·MOVEABLE TYPE·

The Newsletter of the Mark O. Hatfield Library, Willamette University

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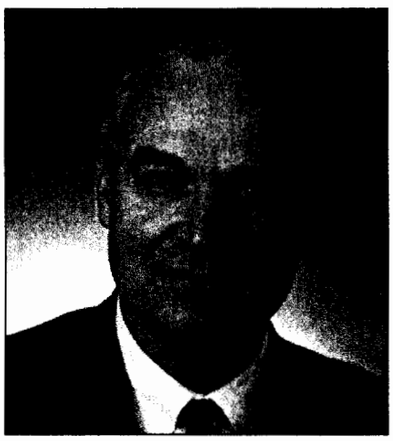

Jim Scheppke, State Librarian.

Great Service Without "Great" Libraries

By Jim Scheppke

OREGON IS RAPIDLY DEVELOPING INTO A GREAT library state. Our citizens, increasingly, are enjoying some of the highest quality library services available anywhere. And, interestingly, we are able to deliver this high quality service without relying on "great" libraries.

Compared to other states, Oregon libraries have relatively modest levels of resources. Only one academic library, the Knight Library at the University of Oregon, has a collection large enough to qualify them for membership in the Association of Research Libraries. Most of Oregon's 125 public libraries are small or medium-sized. The Multnomah County Central Library in downtown Portland, when it reopens after extensive renovations next year, will still be one of the smallest central libraries in any major U. S. city.

Well, how do we do it, if we don't have the collections and buildings and large staffs that are common in other states?

Cooperation is the biggest key to our success. In a state of mostly small and medium-sized libraries, we have had to learn to depend on each other to deliver the information our customers demand. We have been very effective in this. Our public libraries, collectively, rank first in the U. S. in obtaining interlibrary loans for their customers. In 1993, Oregon public libraries borrowed over 141 items for every 1,000 persons they served, more than four times the national average.

Most of this cooperative activity takes place through the innovative use of

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The Information Commons:

Cooperative Development of Electronic Resources

By Michael W. Spalti and Keiko M. Pitter

Most of our campus departments developed when print and oral communication were the primary media around which higher education could be organized. Today, digital media are becoming increasingly useful tools for research and learning, and not surprisingly, developing these new digital media requires working across some existing organizational boundaries. One of the key relationships for developing information technology here at Willamette University is that between the Mark O. Hatfield Library and Willamette Integrated Technology Services (WITS). While our organizations maintain distinct areas of responsibility, we are also brought together by our shared responsibility to develop networked information resources.

Like everyone else interested in the role of information technology on campus, the library and WITS face a medium that grows and changes with each passing year. Part of our job is to be critics of this medium, assessing its impact on society, individuals, and the university. Yet, our combined role is ultimately constructive: to assure that Willamette University's technology investment continues to develop from a network infrastructure (in which machines readily communicate) to an electronic information commons (in which people use these machines to communicate and learn with increasing success).

Library services are an important part of this evolving information commons. At Willamette, these services are being developed incrementally, through steps which take into account the needs of the campus community and opportunities presented by emerging technology. Currently, we are working on improvements in the following areas: the presentation and organization of information, the library InfoStation interface, and campus-wide access to library resources.

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Northwest Innovative Interfaces User Group Created

IN APRIL OF 1995, HATFIELD LIBRARIAN CAROL Drost convened a group of librarians at the annual Oregon Library Association conference in Portland to discuss forming a user group for staff whose libraries have the Innovative Interfaces Inc., (III) automation system. On November 6, 1995, the Northwest Innovative Users Group held its inaugural meeting at the University of Portland with over 150 people from 29 libraries in Oregon, Washington and British Columbia attending. Two Hatfield library staff members, Bill Kelm and Ford Schmidt, presented workshops.

The wealth of expertise found in the member libraries provides an excellent resource base from which all users can draw. In addition to sharing information and ideas, the members plan to use their status as an organized group to suggest changes and additions to the features offered by the system. ■

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- The Indecency Act

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computer catalog systems that are shared among groups of public libraries. In the Salem area, for example, the 17 libraries of the Chemeketa Cooperative Regional Library Service (including Chemeketa Community College Library) allow their customers to search a common catalog and to request and receive materials from any of the member libraries. This same kind of outstanding customer service is available in a number of cooperative library systems throughout the state.

