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April 2000: Internet Caveats, Electronic Classroom

Dacus Library

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Focus

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Dacus: Wired to the Gills

To say there is no difference between Internet sites is like saying, my mother, drunk or sober—There is a difference and you'd better know how to tell before getting too far on the web.

A wag once said that we can now put to rest the idea that 100 monkeys sitting at 100 computers could produce the works of Shakespeare. We know this to be incontestably false, he said, because we have put it to the test: it's called the Internet. That's a bit harsh but anyone who's been on the 'net for any time at all knows that there is an element of truth to this. It has been estimated recently that there are now between 800 million and one billion web pages—yes, you read that correctly, *one billion*. No, not *every* one of those comes up when you do a search, but it seems like it, doesn't it?

With so much information out there, where does one begin, and how do we know the difference between what those 100 monkeys are writing, and what Shakespeare wrought? Several issues emerge that need addressing. What constitutes a website? How do you distinguish the monkeys from the Shakespeares? And, finally, what has the virtual future left us with?

So, just what is a website? A website is any site with a web address that displays its contents in hypertext language. It's *any* site that comes up after a routine search on the web. For example, if you do a

search in any number of search engines or mega-search engines (*Hotbot, Eureka!, Lycos, Yahoo! Infoseek, Dogpile* and so on), you're searching those one billion pages (well, not *all* of them), that vast uncataloged universe of the good, the bad and the ugly. Nearly all those pages have *some* merit, but merit broadly defined between useless but humorous, to useful and indispensable. The former students should never use for papers; the latter they should use routinely. But how to tell the considerable difference?

We've listed these on our webpage (click on *About the Library*, then *InfoGuides*, and finally *Evaluating Internet Information*). Most of what we've listed is commonsense: is the information corroborated elsewhere, are sources cited, are designers/authors cited and can you corroborate their credentials, are there misspellings and frequent grammatical errors, and so on. To say there is no difference between Internet sites is like saying, my mother, drunk or sober—There is a difference and you'd better know how to tell before getting too far on the web.

Where users can be certain their information is above reproach is by using

Dacus-provided databases, and we have more than 70 of them. Information in these databases, while web-based, is basically the same information you'd find in any refereed journal, or journal of opinion. *Infotrac*, for example, contains literally millions of articles scanned in from thousands of journals, the same journals that libraries once subscribed to in paper format. *FirstSearch* and *Academic Universe* are two other such databases, both filled with articles from journals once delivered in paper. Citing papers from these sources is the same as citing an article in the *Journal of Sociology* or one from *Victorian Poets, Time*, etc., because it is the electronic version of the same. In point of fact no difference at all should be made between these sources delivered electronically, and those delivered by mailed subscription. Oftentimes, the electronic delivery is better because it is more manageable and can be updated daily.

Other matters, however, obtain. These databases are *never* free. Pity the poor library that attempts to extend itself electronically on exiguous budgeting. Thankfully, that is not

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Library Committee: a link to Dacus

Dacus Library is an integral and essential part of the University. The Library Committee and the Departmental Book Liaison are two relatively convenient ways faculty members can help the library meet their needs and the needs of their students. The Library Committee, as a standing committee of the University, serves as a link between the faculty and the Dean of Library Services by advising the Dean on such matters as general library policy, the development of library resources, and integrating the library program with other academic activities. For example, last year the committee examined library use, needs, and budget and participated in the search

for the new Dean of Library Services.

The Library Committee consists of nine members: two faculty representatives from the College of Arts and Sciences, and one each from the Colleges of Business Administration, Education, and Visual and Performing Arts and the Library; two student representatives, and the Dean of Library Services (ex-officio). The current committee members are: Jennifer Solomon, Chair and John Schmidt (Arts and Sciences), Jordan Cao (Business Administration), Peg De Lamater (Visual and Performing Arts), Stephen Richards (Education), Lois Walker (Library), Kevin

Byrd and Jamie Jeter (students), and Mark Herring (Dean of Library Services).

Here are examples of questions that faculty may want to discuss with Library Committee representatives: How do faculty feel about electronic access and storage of books, journals, and reference materials? Is the electronic infrastructure of Dacus adequate to support both current and future student and faculty needs? How should the library balance the use and cost of traditional library services with that of electronic replacements?

