

## A Note from the Interim Dean

When Random House bought out the venerable publisher Alfred A. Knopf in 1960, it made headlines in the *New York Times*. As a result, the Attorney General of the United States called Bennett Cerf, the head of Random House. This happened even though the total value of the deal was under \$15 million, and the combined market share of the new company did not reach even one-percent. Last year, the *New York Times* carried another story. In this story, it reported that AOL had purchased Time-Warner for \$165 billion dollars. No one from the Attorney General's office called this time. Since that time, mergers and takeovers have continued apace until five major publishing conglomerates control 80% of American book sales. They are as follows:

Corporate Media Owner	Book Company	Total Corporate Sales
1. Time-Warner	Book of the Month Club Little, Brown, & Company	\$31 billion
2. Disney	Hyperion	\$24 billion
3. Viacom/CBS	Simon & Schuster	\$19 billion
4. Bertelsman	Various small publishers	\$16 billion
5. News Corporation	Harper Collins	\$14 billion

It is probably fair to ask: does this change in American publishing really matter? After all, in 1999, 70,000 new books were published in the United States. Isn't that enough? Well, perhaps figures in publishing do not tell the entire story. Here are some troubling thoughts:

1. Sheer size of publishing output does not guarantee diversity of content. More and more books published seem to duplicate one another.
2. Although the United States' title output of 70,000 seems impressive, it is actually lower per capita than many other countries. For example, Britain, published the same number of books even though it has a smaller population.
3. The standards of the entertainment industry now deeply influence American publishing. Best seller lists reveal an ever-narrower range of books based on celebrities and sensational stories with little intellectual or artistic merit.

With the radical consolidation of American book publishing under the oversight of media corporations, there seems to be an emphasis on either entertainment or "information." There is much less room for books with new or controversial ideas or path-breaking literary voices. When the next Aldous Huxley appears, I hope he/she will be able to find a publisher.

Mark Weber  
Interim Dean, Libraries & Media Services



### Will you help?

*Footnotes* is now ten years old. The goal has been to share information from Libraries & Media Services about services and resources, as well as to highlight some issues of mutual concern—such as scholarly publishing and copyright.

We ask that you complete the enclosed readership survey so that we can make *Footnotes* more useful to you in the issues ahead. The survey is also available at: <http://www.library.kent.edu/footnotes/survey.html>. Thank you!

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# Footnotes

**News from the Kent State University Libraries & Media Services**  
<http://www.library.kent.edu/footnotes/>

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## Dates for Your Calendar



Professor Noel Polk

### **Borowitz Lecture: Gavin Stevens and the Law**

Thursday  
DECEMBER 7, 2000  
4:00 p.m.  
Special Collections Reading Room  
(1212 Library)

This year's Borowitz Lecture will be delivered by Noel Polk, Professor of English at the University of Southern Mississippi, and a prominent voice in contemporary American literary criticism. Professor Polk, whose work has given shape to the past two decades of Faulkner scholarship, will focus on the character Gavin Stevens, the crusading county attorney and amateur Sherlock Holmes who moves through the regional society of Faulkner's Yoknapatawpha novels.

Faulkner himself described Stevens as knowing,

. . . a good deal less about people than he did about the law and about ways of evidence drawing the right conclusions from what he saw with his legal mind. When he had to deal with people, he was an amateur. Probably the passion he had for trying this and trying that and going all the way to Europe to get more degrees, to study more, was in his own nature, it was the same character that made him shy away from marriage, he was probably afraid to be married. He might get too involved with the human race if he married one of them.

Professor Polk will probably leave the issue of Stevens' bachelorhood alone. He will, however, focus on the topic of Stevens' "legal mind," exploring matters that are of crucial concern to attorney Stevens: the creation and enforcement of laws, how certain acts and not others are defined as crimes.

The lecture is free and open to the public. It will be followed by a reception. For further information, contact Jeanne Somers (330-672-1683 or [jsomers@kent.edu](mailto:jsomers@kent.edu)).

### **UCITA A Problem for Higher Education and Libraries?**

Teleconference  
Wednesday  
DECEMBER 13, 2000  
1 - 4:00 p.m.  
319 Kent Student Center

UCITA, the Uniform Computer Information Transactions Act, is a proposed state law that seeks to create a uniform approach to the licensing of software and information. There are several aspects of UCITA that pose problems for higher education and libraries. As proposed, UCITA:

- legitimizes a non-negotiable contract-based system of intellectual property.
- permits provisions that prohibit reverse engineering and the public comment or criticism of a product.
- allows the licensor to electronically disable computer information or software that resides on your system.
- allows software firms to waive liability for known defects in their software.

To learn more about these and related issues, plan to attend the teleconference, "UCITA: A Guide to Understanding and Action," hosted by Libraries & Media Services on December 13th. The panelists are: James Neal, Dean of University Libraries, Johns Hopkins University; Rodney Petersen, Director, Policy and Planning, Office of Information Technology, University of Maryland; Catherine Wojewodzki, Reference Librarian, University of Delaware, and former State Representative in the Delaware Legislature; Sarah K. (Sally) Wiant, Director of the Law Library and Professor of Law, Washington and Lee University. Following the formal presentation there will be a 30-minute discussion on the potential impact of UCITA on Kent State. For program details and links to information sources please see <http://www.arl.org/ucita.html>.

