Deconstructing Wikipedia Mythology

By Ann Matsuuchi, Instructional Technology/Systems Librarian

“...We come from geek culture, we come from the free software movement, we have a lot of technologists involved, and therefore, that’s where our major strengths are. We know we have systemic biases, we know we have problems in the sense that a lot of the articles in the humanities aren’t nearly as good as they could be. This has gotten better over time, but it’s something I think we still need to focus a lot of attention on, even to the point of thinking about how can we bring more people, more good quality editors in to Wikipedia to help us improve those kinds of things...”


Myth #1- Everything is in Wikipedia.

Have you ever been surprised to not find something in Wikipedia? Wikipedia is a relatively new entity and research as to its usage and development has only just begun. The presumed universality of Wikipedia’s content is an ideal only partially realized, and its administrative structure is more conservative, in the sense of dogmatic resistance to change, than one would expect. The participatory nature of knowledge creation has great value, but it requires an awareness of how the generated system operates and what powers control it.

Ed Chi and Bongwon Suh at Xerox’s PARC (Palo Alto Research Center) are conducting numerous studies.

(Continued on page 10)

Library Faculty Co-Author a Major Book on the Use of the Invisible Web

By Louise Fluk, Coordinator of Instruction

Professor Jane Devine, LaGuardia’s Chief Librarian and Professor Francine Egger-Sider, Coordinator of Technical Services, have just published Going Beyond Google: The Invisible Web in Learning and Teaching (New York: Neal-Schuman, 2009). The book is cram-packed with ideas, activities, examples, illustrations, pedagogical tools, bibliographical references, Web links and more, all designed to energize serious Internet research.

Teaching faculty, instruction librarians, researchers of any stripe, will find in Part I a thoughtful analysis of the nature of the Invisible Web and of why inexperienced researchers so often fail to discover its riches. The authors debunk Web myths (“Searching is easy;” “Everything worth finding is already on the Web”); summarize Web user studies (Continued on page 7)

Inside this issue:
• The Eighteenth Century Comes Online
• Explore the New Library Site
• Thomson Avenue Film Festival
• Meet the New Library Faculty
and much, much more ...
Faculty and Staff Highlights

Collection Development Librarian Alex de Laszlo co-brokered a donation of books in conjunction with Prof. Anny Bakalian of the Middle Eastern Studies Program at Graduate Center. The Books were a bequest of Dr. Charles and Jacqueline Hazzi and consisted of many fine books on Middle Eastern, Islamic and Ottoman art. LaGuardia retained about 60 titles and the balance of the collection was accepted by Librarian Jane Fitzpatrick at the Graduate Center’s Mina Rees Library.


Electronica: What’s New with Electronic Resources

A New Subscription Database Enhances Access to Primary Source Material...

Eighteenth Century Collections Online (ECCO) is a digital collection of over 150,000 works published in the U.K. between 1701 and 1800. There are more individual items in the collection than there are books on our shelves. This extensive collection, which includes books, pamphlets, sheet music, sermons and more, was purchased by CUNY and all CUNY faculty and students have access to it through the library websites. Its ancestors are The English Short Title Catalog and Primary Source Microfilm’s Eighteenth Century microfilm collection.

This collection represents works in many fields, including history, literature, religion, law, fine arts, and science. Featured are the complete works of Benjamin Franklin, as well as those of Henry Fielding, Thomas Paine and Jonathan Swift. PDF scans include a variety of languages and original sources, including broadsheets and pamphlets with text that should prove compelling for any researcher in need of primary source material from the period. The text is fully searchable, and the search options include varying levels of fuzzy searching to accommodate spelling variations and glitches caused by the use of optical character recognition technology. To take a look go to the Library’s website > Finding articles & books online > alphabetical list of databases > E.

Presidential Pets Contest

Before Bo there was Barney, Buddy, Socks, Millie, Rex, Liberty, Rob Roy, and Fala. All these First Pets turned up as entries in the Library’s Presidential Pets Contest which ran in January. To enter, contestants were required to use AP Images to find a photo of a presidential pet. The drawing for the winners was held at the reference desk on Inauguration Day. AP Images is a subscription database in the Library’s collection which contains photos, graphics and audio clips from the Associated Press archives. To find photos of these pets and thousands of other news photos, go to the Library’s website > Finding articles & books online > Images > AP Images.