A similar type of service is now envisioned for a large and growing number of academic libraries in Oregon through the Orbis system at the University of Oregon. Currently, 12 academic libraries, including the Mark O. Hatfield Library at Willamette University, have built a "union" catalog on a computer located at the Knight Library at the U. of O., making it easy to search for holdings at all of the participating libraries. When the system is completed, hopefully this year, students and faculty at these institutions will be able to request on-line items found in the union catalog.

Orbis is a good example of "working smarter." By developing computer systems that allow our customers to make their own requests, we can achieve levels of service that could never have been achieved using more traditional labor-intensive interlibrary loan procedures.

The next several years promise to bring even more innovation and better quality service to Oregon library customers. Use of the Internet as a relatively low cost means to connect Oregon libraries, not only to each other, but to our customers and to information resources around the world, is already revolutionizing our services.

The Hatfield library has been a leader in many of these developments. As a founding member of Orbis and the Valley Link consortium in the mid-Willamette Valley, the Hatfield library, under the leadership of Larry Oberg, has been a major player in achieving our vision of excellent library services through cooperation and innovation.

Oregon libraries are demonstrating for the rest of the country that quality library services are no longer the result of enormous buildings and huge collections. Oregon has always had a reputation for doing things a little differently, and in our libraries today, we are achieving world-class service through a simple commitment to working smarter, and most importantly, working together. ■

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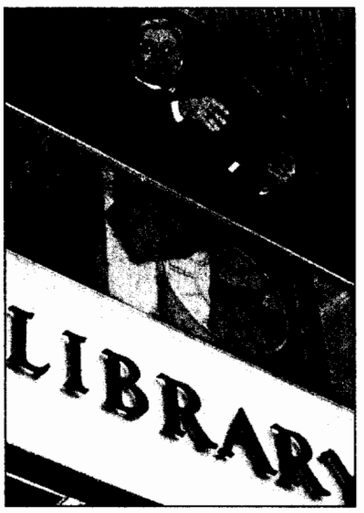
A View from the Library



Larry R. Oberg, University Librarian.

What Does a Librarian do for a Living?

By Larry R. Oberg

It is both amusing and instructive to recall that before the introduction of the computer, few new technologies had emerged to disturb the routine of earlier generations of librarians. Older contrivances that affected libraries to a greater or lesser extent include the card catalog, the typewriter, the photocopy machine and the electric eraser, the latter being a device that greatly simplified the burdensome chore of making changes to catalog cards.

The infusion of the new electronic technologies, however, has troubled deeply the stable and conservative environment in which librarians once functioned. Profound changes have occurred in the services we offer and the means by which we deliver information. These changes have been documented locally in the pages of *Moveable Type* and *Bits, Bytes and Nibbles*, and nationally in the popular and the scholarly literature. The effect of these changes upon the role of librarians and library support staff is less well documented and less well understood.

It has been apparent for some time now that today's combined print and on-line environment requires new and different competencies and skills of librarians as they move beyond their traditional focus upon the book as an artifact and the library as a repository. And, indeed, there exists within the profession today a considerably broader understanding of the needs of the users and the context in which information is consumed. In fact, the recent history of librarianship demonstrates a near linear shift in our attention from artifact to user to context.

At the Mark O. Hatfield Library, a newly redefined organizational structure provides a considerably more inclusive framework for the strategic planning and decision-making now required of us. The new structure, tentatively called the Consultative Planning Model, has created several new working groups composed of the librarians and the support staff most knowledgeable of, and affected by, the change that is occurring within a particular arena.

Charged with researching options, defining policies, implementing solutions and evaluating outcomes, the groups created thus far include Technology Planning, Electronic Resources, Education, Document Delivery, and Space Planning. These groups improve our collections and services and assure that we adopt or design technologies that are appropriate to our own institutional context.

The new organizational structure grants considerable decision-making and some budgetary responsibility to the groups themselves. Unlike many recently reconfigured organizational structures, however, the Consultative Planning Model reserves final programmatic and budgetary responsibility to the library administration.

For some time now, the Hatfield librarians have played considerably more visible roles on campus, roles that in many cases take them out of the library. In addition to their traditionally strong presence in teaching and reference, librarians work actively and collegially with individual faculty, departments and schools in collection development, service provision and evaluation. New collaborative relationships have been developed between the Hatfield librarians and the computing center, the Law library, the Writing Center and the Atkinson Graduate School of Management.

