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Merrill-Cazier Library
Utah State University

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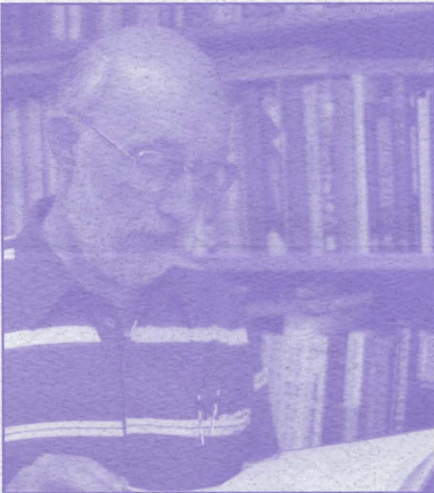


MARGINALIA

friends of utah state university libraries

INTO A BRAVE NEW WORLD?

As Friends of USU Libraries, we might do well to give some thought to the kind of libraries we possess today and hope to enjoy in the future. Today there are questions about libraries that no one—librarian or any of us who love books—has ever before had to face. There remain critical questions



that have been part of library management for a long time, but many more are either entirely new or given a new cast by changes in technology.

For example, when a library converts from a card catalog to an electronic database, what happens to the old card catalog? What is the fate of the card files on the second floor of the Merrill Library—the ones that many of us searched when uncovering some of the secrets the library held for us?

More critical, how confident can librarians and library users be that the information contained on the old cards has been faithfully and accurately entered into the new catalog systems? Transferring data from cards to electronic form

requires some sort of data entry, essentially a typing process. Suppose that the accuracy of our typists might be compared to the purity of Ivory Soap, “.99 and 44/100 percent pure,” surely a commendable (and probably unreachable) goal. That means that in an electronic catalog with a million entries, we might have serious errors for nearly 6,000 volumes. A single error in an electronic catalog entry can result in the effective loss of the book in question; if it cannot be located through the search process, the chance of someone stumbling across it by accident is vanishingly small.

Recent developments at the San Francisco Public Library suggest some of the generic problems posed by our evolving philosophies about what libraries should become in the technological future. Nicholson Baker highlights some of these problems in a provocative essay entitled, “The Author vs. the Library,” in the October 14, 1996 issue of *The New Yorker*.

With good fortune, the San Francisco Public Library survived the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake. The quake presented an opportunity to library administrators to reorganize the Library’s departments. In part, this consolidation and reorganization was performed in anticipation of a move to a new, expanded library building, the “New Main.”

The new library building, a spacious home for staff and books, is an architectural marvel. As Baker describes it,

From the outside, the building looks enormous—and inside, too, the

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Internet
WIZARDRY
tracking new
sites on the
world wide
WEB...



The latest survey by *Network Wizards* (<http://www.nw.com/>) shows the size of the Internet has more than doubled from 6.6 million hosts in mid-1995 to 12.8 million hosts in mid-1996. The staggering growth of the Internet reveals not only the popularity and acceptance of the Internet but also the difficulty of tracking new web sites. Clearly, this level of growth makes it impossible for even the most ardent web user to keep current, never mind librarians and educators with limited time and resources to devote to “surfing” the World Wide Web. So whether you are new to the Internet or a veteran, you may want to point your web browser to the following sites.

InterNIC (<http://rs.internic.net/>) is a joint project sponsored by AT&T and NetworkSolutions, Inc. that promotes the InterNIC Information and Education Services outreach program. As part of this outreach effort, InterNIC produces a variety of publications aimed at providing the necessary tools, information and services to help the research and education community.

Foremost among these publications is *The Scout Report*. *The Scout Report* is a weekly publication (<http://rs.internic.net/scout/report/>) that provides an easy way to keep informed of worthwhile Internet-based resources. Sites are carefully selected for inclusion based on content, authorship and site upkeep. *The Scout Report* is available through E-mail, a plain-text version or a HTML version or via the Web site that has the most recent edition plus a searchable archive of all past reports.

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visitor can enjoy sweeping expanses of carpeting, multistory works of public art...and uninterrupted sight lines in almost every direction. Throwback your head, and you stare upward through a "glittering void" (as its principal architect, James Ingo Freed, describes it) that extends to a conical cornea of white glass eighty-six feet above you. But space, from the point of view of a collection of books, means something quite different from floor space, atrium space...all of which the New Main has in relative abundance. Space, to a book, means shelves: the departments of the library were supposed to get enough shelves to hold their collections, with plenty of room to grow. And yet most of the departments still do not have enough shelf space to hold what they have...