This portrait of Socks is one of many fine photographs to be found in AP Images.
Photo courtesy of AP.
From October 2008 to January 2009, Bokul Bahar, Suraya Choudhury, and I attended the LEAD Seminar program presented by the Human Resources Department of LaGuardia Community College. LEAD (Leadership Essentials for Administrative Assistant Development) is a series of workshops that prepares current LaGuardia Office Assistants for future roles as Administrative Assistants. Seminar topics included the indispensable assistant, business writing, communication, customer service, and GroupWise. Most of the presentations were made by guest speakers from SkillPath Seminars.

LEAD ended with a graduation ceremony on January 29, 2009, where President Gail O. Mellow handed out diplomas to those who completed the program. Chief Librarian Professor Jane Devine, Professor Louise Fluk, and Professor Francine Egger-Sider attended the graduation ceremony on behalf of Suraya, Bokul, and myself. This was the third year of the program’s existence.

Bokul and Suraya found the program to be well worth their time. Suraya said, "I think it was a great program. Everyone had the opportunity to meet coworkers from different departments.” Bokul said, “It will help me to be more TACT-ful (Talk After Careful Thinking) and professional.” Both thought that “The Indispensable Assistant,” a presentation by Margaret McMullen of Skillpath Seminars, was particularly useful. Suraya said, “I liked how she presented setting up day to day priorities and I am using her method now in my daily work.” Concerning “How to Become a Better Communicator,” Suraya said, “It has helped me in dealing with irritated students when they have problems with the copy machines or have periodical questions.” About LEAD in general, Bokul said, “I have learned so many things from this program that will be useful for my everyday activities.”

I have to admit I was reluctant to participate in the program. I was worried the time would be filled with ice breakers and group bonding activities. It had those, but they were not as painful as I had feared. Suraya thought the funniest thing to happen was during the first session when each of us spoke with another participant and then presented each other to the group as a whole. After going through most of the room, Nila Bhaumik of Human Resources said she was glad nobody said they were there because someone told them to go. It was my turn next and the person presenting me shared that I was there because I was told to go. Presenter Dave Oakes thanked me for letting him pick on me throughout the session – anything for a laugh. Still, I found the seminars encouraging.

The presenters stressed the importance of communication, time-management, and knowing your personal strengths and goals. Probably as important as the topics covered was the free food provided to participants (hey, you know my salary!). Overall, I was glad to have been a part of the LEAD class of 2008-09 and hope to use some of the advice that was given within my daily work habits.

Professor Devine was pleased with this year’s LEAD graduation. “I always enjoy attending the LEAD Program graduation ceremonies as they give me a real chance to applaud the accomplishments of our Library staff members. This year I want to congratulate Bokul, Robert and Suraya for their success in completing the program.”
Open Content Meets the U*A*B*A*S*H*E*D Librarian at Columbia University Conference

The Status of Open Content in Russia and the Former Central Asian Soviet Republics

By Alex de Laszlo, Collection Development Librarian

On March 17th I had the opportunity to attend the Open Access and Libraries conference hosted at the School of International Affairs at Columbia University. The event was organized by the U*N*A*B*A*S*H*E*D Librarian, the ‘how I run my library good’ letter, published by Maurice Freeman, former ALA president. Co-sponsorship for the event was provided by ILIAC (International Library and Information Center), the Harriman Institute and Columbia University Libraries.

Presenters representing various organizations discussed the state of open content developments from a domestic and international perspective. Freeman provided opening remarks and James G. Neal, University Librarian at Columbia University, offered greetings to the Russian contingent, led by keynote speaker Yakov Shrayberg. Dr. Shrayberg is the Director of the Russian National Public Library for Science and Technology and President of ILIAC.

Director Shrayberg opened with a few seemingly paradoxical remarks: “inventions repeat what has already been invented” and “what’s new is past,” meaning that, in fact, the concept of open access emerged and flourished immediately after the arrival of the Internet. The global scientific community, in particular, experienced a brief “information paradise,” before commercialized interests emerged and began to dominate information access.

