

# Copyright reform



Kerry Webb

Two press releases around the end of April have promised that Australia will have some of the world's most advanced Internet legislation as a result of reforms to improve protection for copyright material. They are 'Copyright reform and the information economy' at <http://www.dca.gov.au/mediarel/98/064.html> and 'Cultural sector boosted by progressive copyright reform' at <http://www.dca.gov.au/mediarel/98/069.html>. As outlined in this press release, the Department of Communications and the Arts will be conducting the *Copyright and the electronic image forum* in Canberra on 29 July 1998 at the National Gallery of Australia. It will be a national event, of interest to librarians, publishers, multimedia developers, representatives of cultural institutions, and members of the wider community. For further information, see <http://www.dca.gov.au/cmcf/frames/forum.html>.

## Digital libraries resources

If you want to keep up with what's happening with digital libraries, try the Digital Library Information and Resources page at <http://www.canis.uiuc.edu/~bgross/dl/>. It has information on the Digital Libraries Initiative, select digital library projects, a list of forthcoming digital library conferences, and best of all, previous digital library conferences with online proceedings. Definitely worth bookmarking.

One of the digital library sites linked from the page is Columbia University's Project Bartleby (<http://www.columbia.edu/acis/bartleby/>), a library of classic literature in hypertext (I particularly enjoyed Keats' little-known travelogue 'To Kosciusko').

## Library Philosophy and Practice

*Library Philosophy and Practice* (<http://www.uidaho.edu/~mbolin/lp&p.htm>) is a new peer-reviewed electronic journal which will appear twice a year, with the initial issue later in 1998. They have issued a call for papers for the second issue, due in early 1999. The deadline is 1 August 1998.

## The West Report online

The Australian Government-initiated Review into Higher Education Financing and Policy is now complete, and the final report of the West Committee is at <http://www.deet.gov.au/divisions/hed/hereview/toc.htm> in HTML and PDF versions. The Report was discussed at a National Scholarly Communication Forum Round Table *Seams in the seamless: technology and delivery*. Some of the papers are available at [http://www.asap.unimelb.edu.au/nscf/roundtables/roundtable\\_8.htm](http://www.asap.unimelb.edu.au/nscf/roundtables/roundtable_8.htm). It's been reported that the Report could have given more consideration to the impact of networking technologies on education and also the serials funding crisis.

## The digital economy

The US Department of Commerce has released a report titled *The emerging digital economy* (<http://www.ecommerce.gov/emerging.htm>) to 'document the importance of information technologies to the economy, businesses and consumers.' The report traces the development of the Internet, how businesses are using electronic commerce, and the use of the Internet to deliver digital goods and services as well as tangible goods. In addition, the report examines how information technology has affected consumers and workers.

Meanwhile on this side of the pond, we had our own investigation of the Online Information Economy, the E-Commerce Summit. The web pages are at <http://enablingaustralia.telstra.com.au/> and there's a fair bit of useful content there, including transcripts of many of the speeches, presentations, and Q & A sessions.

## Online universities

A report at <http://www.networx.on.ca/~jwalker/digdipl.htm> describes in strong terms some recent online developments in North American institutions. The crux of the report is an article by David Noble, a Canadian historian. One of his comments is that 'Few students realise that their computer-based courses are often thinly veiled field trials for product and market development, that while they are studying their courses, their courses are studying them'. I can see how this may offend some people, but it sounds like common sense to me. The article is well worth reading.

## National Libraries symposium

'Age of information and national libraries' was a symposium held at the Osterreichische Nationalbibliothek in Vienna in April. A report and summary of the presentations is presented in a rather attractive site at <http://www.onb.ac.at/newsev/sympo1/sy1fr.htm>.

## TERENA tools

The TERENA (Trans-European Research and Education Networking Association) has been providing a 'Guide to network resource tools' for several years. At its site (<http://www.terena.nl/libr/gnrt/>) there's a wealth of guidance on how to get the most out of searching the Internet, including a full-text search facility for the site.

## Great news!

The US communications giant MCI has reported the results of a demographic study conducted under its LibraryLINK program. It says that the use of public libraries for Internet access in the US has increased by more than 500 per cent since 1996. Sixteen per cent of the respondents in the had accessed

*It will be a national event, of interest to librarians, publishers, multimedia developers, representatives of cultural institutions, and members of the wider community...*

the Internet through an access point other than home, work or school, and almost half of that number had used the public library as their 'alternative' access point. It would be interesting to see what the Australian figures would be.

