

# Books and the Web



Kerry Webb

*Are we seeing designers taking the book paradigm and translating it to Web pages, or are there people re-examining what books are about, what the Web is about, and merging the best points of the two?*

The future of the book — a topic that librarians and others are debating vigorously at present (and probably for some time into the future). As I pointed out in the March issue, you can get some ideas on the topic from Clifford Stoll, Walt Crawford and Michael Gorman, and Nicholas Negroponte. But what is happening now on the Net? Are we seeing designers taking the book paradigm and translating it to Web pages, or are there people re-examining what books are about, what the Web is about, and merging the best points of the two? The answer is yes, and yes.

As an example of the former, I was recently notified of a new Web site for the NSW Fire Brigades. At the specified address I found a photo of a fireman — just a fireman, no text, no explanation of what the site was about. My browser indicated that the photo was a link, so I clicked on it and found a photo of the Commissioner, links to audio files of his welcome speech, and finally at the bottom of the page a link to the 'Web site', where at last there were pointers to useful information about the NSW Fire Brigades. It seems as if the designer had taken as his model an Annual Report format, with a 'cover', a 'welcome page', and finally a table of contents. Not very useful.

On the other hand consider *Aether madness*, a Web site at <http://www.aether.com/Aether/index.html>. It's a version of a book called *Aether madness: an offbeat guide to the online world*, and consists of the full text of the book, with hypertext links to most of the places that the authors recommend visiting. It's all that the book is — and more. There's an introduction, some travel tales, a glossary, and a resource guide. You can also use a Web form to provide feedback, and there's also information on how to buy the book.

Here are a couple of other sites which show you can add that little extra to make the Web more than just a collection of text.

### The 'I still call Australia home' pages from QANTAS

At <http://www.qantas.com.au/> QANTAS has most of the things that you would find in one or more of their brochures — schedules, Frequent Flyer information, travel opportunities. Their extra offering is the arrivals and departures information, which is linked to their national computer system, so that you can check before you go to the airport whether your flight is on time.

### White pages maps

Telstra continue to improve the services on their Web site. In their White Pages service at

<http://www.whitepages.com.au> many business address are linked to an online UBD map. When you display the map, you can use 'pan' and 'zoom' commands to display an adjacent area or change the scale of the map. And of course the map can be printed.

### Seven ages

Vannevar Bush in his 1945 article 'As we may think' had a vision for the future of the book. This forms the base for Michael Lesk's article 'The seven ages of information retrieval' which examines the developments in information retrieval since that time. You'll find it at <http://community.bellcore.com/lesk/ages/ages.html> but you may have some trouble downloading it because of the graphics in the document. Even if you have to turn off the images, the text is well worth reading.

### Internet Resources for Cataloguing

In the January 1995 *inCite* I reported on a site in which Vianne Sha had collected links to a number of resources useful for cataloguers. This has now been incorporated in a larger document — LIST (Library and Information Science Toolbox), which can be found at <http://www.law.missouri.edu/vianne/list.htm>.

LIST covers a range of topics including Internet resources for archives, preservation, and special collections; library associations on Internet; and library e-mail lists and newsgroups.

### EdNA prototype site

Under the Education Network Australia initiative, a site has been established at <http://proto.edna.edu.au> to try out new and interesting features to enhance EdNA. The purpose of the site is to obtain user feedback so that education sector representatives can make informed decisions on which features should be migrated to the 'real' EdNA site.

Try it out and let them know what you think.

### NASIG on the Net

The North American Serials Interest Group (NASIG) is an independent organisation promoting communication and sharing among people working with or concerned about serial publications. They have set up NASIGWeb at <http://nasig.ils.unc.edu>. On it you'll find an online membership brochure, lists of committee and board members, citations for the published Conference Proceedings volumes and links to other Web sites of interest to serialists.

### IFLA Directory

IFLA has announced that its 1996/1997 Directory is available at <http://www.nlc-bnc.ca/ifla/database/directy.htm>. It is searchable and

contains contact information about the IFLA members in various categories, but it does not have information about officers and members of IFLA administrative units, steering bodies, core programs, divisions, sections, and round tables. This will be published soon in an online companion directory.

### New at HealthWeb

The health sciences librarians and information professionals from the 'big ten' United States universities and the University of Chicago have built HealthWeb at <http://www.ghsl.nwu.edu/healthweb/> by selecting critically evaluated resources. They've announced thirteen new pages on the site, including AIDS, Anatomy, Osteopathic Medicine, Pediatrics, and Veterinary Medicine.

### Return to Oz

In the September 1995 issue, I referred to Earl Lee's article 'A visit to Oz' about the trials of library automation. He's followed it up with 'The return to Oz' at <http://axelib.pittstate.edu/staff/personal/earl/return.html>.

### Library computer accessories on the Internet

There's a new Web page for finding library computer accessories through the Internet, featuring companies which specialise in libraries, as well as those whose products are designed primarily for general office, multimedia, or other markets. It's at <http://www.auburn.edu/~tostecd/docs/accessories.html>.

### The Internet Library Association

The Internet Library Association (ILA) has been created to educate, support, and inform librarians and others about the Internet. The ILA's web page at <http://www.usm.edu/~jiregel/ila> has links to other technology-related organisations, Internet news, details of their listserv, and 'how to' links.

### Technostress

John Kupersmith, author of the article 'Technostress and the reference librarian' (*Reference services review*, Summer 1992), has put together a page on the subject at <http://www.greatbasin.net/~jkup/> including links to a number of interesting articles. ■

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

### 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/alia/incite/articles/webb's-web.html>

[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).



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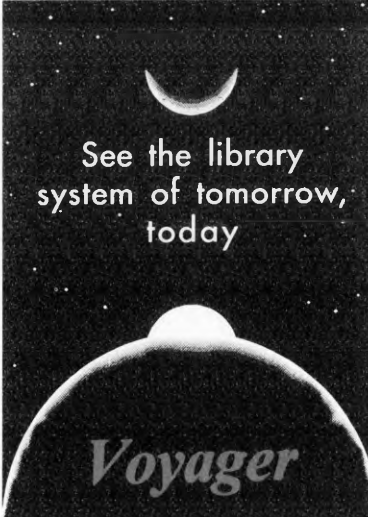
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