

## Current Awareness

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This column contains summaries of articles (print and electronic) about information access and retrieval, electronic publishing, preservation and virtual libraries etc. including, with permission, abstracts identified with an \* next to the author initials, drawn from *Current Cites*, the monthly publication distributed electronically by a team of Librarians and Library Staff and edited by Roy Tennant (<http://lists.webjunction.org/currentcites/>).

If you are interested in providing reviews for the column, please contact Jane Grogan for further details.

## Digital Libraries

Glazer, Becky (2006) **Digital Library Curriculum Project Collegiate Times** (26 January 2006) (<http://www.collegiatetimes.com/news/1/ARTICLE/6358/2006-01-26.html?sid=945afea211a7d357e7fa7b5878cf28c6>) – Digital libraries have such a high profile in our profession these days that it is sometimes easy to forget how new this concept is. Which means, as this article points out, that there really is a dearth of adequately trained individuals to build and maintain these repositories. This year, however, the University of North Carolina and Virginia Tech are jointly developing "a quality educational curriculum on the development and preservation of digital libraries", thanks to three years' funding from a National Science Foundation grant. Virginia Tech has a top-quality computer science program and UNC's SLIS is ranked number one by **U.S. News and World Report**, which should make for an excellent collaboration. The project includes the development of both online and off-line course modules as well as supplementary course materials. – [\*SK]

**IEEE Technical Committee on Digital Libraries Bulletin** 2(1)(2005) (<http://www.ieee-tcdl.org/Bulletin/v2n1/>) – This special issue of the IEEE TCDL Bulletin presents brief summaries of poster sessions and demos from the Joint Conference on Digital Libraries (JCDL 2005). Example articles include "aDORe, A Modular and Standards-Based Digital Object Repository at the Los Alamos National Laboratory", "If You Harvest arXiv.org, Will They Come?", "Metadata for Phonograph Records: Facilitating New Forms of Use and Access to Analog Sound Recordings", "The Musica Colonial Project", and "Video Recommendations for the Open Video Project". This issue is a good way to get a quick look at current developments in the digital library field. – [\*CB]

Stevens, Norman D. (2006) **The Fully Electronic Academic Library College & Research Libraries** Vol 67 (1) January 2006: 5-14 – This hugely entertaining and satirical article describes the planning process and creates a frighteningly convincing scenario for the creation of the first academic library to contain digital-only resources. In 2000, The Molesworth Institute (dedicated to the promotion of library humour) was approached by the Board of the Trustees "of the [fictitious] newly established Ezra Beesley University (EBU) to develop a plan for the creation of its library." The article describes in detail the collections, the budget, the staffing, the library building and security which this new library will require. The library will be relatively cheap to build and

run because of the savings involved in running an electronic-only library. The technological and economic rationale for the decisions the planning group make are brilliantly seductive and the organizational structure an absolute hoot. An amusing, yet refreshing, presentation of the spurious arguments for digital-only libraries. – [AS]

## Electronic Publishing

Liu, Ziming (2005) **Reading Behavior in the Digital Environment: Changes in Reading Behavior Over the Past Ten Years** *Journal of Documentation* 61(6)(2005): 700-712 (<http://www.emeraldinsight.com/info/journals/jd/jd.jsp>) – Interesting study on the changes in reading behavior due to increased use of digital information. People highlight less but search more; people read linearly less but show intense concentration once sections are found that interest them. While considerably more research is needed, this article is a good introduction to the field. – [\*LRK]

Rubino, Ken (2006) **Self-Publishing: The Internet Makes It Easier to Go from Idea to Print Link-Up Digital** (15 January 2006)(<http://www.infotoday.com/linkup/lud011506-rubino.shtml>) – One of my staff recently sent a customer my way. A lieutenant colonel on the cusp of retirement. He wanted to write a book. [My new book](#) came out recently. Therefore I could help this man, right? Actually I could – since I'd just stumbled across this article on the **Information Today** website. Lots of people want to write books. Most of them will never get around to it. And of those who do come up with a completed manuscript, relatively few will make it over the hurdles of the traditional publishing process. But that doesn't matter nearly as much as it used to; self-publishing flourishes in myriad forms on the Internet, as this article points out. From the humble weblog to full-service self-publishing companies – the opportunities are out there, waiting for the aspiring author to click on them. Naturally, there are caveats; Rubino, "a professional photographer and occasional freelance writer" discusses some of them, offers advice about what to look for when choosing a self-publishing company and provides websites you can browse for more information. He recommends [Books Just Books](#) as a good starting point for the would-be self-published author. – [\*SK]