[It has become clear] that the critics of the blueprints had been right to worry: the Main Library's collection... simply [does not fit] in the New Main Library. [In an internal library memo, the Chief of the Main said,] "The unhappy fact remains that we have less storage capacity in the new building than we had planned for and less than we need.

Without sufficient space to shelve the books from the previous collection, librarians were forced to carry out an extreme process of "weeding." Every library must do some regular weeding, periodically deciding which books to keep and which to discard. USU Libraries offers an annual "book sale" of books that are no longer vital to its collections including duplicates, out-of-date volumes and books no longer in demand. One function of a library, of course, is to continue to shelve some irreplaceable sources of information, without regard to demand. But many books have no particular uniqueness to justify shelf space, making such weeding decisions an unavoidable part of a librarian's job.

The weeding process in San Francisco, however, far exceeded what most people would consider standard library practice. Mr. Baker tells of what is called the "Discard Room. He writes,

Stencilled on the wall [of the Discard Room] in red are warnings to stack discards neatly. On most Tuesdays, until this past January, a Department of Public Works truck—a five-ton flatbed truck with wooden sides...drove down to that room, and two, sometimes three men threw the books, which were often tied with string in bundles of eight or ten, into the back.

The usual destination of the discard truck was the city landfill. After the library administration sent instructions to all departments to "weed," the books in the Discard Room grew at such an alarming rate that truck crews "would crack open the door...and close it fast, afraid that an eight-foot-pile of books would collapse on them.

It was reported to the city's Library Commission last July that "the library had withdrawn more than a hundred thousand books from the entire system...in the period from January of 1995 to June of 1996."

Many library employees suspect that the number of books withdrawn was closer to twice the admitted figure.

As part of a legal effort to determine just what had been purged from the San Francisco Library system, Mr. Baker found,

...a thirty-two megabyte computer report entitled 'Purge of Items Declared Withdrawn,' ...[covering] items removed from the collection between January 1, 1995, and April 1, 1996. The report has never been printed out, for it would fill almost five thousand large-format-computer-paper pages.

There had been "at least one earlier purge report, run in 1995, covering discards from some point in the past through the end of 1994. That purge report was itself purged, however...It doesn't exist on any backup tape or disk," leaving the San Francisco Main Library's card catalog, in the words of one librarian, "the mute witness to all of this destruction.

Many of the actions undertaken by San Francisco Public Library administrators were unquestionably well-intentioned and guided by their philosophy about what a library should be and how it should operate in an age of technology. That I (and Nicholson Baker) have a different philosophy does not necessarily invalidate the administrators' approach. In the home my wife and I share, we have perhaps an unreasonable reverence for books. We have been told that in our house, "books grow, like moss, on every available surface." We philosophically recognize the need for weeding, but we discover, betimes, that a book that has sat on our shelves, unopened, for twenty years, is suddenly a necessity. Books that are loaned and unreturned leave a painful gap.

I have no desire to impose our personal peculiarities on others, but some questions will not go away. Every library administration must make

decisions about the nature of its collections. How are library resources to be preserved, and how are they to be made available to library users? Responses to technology are required, even if the decision is to "just say no."

John Needham, a Friends Board Member, articulated several pertinent questions in this regard: "What weeding, if any, occurred during the move to the SciTech Library? On what criteria are books removed from USU Libraries' stacks? What has, in fact, become of USU Libraries' card catalog? And what does its status tell us about the future of the books that fill USU Library stacks?"

As Friends, and users, of USU Libraries, we have a vital interest in what our libraries are going to become. Are we vulnerable to what many consider the disaster of the San Francisco Public Library?

I hope that our library administrators will discuss some of these issues in public forums, and I hope that interested Friends will vigorously respond.

— Professor Lawrence O. Cannon
Friends Board Member

Editor's note: In our spring issue, Richard Schockmel, Acquisitions Librarian, and Reed Painter, Cataloging Librarian, will respond individually to Professor Cannon's queries.