Dr. Shrayberg then proceeded to describe the current status of open content in Russia. Open content is developing rapidly in Russia as well as in many of the former Soviet Republics. The development of open access archives has increased by 1,300 databases between 2006 and 2009. Like the web, open access has a global potential, the difference between the U.S. and Russia being that there are fewer venues for access in the latter.

One essential open access portal for Russia has been the DOAJ (Directory of Open Access Journals), a resource of Swedish origin, funded by Lund University. DOAJ is actually a resource of international, peer reviewed, scientific literature. A domestic Russian equivalent made available through DSpace, a standard digital repository system, provides 73% of content on an open access basis. The text is primarily of Russian origin, readable as Cyrillic text. The website can be visited at www.elar.usu.ru.

It is not surprising that the scientific world would be a leader for open source development in Russia but Dr. Shrayberg surprised us with the progress made by the State Archive of the Russian Federation (www.garf.ru) which is heavily committed to providing historical primary source material on an open content basis. The homepage looks as technically polished and well crafted as any equivalent site in the United States.

Dr. Shrayberg described a disparity in open source development between Russia and the former Soviet Republics. Former USSR states with well funded university infrastructure such as Ukraine have provided website venues that have become bastions for open content in recent years. The National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy of Ukraine sponsors sites via www.ukma.kiev.ua, which does provide open content when possible.

The disparity becomes more pronounced when one considers the former Central Asian Soviet republics, such as Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan where the development of open content is still in its infancy. As Dr. Shrayberg astutely observed, under the a free market economic system, it becomes essential to have commercial development in order to create the basic web infrastructure upon which open content providers can rely. Ironically, in the prevailing neoliberal climate, more economic growth will be needed before these less affluent states can disseminate open content to their populations at large. Dr. Shrayberg reminded us that technological adaptations can be virtually instantaneous but are highly contingent on the socio-economic preconditions for their successful implementation.
The New Library Web Site

By Steven Ovadia, Web Services Librarian

The Library recently changed its look and its web address. The new site can be seen at library.laguardia.edu.

The impetus for the change was to allow us to move the site into a content management system, making it easier to update the site and to manage our electronic resources.

The Library’s new site borrows a lot from the previous version, preserving all of the features everyone knew and loved, but making them more accessible to students and faculty.

One of the areas we’re most proud of improving is the Faculty and Staff Research Information area, which can be found at http://library.laguardia.edu/research/faculty. Where the Library home page is designed for a broad audience of experienced and less experienced researchers, the Faculty and Staff Research Information is designed specifically for the LaGuardia faculty and staff community. It includes links to frequently used parts of the Library site and the College site, as well as advanced research guides.

Learning a new site is never an easy process, so we’re very interested in faculty, staff, and student experiences in using the site. To gather information on how people are using the site, we’ve been conducting a usability study of students, to determine their expectations when conducting research. We’d also love to hear your experiences as you use the site more frequently. To submit a comment, just visit http://library.laguardia.edu/about/comment or email sovadia@lagcc.cuny.edu.

Information Competency Tutorial Now Available through the Library Homepage

By Marie Cimino Spina, Institutional Archivist

Research skills are promoted and supported by Library faculty through LRC 102 and LRC 103 courses, and in the one time classes, workshops and reference desk sessions that enhance student work in subject disciplines. By these means, the Library collaborates closely with faculty who teach in the disciplines. A new arrow is in your quiver to help hit the target in preparing students for better research, the Information Competency Tutorial is part of a peaceful arsenal in the campaign to promote better research strategies.

The tutorial offers another way to engage students by helping them make choices for viable research sources from what seems like a bewildering number of choices among scholarly reference books, databases, Google and other web-based resources. This tutorial provides a means of improving students’ grasp of resources available and covers issues such as the ethical use of information. Of special interest are the quizzes for each tutorial that can be taken and e-mailed to the student and a professor.

The Information Competency Tutorial is one of the many projects of LILAC (Library Information Literacy Advisory Committee) a CUNY-wide collaboration to bring the skills of evaluation, access and research presentation more actively into every student’s academic life.

Hostos has provided server space and a Spanish language version and extraordinary help in implementing the quiz mechanisms.