The quality and frequency of contact between teaching faculty and librarians assumes greater importance as we network more of our services and resources outside the walls of the library. Here at Willamette, we are moving beyond traditional librarian-department liaison activities towards greater librarian participation in the programmatic aspects of the institution. We may expect to see increased collaboration between librarians and teaching faculty in collection development, the development of the curriculum, the design of library instruction, campus governance, and the conduct of joint research projects. ■

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The Information Autobahn:

Even the Slow Lane Will Get You There Sooner ...

By Charlie Wallace

Among the traffic on the information Autobahn, I'm something of a Beetle, putting along in the slow lane and shuddering in the wind created by the sleek, self-assured Mercedes and Daimlers who seem to know no limits. Put it another way: while I now have a nice Gateway PC in my office and do my share of gee-whizzing around the Web, I'm the only guy on campus still using WordStar for word processing. Somewhere between Ludwig Fischer (hiking in lederhosen beside the road) and Keiko Pitter (who has long since zoomed off it in another way, up, like a Leer Jet from a runway), I am finding good ways at moderate speeds to use technology in academic pursuits.

In fact, the Internet and a not-so-current bit of technology, microfilm, has made it possible for me (nearly) to complete a decade-long editing project that a few years ago would have been impossible on a small campus like ours.

Before coming to Willamette in 1985, I had made a research foray to England and within a month had photocopied all the original manuscripts of Susanna Wesley (1669-1742), mother of John, founder of Methodism, original sponsor of our fair school. It was and is time for her letters, diary and other papers to be available to a wider public so she can be judged in her own right — it's the sort of reclaiming of the voices of previously silenced women and minorities that many of our disciplines have been pursuing for a couple of decades now.

The problem was that I had begun transcribing from the photocopied manuscripts B.C., before computer, so that when the first KayPro arrived on my desk, bundled, of course, with WordStar, I had to re-enter everything. Everything being about 1000 typescript pages. Once that was accomplished, though, I could begin to edit the good woman's spelling and punctuation, and start the process of annotation. Not even the move across country to Oregon or the shift from CP/M to DOS could slow me down — though chaplaining and teaching, it turns out, could.

However, I've persisted, and apart from a couple of months in the Huntington Library one summer and a few odd hours in the British Library while directing our London program one fall, I've been able to pull the project together from home and office right here in Salem.

Once I got hooked into the Internet, first by modem, then hard-wired, my greatest ally was Melvyl, the accessible on-line catalog of the massive University of California library system. While my topic ideally would have me delving into the Bodleian and the British Museum, our colleagues over there have still not got all their old stuff electronically cataloged and available. But U.C. does, and what they don't have in actual rare book form (which one could drive down and look at in the Bancroft Library on the Berkeley campus), they seem to have in a huge microfilmed collection of Early English Books. Consequently, much of the annotation process, figuring out what Susanna Wesley was reading and writing about, did not require a trip to the Bay Area, much less London.

JENNA CALK

Charlie Wallace in the slow lane of the information Autobahn.

The sleuthing for obscure references has actually been one of the most enjoyable parts of the project. Who is this mysterious "Dr. Lu" she keeps quoting on the now quaint-sounding doctrinal issue of "Christian perfection?" A little poking in Melvyl, buttressed by more conventional looking in the Victorian classic, the *Dictionary of National Biography*, and other reference sources produced an answer: it was probably a now little-known blind Welsh priest in one of the London churches who had written a couple of volumes on just this subject. A quick interlibrary loan from California brought up the films, and soon I was having the delicious experience of tracking her quotations word-for-word from the sources — comfortably seated in the micro-reader section of the MOH library.

Most fun was finding an even more veiled unattributed quotation in her journals, one that talked about balancing the rational and experiential components of religion, tagged only with a marginal note that could be read either as "Lord K" or "Lord R." Again the technology allowed me to root around in Melvyl and determine that the quotation came from a popular book by the church historian Bishop Gilbert Burnet, who had, he claimed, extracted a death-bed conversion from John Wilmot, poet and notorious Restoration libertine, a.k.a., as the Earl of Rochester — Susanna's "Lord R."

You can't do everything on the 'net. I'm still on the last 100 pages of copy editing at home using a green pencil and an eraser, with sticky labels the highest tech item on my desk. But the project is almost finished, and I can't imagine where it would be without these little electrons zinging around. Now if the University of Virginia would just let an outsider search their English Poetry Database, I might come up with just one more reference.

