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ABSTRACT

The Andy Holt Virtual Library, with a focus on the Humanities and Fine Arts, is free and open to the public, though designed to serve the learning communities within the College of Humanities and Fine Arts at the University of Tennessee-Martin (UT). It also plays a resource role in UT's New College and the Tennessee Governors School for the Humanities. This independent information source is linked to in key places to the Paul Meek Library on the UT campus. This presentation describes the development of the library and illustrates many of its links. (Contains a 21-item bibliography for digital and virtual libraries.) (Author/MES)

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Institutional, Public and Individual Learning Dynamics of the Andy Holt Virtual Library

By: Robert Peckham

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Eighth Annual
Mid-South Instructional Technology Conference
Teaching, Learning, & Technology
The Challenge Continues
March 30-April 1, 2003

2003 Conference Proceedings

Institutional, Public and Individual Learning Dynamics of the Andy Holt Virtual Library

By: Robert Peckham
Track 3 - Shaping a Transformative Learning Environment
Interest: General :: Lecture/Presentation :: Level: All

Abstract

The Andy Holt Virtual Library, with a focus on the Humanities and Fine Arts, is free and open to the public, though designed to serve the learning communities within the College of Humanities and Fine Arts at the University of Tennessee-Martin. It also plays a resource role in UT's New College and the Tennessee Governors School for the Humanities. This independent information source is linked to in key places to the Paul Meek Library on the UT Martin campus.

Proceeding

Transformative: "Having the faculty of transforming" (OED)...Dare I say the power to change? And am I too bold in asking just how a true learning environment can avoid changing things? Surely, those who love the status quo have every reason, if not a right, to fear an effective learning environment, especially one where the price of knowledge is within range of those every-day people who may use knowledge to leverage transformations.

The Andy Holt Virtual Library (henceforth the AHVL), with a focus on the Humanities and Fine Arts, is free and open to that public, though designed to serve the learning communities within the College of Humanities and Fine Arts at the University of Tennessee-Martin (henceforth UTMartin).

The Andy Holt Virtual Library (http://www.utm.edu/vlibrary/vlhome.shtml) its 53 pages have been researched and programmed by the Globe-Gate Intercultural Web Project at UTMartin. It was launched in May of 2001 with full awareness that virtual resources are never a substitute for those physically present in a brick and mortar establishment, with knowledgeable and willing librarians in a number of specialized sub-disciplines. Indeed, a physical library can contain and access a virtual library, but the opposite is not generally true. Appropriately, the AHVL is linked in key places to parallel physical and virtual resources provided by the Paul Meek Library on

the UTMartin campus. All of these, save subscription services, are open to the general remote public.

At the same time, however, this is an independent information conduit, with its own World catalog metasite, an extensive set of free bibliographic databases, a periodical literature collection (including hundreds of full-text journals), A "General Reference Desk" (almanacs and fact books, dictionaries and thesauri, encyclopedias, biographies, maps, quotations, etc.), a "Book Reviews" page, "Docu-Stacks" with access to well over a million digital documents (in dozens of different languages), and other resources associated with the six discipline clusters of the College of Humanities and Fine Arts at UT-Martin.

I need to point out that I am the chief researcher for the AHVL, though I receive many suggestions from active and interested local and remote colleagues, as well as from librarians around the world. Right now, I am the only programmer. I do not think of this as a permanent state of affairs. Our department has just finished renewing itself in the hiring of four out of six full-time tenure track teachers. All are highly computer literate people with their own web sites, some are software designers and one has considerable server administration experience. In addition, I plan to apply for some grant funding.

My qualifications come from the WTS (willingness to serve) rather than the ALA. As a medievalist with interests in textual editing, paleography and codicology, I have done physical research in scores of libraries in ten different countries on three different continents. I have been a consultant for libraries and museums, published one reference volume used in most national libraries around the world, and I have chaired our institution's library committee. My web experience began with the availability of the first humanities-related sites. On the way to building the Globe-Gate Intercultural Web Project with over three quarters of a million visits a year, I have designed and programmed two sites with five-star MERLOT ratings, another used as an official study site for the French baccalauréat, one British Academy gateway site, etc. As to my knowledge of the other disciplines in our College of Humanities and Fine Arts, I have a solid liberal arts education, have worked as an English teacher, have been an active participant in all the performing arts, am considered more of a historian than a literary critic in my own discipline: Foreign Languages and Cultures. While nothing can make up for the lack of a library degree, I have been reasonably successful.

To tell the story from its beginning, in the Fall of 2000, our newly-formed College of Humanities and Fine Arts stepped into the academic limelight with its founding dean. All of us in the college's six departments were anxious about our reduced size. After all, we were among thirteen departments in the previous "College of Arts and Sciences". Then, there was the that image question of what we would represent to students, parents, accreditation teams, potential donors and legislators. We needed some new ways to define ourselves beyond our separate disciplines and administrative umbrella. As a Professor in a department already well known for its collaborative work with other departments in areas like international education and language across the curriculum, I began to revive, reiterate and downsize a proposal which had died with the hope of a unified "Tennessee Virtual University" in late 1999. The original virtual library for this purpose was to be large, staffed and well funded. The present library idea, which I showed first to my chair and then to my dean, was a modest concept, quite different from the rose-colored dream of the dot.com era. The notion of using link lists divided into discipline-specific and library-basic categories seemed manageable so long as I could get cooperation from some key people in my college. Since I was to invest time in a major online project not directly related either to my classroom duties or to my scholarly discipline, and since I planned to undertake this not long before I was to endure post-tenure review, I needed to negotiate around the fact that time taken would have to come from research and publication. When I explained that I would have to forgo writing one of those highly publishable monographs...let's call it

Morphing discourse, lacanian loquacity and millennial metaphorics embedded in the readerly riddles of Booth's Great Aunt , the dean smiled and assured me of his support if I would follow through on a successful virtual library. He even had me introduce the concept in a faculty meeting for the whole college.

