty and students who represent the library to the parent organization and are largely responsible for its success and relevance.

But there is more to customer service than the day-to-day, face-to-face contact with those

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also promised to run a Provost's Panel. We also have Anurag Acharya, Founder and lead engineer of Google Scholar, Peter Brantley, Director, Bookserver Project, The Internet Archive, Kirsten Eschenfelder, Professor, continued on page 40

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**Interview — Leslie Straus**

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raphy? Obviously, you haven’t cut your ties with your native land. We also know that you have a cottage on a lake in Muskoka, Ontario. Can you tell us about that?

LS: Living in the DC area in 1970-72 when my husband was a postdoctoral student probably started it. The people he worked with and their spouses were so open, direct, and warm — much more “out there” than in Toronto (at least the Toronto of those days). At the same time it was troubling to be in DC when it was still badly scarred from the 1968 riots and walking downtown was dangerous. I guess all this grew into a fascination with U.S./Canada cultural differences which I believe originate from each country’s roots. Hence, the interest in history, and there’s so much good stuff out there to read!

As for the cottage, for me it’s where many beautiful things come together — water, trees, magnificent rock faces, fresh air, lots of wildlife, the seasons. This is where I’m happiest.

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School of Library and Information Studies, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Mike Shatzkin, Founder & CEO of The Idea Logical Company, a panel on “Changes in Selling and Acquisition of University Press Content” with Leila W. Salisbury, Director, University Press of Mississippi; Doug Armato, Director, University of Minnesota Press; Alison Mudditt, Director, University of California Press. And that’s just a few of our speakers.

http://www.katina.info/conference/

Was excited to learn that the fantastic Doug Armato has recently been named President of the American Association of American University Presses. Doug obviously knows where the action is which is why he is coming to Charleston!

Facebook is a fascinating place to visit “had I but world enough and time”! We have a Charleston Conference FB page. Have you visited? In fact, I saw news of several colleagues the other day when I happened to stumble into FB. Rebecca Cybulsy Walden was one of them. Rebecca used to work at EBSCO (left in 2008) and does a lot of freelance work for the American Library Association (www.atyourlibrary.org) and also some consulting for Dan Tonky’s company, Content Strategies and some STM publishers.

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**Leslie Straus**

BORN/LIVED/EARLY LIFE: Born in Kaslo, British Columbia near the end of WWII (then a relocation center for Japanese Canadians). At war’s end the family moved to Waterloo, Ontario. Remained in Waterloo through graduation with a BA (English major) from the University of Waterloo, where I was fortunate to work two summers as a library assistant. Then came marriage, a move to Toronto, and a University of Toronto library degree.

PROFESSIONAL CAREER AND ACTIVITIES: Started out as a Junior Cataloger at York University Libraries in Toronto, progressing to Serials Cataloger, then Senior Cataloger before becoming Head of (technical) Processing. (I have vivid memories from those pre-MARC days of cataloging in a manual setting — endless searching and endless filing — fantasizing how wonderful it would be if only the NUC quarterly and monthly printed catalogs were somehow computerized). After that, there was a hiatus of two years as a stay-at-home mom in the Washington, DC area where husband Neil was a post-doctoral student. Then it was back to Toronto, where I began to work part-time for Coutts Library Services, helping to set up the company’s continuations service. Involvement with Coutts led to involvement with UTLAS in an electronic ordering pilot project, which led to a job offer from UTLAS to be Manager of Product Marketing. Among the products we brought on-board at UTLAS to market in Canada was INNOVACQ, a nascent acquisitions system developed by Innovative Interfaces when Innovative consisted of half-a-dozen people working in three rented rooms in Berkeley. That involvement led to a job offer from Innovative to be a trainer, which rather quickly evolved into a combination training/sales/contracts role. (Being the Eastern Time Zone person for a California start-up meant that it was easy to get to wear multiple hats.) Twenty-one years later, in 2006, I retired from Innovative as VP of worldwide sales and marketing. Although happy with that being the sum total of my career, I found myself accepting an invitation three years later to head up SkyRiver, a new bibliographic utility for cataloging. This was a good decision. It has been a great adventure, not to mention learning experience, to be able to help launch SkyRiver with technology that eclipses anything I could have imagined as a cataloger in the 1990s. So I’ve come full circle in a very serendipitous way.

FAMILY: Married to Neil Straus (University of Toronto Professor Emeritus); two sons.

IN MY SPARE TIME: Not much of this right now, but whenever possible it’s spent in Muskoka, Ontario at our cottage on a lake, canoeing, hiking, foraging for berries and mushrooms, or just enjoying the view of rocks, trees, and water (or ice and pristine snow).