At any rate, I'll look for you on the Autobahn. Don't forget to honk (or flash your lights) when you pass. ■

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Briefly Noted

Environmental Reports Move to Hatfield Library

NOW THAT THE SCIENCE DEPARTMENTS ARE moving to the new Olin building, the Hatfield library has agreed to accept a collection of environment-related government reports that were housed previously in the Environmental Science Department. Collected over the years by Professor Gilbert F. LaFreniere (Geology and Environmental Science), the collection includes environmental impact statements related to the Pacific Northwest that were produced by various United States federal agencies. Some state and local documents also are included in the collection. When they are moved to the library, the reports will be more readily accessible because they will be cataloged and available through the on-line catalog. ■

Library Threatened by Flood Of '96

THE GREAT FLOOD OF '96 LEFT THE Willamette community shaken but united. Heavy rains caused Mill Stream, the normally placid creek that graces the campus, to overflow its banks and flood several buildings, including the J. W. Long Law Library and the new Olin science building. Hatfield library employees braced for the worst, working until the early morning hours of Thursday, February 8, to prepare for possible flooding. Regular service was maintained Wednesday night, but after closing at midnight, nearly 100 enthusiastic student volunteers relocated books and equipment to higher shelves and the second floor.

Because an upstream embankment behind the weir that controls the flow of water gave way, thereby lowering the level of Mill Stream, the library escaped with only a few square yards of soaked carpet. In a letter of thanks published in the student newspaper, *The Collegian*, University Librarian Larry Oberg wrote, "On behalf of the entire Hatfield library staff I want to express our sincere thanks ... to the Willamette students who unselfishly volunteered ... to help prepare the library for possible flooding ... Fortunately, damage to the Hatfield library was minimal, but, the commitment of the student volunteers was exemplary and deserves recognition. This demonstration of community solidarity was deeply gratifying." ■

Of Pink Swastikas and Daddy's Roommate: Some Thoughts on Book Cer

By David A. Douglass

The Pink Swastika[1], a recent book by Scott Lively and Kevin Abrams, has met with something less than universal acclaim. Dan Hayes, book reviewer for the Salem, Oregon, *Statesman Journal*[2], characterizes the work as "a deeply flawed book," "pure propaganda masquerading as serious scholarship and historical study." Social historian William Toll describes the book's analysis as "a jumble of disconnected labels, a group of unrelated clichés."[3] A series of conversations on and off campus have echoed the same theme. Several students and one faculty member have gone so far as to suggest that libraries should shun the book, and that it should be allowed, as one person put it, "to be forgotten as quickly as possible."

One need not look far for the source of the book's disfavor. Its aggressively revisionist historical thesis — that "homosexualism, elevated to a popular ideology and combined with black occult forces, not only gave birth to Nazi imperialism but also led to the Holocaust itself" — flies in the face of a virtual consensus of other historical works and authorities. This lack of corroboration, together with the status of one of the book's authors as a leader of the Oregon Citizens Alliance (OCA), might be taken as sufficient reason to dismiss the work as merely the latest salvo in the ongoing political battle sponsored by the OCA over the rights and morality of homosexuals. However, to so dismiss such a work out of hand without careful consideration and reflection amounts, Kenneth Burke has written, to intellectual vandalism. Moreover, the question of whether such a book should be included in a library collection provides an invitation to reflect on issues of intellectual freedom and the role of libraries in providing access to diverse, even divergent, points of view.

It is generally taken for granted by librarians and lay persons alike that the principle of intellectual freedom serves as a foundation for libraries, or at least for libraries in the United States. Nothing could be further from the truth, as demonstrated convincingly by Judith Krug's and James Harvey's historical review of such policies in the excellent and authoritative *Intellectual Freedom Manual*[4] of the American Library Association. Although the history of U.S. libraries displays a general commitment to principles of free speech and the creation of a favorable climate for intellectual freedom, the definition of precisely what constitutes such freedom has never achieved consensus, and in practice has varied widely.

Equally mythical is the notion of libraries as zones of neutral value, the repositories of materials reflecting widely disparate perspectives, yet partial to none. This perspective would cast the library as a sort of moral Switzerland, where a commitment to neutrality is elevated to both guiding principle and project. As with the myth of the guiding principle of intellectual freedom, the fact of the matter is quite another thing. Collections are structured according to values in an almost infinite number of ways, some random, some contextual, and some intentional. Limits in funds restrict the options for acquisition, as do the interests and needs of patrons. Similarly, the holdings of nearby or competing libraries serve to configure a collection. Even seemingly trivial decisions such as how to display particular works, or how long to lend them, subtly value holdings in various ways.