Teachout, Terry (2006) **A Hundred Books in Your Pocket** *The Wall Street Journal* (21 January 2006) ([http://online.wsj.com/public/article/SB113779027926552261.html?mod=todays\\_free\\_feature](http://online.wsj.com/public/article/SB113779027926552261.html?mod=todays_free_feature)) – As you can probably guess from the title, this article is about e-books – more specifically, Sony's announcement of a new paperback-sized e-book reader that will use E Ink, a state-of-the-art display technology that is supposed to be like reading from paper (obviously the gold standard). Even more interesting, perhaps, is Sony's intention to open a new iTunes-like store for downloadable e-books. Three major publishers – HarperCollins, Random House and Simon & Schuster – have signed on; "HarperCollins and Simon & Schuster are plan to make their entire backlists available for downloading as soon as they negotiate royalty rights with the authors." The author thinks this will be what causes Sony's reader – due for release this spring – to take off. Like the wildly popular iPod and iTunes, this is "what marketers call an 'end to end' solution to the problem of the e-book" – one-stop shopping for content, as it were. The author seems to feel quite strongly that the printed book, as "a technology," is circling the drain. "Like all technologies," he says, "it has a finite life span, and its time is almost up." – [\*SK]

## General

Caldwell, Tracey (2006) **Breaking down the walls** *Information World Review* 221, February 2006: 14-15 – This piece looks at convergence in universities between libraries and IT departments, and how this has proved favourable or in some cases problematic in various institutions. – [RN]

Crawford, Walt **Library 2.0 and 'Library 2.0'** *Cites & Insights: Crawford at Large* 6(2)(2006): 1-32 (<http://cites.boisestate.edu/civ6i2.pdf>) – Library 2.0 is all the buzz, but what is it really? That's the question that Walt Crawford set out to answer. The result is a 32-page essay that includes 62 views, seven definitions, many perspectives by library bloggers and others, and, of course, Crawford's incisive analysis of it all. By far, this is the definitive piece on this rather amorphous topic. Crawford draws a distinction between Library 2.0, the conceptual aggregate that embodies a variety of software and service innovations, and "Library 2.0," the "bandwagon." He favors the former, but feels the latter "carries too much baggage." This is Crawford at his best, and, love it or hate it, it's a stimulating article that informs and provokes serious thought. (See also his [follow-up article](#).) – [\*CB]

Goedeken, Edward A. (2005) **The Serials Librarian: A Brief History and Assessment** *Serials Librarian* 49 (4)(2005): 159-175 (<http://www.haworthpressinc.com/store/product.asp?sku=J123>) – Serious navel-gazing is going on by the journal, **The Serials Librarian**, as it features this study of its own articles from 1976 to the present. The author of the study tabulates subjects covered, authors, geographic areas, etc. Perennial favorites as far as topics are concerned include collection development and cataloging. Other topics seem to come and go. In the beginning there was much interest in bibliographic utilities like OCLC and RLIN; automation was also popular though interest seemed to wane as "librarians became more comfortable with computers and their role in libraries." Not surprisingly, E-journals, once a "curiosity", now demand closer attention. This is a good look at the continuity of serials librarianship from a statistical point of view. – [\*LRK]

**Perceptions of Libraries and Information Resources** Dublin, OH: OCLC, December 2005 (<http://www.oclc.org/reports/2005perceptions.htm>) – This report "summarizes findings of an international study on information-seeking habits and preferences. "The survey was an attempt to learn more about library use, awareness of and use of library electronic resources, and the library "brand", among other things. "The findings indicate," states the report, "that information consumers view libraries as places to borrow print books, but they are unaware of the rich electronic content they can access through libraries." Although there are some bright spots, the report finds a rather depressing set of opinions about libraries. We clearly need to do better on a variety of fronts, but certainly with customer service and the marketing of our services to our users. – [\*RT]

