Current Awareness

*This column contains summaries of articles (print and electronic) about online services, CD-ROMs, networked information, electronic publishing, multimedia etc. including, with permission, abstracts identified with an * next to the author initials, drawn from Current Cites, the monthly publication distributed electronically by the Library, University of California at Berkeley: http://sunsite.Berkeley.edu/CurrentCites/ .*

The Current Cites database of citations now numbers over 1,000 and is searchable at <http://sunsite.berkeley.edu/CurrentCites/bibondemand.cgi>. This service is called "Bibliography on Demand" because it can be easily used to create printable or linkable bibliographies on information technology topics. Another service offered is full-text searching of all cited articles that are freely available in full-text. You can try it out at http://sunsite.berkeley.edu/CurrentCites/articlesearch.html.

CATALOGUING / METADATA

Babb, Nancy M. "**Cataloging Spirits and the Spirit of Cataloging**" *Cataloging & Classification Quarterly* 40 (2) (2005) – Here's the problem: take any spiritual communication in published form. You have the medium who physically delivers the message and the originating spirit who generated the message. Who should get credit? If you're a cataloger, you'll know that this is no idle question since the work has to be attributed to someone. The author of this article, Nancy M. Babb, a cataloger at SUNY Buffalo, stresses that giving credit to the spirit illustrates the advance in cataloging over the centuries in that a "bibliographic" entity is preferred over a "biographical" one. Such considerations are "exemplar of complex authorship", Babb argues. They illustrate a more "inclusive and expansive concept" of authorship; one that is centered on "what will be of most value to catalog users". Babb in this breathless review of cataloging history confirms what many of us have long suspected, namely, that "an author need not physically exist to have recognized bibliographic identity within the library catalog." – [*LRK]

Marcum, Deanna B. **"The Future of Cataloging"** *EBSCO Leadership Seminar, Boston,* 16 January 2005 (http://www.loc.gov/library/reports/CatalogingSpeech.pdf). – This thought piece on the future of cataloging is long on musings and short on predictions. But that isn't to denigrate it, only to clarify it's role given the possible connotations of the title. Rather than coming up with solutions or predictions, Marcum ponders the proper role of cataloging in a Google age. Marcum cites the Google project to digitize much or all of the contents of a selected set of major research libraries as evidence that the world of cataloging is changing dramatically, and she briefly identifies ways in which the Library of Congress is responding to this new environment. But, Marcum cautions, "the future of cataloging is not something that the Library of Congress, or even the small library group with which we will meet, can or expects to resolve alone." She then poses some specific questions that should be considered, including how we can massively change our current MARC/AACR2 system without creating chaos. – [*RT]

Sanderson, Robert, Jeffrey Young, and Ralph LeVan. "**SRW/U With OAI:**

Expected and Unexpected Synergies"
D-Lib Magazine 11 (2) (February 2005)
(http://www.dlib.org/dlib/february05/sanderson/02sanderson.html). – This very
interesting (but technical) piece explores
synergies between the Web Services
replacement for Z39.50, Search and
Retrieve via the Web (SRW) and the
Open Archives Initiative (OAI) Protocol
for Metadata Harveseting. SRW is a
search protocol and OAI-PMH is for
retrieving specified sets of records (or
all) from a content repository. The
authors demonstrate that "SRW and OAI
clearly complement each other.
Although the two protocols have chosen
different answers to certain questions,
this does not prevent them from being
stacked up like building blocks into very
different and interesting configurations."
Highly recommended for anyone familiar
with SRW or OAI. – [*RT]

ELECTRONIC PUBLISHING

Associated Press. "**Next Hot Trend for
Cell Phones: Reading?**" *MSNBC.com*
(18 March 2005)
(http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/7232995
/). – "Your eyes probably hurt just
thinking about it," this article begins,
and...yep. Nevertheless thousands of
Japanese folks are downloading and
reading full-text novels on their cell
phone screens. Of course, the average
Japanese consumer is a sophisticated
user of wireless technology anyhow; the
cell phone there is routinely used as
both "an entertainment and
communication device." And now there
are a number of websites where folks
can browse and select from among
classics, bestsellers and "works written
especially for the medium." Quite
honestly, it does not sound very
enjoyable. "Only a few lines pop up at a
time because the phone screen is about
half the size of a business card." The
latest technology is Java-based and
incorporates such ease-of-use features
as "automatic page-flipping, or scrolling."