FAVORITE BOOKS: Biographies and history, particularly U.S. history. Having become a naturalized U.S. citizen, it’s interesting to learn more about the “other guys” after being schooled from a British-centric perspective.

PHILOSOPHY: Be curious; be as useful as possible; laugh whenever possible; be open to ideas and people.

MOST MEMORABLE CAREER ACHIEVEMENT: My role in bringing SkyRiver to the library community and introducing a cost-effective, full-service alternative for libraries when there wasn’t one.

GOAL I HOPE TO ACHIEVE FIVE YEARS FROM NOW: Having the good health, energy, and time to engage in whatever adventure presents itself then.

HOW/WHERE DO I SEE THE INDUSTRY IN FIVE YEARS: Technology will continue to transform how information is managed and presented, but there will be no change in the need for bibliographic integrity and understanding the needs of information consumers. In fact, this will be even more vital because there will be so much more to deal with in so many different forms. It will be important for librarians to assert themselves in an industry that stands to learn a lot from their expertise and service commitment to patrons. Librarians who adapt to new technologies yet remain grounded in the fundamentals of librarianship will be important in keeping the world afloat in a sea of information, whether they’re in libraries or in the industry.

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other areas in Physical Sciences and Engineering after scientists around the world learned of our mission and support what we are trying to accomplish. Over the last 15 years, our publishing program has grown to include fields in life sciences, medicine, environmental science, business, economics, and Asian Studies. We are also developing significant and important programs on nanotechnology, energy, and materials science.

**JL:** I noticed that your physics publishing program includes authors such as Nobel Laureates Claude Cohen-Tannoudji and Leon Cooper. Can you talk about some of your authors?

**MP:** One of the core missions of *World Scientific* is to work closely with our authors and provide them with as much support, from manuscript preparation to sales and marketing. A majority of our authors are very satisfied with working with us, and many are close friends whom we work with for many years. We are honored to have many Nobel Laureates like Claude Cohen-Tannoudji and Leon Cooper among our authors and also long-standing relations with Nobel Laureates like P. W. Anderson, Ahmed Zewail, and U.S. Secretary of Energy Steve Chu, himself a Nobel Prize winner. Some Nobel Laureates like Eric Maskin, who is the book series editor of our Series on Economic Theory, works closely with us to publish and develop the best books in their fields. Our authors are our partners, and we strive to continue developing and improving on our author-centric culture.

**JL:** Tell us about WSPC’s eBook publishing program? I understand that you publish about 300 new eBook titles per year.

**MP:** We publish about 300 new eBooks a year and have around 5,000 eBooks in total so far. We have been developing our reference book program with e-versions of many top-quality handbooks and MRWs in the pipeline. Our yearly eBooks program looks to grow to 500 in the next three years. We have both a pick-and-choose model and also subject collections from various science and technology disciplines to business and medicine. We have received tremendous support from librarians on our eBook program and look to work closely with librarians to serve the information needs of their users.

**JL:** Just looking at one example, WSPC has a large publishing program with regard to nanotechnology, and I think that ATG readers are probably wondering how WSPC tracks hot areas (like nano) throughout the sciences.

**MP:** In addition to our in-house publishers and senior editors, of whom many were former professors, scientists, and lecturers, we seek the advise of our managing editors, journal or book series board members, individual authors, and our network of advisors to spot trends and identify hot areas to publish. One good example, is the *World Scientific Series in Nanoscience and Nanotechnology*, of which the chief editor is Frans Spaepen from Harvard. Together with an editorial board consisting of world-leading academics in this field like Dawn Borell (UPenn), Jeff Grossman (MIT), Mark Lundstrom (Purdue), and Mark Reed (Yale), we are able to obtain good advise and insights in the field of nanotechnology so that the content and research we publish are at the forefront of the field, providing readers with high-quality and useful information.

**JL:** Thanks so much for keeping ATG readers apprised of WSPC’s fascinating, professional, and STM publishing activities.
is that both print and electronic format will continue to be in demand." Do you still feel the same? Why?

MK-P: My position has not changed when it comes to demand for print vs. electronic. There will always be a demand and a desire for print. That format has been around for hundreds of years. Obviously, the demand for electronic content has also increased significantly and we have noticed this increase for IGi Global electronic content, but it would be an oversimplification to assume that the print market will disappear in ten years. The customers will always decide what format is the most suitable for their particular needs.

ATG: We’ve spent a good bit of time asking some serious questions, but we have to ask, did you ever get that Kindle you mentioned the last time we spoke? You had just finished Thomas Friedman’s “The World is Flat” and made a point to say that it was the print version and that you hadn’t gotten a Kindle yet. We also know of your deep love of music and were hoping that you had some recommendations for our iPods.