Pickering, Bobby (2006) **A World Without the Waffle** *Information World Review* 220, January 2006: 27 – A brief review of Euromonitor's new Country Insight Database. – [RN]

Thomas, Kim (2006) **Moveable Feast** *Information World Review* 220 January 2006: 19-20 – This item looks at the Charles Rennie Mackintosh Society's use of PDAs for museum visitors, streaming them information relating to the guided tours or Mackintosh's life. It goes on to discuss the take up of PDAs in business generally, and the apparent successes of podcasting in comparison to other mobile content delivery ideas. – [RN]

## Information Access

Sandler, Mark (2005) **Disruptive Beneficence: The Google Print Program and the Future of Libraries Internet Reference Services Quarterly** 10(3/4)(2005): 5-22 (<http://www.haworthpressinc.com/store/product.asp?sku=J136>) – One of several articles in this special issue looking at the impact, for better or worse, both pro and contra, of Google on Libraries. In this piece we have the Collection Development Officer of UMich, a Google-Print Library, explaining the agreement between it and Google as a "work in progress, not fully formed in anyone's mind". Nevertheless, it's important, argues the author, to focus not on Google but on libraries and what they want to do with digitized material, the goal being at Michigan as elsewhere "to provide online access in perpetuity to its collections". Google can't do everything anyway. This includes local collections and other specialized material. "At best," the author observes, "Google Print will be a massive collection of undifferentiated books." Libraries will still be needed to fill in the gaps and to provide innovative services online and in-person that the competition, including Google, simply can't supply. – [\*LRK]

Suber, Peter (2006) **The U.S. CURES Act Would Mandate OA SPARC Open Access Newsletter** (93)(2006) (<http://www.earlham.edu/~peters/fos/newsletter/01-02-06.htm#cures>) – In this article, Suber overviews and analyzes the American Center for CURES Act of 2005 (S.2104). This important bill would mandate open access to all research funded in whole or part by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, which is roughly half of all non-classified federally funded research. Deposit of the final, peer-reviewed versions of articles would be required when they were accepted, and any access embargo periods could only last six months. Non-compliance by grantees could result in the denial of future funding. Government employees' articles would also covered by the bill. – [\*CB]

## Information Management

Guy, Marieke, and Tonkin, Emma (2006) **Folksonomies: Tidying Up Tags? D-Lib Magazine** 12(1)(<http://www.dlib.org/dlib/january06/guy/01guy.html>) – Short "seat-of-the-pants" examination of user-generated folksonomies as practiced at del.icio.us and flickr. The authors identify a "natural tendency towards the convergence of tags". That said, there seems to be a great variation in spelling and use of punctuation with upwards of a third of the terms. The authors discuss ways to improve both the system and the practices of people using the system. At the same time, they're mindful of the benefits that an open system despite its irregularities can have. – [\*LRK]

Kroski, Ellyssa (2005) **The Hive Mind: Folksonomies and User-Based Tagging Infotangle [Blog]** (7 December 2005)(<http://infotangle.blogspot.com/2005/12/07/the-hive-mind-folksonomies-and-user-based-tagging/>) – "Folksonomies" (loose taxonomies created by uncoordinated individuals) have been getting a lot of press lately, what with sites like Flickr.com, del.icio.us, and others (<http://unalog.com/>) allowing their users to "tag" photos or bookmarks with whatever descriptive terms come into their head. The idea is that this practice can lead to a taxonomy of sorts generated simply through usage. In other words, it's an idiotic idea whose time has apparently come. But setting aside my personal biases, this piece is one of the best I've seen on both the good and the bad of

folksonomies. Although this is a blog posting (the first by this author), it is written much more like a journal article, and like such it has a rather awesome list of references. – [\*RT]