According to the article, this trend could
spread to the U.S., noting that "Random
House recently bought a stake in
VOCEL (http://www.vocel.com/), a San
Diego-based company that provides
such mobile-phone products as
Scholastic Aptitude Test preparation
programs." Consumers in China and
South Korea hava already begun to
embrace cell phone reading. What's
weird is that people are using this
medium even when not on the go; a
recent marketing study found that 50
percent of cell phone readers are
female, and many are doing their cell
phone reading in the home. What sorts
of books are people reading on their cell
phones? Classics they never got around
to, sex manuals they'd be embarrassed
to buy in the dead.tree version...but the
most popular content is an electronic
dictionary. – [*SK]

Bailey, Jr., Charles W. *Open Access
Bibliography: Liberating Scholarly
Literature with E-Prints and Open
Access Journals.* Mountain View, CA:
Association of Research Libraries,
March 2005.
(http://info.lib.uh.edu/cwb/oab.pdf). –
Long-time *Current Cites* contributor
Charles W. Bailey, Jr. has published a
bibliography on the movement to free
the scholarly literature. Available both
online and in print from the Association
of Research Libraries, this thorough and
authoritative bibliography will serve as
the seminal bibliographic source for this
movement. Over 1,300 selected English
language books, conference papers,
journal articles and a number of other
sources (including digital videos) are
included. Anyone interested in the Open
Access movement will likely find this
contribution to the effort to be an instant
classic. – [*RT]

Cosgrove, John, Norelli, Barbara &
Putnam, Elizabeth. **"Setting the
Record Straight: How Online
Database Providers Are Handling**

Plagiarism and Fabrication Issues"
College & Research Libraries 66 (2)
(March 2005): 136-144.
The authors describe a small study of
how the full-text database providers
LexisNexis, Ebsco, Proquest and
Thomson/Gale handle a number of high-
profile incidents of plagiarism and
fabrication in newspaper and magazine
articles and the later correcting articles.
The authors draw attention to the
potential ease with which users could
keep track of these corrections because
online database providers could provide
links between faulty and correcting
articles. However, surprisingly, these
value-added services are rarely
available. Lexis-Nexis is the only
provider who appends some of the
correcting articles to the original articles.
The other database providers do not
append any of the correcting articles.
None of the database providers link the
correcting article to the original article.
The database providers' view is that this
responsibility lies with the publisher or
licensor. The authors call for the
database providers to be responsible for
connecting faulty articles and their
corrections and encourage librarians to
speak to their database representatives
to voice their concerns. – [AS]

GENERAL

Biever C. "**The touchy-feely side of
telecoms"** *New Scientist* 185, 2488, 28
(26 February 2005)
Soon you will be able to send
sensations over the Internet. The
technology of recreating touch and
texture through artificial stimuli is called
haptics. "Vibrotactile" motors in mobile
phones will be able to simulate particular
sensations. This could give online
shoppers a feel for products. However
touch spam or "spouch" might be the
next target for spammers. – [DJH]

Fescemyer, Kathy. "**Serials Clutter in
Online Catalogs**" *Serials Review* 31 (1)