This should not be taken to suggest that libraries generally acquire collections haphazardly or without regard to principle. Quite to the contrary, the principles articulated in the ALA governance documents might serve as a model of thoughtful policy and careful elaboration of contingencies. That they do not always provide for easy decisions about the inclusion or exclusion of a particular work says less about the principles themselves than it

orship and Acquisition

does about the complexity of the issues at hand. The problems posed by a work such as *The Pink Swastika* illustrate the depth of this complexity.

The Library Bill of Rights clearly states, in its second article, that "libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval." Thus, that the book may be linked explicitly to a political agenda should not serve as warrant for its exclusion from libraries.

More troubling than the charge that the book is bad history — history aligned with an objectionable political impulse — is the charge that the book is poor history, or history badly written. For libraries to include materials that may be patently false would clearly seem undesirable. Moreover, the quality of a particular work, the cogency of demonstration and strength of evidence, certainly seem to be reasonable criteria for inclusion or exclusion.

The weaknesses of *The Pink Swastika* as history must be weighed against its significance as an inscription of public discourse. It is not only a list of facts and interpretations to be judged truth or fiction. It is also a voice, one speaking from and to a significant portion of the community. No matter how objectively inaccurate, the work might be considered materially or historically significant in its own right, not in spite of its political motivations and context, but because of them.

My point is not that the book should be included in the Mark O. Hatfield Library collection — it already is — or any other collection, nor that it should be excluded. It is, rather, to draw attention to the deliberative process itself. Any library's collection should be the result of neither systematic censorship nor unrestricted acquisition, but of thoughtful negotiation among competing exigencies to reach a contingent judgment. This careful process of selection is, or should be, as much an end as the decisions that emerge from it, for in this process libraries play a considerable role in arbitrating cultural legitimacy, in defining margins and centers.

That a book co-authored by one of the leaders of the OCA should be subject to discussions of censorship is more than a little ironic. The OCA has itself advocated censorship or restricted access for a series of books that cast homosexuality in positive terms. Best known, perhaps, are campaigns against two books, *Daddy's Roommate*[5] and *Heather has Two Mommies*[6], in which children's experiences with gay parents are described. These campaigns met with limited success and enormous controversy. I find the success less disturbing than many. After all, *The Catcher in the Rye*[7] has been the most widely banned and censored book of the past 25 years, and it seems unlikely soon to be forgotten. The controversy and cultural turmoil over the process assures me that libraries — and the profoundly important role they play in validating the diversity of a culture's voices, knowledge, and values — are alive and well. ■

[1] Scott Lively and Kevin Abrams, *The Pink Swastika: Homosexuality in the Nazi Party*, Keizer, OR: Founder Pub. Corp., 1995.

[2] Dan Hayes, "Pink Swastika Revises History." Review of *The Pink Swastika*, *Statesman Journal* [Salem, Oregon] 5 September 1995, D1-2.

[3] Quoted by Hayes in "Pink Swastika Revises History."

[4] American Library Association. Office of Intellectual Freedom, *Intellectual Freedom Manual*, 4th ed., Chicago, American Library Association, 1992.

[5] Michael Willhoite, *Daddy's Roommate*, Boston: Alyson Wonderland, 1990.

[6] Leslea Newman, *Heather Has Two Mommies*, Boston: Little, Brown, 1989.

[7] J. D. Salinger, *The Catcher in the Rye*, Boston: Little Brown, 1951.

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Gender Collection More Accessible

SOME MONTHS AGO, STAFF AT THE HATFIELD library and the Womyn's Center concluded a unique cooperative agreement. The library agreed to catalog the books in the Womyn's Center collection and include the records in the on-line catalog in order to raise campus awareness of this interesting and useful collection.

The Womyn's Center houses a variety of women's and gender studies materials as well as the resources from the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual Alliance collection. These materials now appear in the on-line catalog and are identified by the location indicators "Womyn's Ctr" or "Womyn's Ctr LGBA."

The Willamette community is welcome to use the collection during the hours the Center is open or upon making arrangements with the Office of Student Affairs. ■

New Electronic Communications Forum Created

ON FEBRUARY 8, 1996, PRESIDENT CLINTON signed a series of bills that enables major changes in the legislation governing telecommunications in the United States. An uproar that included major discussions and much collective head scratching by librarians quickly erupted against the Communications Decency Act of 1996. A federal lawsuit was filed the next day by 20 plaintiffs.