Each academic department also has a Book Liaison who coordinates

ordering books requested by faculty. Please take advantage of this opportunity for selecting books in your discipline or area of research interest. Your support of Dacus Library through the Library Committee and the book liaisons provides valuable input for maintaining current library services and planning for the future. If you have questions or suggestions for the Library Committee, please contact your college representative or Jennifer Solomon, Chair of the Library Committee, at 4658.

Jennifer Solomon
Associate Professor of
Sociology
Chair, Library Committee

Library classroom: hands-on learning

Library instruction at Dacus is catching up with the networked age this spring. The room where over 3,000 students per year have learned how to find information for the last thirty years is being converted to an “electronic classroom.”

Dacus faculty have been teaching students how to use electronic resources since the first ones appeared on CD-ROM a decade ago. The methods have progressed from overhead transparencies to a computer projector that sat on top of the overhead projector to one of the first color computer projectors on campus.

But we have never been satisfied with having to talk about resources, only to stop and trek upstairs to the library’s limited number of

public workstations for hands-on experience. When learning how to use computer-based applications, nothing beats being able to try what the instructor is explaining, as it is being explained.

Now that will be possible. As a result of university funding of a Dacus project proposal, twenty-four personal computers will be installed in the library classroom. All will be connected to DLO—Dacus Library Online, the library’s gateway to resources both within and outside the library building. Students will see the same screens as on the library’s public workstations or on their own PC’s when they dial into the library.

The classroom makeover also includes new paint and carpet, a new, state-of-the-art InFocus 770 computer projector, screen, and computer tables designed especially for classroom use. The tables are designed to lower and tilt the monitors so that they don’t interfere with the student’s view of the instructor. Added to the instructor’s computer lectern purchased last year, the teaching environment will be ideal.

Much of the physical preparation of the room was completed over Spring Break; the remaining work will be done as the equipment is delivered.

Some of the equipment formerly in the classroom is being moved to the top floor group study room. Minor

modifications being made to that room will create an area that can be used for instruction when the classroom is occupied or when larger groups must be accommodated.

Laurance R. Mitlin
Associate Dean of Library
Services

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Lois Walker, Editor

Focus

Added funds mean more books

Since January 2000, the library budget has seen two funding increases. An increase of \$12,000 for across-the-curriculum purchases was followed by a special allocation of \$15,000 made for five departments which had immediate accreditation needs. These additional funds were used to fill in gaps identified by the departments and by visiting accrediting teams. Combined, these two recent fund additions comprise 22.4% of the original budget available for book purchases.

This additional money enabled the library to afford many titles which would have otherwise remained beyond our reach. A sample of items

purchased with these new funds includes: *China, 5000 Years*; *Comparative Advantage In International Trade*; *Encyclopedia Of The American Civil War*; *Kirk-Othmer Concise Encyclopedia Of Chemical Technology*; and *Sports Nutrition*.

While we continually add new titles with the latest findings to support our programs of study, we also ensure our collection is uncluttered by obsolete materials. To achieve this balance between the old and the new, the library periodically withdraws outdated materials. Such materials have not circulated in several years or, for some scientific and computer-related

disciplines, are over 15 years old. Only items that are not classics as defined by *Books for College Libraries* become viable candidates for weeding. A list of books suggested for withdrawal is sent to the appropriate teaching faculty for review before actual withdrawal. This ensures that only non-classics containing truly obsolete information are removed from the library.

Such renewal helps us maintain a relevant, up-to-date collection. It also helps us provide students the latest information in their fields of study.

Antje Mays
Head, Monographs Acquisitions

York mayor preserves history in Archives

Gene Barnwell has given a lifetime collection of personal papers and correspondence to Dacus Library at Winthrop University. The donation would seem to have the perfect timing—ending this century with a look back at a lifetime of service in city government, both in his hometown of York and in Alexandria, Virginia, and a rich legacy of musical performance, and beginning a new millennium as a donor of his life's accomplishments.

The collection will tell of Barnwell's musical proficiencies over a span of more than 50 years, extending across the entire United States. It will speak of his abilities in government and his lifetime of service in two municipalities. In short, the collection will form a link from the 20th Century to the 21st Century.