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BETTER than cash

Did you know that giving an appreciated asset to USU Libraries is better than giving cash? Example: Say you have common stock that is currently worth \$1,000, which you originally purchased at \$400, and you are in a combined (federal and state) tax bracket of 30%. If you sold the stock, paid the capital gains taxes and gave the balance to USU Libraries, your gift would total \$820. If, however, you gave the stock directly to the Libraries, it could be sold and net the full \$1,000 for USU Libraries. The Libraries receives \$180 more and you end up with a \$1,000, rather than a \$820, charitable contribution.

Check with your tax advisor for details. To make donations of any form to USU Libraries, call John Payne, 797-2860.



"FRIENDSHIP FOR LIBRARIES IS ENLIGHTENED SELF-INTEREST"

—Barbara Tuchman, *Historian*

The Friends of USU Libraries seek to further the appreciation of books, foster an awareness of the importance of the Libraries to the community and to the state, organize programs based on library collections and interests and stimulate private support for the Libraries.

There are a number of benefits available to friends, members, depending on the level of support:

- **A Subscription to Marginalia**, the Friends' quarterly publication featuring articles on library holdings and happenings.
- **Bookplates** placed in newly-acquired books with your name as donor.
- **Special invitations** to programs sponsored by the Libraries.
- An invitation to a special preview of the annual **Library Week Book Sale**.
- A **USU Libraries Card** providing book check-out privileges and access to the Internet.

Special Memberships are also available for the business community. For more information, call Randy Williams, 797-2869.

"I have always imagined that paradise will be a kind of LIBRARY"

—Jorge Luis Borges



Mark your calendar for the *CollegeWise* lecture series sponsored by the Friends of USU Libraries

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I want to support _____ with a monthly payroll deduction to strengthen this important program.
(The following information is needed for payroll deduction)

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Date _____

Signature

friends' calendar



Date	Event	Speaker	Time	Place
9 JAN.	collegewise*	GEORGIA LAURITZEN	4:00 p	scitech LIBRARY 120 USU Extension
<p>"Maintaining a Safe, Nutritious Food Supply: Keeping Up with Changing Society" Dr. Georgia Lauritzen will contrast our food supply today with that of the past, discussing food policy, legislation and the role of technology in our changing means of producing and consuming food. Dr. Lauritzen is an Extension Specialist in nutrition and Associate Professor in the USU College of Agriculture's Department of Nutrition and Food Sciences.</p>				
13 FEB.	collegewise*	BARRE TOELKEN	4:00 pm	scitech LIBRARY 120 USU College of HASS
<p>"Folklore: The Living Library" Dr. Barre Toelken will discuss the Fife Folklore Archive's function within University Libraries and how folklore serves as a repository of cultural expressions which preserve and reveal important aspects of our Western cultures. Professor Toelken is Director of USU's American Studies Graduate Program and the Department of English's Folklore Program.</p>				
21 FEB.	BOOK READING*	COLLEEN WHITLEY	7:00 pm	eccles conf center USU Press
<p>"Worth Their Salt: Notable But Often Unnoted Women of Utah" Join us and our co-sponsor, USU Press, as we celebrate "notable but often unnoted women of Utah." The book's editor, Colleen Whitley, and several contributors will read from and discuss their essays on lesser-known but important Utah women..</p>				
13 MAR.	FRANK ASCIONE*		7:00 p.	msci-tech LIBRARY, 120 USU College of Education
13-19 apr.	national library week			
<p>friends-only special preview of the annual booksale. see the spring 1997 issue of marginalia for details on all library week activities.</p>				
<p>* All Friends' events are free and open to the public. For more information, call 797-2869.</p>				

the euphoria of reading

"To the gourmet fungus, as to the bibliophile, a well-stocked library is a feast of incomparable variety and flavor."

According to R.J. Hay, Doctor of Dermatology in London, there may be a chemical explanation for the euphoria that scholars experience when they unearth an ancient manuscript. Writing in the British medical journal, *Lancet*, (V.346 Dec.16 1995), Hay presents the fanciful possibility that the disturbance of fungi and mold spores present in old paper could be responsible for the enhancement of artistic endeavors, and even be one source of the scholar's enlightenment.

"The source of inspiration for many great literary figures may have been nothing more than a quick sniff of the bouquet of moldy books," writes Hay. "Coleridge may have been quite wrongly suspected of describing the delights of Kubla Khan's fun city under the influence of opium, a few hours breathing deeply among his books incubated in the dank Somerset air being quite sufficient to whirl him off to Xanadu in a trance."