To register for this free event, contact Cindy Rasmussen, Dean's Office, Library (330-672-4483 or [crasmuss@kent.edu](mailto:crasmuss@kent.edu)).

## Database News

### SuperFind: Help in Database Selection

OhioLINK has developed a tool to help users select one of the OhioLINK databases when they do not know where to start. "SuperFind" enables a user to enter a keyword and choose the appropriate topical group. The system then searches the databases in that grouping and gives the number of hits for each database. Suggestions are also given for other OhioLINK databases to try that are operated by external providers.

If the user searches a multi-word phrase, SuperFind displays the number of hits on each word separately. No combination, such as adjacency or the logical operation of AND, is performed.

After identifying databases with productive yields, the user connects to a given database and reenters the search to retrieve the actual citations.

### Help in the Library

Encourage your students to come to the Library for assistance with their projects. Quick, expert help is available in the Reference Center of the Main Library 70+ hours per week. RefCam highlights the action (<http://www.library.kent.edu/reference/drefserv.html>).

### Upgrade to the *ERIC* Thesaurus

The *ERIC* database has been reloaded with an enhanced Thesaurus that now includes the date that each subject term was introduced. This will enable users to do more thorough retrospective searches knowing when *ERIC* terminology changes took place.

### Change in Newspaper Abstracts

*Newspaper Abstracts* covers 1989-present. At present there are two segments of this database available: 1989-1996 and 1997- present. On Monday, December 4, these will be merged into one covering the entire time period.

### Demise of *Cumulative Book Index*

The *Cumulative Book Index (CBI)* database is no longer being updated. It is being retained as an online reference for the years 1982-1999. *CBI* began as a print publication in 1905 and served as an international bibliography of books published in English.

### Online HELP!

Among the enhancements to OhioLINK databases that will be implemented over winter inter-session will be context-sensitive help. This will provide help information directly related to the search page the user is currently on. More information to follow!

## ENGRAVING New and Improved

Audio Visual Services has improved and expanded its Engraving Services and now offers a wide range of materials. Engraving Services can produce numerous styles of name tags, desk and wall name plates, office, door, and hallway signs, equipment labels, and direction plates.

Name tags are available with the standard pin, magnetic clip, or a pressure clip. The new University logo can be incorporated into name tags or any type of display signs. Symbols, patterns, and other designs can be scanned and then engraved. Engraving Services can also produce the University standard blue and gold public hallway signs that incorporate Braille and tactile letters or symbols. Self-standing desk and counter signs of various sizes and colors are also available. For more information or to place an order, contact Larry Rubens (330-672-3272, fax 330-672-3463, or e-mail [lrubens@lms.kent.edu](mailto:lrubens@lms.kent.edu)). Engraving Services is located in Audio Visual Services, 3rd floor, Main Library.



## Detecting Internet Plagiarism

Two recent issues of the *Daily Kent Stater* focused on the growing problem of student plagiarism, especially through the use of "term paper mills" and misuse of other types of Internet resources. These can include full-text resources provided through the Libraries or located anywhere on the Web.

In response to this rising problem, librarians have developed a Web site to provide instructors with information to help prevent and detect plagiarism by students. Originally created to

support the 60-Minute Seminar, "Student Plagiarism, the Internet, and You," this site links to a variety of free and fee-based services that allow instructors to test portions of students' papers for the likelihood of plagiarism. It also contains a bibliography of selected resources that includes sections for faculty, students, and links to software and online detection tools. The plagiarism Web site is located at <http://www.library.kent.edu/plagiarism/>.

For further information, please contact Erica Lilly (330-672-1660 or [elilly@lms.kent.edu](mailto:elilly@lms.kent.edu)) or Kara Robinson (330-672-1664 or [krobinso@kent.edu](mailto:krobinso@kent.edu)).

## New in Government Documents



### Finding Government Information <http://www.firstgov.gov>

As the Federal Government continues to migrate its services and information resources to the Web, the number of government sites and pages is rapidly growing. According to current estimates, there are 20,000 sites providing over 100 million pages of government information.

In an effort to help the public navigate the Web for government information, the Federal Government has developed *FirstGov*. The goal is to provide the public with one-stop shopping for Web-based government information. The site offers a search engine that indexes only government sites, a directory for federal information on the Web, and another directory for state and local government.

*FirstGov* was launched in September 2000 and links to it are appearing on many agency sites. Two commercial search engines that do a better job of relevancy ranking for government sites are: Google's UncleSam (<http://www.google.com/unclesam>) and Northern Light's usgovsearch (<http://usgovsearch.northernlight.com/publibaccess/>).

### Reducing Tobacco Use: A Report of the Surgeon General

This report is a "composite assessment of efforts to reduce tobacco use." It supplements information in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' *Healthy People 2010*, which sets forth goals on how to make all Americans healthier throughout the next decade. The report is organized for easy use, with access to information about a range of issues, including the history of American tobacco use, past efforts to reduce use, and plans for the future.

The report is available both in print and on CD-ROM. The accompanying CD-ROM installs easily, is very user-friendly, and provides links to the report from the table of contents. The print volume (HE 20.7602:T 55/4) and the CD-ROM (HE 20.7602:T 55/4/ CD-ROM) are both available in the Government Documents collection on the tenth floor of the Main Library. An executive summary is available as well (HE 20.7602:T 55/4/EXEC.SUM).