Reacting to the pressing need to discuss these issues, inform people of the text of the legislation and assist organizations in responding to the criminalization of vaguely defined materials available through the Internet, Gary Klein, the Hatfield Library's management/business economics librarian, created an electronic forum to discuss these matters on the Internet.

The CDA96-L electronic discussion group was opened to the public on February 13. Before the list was even one week old, some 600 subscribers from 20 countries were keeping up on judicial, legislative and grassroots efforts to defuse this legislation. The law, which took effect immediately after the President signed it, declares certain Internet transmissions to be felonious crimes, punishable by fines of up to $250,000 and by imprisonment of up to two years. Subscription information is available from Klein at gklein@willamette.edu or telephone number (503) 370-6743. ■

Government Documents Now Being Cataloged

BEGINNING ON JANUARY 1, 1996, U. S. federal government documents received through the Federal Depository Library Program are accessible in the Hatfield and Law libraries' shared on-line catalog. Prior to this date, only selected documents were entered into the catalog. Although all newly received materials will now be available, older documents will take more time to appear. Certain categories of older documents, such as the U. S. Congressional Hearings, the Bureau of the Census reports, and the Bureau of Labor Statistics bulletins, will be given priority.

Until all documents are entered into the catalog, it will be necessary to continue to consult the Government Printing Office's *Monthly Catalog* (also available electronically as *GPO CAT/PAC*) for complete library holdings. ■

Hatfield Catalog Available On Web

THE LIBRARY'S INNOVATIVE INTERFACES on-line catalog is now available in a Web version. Although still under development, the new catalog interface nonetheless can be accessed with standard Web browsers such as Netscape or Mosaic (URL: http://library.willamette.edu). The Web front-end continues to provide access to print resources in the library. But now it also allows users to link directly to selected Internet resources, for example, the full text of Project Muse journals in electronic format and certain government documents. ■

MOVEABLE TYPE

Moveable Type is published by the Mark O. Hatfield Library, Willamette University, 900 State Street, Salem, Oregon 97301. Editor: Larry R. Oberg, University Librarian. Associate Editor: Joni R. Roberts, Associate University Librarian for Public Services and Collection Development. Graphic Designer: Christine Harris. Contributors to *Briefly Noted* include Carol Drost, Arlene Weible and Gary Klein. The text of all articles published in *Moveable Type* is archived on the Hatfield Library Web homepage at: http://nemesis.willamette.edu under Library Publications.

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The importance of the first of these items should be apparent. As we move into an era in which information is available in a variety of formats, and is increasingly accessed by electronic means, there is a growing need to present electronic information in a coherent and intuitive manner. The presentation and organization of information in an electronic environment combines traditional approaches to organizing content with the new design possibilities of the graphical user interface. The library's new Web site (http://nemesis.willamette.edu) is one such step in the direction of providing a more integrated research environment for students and faculty.

While the library's Web site offers services and information beyond the walls of the library, the Hatfield library InfoStations are likely to be a focal point for developing a truly integrated library interface. We soon hope to move beyond the current, minimal interface—which consists of a few icons arranged on a Windows desktop—to an interface that makes the researcher's search options clearer and easier to access. Again, the Web will provide much of the technology that will make this happen. Much of what we learn in developing the InfoStation interface also will be available to networked workstations outside the library.

Ultimately, the value of information technology is increased when research and instructional materials become available at any workstation, located anywhere on campus. Improving campus-wide access requires moving beyond the limitations of platform-specific applications. Eventually, it will not matter whether a user's machine is a PC, a Macintosh, or a Unix workstation; all information resources will be equally available, and presented in the same familiar format.

Collaboration between the library and WITS also allows us to explore how newly implemented technologies might eventually create opportunities for altogether new information services. To cite one example, a physics lab planned for the remodeled Collins hall needs mobile, networked computer equipment in order that data collection and analysis can be done from anywhere in the room. A wireless network offers the best solution. Dialog between the library and WITS allows us to consider how this same technology might benefit library users. In one scenario, specially configured laptop computers to be used within the library could be connected to the campus network and the Internet via wireless technology. This would allow students to work individually and collaboratively from anywhere in the building. Rather than simply access information, these computers could also be configured to manipulate and analyze information.