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Yes! I would like to join Friends of Utah State University Libraries!

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_____ Book-of-the-Year Club	\$50.00	
_____ Quarter Book Club	\$150.00	
_____ Book-of-the-Month Club	\$500.00	
_____ Benefactor	\$750.00	
<p>Yes, I (or my spouse) work for a matching-gift company. If yes, please enclose matching-gift form.</p>		<p>Select one category and send check and this form to: (see back for alternate USU employee payment plan)</p> <p>Friends of Utah State University Libraries 3000 University Boulevard Logan UT 84322-3000</p>

thank you for your support

The second current awareness project supported by InterNIC, and Gleason Sackman, is *Net-happenings* (<http://www.mid.net:80/NET/>). This is a daily listing of Internet sites that are of interest to the Internet community of users. The *Net-happenings* home page maintains an archive back to 1994. Although not as useful as the *Scout Report*, since they do not provide annotations to help guide users to resources, *Net-happenings* is still a valuable site to check on the newest happenings in cyber-space.

Finally, InterNIC sponsors *K.I.D.S* (<http://rs.internic.net/scout/KIDS/index.html>), a new publication produced by K-12 students for other K-12 students. Published biweekly, *K.I.D.S* resources are selected and annotated by students with teacher assistance. This page is of interest to parents, educators and children alike.

Although it is difficult to find another current awareness newsletter/homepage as comprehensive and useful as those sponsored by InterNIC, there is one other that does an excellent job of reviewing sites. *Netsurfer Digest* (<http://www.netsurf.com/nsd/index.html>) forgoes the InterNIC's emphasis on educational sites but makes up for this with an array of genuinely interesting Web sites. Topics include new sites, art online, books and e-zines, science and technology. Each site is clearly annotated and, like *The Scout Report*, *Netsurfer Digest* can be received via e-mail or browsed at their homepage. *Netsurfer Digest* maintains archives from 1994 and sponsors the *Netsurfer Focus*, a newsletter devoted to single topics that they then give more in-depth coverage.

Internet Resources Newsletter (<http://www.hw.ac.uk/libWWW/irn/irn.html>) is a monthly e-mail newsletter published by the Heriot-Watt University library in the United Kingdom. The emphasis is British; however, they include Internet sites from elsewhere. Each site is annotated and they maintain an archive of past issues.

In order to facilitate access to these web resources, a copy of this article with active links to all of the mentioned resources can be found at the following URL: (<http://www.usu.edu/~library/Friends/friend.html>). If you have any comments or need help navigating the Internet, please contact Kevin Brewer at 797-0737 or via e-mail at kevbre@cc.usu.edu.

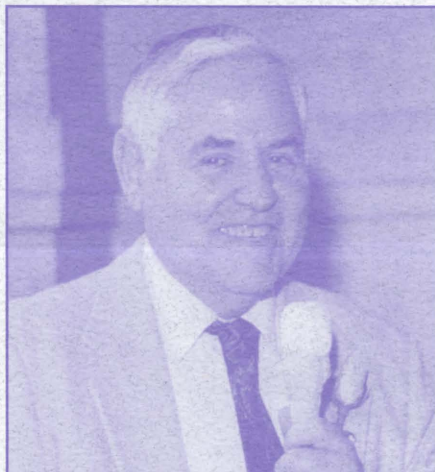
—Kevin Brewer
Science Reference Librarian
USU Libraries

Just Between Friends:

an introduction to a friend of usu libraries

Wilford R. Gardner, a new addition to the Board of the Friends of the USU Libraries, is becoming reacquainted with his *alma mater* and place of birth. Though born in Logan, the young Wilford was educated in Colorado and returned to USU, after serving with the U.S. Corps of Engineers during World War II, to pursue a bachelor's degree in physics and mathematics. Here he met his future wife, Marjorie Louise Cole, with whom he shares an active interest in music. He received his M.S. and Ph.D. in solid-state physics and mathematics, with a minor in soil physics, a field pioneered by his uncle, Willard Gardner, who then chaired USU's Physics Department.