### Information Retrieval

Chillingworth, Mark (2006) **Racing ahead in the fast lane Information World Review** 221, February 2006: 11-12 – Fast Search & Transfer is building its profile in the global enterprise search market. Here Mark speaks to their senior management about the current market and their own place in it. – [RN]

Chillingworth, Mark (2006) **Factiva ups ante in news aggregation Information World Review** 221, February 2006: 25 – Factiva's news aggregator, Search 2.0 is currently in beta testing. This article provides a brief review of the end-user focussed search service. – [RN]

Chillingworth, Mark (2006) **PA's Political argy-bargy Information World Review** 221, February 2006: 27 – Another brief site review, this time for a subscriber service that allows users to search across televised parliamentary debates. – [RN]

Sadeh, Tamar (2006) **Google Scholar Versus Metasearch Systems HEP Libraries Webzine** (12)(February 2006) (<http://library.cern.ch/HEPLW/12/papers/1/>) – The advent of Google Scholar has made many question whether libraries need expensive metasearching systems to unify searching of multiple sources. This thoughtful and informative article addresses this question, and even attempts to clarify the confusing terminology by drawing clear distinctions between "metasearching" (just-in-time unification, such as most library metasearch tools) and "federated searching" (just-in-case unification like Google Scholar). Although the author is an employee of ExLibris (vendor of the MetaLib metasearching tool), and naturally uses MetaLib as an example system, what she discusses is generally applicable to the metasearching environment as a whole. She also reviews other metasearching efforts such as Elsevier's Scirus system. Those who are knowledgeable about the issues will not be surprised that Sadeh does not come down on the side of Google, nor against it. Rather, she acknowledges the utility of both Google Scholar and library-based metasearch services when each is appropriate, as well as carefully watching developments in industry as a whole. This is altogether the best overview of Google Scholar, other large federated search systems such as Scirus, and library-based metasearch tools I've seen. Full disclosure: as a MetaLib customer I have worked with Ms. Sadeh and some of my work is cited in her article. – [\*RT]

**Sector Update: Company, business and financial data Information World Review** 221, February 2006: 21-23 – Brief reviews of some key data providers in this sector, giving an overview of their current services as well as any new developments on the horizon. The services covered are: Biogs, Bureau Van Dijk, Companies House, D&B, Equifax, Hemscoff, ICC Information, Kompass publishers, OneSource Information Services, Perfect Information, RM Online, Thomson Financial. – [RN]

University of California Libraries Bibliographic Services Task Force (2005) **Rethinking How We Provide Bibliographic Services for the University of California** Oakland, CA: University of California, December 2005 (<http://libraries.universityofcalifornia.edu/sopag/BSTF/Final.pdf>) – In a no-holds-barred

report by this University of California task force, much of the existing library bibliographic infrastructure is blasted as being out-of-date and inadequate. "The current Library catalog," states the report, "is poorly designed for the tasks of finding, discovering, and selecting the growing set of resources available in our libraries." But it doesn't stop there, in either uncovering deficiencies nor in recommending potentially fruitful directions. The thrust of the report can perhaps be perceived by the headings under which the recommendations for further action are grouped: "Enhancing Search and Retrieval," "Rearchitecting the OPAC," "Adopting New Cataloging Practices," and "Supporting Continuing Improvement." Although this report is specific to the UC environment, I suspect that many institutions find themselves in a similar situation and therefore reviewing this report carefully is likely to be instructive. Full disclosure: I am a UC employee and was interviewed by the task force in the process of producing this report. – [\*RT]