(March 2005): 14-19.
(http://www.elsevier.com/wps/product/c
ws_home/620213). – Dealing with
serials records in the OPAC can be
confusing even to librarians. It isn't
always apparent what record is the
microfilm and what record is the
electronic version. The author looked at
how easy it was to find a number of titles
in nine large academic libraries. Next
she measured the physical length of the
records she found. In many cases, it
was difficult to find the right record when
using titles such as "Science" or
"Nature". Many of the records contained
holdings information that ran to several
hundred lines. The author argues for
simpler records with one bibliographic
record per journal regardless of format.
She also points to the need to prioritize
information making less information the
default setting. Someone looking for a
call number ought not to have to trudge
though a sea of volume and issue
listings. Of course, this is as much an
OPAC-Vendor problem as a library
problem. Doing what the author
suggests (i.e. making a simpler interface
for serials) can only be achieved in
certain OPACs (if at all) through
considerable customization. It ought not
to be so hard! – [*LRK]

Mao, Ji-Ye, Karel Vredenburg, and Paul
W. Smith, *et. al.* "**State of User-
Centered Design Practice**"
Communications of the ACM 48 (3)
(March 2005): 105-109.
(http://www.acm.org/cacm/). – Some
interesting results from a survey of
people involved with User-Centered
Design (UCD). The authors suggest that
UCD is meeting with growing
acceptance as a necessary component
of software development. This is thanks
to the realization on the part of
developers that if users can't use their
software, they'll go elsewhere.
Nevertheless, UCD continues to be
plagued by difficulties in measuring
success and establishing clear goals.

Some of the more common techniques used are "iterative design, usability evaluation, task analysis, informal expert review, and field studies". The authors found that techniques tended to be either used or avoided due to the perceived cost in time and money. They argue for a more complete approach. (Note, CACM also has an interesting section on the "Disappearing Computer" – featuring interesting projects that make use of ubiquitous computing). – [*LRK]

Norman J. "**Cyber-antiquities"** *New Scientist* 185, 2487, 20 (19 February 2005)
The article previewed the auction of a collection of documents on computing, telecommunications and networking, charting the development of the Internet. Apparently many of these late C20th papers can be rarer than medieval books, and potentially very valuable. Funnily enough the author was the vendor. – [DJH]

Olsen, Stefanie. "**Yahoo's Game of Photo Tag**" *CNet News.com* (22 March 2005) (http://news.com.com/2102-1032_3-5630403.html?tag=st.util.print). – A number of web sites such as the photo sharing site Flickr (http://www.flickr.com/) and the link sharing site Del.icio.us (http://del.icio.us/) have provided a way for users to attach their own topics (or "tags") to their links and photos. This activity inspired Thomas Vander Wal to coin the term "folksonomies" for user-created taxonomies. The purchase of Flickr by Yahoo! has provided even more attention to this phenomenon, highighted in this article. Although this is one of the hottest new topics in the press at the moment, the jury is still out on just how effective this technique will be in making things easier to find. As quoted in the article, information architect Peter Merholtz thinks that "the future of folksnomies involves meshing these user-generated categorizations with more standardized categorizations, such as the Library of Congress or the Getty Thesaurus of place names, so you could start to connect data to allow more of these associations to be made." – [*RT]

Rossman, Parker. "**Beyond the Book: Electronic Textbooks Will Bring Worldwide Learning**" *The Futurist* 39 (1) (January-February 2005): 18-23. (http://www.wfs.org/futurist.htm) – Gee whiz! And you'll eat your dinner in a tasty little pill ... when you need a break from soldering the wiring of our utopian days to come, take a look at this. It's worth it because it's the kind of writing that creates unrealistic expectations and causes purse string-holding politicians to salivate over the spending cuts of the world of tomorrow. It's part Futuramaesque boosterism (I'll admit to a pang of nostalgia for the Disney shows of my childhood), part mid-90's *Wired* magazine wipe-the-slate-clean prognosticating (without the fuchsia and lime green) and part laundry list of the kinds of educational technology which divert students' attention from the content to the medium. You'll notice that "academic rigor" isn't an ingredient in this recipe, but it is meant for a general audience. Granted that this mix of fact and imagination does give some plausible examples of how some of the poor or handicapped might benefit from digital information, but it does a disservice to the teachers who struggle daily with aging infrastructure, shrinking resources and students who want to hear that books are obsolete. But I forgot – that's not a futurist's job. – [*JR]