MK-P: I do have a Kindle now, two in fact. I also have an iPad 2. Interestingly enough, I just finished Steve Jobs by Walter Isaacson on audio. I listened to it while travelling on the train, planes, or in my car. So you see, format has to be up to the customer. I understand my customers because I am a customer. As far as recommendations for your iPods, I would suggest the following:

Drumming Song by Florence + The Machine
The Day Before The Day by Dido
Say Goodbye by Dave Matthews Band
Otis by Jay-Z and Kanye West

ATG: Dr. Khosrow-Pour thank you very much for taking the time to talk with us.

MK-P: Thank you for allowing me to share my experience with your readership. It should be noted that although running a business in this industry can be very challenging, it is also very rewarding.
and readiness — and then the producer points to the musicians, silently, “Begin.” Each time for the performance of a lifetime. Then the piece ends and silence falls again. A button is pressed, and recording ceases. Then there is a collective whoosh of breath, “Phew!” Then it’s time to listen, to see if lightning was caught in mid-strike, or another merely correct but perfunctory performance.

Has “How writing happens” really been overtaken by the word processor? “Word Processor.” Kind of sounds like “Food Processor,” doesn’t it? I don’t reckon Sam Clemens’ writing would come out so very different today. I’ll bet he might even still like to write in his pajamas (and who doesn’t?)

No, the Traveling Medicine Show is still the Traveling Medicine Show. We’re still being sold dubious treatments for even more dubious ailments. And our true poverty is neglected. We’re starving for nutrition at a feast of junk food. We’re longing for some fresh examples of ingenuity amidst a parade of derivative throwaway junk. We’re aching for a sincere, kind word whilst drowning in an ocean of glad-junk. We’re aching for a sincere, kind word whilst drowning in an ocean of glad-junk. We’re aching for a sincere, kind word whilst drowning in an ocean of glad-junk. We’re aching for a sincere, kind word whilst drowning in an ocean of glad-junk.

Oh, and don’t forget to take a free pen! Take several! They’re free! Have a breath mint! Don’t forget to drop your business card in the fish bowl! May I swipe your card? (No! A Thousand Times, No!)! You can get a bonus of 500 points by registering today! There’s never been a better time!

So we’ll leave today’s latest things, for now. If I can remember that long, next time perhaps it’ll be time to take a look at that most enduring of seemingly ephemeral digital artifacts, the “Social Identity.”

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it is snowing, (it’s in the 60s in Charleston). I was telling him that I spent time in my salad days (do they still use that term?) cleaning up skeletons next to Winchester Cathedral. Richard was telling me that the head of the dig back then, Martin Biddle, has just received the freedom of the city award from Winchester’s city council. And Richard even sent me the link! Isn’t it a small world?

http://www.hampshirechronicle.co.uk/news/5036447.Rare_honour_for_Winchester_archaeologist_Martin_Biddle/

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Don Stave – In Memorium

by Richard Abel (Aged Independent Learner) <reabel@q.com>

Don Stave was the fourth member of the band of Argonauts who joined the Abel Company. He remained one of the leading members of the “inside” staff which participated in the formulation of the Approval Plan and the related Standing Order system. He was highly instrumental in implementing those systems and in tweaking them over the years to make them increasingly responsive and relevant to the evolving needs of academic and research libraries across the developed world. The widespread employment of these systems to get appropriate books (knowledge parcels) into libraries as cheaply and quickly as possible owes much to the thought and work of Don.

Don graduated from the University of North Carolina with a degree in library science following his years in the service during WW II and his marriage to Louise (Lou) in 1946. Lou too trained and practiced as a librarian in the Multnomah County Library after their three children were well along.

Don had landed the job of acquisitions librarian in the library of the Atomic Energy Agency in Richland, Washington. It was there that the firm first made contact with Don as a knowledgeable bookman committed to the building of first-rate libraries. Don was prepared to entertain a wide variety of practices which would improve the book-dealer/library relationship. We soon learned that Don was contemplating seeking a job elsewhere.

In the meantime it had become clear to the then three of us (Tom Martin, Fred Gullette, and Abel) that the firm needed some professional librarian guidance in-house as the demands on the firm became more extensive and the number of libraries served continued to grow. The timing of these two decisions could not have come together at a better time. So the firm made an offer to Don, who, in turn, accepted it.

Not long after Don came aboard, the firm arranged with the Washington State University Library the primitive pioneer of the Approval Plan. Don became the point-man to review all the new incoming books each day and then select those which fit the teaching and research interests as defined by the university catalog. This trial went on for roughly half a year. The university library and faculty were so pleased with what Don had accomplished with respect to the rapid availability and the cost savings realized by the library that they wished to continue.