### Knowledge Management

Noveck, Beth Simone (2005) **A Democracy of Groups** *First Monday* 10(11)(7 November 2005)([http://www.firstmonday.org/issues/issue10\\_11/noveck/](http://www.firstmonday.org/issues/issue10_11/noveck/)) – Noveck argues that the critical mass of new display technologies and collaborative software has reached a point where small groups of like-minded persons can work together with much greater impact on work and society. With these new visual display technologies, groups can now create meaningful online community, and utilize much-improved self-governance tools. While the mainstream of cultural and media researchers are interested in the relationship between the individual and the state, there is far less attention given to the rapidly evolving relationship of collaborative, grass-roots democracy in the online sphere of public life. Noveck makes two arguments, which fuel an interesting analysis of the state of online community in 2005. First, she argues that technologies of collaboration will increasingly fuel collective action (think of [moveon.org](http://www.moveon.org)). But the pace of growth will accelerate because of emerging tools for "collective visualization:" the ability to hold full-scale meetings in cyberspace. Her second argument flows from the first, calling for a legislative overhaul that empowers the process of decentralized, group-based decision making. Groups can now have "body" as well as "soul" – in essence, following the principles of the law of corporations. – [\*TH]

### Legal Issues

**Google Free to Cache: Court Red Herring** (26 January 2006) (<http://www.redherring.com/Article.aspx?a=15493&hed=Google+Free+to+Cache%3A+Court&sector=Industries&subsector=InternetAndServices#>) – Guess what? It's not the end of the world as we know it. A federal district court in Nevada has ruled in *Field v. Google* that Google's Website indexing practices don't violate copyright law. Just imagine if the ruling had gone the other way. Time to get permission from billions of Website owners (and any other copyright owners with material on those Websites) before indexing them. Ouch! In a related press release from EFF ([http://www.eff.org/news/archives/2006\\_01.php#004345](http://www.eff.org/news/archives/2006_01.php#004345)) Fred von Lohmann, senior staff attorney, says: "The ruling should also help Google in defending against the lawsuit brought by book publishers over its Google Library Project, as well as assisting organizations like the Internet Archive that rely on caching." I don't know about you, but I feel fine about this copyright ruling (for a change). – [\*CB]

## Metadata

Coyle, Karen (2005) **Descriptive Metadata for Copyright Status** *First Monday* 10(10)(3 October 2005)([http://www.firstmonday.org/issues/issue10\\_10/coyle/](http://www.firstmonday.org/issues/issue10_10/coyle/)) – The author, a well-known commentator on digital library issues, has taken up a bite-sized topic: metadata for the copyright status of items in digital libraries. She delivers a succinct, but complete proposed strategy, complete with tables, grids and comparative information that buttresses her arguments. She comments that the discussion of intellectual property rights has heretofore focused on access and usage, which lie in the hands of the rights holder. It would be useful, she argues, to have a corresponding set of descriptive data that outline copyright status. She proposes a manageably-sized set of descriptive data elements that might accompany digital materials to inform potential users of the copyright status of the item. She suggests that it is possible to expand upon the well-articulated language of such sources as the Open Digital Rights Language of the Open Mobile Alliance, and the Creative Commons. The absence of well-articulated statements that define the full parameters of access places a heavier burden on users who seek to know what they can – and cannot do. Digital rights management has focused a lot on the copyright "don'ts" – Coyle presents a modest, but powerful argument for making the copyright "dos" easier to find and understand. – [\*TH]

## Preservation

Sale, Arthur (2005) **Comparison of IR Content Policies in Australia** (<http://eprints.comp.utas.edu.au:81/archive/00000230/>) – In this e-print, Arthur Sale, Professor of Computing at the University of Tasmania, analyzes e-print deposit activity at seven Australian universities for 2004 and 2005 publications (there is partial 2005 data through early December). In brief, he found that mandating deposit resulted in much higher levels of activity than either voluntary deposit without special support for authors by repository staff or with such support. The one university with mandated deposit (Queensland University of Technology) had four times the deposit rate of the closest voluntary deposit university for 2005 publications. No voluntary deposit university had a rate higher than 10% for 2005 publications; QUT's rate is about 40%, and it is projected to be near 60% by the end of 2005. The author concludes: "It is well overdue for DEST to rule that postprints of all research that Australian universities report to DEST must be deposited in an institutional repository, to take effect say for 2007. The costs to the universities are ridiculously small; the benefits from increased global research impact, and enabling Australians to access the research they fund through the public purse, are enormous." (DEST is the Australian Department of Science Education and Technology.) – [\*CB]

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