See the tutorial at: http://www.hostos.cuny.edu/library/info_lit/library/ or found on our homepage under CUNY Libraries.
which confirm the popularity of general-purpose search engines because of their simplicity, speed, and apparently effective results; and note the problems of over-reliance on visible or surface Web results (information overload, “getting lost among the links,” preferring access to quality, difficulties of evaluating information, etc.). Extensive references on the theory of Internet research are provided at the end of each chapter and supplemented by a bibliography in an appendix at the end.

However, the practical strength of this book lies in the energy with which it collocates, in Parts II and III, techniques for using the Invisible Web and for teaching others to do so. For “Stage One” students, it does not shrink from starting with Web search basics, including search of the visible Web. For “Stage Two,” it presents the concepts basic to understanding the Invisible Web. “Stage Three” is for advanced researchers. Each concept for Stages One and Two is mapped to the Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education of the Association of College and Research Libraries (the full text of which appears in Appendix C) and Standards for the 21st Century Learner of the American Association of School Librarians.

There follow sample assignments; suggestions for teaching about the Invisible Web at the reference desk, in one-hour instruction sessions, in college courses for credit and in other venues (ePortfolios, course management systems such as Blackboard); specialized tools such as Google Alerts to locate new articles about the Invisible Web and temporary URLs to identify Invisible Web content; and a list of graphics, audio and video materials, tutorials, and blogs useful for learning and teaching about the Invisible Web. Rounding out the volume are a case study of a college student researching an economics paper; a chapter sampling Invisible Web research tools such as subject directories, databases, and specialized search engines; and an overview of trends in Internet research, particularly the “shifting boundaries” between the visible and Invisible Web.

The riches of the Invisible Web to which authors Devine and Egger-Sider wish to draw attention are matched by the riches of their work on resources and techniques for learning and teaching about the world “beyond Google.”

Meet the New Library Faculty!

Dianne Gordon Conyers is the new Periodicals Librarian at the LaGuardia Library. She comes to LaGuardia with a background in healthcare working at Greenwich Hospital in Greenwich Connecticut where she was the Clinical/Content Management Librarian. Prior to that, she was the Content Management Librarian at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center in New York City. Dianne received her MLS from Pratt Institute and a B.A. in English, Language Arts from Hunter College.

Dianne looks forward to working at LaGuardia, a community rich in cultural diversity. She looks forward to having the opportunity to reach out across the disciplines to share knowledge and experiences gained with students, faculty, and staff.

Ann Matsuuuchi is a native New Yorker who comes to us from Brooklyn College Library where she worked in Technical Services. Before that, she worked in the New York Public Library branches. She received an MSLIS from the Palmer School, Long Island University, and a B.A. in philosophy and religion from Hunter College. She is currently in the Liberal Studies program at the CUNY Graduate Center, studying the intersections of gender, race and science fiction, with an emphasis on the work of Samuel R. Delany. Ann feels tremendously fortunate to now be part of the talented and visionary community at LaGuardia.
Seventh Annual Thomson Avenue Film Festival

By Terry Parker, Assistant Coordinator, Media Services

On June 8th, sometime around 5:00 pm, numerous students and their families along with interested faculty, will began to stream into the Black Box Theatre (M122) to be part of the Seventh Annual Thomson Avenue Film Festival. Unlike most film festivals that are buzzing with the anticipation of awards and corporate recognition, and the possible sighting of a celebrity, the entrants on this evening will have more humble aspirations.

This festival gives no glimmering awards, and career-propelling lucrative movie deals are not waiting when the last credit is rolled. There is no First Place for this, or a Second Place for that. No one is a Runner Up, or a Close Third.

For many of the film makers, this will be the first time anyone other than their immediate family or close friends, would have had chance to see their work, and certainly, never on such a large screen. For others, this will be their second or third time around; they are the closest the festival will get to having royalty or a true superstar in its midst. Many will bring their girlfriends and boyfriends and other supporters, a type of pseudo entourage that will guarantee hoots and hollers and applause when the entrant’s name and film is introduced. Others will come alone, presenting their body of work with an inner courage, while at the same time, too shy and bashful to fully entrust this moment with a companion.