Planning and developing such information technology is important for shaping the information commons. Yet, in any discussion of information technology there is a tendency to dwell too exclusively on the technology and to give short shrift to the social issues that have equal bearing on the future.

Indeed, politics, economics, ethics, and law are all crucial to determining how information technology can and should be used. Making information available electronically both raises copyright issues and challenges some of the basic foundations of existing copyright law. The Communications Decency Act of 1996 brings an important and controversial political dimension to developing the information commons, and calls for immediate attention and public debate. Issues of the appropriate and inappropriate use of technology raise ethical concerns. And, new economic models become a factor as the Internet develops from an information free-for-all to an increasingly ordered place in which users pay for value-added information products.

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JENNA CALK

Anticipating the world on their laptops. (Sophomores, Alida Godfrey and Debra Peth.)

A View From Ohio:

Why Are Libraries Changing?

By Damon D. Hickey

Anyone who has visited a library in Ohio (where I live and work), in Oregon, or anywhere else in America lately, knows that libraries are changing. We seem to have entered a permanent state of transition. At the College of Wooster in 1990, the card catalog was replaced by an electronic library system available in offices and dormitory rooms via the campus academic computing network. In 1995, the libraries were connected to the College's fiber network backbone so that the libraries' electronic resources (including the on-line catalog, remote-access databases, and local CD-ROM databases) could all be networked throughout the College.

This summer, four of the schools (Wooster, Denison, Kenyon, and Ohio Wesleyan) in the new Five Colleges of Ohio Consortium will merge their library systems onto a single machine located at Denison. With connection to all four campuses via dedicated telecommunications, the new system will achieve considerable savings for the participating colleges.

The Five Colleges' shared catalog will also be linked to OhioLink, an automated statewide library system upon which Oregon's Orbis project was modeled. OhioLink membership will make it possible for our faculty and students to locate, with a single search, almost any title held by any Ohio university library. They will also order any item they wish at the computer screen and may expect to have it in hand in two or three days, rather than the present two or three weeks required for traditional interlibrary loan.

Also in 1996, we hope to set up a reference database server at Oberlin College for all of the Five Colleges of Ohio schools. Many of these databases will replace those to which we currently subscribe on CD-ROM, and will enable us to afford others at lower consortial rates.

Over the next two years, we will begin offering the 43 journals published electronically by the Johns Hopkins University Press to every member of the college community. The Five Colleges of Ohio have also purchased the Encyclopedia Britannica online. This resource, which is updated weekly, is now available from any campus computer. These are the first of many databases that we hope to be able to offer the campus community.

Why are we doing all this? Do we enjoy looking at computer screens more than at pages of text? Hardly. But, there are several compelling reasons why libraries everywhere are turning more and more to electronic sources of information (many of which are resident elsewhere), and why cooperation in acquiring and sharing resources is increasing:

COST OF ACQUIRING INFORMATION

The cost of books and periodicals has risen at a rate greater than the general rate of inflation for more than a decade. As a result, our buying power has shrunk dramatically. In order to keep pace, librarians are trying to provide more information "just in time," rather than buying and storing it "just in case" it is needed someday. Electronic sources of information (electronic indexes, journals, encyclopedias, and other reference materials) allow us the possibility of obtaining information when it is needed, without trying to have everything on our own shelves. Cooperative development and sharing of print collections also stretches scarce dollars by reducing unnecessary duplication, thereby allowing more unique titles to be purchased.

"Institutional cooperation and electronic sources of information offer solutions to a financial crisis faced by all libraries."

COST OF STORAGE

The College of Wooster has just completed its third library building. Its first was built in 1900, and was adequate for 62 years. Its second, built in 1962, was adequate for 33 years. The new library was built in 1995 and is expected to be adequate — assuming current rates of collection growth — for no more than 15-16 years. In other words, each new library has been adequate for only half as long as the previous building; yet each has required the largest single gift received by the college at the time it was built. If that trend were to continue, Wooster would have to build still another addition about the year 2010, again with the largest single gift in the college's history. But that addition could be expected to be adequate for only seven or eight years. Our experience is more or less typical of other colleges' and universities'.

Electronic storage of information, especially journals, not only frees the library from having to pay for binding; it also frees us from having to build space to house these journals (or to buy them again in microform). We can, thereby, extend the useful life of the buildings for which we have paid already, and free these funds for other purposes.