As a consequence, the firm understood that it needed first to put the plan on a sounder basis of definition and then refine the buying and review of the universe of North American publishing to fully reflect the varied collecting interests of what was hoped to be an expanding universe of libraries employing the Plan. Don’s role in these exercises was manifestly of prime importance. One of the most difficult problems which had to be mastered was that of fitting standing orders for books-in-series into the Plan. So doing involved not only the blurred definition of the term and the consequent malleability in its use by various librarians but the repeated failure of publishers to provide such a designation to some volumes contained in series of their making. Whatever the slipperiness and vagaries involved in trying to bring some rational order to subject definitions and relationships and publishing practices, Don was a stout participant in formulating a reasonably sensible system for dealing with such matters.

The firm now had a coherent program which the managers of the regional offices could take out and explain to libraries together with the requisite supporting thesauri and instruction manuals. The Plan was fairly widely adopted — always on a trial basis. As the number of participating libraries grew, the inevitable problems became manifest, requiring tweaking the system. Don was in the forefront of this ongoing effort to make a system as flawless as possible, being always dependent on the slipperiness of the language.

From these early days Don remained the in-house master of the Approval Plan and the Standing Order systems. This dominant position remained his through the translation of these systems to the computer and through the successive augmentations in two directions. First, the several revisions of the thesauri and the enlargement of the Plan to include all the languages of the major knowledge-producing countries of the world. Second, to lead the subsidiary book profiling centers in New Jersey and London through the difficult process of mastering the the major outlines and fine points of successfully describing books to fit the disparate collecting objectives of many of the world’s major academic and research libraries.

Tom Stave, Don’s son and a librarian at the University of Oregon, recalled that Don believed his continuing involvement in the evolution of the Approval Plan was a greater contribution to his profession of librarianship than would have been his role as a practicing librarian in a conventional research library. It would be a matter of great misunderstanding to deprecate this belief. The principles and practices developed for getting books into such libraries as quickly and cheaply as possible has remained a continuing professional practice. All the libraries involved in such systems and their librarians owe profound respect and deep regard for Don, one of their colleagues who was the shepherd of those systems from their founding to the days of his final service in the Blackwell organization.

http://www.against-the-grain.com> 47
often refers to the work of other authors included in the book, which offers a nice full-circle reading and the opportunity to synthesize the individual texts within the work as a whole. The essays in the “Dance and Other Arts” section also present a wide-ranging scope, from Wagnerian Gesamtkunstwerk, in which all of the arts have equal value and together create a “whole,” to the works of Martha Graham, who created a full theatrical experience including sculpture, music, dance, and costume. It also covers the pitfalls of using the music of great composers like Beethoven and Mozart and the ballet scenes portrayed famously in the art works of Edgar Degas.

Although some might complain that some of the essays, specifically those of the aestheticians/philosophers, are not easily read by undergraduates, What Is Dance? offers a bit of something for everyone, no matter their level of study. General populations such as students taking introductory courses in dance appreciation can glean knowledge of the dances of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries by reading the criticism of Gautier, Denby, Croce, and Jowitt. Upper-level students can delve into the anthropological and historical treatsies. And graduate students can delight in the texts by philosophers Langer, Barthes, Margolis, and Sparshott. With such a variety of topics and with such a diversity of voices and opinions, Copeland and Cohen’s What Is Dance? remains a standard for academic libraries.

Endnotes
1. Even with the rise in theoretical courses, due to the small number of dance scholars and seemingly publishers’ profit motives, anthologies were more likely to be published than scholarly monographs. The monographs that have been published focus more on interdisciplinary, theoretical approaches (e.g., queer theory, cultural theory, history, literary theory, ethnography, etc.) and monographs on one dance are very rare, though one example of note is Janet Lansdale’s The Struggle with the Angel, published by Dance Books, Inc. in 2007.
*Editor’s note: An asterisk (*) denotes a title selected for Resources for College Libraries.

Rumors
Pictured here are photos of Audrey Powers’ granddaughter, Erika. Isn’t she a cutie?

Remaining in the Brit area for a few more minutes, was talking to one of my favorites Liz Chapman about miniature books. Did you know that Liz collects them? She says that she began collecting them as a child and continues to this day.

And this is a bigger book! Donna Jacobs tells me that her Arcadia book on Charleston’s West Ashley neighborhood is coming out at the end of April! I am planning to attend the launch party!

Running out of room. See y’all online or in June! Yr. Ed. 📖