#### Dates for library conferences?

Actually, we're talking about the sort of dates you find on calendars — well you know what I mean. Check out the librarian's datebook at <http://www.hsl.unc.edu/libcal.htm>. They list events (regional, national, international) as far out as 2006, including ALIA2000.

#### ... and for knowledge management

If you want to keep pace with the fast-moving world of knowledge management, see their meetings Website at <http://www.dreamscape.com/burton/kmmeet.htm>.

#### Answers for kids

The ALA has a site called 'Ask KidsConnect' that looks pretty useful. It's run by the American Association of School Librarians (AASL), with assistance from a few other bodies, including Microsoft. Enquirers are asked to submit their questions via e-mail, and one of the Association's volunteers replies within a couple of days with a list of appropriate research materials, including Internet sources. See it at <http://www.ala.org/ICONN/AskKC.html>.

#### Digital collections study

The UK Arts and Humanities Data Service (AHDS) has been carrying out a study into the needs for digital archiving, on behalf of the Joint Information Systems Committee. The public consultation draft of this study, 'Digital collections: strategic policy framework for creating and preserving digital resources' is now available on the Web at <http://ahds.ac.uk/manage/framework.htm>. Comments and additions for incorporation are welcome and should be sent to the authors by the end of June.

#### And standards and preservation

AHDS has also released two new pages on Standards for the Interchange of Digital Information (<http://ahds.ac.uk/resource/standards.html>) and Digital Preservation (<http://ahds.ac.uk/resource/preserve.html>). The Standards page lists organisations which are working on relevant standards for the interchange of cultural resource material. These standards cover technical standards, data documentation standards, and controlled vocabularies. The preservation page is a revised set of references to international resources and initiatives on the preservation of digital resources.

#### Asia-Pacific site

The ABC has been doing a lot of good work on their Web site, which is generally well designed and informative, even though they

don't update the news component as often as they should. One new feature is the news-based companion site to Radio Australia's program 'Asia-Pacific', with background features and news headlines (unfortunately also not updated quickly). See for yourself at <http://www.abc.net.au/ra/asiapac/default.htm>.

#### Legal information online

Ron Huttner, a Victorian solicitor, barrister and academic, has put together an extensive site of online legal resources at <http://www.law.unimelb.edu.au/research/research.html>. It starts with a list of Australian legal sites (AUSTLII, courts, parliamentary bodies) and then covers contemporary issues such as the waterfront dispute and Native Title, with links to the home pages of the organisations involved and to press releases and transcripts and decisions of related court proceedings. It then covers other Australian issues and finally lists a large number of international legal resources.

#### More on the metadata thread

The ARIADNE project, supported by the European Union Telematics for Applications Program, has recently published its recommendations for educational metadata at <http://ariadne.unil.ch>. ARIADNE has a distributed database of reusable pedagogical documents called the Knowledge Pool System, consisting of the documents themselves and a detailed descriptions of these documents. The ARIADNE metadata set explicitly refers to the Dublin core elements and adds additional elements to this base set, based on experience in practical experiments during the last two years.

One feature of the development is a software tool for insertion of metadata by end users. The same tool, developed as a Java application, can also be used to query the Knowledge Pool System. Comments and reactions by the Dublin core community are most welcome and can be sent to the address at the site.

#### Poll by USA Today

Late in April, the *USA Today* newspaper conducted an online poll to ask for opinions about libraries' use of filtering software on the Internet terminals. The results broadly opposed the use of the software with around sixty per cent saying that it should not happen. This is heartening, until you start considering which group is most likely to be responding to such a poll, that is those who are already using the Internet on a regular basis. And the results may have been skewed by messages that went out to a number of librarians lists urging people to vote. We haven't heard the last of this one. ■

*The results broadly opposed the use of the software with around sixty per cent saying that it should not happen...*

The ALIA home pages and the ALIA web service, ALIANet, can be found at the following URL:  
<http://www.alia.org.au/>

**SAVE YOURSELF  
THE TROUBLE OF  
TYPING THESE  
URLS!**

This column (with associated hyperlinks) is on ALIANet, and has the URL of  
<http://www.alia.org.au/incite/www/>

[Please note that full-stops at the end of any URL or e-mail addresses, or underlines, appearing in *inCite* should NOT be used]

Contributions and suggestions for this column are always welcome. Please e-mail Kerry Webb at [kerry.webb@alianet.alia.org.au](mailto:kerry.webb@alianet.alia.org.au) or via the ALIA National Office, [incite@alia.org.au](mailto:incite@alia.org.au)