ADVANTAGES OF ELECTRONIC STORAGE

Printed information, including information stored on microform, can be used by only one person at a time. If a book is checked out, no one else can use it. For that reason, journals do not circulate. Electronic journals and encyclopedias, on the other hand, can be used by any number of people at once without requiring them to come to the library. Electronic materials can be printed on demand, rather than photocopied, and can be searched by keyword, not just by author, title, or subject headings. Electronic documents can also be linked electronically to other documents, as well as to graphics, sound, or video resources.

In short, institutional cooperation and electronic sources of information offer solutions to a financial crisis faced by all libraries. Documents distributed electronically also offer flexibility of access, ease of searching, ease of printing, and links to other texts. And, cooperative coordinated collection development makes more resources available to everyone.

For the foreseeable future, libraries will offer a mixture of print, electronics, audiovisual and microform. Print will probably remain the medium of choice for most of us. Indeed, the motto of the electronic revolution might be, "We will print no document before its time." In other words, more and more publishers will make texts available in electronic form so that users can manipulate and search them in ways that are impossible once the texts are printed. What, how much, when, and where to print will be up to you. ■

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The Telecommunications Act of 1996:

The Indecency of it All!

By Gary M. Klein

How could a piece of legislation be considered indecent if it drew a standing ovation from Congress, as well as praise from stand-up comedian Lily Tomlin? Tomlin's stage character of Ernestine, the telephone operator who took great pride in her prudish upholding of decency on the *Rowan & Martin's Laugh-in Comedy Hour*, was resurrected as part of a media event that accompanied President Clinton's signing of major new telecommunications legislation on February 8, 1996.

Lily Tomlin clearly knew that her satiric routine ushered in the Telecommunications Act of 1996. But, did she know that it also ushered in an adjunct piece of legislation that now is casting a cloud over the Internet, academic computing and libraries?

Less than one day after President Clinton signed the Communications Decency Act of 1996 (CDA), 20 organizations, including the Planned Parenthood Federation of America, the Human Rights Watch, the National Writers Union, and the Clarinet Communications Corporation, joined together in filing a lawsuit to challenge it.

Why is this of concern to the Hatfield library? Because, quite simply, we provide our students unlimited Internet access, including access to the very resources that are criminalized under the CDA. Since this legislation makes it illegal for minors to gain access to certain types of electronic resources, librarians could be prosecuted for helping Willamette students.

Furthermore, in its current form, the Communications Decency Act does not define what it terms "patently offensive" nor what it terms "indecent," an omission that lends the bill considerable ambiguity. However, it clearly spells out that almost any electronic transmission of abortion information is automatically declared indecent and subject to prosecution.

Aside from abortion, the CDA does not offer any precise definitions of indecency, nor of what is patently offensive. Yet, the Internet providers are subject to the CDA's provisions if a minor "may" have access to offending materials, regardless of the nature of the student's request.

Thus, if a student under the age of 18, writing a term paper on the ethics of abortion, turns to an Internet resource, the Communications Decency Act can suddenly be called into action. The CDA clearly states that people found responsible for violating its restrictions "shall be fined under Title 18, United States Code, or imprisoned not more than two years, or both."

Ironically, if this same abortion information were obtained from printed sources, then no crime would have been committed because those publications are protected by the First, Fourth, Fifth and Ninth Amendments of the United States Constitution. Although abortion is a perfectly valid topic for a student to explore, dispensing information on abortion to minors over the Internet has become a crime.

Who ever thought that turning to electronic resources could be a crime? Will libraries and computer laboratories all across the country have to start "carding" their students before connecting them to Internet resources?

The role of libraries and librarians in an academic setting is to help students to find information by whatever means are appropriate, and provide resources that students can analyze, digest, synthesize and from which they can learn. With this new legislation taking effect the minute that President Clinton signed it, however, librarians may have to start censoring their recommendations, otherwise they could land in prison for two years.

New York State's legislators recently signed into law an even stronger bill that criminalizes any electronic transmissions of nudity, whether visual, textual or spoken. Museums are up in arms over the New York bill because it does not offer any provision for artwork, such as a critic's discussion of Marcel DuChamps' N*ude Descending a Staircase.* I wonder how the Vatican would feel if New York's legislation was used to declare the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel indecent because it includes nudity?

How far will legislators go in defining indecency?

And, who is going to police the Internet connections available from the Hatfield library's InfoStations when students start turning their Web browsers to the Vatican's artwork, where anyone in the world can view Michelangelo's artistry? ■

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