INFORMATION ACCESS/RETRIEVAL

Garvin, Peggy. "**Why Google Uncle Sam?**" *LLRX.com* (13 February 2005) (http://www.llrx.com/columns/govdomain2.htm). – Google's Uncle Sam (http://www.google.com/unclesam)

search has evolved into the most popular search tool for the .gov and .mil domains. Garvin, author of The United States Government Internet Manual (http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/tg/detail/-/1886222185/qid=1103727472/sr=1-1/ref=sr_1_1/102-6243105-6902522?v=glance&s=books), questions this popularity, pointing out a number of deficiencies. For one thing, it doesn't include all the information that the federal government makes available online, since some sites don't have .gov or .mil domains (e.g., usps.com (http://www.usps.com/), ndu.edu (http://www.ndu.edu/)). Also, the Uncle Sam service does not offer an advanced search form; if you click on advance search, you'll be sent to Google's generic version. Garvin also takes a look at the federal government's own search engine, at firstgov.gov (http://www.firstgov.gov/). Although it, too, has some limitations, it does offer some features that Uncle Sam does not. Bottom line – "When searching the federal government niche, follow the same recommended practice as in general searching: use more than one search engine." Also listed are two additional tools for federal government research: Department of Defense Search (http://www.defense.gov/search/) and Vivisimo's (http://vivisimo.com/) FirstGov cluster search. – [*SK]

Mendoza, Martha. "**AP Review: Gov't Reducing Access to Info**" *Guardian Unlimited* (13 March 2005) (http://www.guardian.co.uk/worldlatest/story/0,1280,-4862137,00.html). – In a piece that will likely suprise few librarians, an Associated Press review has documented a major clampdown on the release of government information to the American public. "The federal government – not including the CIA – created 14 million new classified documents in fiscal year 2003, a 60

percent increase over 2001, according to the Information Security Oversight Office. At the same time, the agency reports that it cut back on the number of documents that were declassified" the article states. The Associated Press documents a number of other findings from its review that anyone interested in government by the people, for the people, will find chilling. – [*RT]

Stone, Brad. "**The Road Now Taken**" *Newsweek (via MSNBC)* (21 February 2005) (http://msnbc.msn.com/id/6934466/site/newsweek/). – Regardless of which Internet mapping site you prefer, the geospatial data that makes it work was provided by one of two companies – NAVTEQ (http://www.navteq.com/), based in Chicago or Tele Atlas (http://www.teleatlas.com/), a Netherlands firm. This article describes how these companies go about gathering the data and making sure it stays current. Meanwhile, the sales of "GPS-enabled devices," including cell phones, is projected to go through the roof by 2008. Thus, there looks to be no end in sight to the demand for geospatial data. While Internet users are particularly enamored of mapping websites, many business people are downright addicted to various high tech navigation tools. The article notes that North America, Western Europe and Japan are fairly well "mapped" right now; future expansion is projected in Eastern Europe and Asia. – [*SK]

Suber, Peter. "**Comments on the Weakening of the NIH Public-Access Policy**" *SPARC Open Access Newsletter* (82) (2005) (http://www.earlham.edu/~peters/fos/newsletter/02-02-05.htm#nih). – Since the National Institutes of Health (NIH) sponsors megabucks worth of research, it would be a big deal if all of the articles resulting from that research would be made freely available. Last July, the