Following graduation, Wilford



sought a career in soil physics which led him to positions as a Physicist at the U.S. Salinity Laboratory in Riverside, California; Professor of Environmental Physics at the University of Wisconsin; Head of the Department of Soil and Water Sciences at the University of Arizona; and until 1994, Dean of the College of Natural Resources of the University of California at Berkeley. He holds the title of Dean Emeritus at Berkeley and Adjunct Professor of Soil Physics at USU. Professor Gardner is the recipient of an National Science Foundation Fellowship to Cambridge, England and Wageningen, The Netherlands, a Fulbright Fellowship at the University of Ghent and a Pye Fellowship to Australia. He has been President of the Soil Science Society of America and was elected to the National Academy of Sciences in 1983.

Having moved to Logan for family reasons, Professor Gardner is continuing his scientific activities on the national and

international level. He has just completed chairing a study of the future of irrigation for the National Academy's National Research Council. He explains that the Mormon experience with irrigation and the pioneering research by Mormons such as John A. Widsote, a former Professor of Soil Chemistry at USU, led him to seek this assignment. He is presently working on a history of soil physics during the first half of this century, drawing heavily on holdings in the Merrill Library's Special Collections and Archives.

According to Professor Gardner, "Without USU Libraries, my life as a scientist would largely be at an end. As a Friends Board Member, I hope that we can bring about a greater appreciation on the part of the Cache Valley community, both of the tremendous asset the Libraries represent and how accessible they are."

adopt a journal

The Friends of USU Libraries invites individuals and groups to "adopt"—or assist in the purchase of—the many scholarly journals and other periodicals available at USU Libraries. Donors may contribute in several ways:

1. You may pledge all or part of the annual subscription of the journal of your choice, either for an indefinite or specified period of time.
2. You may pledge the partial subscription of all the journal in a chosen field of study.
3. You may establish a perpetual endowment from which the library can use the earnings to acquire selected journals.
4. Or, you may make a matching gift towards this year's subscription of one or more journals.

Donors are acknowledged in the electronic catalog and on a bookplate placed within the issues of the adopted journal. To make a donation or discuss journals awaiting adoption, call John Payne, 797-2860.

The Friends of USU Libraries thank the following for adopting journals on behalf of USU Libraries: The Book Table (*Dialogue, Journal of Mormon History, Sunstone*), Dr. William F. Lye (*Africa Today, African Affairs, African Studies Review, Issues, Van Riebeeck Society*) and Janis Grimes Neece (journal related to psychology).

— Professor William F. Lye
President
Friends of USU Libraries

the frontier closes at old main

Smarting under restrictive legislation passed by the Utah State Legislature which limited curriculum and instruction at Utah Agricultural College (now Utah State University), President Elmer George Peterson conceived the idea of initiating a National Summer School in 1923. Peterson hoped to circumvent the legislative restriction—of only being able to provide instruction in agriculture and related topics—by attracting a nationally prominent faculty to the campus thereby enabling him to offer a wider diversity of academic subjects. Among those scholars whom Peterson contacted was the historian Frederick Jackson Turner.

By 1923, Turner was nearing the end of an academic career which began auspiciously with the delivery of his famous frontier thesis at the annual meeting of the American Historical Association in July 1893 and ended with his retirement from Harvard University in 1924.

Turner and President Peterson corresponded with one another often over the course of the next two years.

Although they form only a small part of the papers of Utah State's sixth president, the letters of frontier historian Frederick Jackson Turner constitute a unique and important holding for University Archives. The letters are contained in The Papers of Elmer George Peterson, Sixth President of the Utah State Agricultural College (1916-1944), Record Group 3.1/6-2.

Turner accepted President Peterson's invitation, outlining in October 1924 the subject of his courses by noting:

"I am willing to give the course in American History, 1815-1850; or I could give myself a little more lee way for a general audience by making the subject: The Section in American History — a general survey...with reference to the factor of sectionalism."

Turner was welcomed to the campus of Utah Agricultural College with an adoration that he had not enjoyed since his early days of teaching at the University of Wisconsin. Over three hundred undergraduates crowded into the chapel of Old Main to hear Turner discuss his frontier theories. The scenery, the culture, the

scholarly atmosphere and especially the fishing on Logan River, impressed Turner, who wrote to his wife, Mae, "I am a Mormon in everything but 'revelation.'" Mae accompanied her husband to Logan the following summer and was equally impressed.

— Bob Parson
University Archivist
USU Libraries

happy new
year!



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