What this festival lacks in grandiose premieres and tabloid reviews, it makes up for with a hefty supply of vibrant enthusiasm, and a collective spirit embedded in the belief that trophies are not all self defining. Present on this evening are some of LaGuardia’s brightest and most artistic, who are more than willing to take that leap of faith towards a dream. Their works are at times rough around the edges, but honest, with an uncorrupted humility, that can come only when you haven’t quite learned to trust your instincts, or your video editing instructor. Among the lot is always that one glimpse of a potential genius. These are our young and impressionable storytellers, future filmmakers learning their craft and their art right before our eyes. This festival is not the Sundance, the Tribeca, nor the Hampton. Then again, there are never any losers here at the Thomson Avenue Film Festival....

The Thomson Avenue Film Festival is annually co-sponsored by the Humanities Department, Media Studies Option. The Library Media Resources Center, and the Student Life and Development Office; Terry Parker and Dr. Joyce Rheuban, Co-Directors.

Need a book from a CUNY Library?
Use CLICS to get it for you!:! Details are here:
http://library.laguardia.edu/services/clics/
BLACK AMERICANS IN CONGRESS; 1870-2007
The Committee on House Administration of the U.S. House of Representatives
U.S. Government Printing Office
Call no.: Gov Docs Y 1.1/2:SERIAL 14904

This is a lavish single volume covering the totality of African-American officials elected to Congress. Each entry provides biography and background, divided into two sections; the first covers former members, beginning in 1870, and the second covers current members. In addition, extensive appendices provides tables and charts pertaining to the history of African American participation in Congress.

The volume includes Constitutional Amendments and Major Civil Rights Acts of Congress as well as a timeline/history of participation in the Congressional Black Caucus. This reference is loaded with high quality illustrations, photographs and graphics, printed on high quality paper.

BORN IN THE BRONX;
A visual record of the early days of hip hop
Edited by Johan Kugelberg
Foreword by Africa Bambaataa
Rizzoli
Call no.: Reference Desk

This is an exceptional book on this topic, meeting many needs at once. It is a coffee table photo essay, in-depth history of hip hop culture as it has emerged from the South Bronx, as well as a vivid chronicle of urban sociology. A timeline traces the ferment of Bronx Hip Hop culture to the completion of the Cross-Bronx Expressway in 1963. The urban decay and white flight which followed engendered an adverse environment that demanded a creative response. The arrival of a West Indian population and community activist response, through organization of community centers throughout the 60’s, was key in providing fertile ground for the hip hop revolution.

As is evident in this book, hip hop and rap culture started out as a radical act of self invention, protest and self-expression. The book is full of many previously unseen photographs, event flyers and lyric sheets, providing a rare and rich source of primary source documents on this subject.

The Library in Numbers

Number of Searches and Full-Text Found Using Library Databases (FY2007-08)

Almost 300,000 articles were found in the last fiscal year, using the Library’s subscription databases.
ous research studies on Wikipedia content and usage. They have also developed a bookmarklet called Wiki-dashboard (http://wikidashboard.parc.com) to provide social transparency and allow for better attribution and analysis of work to individual Wikipedia editors/creators. Part of their stated goal is to enable Wikipedia’s development into a more credible, trustworthy source of information. Statistical information is graphically presented so that you can see and compare editorial activity on an entry. Interestingly, it reveals entries whose edits are dominated by one or a handful of editors (for more on this, see: http://www.technologyreview.com/web/22076/page1/)

Other tools like Wikiscanner (http://wikiscanner.virgil.gr/) reveal the location of anonymous editors, giving us an insight into dueling factions, or corporate manipulation of unflattering information.

One preliminary study comparing specialized print encyclopedias with Wikipedia published in early 2008 found a notable variance in representation. Between 18 and 37% of the print encyclopedia articles had no equivalent in Wikipedia. What would account for these holes in topical coverage? Online culture privileges certain areas of coverage, feeding into jokes by Stephen Colbert comparing the length of entries for lightsabers and the printing press. But even pop cultural entities are not necessarily guaranteed inclusion into the Wikipedia canon. Deletionpedia (http://deletionpedia.dbatley.com/w/index.php?title=Main_Page) archives deleted pages from Wikipedia, providing further insight into Wikipedia administrator activity.