The purpose of preserving one's papers and memorabilia is to enable the researcher to get a sense of the past which can be linked to the present time. Barnwell explained that personal papers make a story available to those who wish to investigate. He hopes his contribution will encourage others to file their old letters and papers with Dacus Library or any research and

archival facility. "It is one way to make a small step in the sands of time," he said. "The papers will have meaning to future citizens who might utilize them for background or research. Personal letters and replies enable the researcher to have a word picture of the area."

Types of materials of value to an archival facility include letters; program folders of events; pictures; and reports, research documents and speeches. Ron Chepesiuk, head of Special Collections, expressed his pleasure at receiving Barnwell's personal papers. "We have collections from all over the Catawba region. However, there is not as much from the York area as we would like."

The collection will be taken to Dacus Library where each piece will be inventoried, and cataloged for the Archives Special Collections.

Barnwell has lived a very rewarding and colorful life. He was born in York, the son of James Robert Barnwell and Iva Erixna Brison Barnwell, one week before his grandfather William Samuel Barnwell, died. The elder Barnwell and his wife, Amanda McArter, were members of Union

Baptist Church, as was his son, James Robert Barnwell.

Gene Barnwell's penchant for preserving the past began with his mother's careful, early record-keeping. The first mention of him in his mother's scrapbook came from the *Yorkville Enquirer*. "Yorkville now has some speedy people. B. Moore and Gene Barnwell recently rode to Black's swimming pool on their bicycles in twelve minutes." The second article in that scrapbook, also from the *Yorkville Enquirer*, pictures Gene Barnwell with eight other local boys as achieving Eagle Scout in Troop No. 1, Yorkville Boy Scouts.

Barnwell retired from City of Alexandria, Virginia, municipal government in 1979. He returned to his native York and was elected mayor of York in 1982. He served two terms as mayor.

Barnwell remains interested in all phases of York city government and attends most of the meetings as a private citizen.

Ron Chepesiuk
Head, Special Collections

Wired to the Gills

From Page 1

Dacus. Our budget continues to improve. While the state provides one set of databases to us, Dacus pays for the larger remainder, and we pay a great deal (tens of thousands of dollars). In the end, truisms turn out to be true: on the web, you get what you pay for.

So how bodes our future? All that pulses is not always well. Electronic delivery, while reliable, fast, and ubiquitous is also mutable, expensive and unnerving. And we're only at the exordium. As the virtual library expands, and as Dacus moves farther along in that direction, other issues emerge. Vendors delivering database packages often change that package without warning. Graphs and photographs still do not transmit well, and some files end up corrupted for no apparent reason (no, *this* time it *isn't* bad company).

Then there is that bugbear known as filtering, where more is often said than is ever really known. Finally, there is what is know as *e-books*, and they *are* coming. Academic libraries spend *billions* a year on books and it's only a matter of time before Dacus may have to deliver some books electronically. As we move deeper into virtual reality, the way we teach will have to change. Often that change will be driven by the delivery of information. While these changes may only be cosmetic at first, they will ultimately nevertheless change in profound ways the manner in which courses are taught.

Meanwhile, Dacus stands ready to make academic life virtually trouble-free. We hope you are taking every advantage of us. If not, why not? We're here to serve.

Mark Y. Herring
Dean of Library Services

<p>ACTIVE PEOPLE</p>
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GINA DEMPSEY,
Serials Assistant,
has taken a position as circulation/reference supervisor at Columbia College.

CHARLENE DRUMMOND,
Serials Assistant,
and

BRENDA KNOX,
Serials Assistant,
have transferred to the Serials Department from the Circulation Department.

GERI GASKILL,
Head of Circulation,
has taken a position as supervisor of branches with the Horry County Public Library in Conway.

ROSE P. DAVIS MARSHALL,
Coordinator of Library Instruction,
is joining the Thomas Cooper Library at the University of South Carolina as reference and library instruction librarian.

DOUG SHORT,
Circulation Assistant,
and

BRITTANY TANT,
Circulation Assistant,
have joined the staff of the Circulation Department.

NANCY WHITE,
Documents Assistant,
has been named head of the Circulation Department