U.S. House Appropriations Committee made recommendations that made this a possibility (see "NIH Public-Access Policy: Frequently Asked Questions" (http://www.earlham.edu/~peters/fos/nihfaq.htm) for details). Now, after events I won't describe here (see "Congress Approves the NIH Plan" – http://www.earlham.edu/~peters/fos/newsletter/12-02-04.htm#congress), the NIH has issued its "Policy on Enhancing Public Access to Archived Publications Resulting from NIH-Funded Research" (http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-05-022.html), and the news for open access advocates is mixed at best. Deposit of articles in PubMed Central is voluntary (not mandatory), and it is "strongly encouraged as soon as possible (and within twelve months of the publisher's official date of final publication)." Suber dissects the NIH plan with his usual clarity and precision, and he provides interesting background information about it, including how it compares to an earlier draft. One key point that he makes is that the policy "invites publishers who dislike the policy to voice a preference contrary to the NIH's preference," which "creates an untenable, high-risk dilemma for authors." In spite of the NIH plan's perceived downsides, Suber notes in his postscript that: "Even the watered down version of the policy will be an advance over the status quo, though a smaller advance than we had been led to expect. . . . Since the body of NIH-funded research is very large and very high in quality, even delayed free access to a subset is better than toll access to the totality." – [*CB]

PRESERVATION

Serials: The Journal for the Serials Community 18 (1) (2005) (http://www.uksg.org/serials.asp) – This issue of *Serials* has a number of interesting papers on open access. In "A

Mandate to Self Archive? The Role of Open Access Institutional Repositories," Stephen Pinfield, tackles the controversial issue of mandating the deposit of articles in institutional repositories. In "Open Access: Evidence-Based Policy or Policy-Based Evidence? The University Press Perspective," Martin Richardson describes experiments at Oxford University Press with different OA journal publishing models. In "Open Access: Principle, Practice, Progress," Jan Velterop argues that the open access battle for hearts and minds is gaining ground, but implementation issues remain and misconceptions about OA persist. In "Open Access: Reflections from the United States," Ann Okerson weighs the pros and cons of OA for US research libraries, noting that institutional repositories are likely to be expensive, and their focus in the U.S. is likely to be on locally produced scholarly materials other than articles. Consequently: "It is unlikely that under this kind of scenario in the US, scattered local versions of STM articles would compete effectively with the completeness or the value that the publishing community adds." She also suggests that library cost savings resulting from OA journals are "unlikely, unless substantial production cost reductions can be realised by many categories of publisher." In "Open Access to the Medical Literature: How Much Content Is Available in Published Journals?," Marie E. McVeigh and James K. Pringle report that for the research and clinical medicine journals that they studied "26% of the journals made their most recent issues open access, and 21% of articles since 1992 were available as open access." In "Overview of the House of Commons Science and Technology Select Committee Inquiry into Scientific Publications," Ian Gibson discusses the important activities of the Select Committee that he chaired. Finally, in

"*Scientific Publications: Free for All?* The Academic Library Viewpoint," Tom Graham examines the key findings of the Select Committee's influential report and criticizes the U.K. Government's response to it. – [*CB]

VIRTUAL LIBRARIES

Nicholson, Scott. "**A Framework for Internet Archeology: Discovering Use Patterns in Digital Library and Web-Based Information Resources**" *First Monday* 10 (2) (7 February 2005) (http://www.firstmonday.org/issues/issue10_2/nicholson/). – Nicholson is interested in the trail of "data-based artifacts" that users leave behind when they interact with digital libraries or other Web-based information space. In particular he explores one discovery process that is called bibliomining – a combination of data warehousing, data mining and bibliometrics. He employs the research framework of archeology to analyze bibliomining as a potential aid for managers of digital libraries. Using the language of archaeology to analyze the nature of the Internet is familiar approach – a case of borrowing language from an established field to help assess the emerging virtual spaces we are building. This approach is utilized so often because it enables developers to visualize the network in understandable terms. Bibliomining draws on the basic tenets of archaeological practice, that is to say, "recovery, systematic description, and study", and Nicholson suggests that it may be a new tool for digital library managers. He says that we're still "describing" the digital library, even as we build it; Bibliomining may help us move beyond description, toward a sustainable cultural of continuous improvement. – [*TH]