Another recently published conference paper from April 2009 studying content and coverage found a bias toward currency, popularity, country size: “This analysis supports the idea that Wikipedia is more a socially produced document than a value-free information source. It reflects the viewpoints, interests, and emphases of the people who use it. This has implications for all sites that rely on user-generated content, and these trends will become more important as Web 2.0 technologies become increasingly available and widely used.”

danah boyd, a researcher for Microsoft, wrote an essay (http://www.danah.org/papers/essays/ClassDivisions.html) connected to her 2007 dissertation about American class and race divisions that exist in social networking spaces like Facebook and MySpace. This piece got media coverage and started some conversations about the relationship between online content, culture, advertising and aesthetics. Another example would be the debates regarding entries like ‘feminist science fiction’ inspiring the creation of groups like WikiChix (http://wikichix.org/) formed to combat systemic gender bias in the Wikipedia community.

This is not to say that the Wikipedia community is unaware of the problem. A Wikiproject (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:WikiProject_Countering_systemic_bias) does exist to combat it and articulates it aim as follows: “...the idea of systemic bias is more troubling than intentional vandalism; vandalism is readily identified and corrected. The existence of systemic bias means that not only are large segments of the world not participating in the discussion at hand, but that there is a deep-rooted problem in the relationship of Wikipedia and its contributor editors with the world at large....As long as the demographic of English speaking Wikipedians is not identical to the world’s demographic composition, the version of the world presented in the English Wikipedia will always be the Anglophone Wikipedian’s version of the world...”

Myth #2- Wikipedia is a (problematic) democracy; anyone can post anything.

Another common presumption is that because of allowed anonymity Wikipedia must be littered with nonsense, which is only true on a superficial level. It is surprising how quickly corrections are made, edits are reversed, or obscure entries are modified or deleted. Wikipedia’s power structure involves voluntary administrators who have access to restricted maintenance tools, responsibility for deletions, undeletions, and page protection on particularly controversial entries. Their authority rests in familiarity with the rules and the commitment and free time for intense involvement. If you look on the talk pages (the discussion tab on an entry) or in the entry’s history you can see the oftentimes heated and entertaining debate about policy observance and content presentation.

My limited experience creating and editing entries reflects both this active policing and the content holes in Wikipedia coverage. I was doing research on Bill Gunn, an African American film director and playwright active in the 1970s, and found some comprehensive bio-
graphical entries in library resources, in databases and specialized encyclopedias. Looking in Wikipedia resulted in an incorrect link to a different Bill Gunn, an Australian politician, and only empty links to the correct one in the entry for one of his films. Surprising, but an example of how the invisible web is not mined in everyday online searching. I created a brief stub of an entry, and only 28 minutes later it was taken down. I had hoped to have a little more time to expand it later. In the past, brief entries for even obscure writers prompted other people to add valuable and unknown information to the stubs. In any case, a few hours after deletion, I made the entry more complete, with necessary links to external sources. The entry now remains unchallenged. Citation is important in Wikipedia, although this is not always thoroughly investigated.

The Deletionist/Inclusionist War (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mergism)

So, who is deleting these entries so fast? Some admins set up bots to automate grunt work, and automatically challenge entries that do not meet specific criteria (i.e. lack of citations) regardless of the content. The openness of these new online spaces is a boon, but anarchy and factionalism arises without formal control, an acknowledged flaw. Whoever is in the room and whoever is loudest will end up being heard.

The trend amongst admins to delete first and question later has been criticized by a number of online commentators. In a Slate article (http://www.slate.com/id/2160222/pagenum/all/#p2), Timothy Noah points out how the criteria of ‘notability’ functionally enables bias and serves no larger purpose: “Hierarchical distinctions among people and things remain in force not because they retain practical value, but because they have become pleasurable in themselves... We limit entry to the club not because we need to, but because we want to.” What does objectivity mean when used so un guardedly, so uncritically?

The existence of areas of exclusion highlights the need for more and better participation. All spaces, including virtual ones, are culturally and economically situated. Wikipedia is a space that is even more limited when you consider that admins and creators are a very limited, self-selected group. Wikipedia is open and inclusive ideologically, but even more people need to do work to actualize that ambitious ideal. The trend towards increasing restrictions effectively limits participation and does not represent the larger progressive epistemological approach that the Web enables.

Lack of expertise should not cause too much hesitation to contribute, as well-executed research, not a respectable CV, are the determinative factors at play. A starting entry may indeed prompt others to build upon it, and add valuable nuggets of previously unknown information. The how-to guide, Wikipedia: The Missing Manual, offers a great deal of clearly written tips for getting your entry to survive its first 24 hours, including using your library’s online resources and asking your friendly local librarian for assistance (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Help:Wikipedia:_The_Missing_Manual/Editing,_Creating,_and_Maintaining_Articles/Creating_a_New_Article#Resources_for_Writing_Articles). ■

Tips for editing/creating Wikipedia articles

Notability - Make sure there are references to print sources, i.e. links to books with ISBNs, full references to journal articles. This will make your entry more defensible.

Besides putting comments in the talk page (‘Discussion’ tab), one can embed comments into the source with <!----...-->; this is useful for putting comments for future editors like <!----don’t remove unless you have a source-->

If your entry remains unchallenged for a few hours, it has a good chance of survival.

If you register, you can add entries to a watchlist and keep up with all the changes that an entry undergoes.

(Continued from page 10)
ENCYCLOPEDIA OF ISLAM IN THE UNITED STATES
Edited by Jocelyne Cesari
Greenwood Press
Call no.: REF BP67 .U6 E53 2007

This is a timely addition to the existing reference collection on Islam at LaGuardia. Diaspora studies are perhaps the fastest growing field in the world of Islamic and Middle Eastern academia. This two volume set does a solid job of pulling together many aspects of Muslim culture in the United States. Volume I is an A-Z compendium of subjects, covering the minutia of Islamic-American culture. Volume II, more surprisingly, is a collection of primary source documents, arranged under the subheadings of religious life, terrorism and September 11th, challenges of citizenship, gender and Islam, race and Islam and artistic and cultural expression in America. A comprehensive effort.

THE BUSINESS OF HEALTHCARE
Edited by Kenneth H. Cohn, M.D. & Douglas E. Hough, PhD
Praeger Perspectives
Call no.: REF RA395 .A3 B875 2008

This is a three volume set that covers a lot of ground. Volume I, Practice Management, focuses on issues of private practice management on a micro level. Issues associated with running a private physician practice are covered in detail. Volume II, Leading Healthcare Organizations, focuses on healthcare delivery systems, hospital management, alternative medicine and biotechnology. Volume III, Improving Systems of Care, is concerned with healthcare insurance, quality in healthcare, market dynamics and medical technologies. The title, The Business of Healthcare, is to be taken literally, for, from the editor’s perspective, healthcare is nothing more or less than business. Both Cohn and Hough hold M.B.A.’s as a second credential. Community healthcare is weakly represented here as is insurance and managed care issues. Still, this is a useful tool for anyone needing to understand the healthcare status quo from a realist, bottom line, perspective.

THE COLUMBIA GUIDE TO THE LATIN AMERICAN NOVEL SINCE 1945
Raymond Leslie Williams
Columbia University Press
Call no.: REF PQ 7082 .N7 W546 2007

This is a two part, compact single volume reference book covering the range of subject described in the title. Part I provides a chronological as well as a regional survey. This is followed by an interesting conclusion entitled, “The Post-1945 Model, The Desire to be Modern, and Redemocratization,” assuming an optimistic, positivist, interpretation. Part II is an A-Z of brief entries including nations, topics, biographies and novels. Williams transcends linguistic and cultural barriers in this book as he includes works in Spanish, Portuguese, English, French, Spanglish and Creole.

MANUAL OF EXOTIC PET PRACTICE
Mark A. Mitchell & Thomas Tully, Jr.
Saunders-Elsevier
Call no.: REF SF997.5 .E95 M26 2009

This is a tailor-made single volume reference book for the Vet Tech program. The work is so complete and in-depth, covering the most exotic of the exotic pets imaginable; it makes for entertaining reading for the lay person/animal enthusiast. An entire chapter is provided on Crocodilians as well as Hedgehogs, not to mention the more garden varieties of lizards and ferrets. Useful taxonomy, husbandry and anatomy information are provided in a concise manner. Color photographs are clear and of excellent quality. Highly specialized modes of treatment, restraint, anesthesia and surgery are covered. This is a truly essential volume for any veterinary practice.

(Continued on page 9)