WEB DESIGN

Spool, Jared M. "**Seven Common Usability Testing Mistakes**" *UIE Roadshow Articles* (2005) (http://www.uie.com/events/roadshow/know_your_users/articles/usability_testing_mistakes/). – This is the kind of article that you want to give to your administrator when he or she starts wondering what usability can and cannot do. It briefly indicates what you can measure and what you can't, who should be involved and the kind of follow-up you should do. I've rarely read something by author, Jared Spool, where I didn't learn something and this brief treatment is no exception. – [*LRK]

Tonkin, Emma. "**Making the Case for a Wiki**" *Ariadne* (42) (2005) (http://www.ariadne.ac.uk/issue42/tonkin/). – Wiki: "the simplest online database that could possibly work." Anyone can create Wiki pages and edit them, so a Wiki is by nature a collaborative tool (and one designed to drive control freaks off the deep end). The Wikipedia (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Main_Page)is probably the most famous Wiki. Tonkin gives the reader a brief overview of Wikis, suggests various uses, provides comparative information about major Wiki software, discusses deployment issues, and speculates about the future of Wikis. – [*CB]

WEBLOGS

"'The Blogosphere' (special issue)" *Communications of the ACM* 47 (12) (December 2004) (http://www.acm.org/pubs/cacm/) – The idea of a systematic analysis of the blogosphere sounds like an exercise in futility – OK, we've got that manifestation isolated, wait, there are new eruptions over here and here and here – but this special issue of *Communications of the ACM* has several articles which do pin down

aspects of blogging by measurement, experiment and anecdotal evidence. Patterns in interpersonal relationships and activity emerge over time. What is expressed in blogs, and what bloggers get out of it, is revealed by survey. An author who began blogging way back in 1999 describes the phases of change in online communities wrought by the development of easy to use blogging software. How semantic metadata could add a knowledge management layer to blogs is explored through the creation of a prototype semantic blogging demonstrator. And old concerns about the effect of filtering one's information intake are reawakened in the light of new functions used in blogspace – could it be that RSS abuse could make *you* really simple? The issue is an essential addition to the literature about this revolutionary phenomenon. – [*JR]

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Book Review

Maxine Melling (ed) *Supporting e-learning: a guide for library and information managers.* London: Facet Publishing, 2005   ISBN 1 85604 535 8 192pp £39.95

E-learning in this book relates to higher and further education – e-education, if you like – rather than to the corporate world, where the development of IT and

management skills by e-learning is more like e-training. As the subtitle indicates the focus is on management aspects, so chapters discuss the development of Managed Learning Environments (MLEs) and the place of library resources therein; the development of learning technologies and their effects on organisational structures, but with only minor consideration of libraries; the high level strategies needed in the process of developing an e-learning environment; and support for new media based on experience at Columbia University.

Some more practical content is in Peter Stubley's thoughts on information literacy in an electronic learning context, including some of the activity he'd been involved with at Sheffield University, though it doesn't really reflect the widespread incorporation of information skills material into Virtual Learning Environments (VLEs). The chapter on collection management by Frances Hall and Jill Lambert is the nearest to the interests of UKeiG, with an overview of the main concepts: electronic journals, e-books, serials management, archival access to resources, OpenURL resolvers, licencing, promotion, etc, though without any close relation to e-learning.

Indeed my main concern about the book is a lack of connection between libraries and e-learning in any detail. So, though the need for technical integration of resources into a VLE or MLE is recognised – and the need to solve various, but unspecified, technical issues is noted – there is not much on the practicalities. Where should this integration be – within modules to present resources at the point of need or merely in a library area? Only passing mention is given to the metasearching portals increasingly being adopted by university libraries, yet having such search boxes in a VLE is valuable. What