Armed with an email list of College of Humanities and Fine Arts faculty, directory space negotiated by the dean, and a list of contacts in major libraries and web projects world-wide, I began the task of organizing what I had, looking at courses offered in each department, trying to get brief research profiles on as many individual faculty as I could. Then, I used this information to gather more links, and I began to send out potential page contents to my colleagues for feed-back. I even met with two departments to discuss the construction of their periodicals collections. Of course, from the very beginning, I have remained in regular contact with the excellent staff of our campus's Paul Meek Library.

How does the AHVL help to craft dynamic institution-based learning environments? First, it is appropriately linked among our campus library's Electronic Databases (Paul Meek Library) http://www.utm.edu/departments/acadpro/library/catalog/edatabases.php.

Even though the AHVL's size and complexity make it unlike many of the other databases, this is a very appropriate place for patrons to encounter a resource of this kind. From what I was told the classification met with the approval of the Southern Association of Schools and Colleges who visited our campus in the Spring of 2002, and praised our use of electronic resources.

In considering Institutional learning dynamics, I cannot overlook the productive relationship between the AHVL and the Paul Meek Library on campus. In addition to including us among the "electronic databases", it has also used some lower-level pages in other places. For instance, Globe-Gate's Weakley County web site, which though not an official AHVL page, functions within the history discipline page of the AHVL. The Paul Meek Library uses this page http://www.utm.edu/departments/acadpro/library/departments/special_collections/SCSTATE.HTM in its presentation of local history.

In turn, my incorporation of Paul Meek library resources, especially subscription databases, which I have cautiously designated for "UTMartin patrons, with on-campus, UTM remote, or proxy-server access" has helped to increase awareness of these resources in our academic community. I myself have had to learn a few interesting lessons about subscriber verification in these databases in order to set designated patrons on a path that will actually lead to operating these resources.

A second manifestation of institutional learning dynamics is an outcome of the UT Martin's status as virtual home of New College (The University of Tennessee's virtual campus) http://newcollege.tennessee.edu/homepage.htm now a partner with ELEARNIT.ORG (Public Higher Education Online). The AHVL is among its electronic learning resources, and there is an increasing call for courses in the Humanities and Arts.

Yet another example of the AHFL affecting institutional learning dynamics is evident in the Tennessee Governors School For The Humanities, which will be operational again this summer (after a budget hiatus in 2002. As bright high school students from all over the state prepare to join a nationally selected faculty, to investigate, as the handbook says, "why people create different and sometimes opposing cultures, have complex ethos and expressive styles, and believe as they do", they will be able to begin and pursue their investigation with the assistance

of a virtual library made-to-order for humanities research, chosen by this year's director.

GSH Internet Links
http://www.utm.edu/~govschol/

Finally, institutional learning dynamics associated with designing and implementing the AHVL extend to an exploration of where research and courses indicate possibilities for connections or needs for distinctions. For example both the Department of Modern Foreign Languages and History and Philosophy are committed to the study of extra territorial civilization. However, my department's focus is national cultures, whereas that of History and Philosophy is cultural internationalism. The difference between "photography" in the Visual Arts and Communications curricula effect the kind of photography resources I will link. Also, I have used the library to increase the visibility of Religious Studies and International Studies majors, whose presence is not apparent in the name of the "Department of History and Philosophy".

As I have indicated, the AHVL is, for the most part, free and open to public use. As such, it is recognized by the Tennessee Library Association in the TLA Newsletter (July 2001): 9., endorsed by the Oak Ridge Public Library, Homeschool Central, the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh, to name just a few. In the current economic downturn, with national funds being diverted to geopolitical agendas, and with state budgets in jeopardy everywhere in the nation, there will be fewer public and public school libraries able to afford subscription databases. The AHVL cannot take these place of the abundant, well organized, and often conveniently programmed resources. I should point out however that not all subscription virtual libraries and databases will be able to weather the economic climate in this dawn of the twenty-first century, and I think that the experience of sites presenting organized arrays of free public resources, will be an incentive in the creation of the successful subscription databases of tomorrow. This has become evident to me in my

A final aspect of public learning dynamics is the AHVL's response to what individual patrons demand. After the 9/11 attack, as attention began to focus on Afghanistan, I noted that one of the Paul Meek librarian emailed a few links about this Central Asian country. At the same time, I was receiving mail from a number of users outside the UTMartin academic community asking where our resources on Afghanistan were. We had none at the time, but public interest quickly brought the resolve to create the AHVL AFGHANISTAN INFORMATION CENTER (http://www.utm.edu/vlibrary/afghan.shtml).

Strong public interest also inspired the creation of the AHVL IRAQ INFORMATION CENTER (http://www.utm.edu/vlibrary/iraq.shtml) just days before hostilities began.

What remains can only be explained by a walk-through:

ANDY HOLT VIRTUAL LIBRARY
http://www.utm.edu/vlibrary/vlhome.shtml

As you can see, programming is uncomplicated, and the library categories somewhat intuitive . Each page is similar in appearance, containing an often hypertext embedded introduction and links. There are two main categories: Resources that that provide principally locational or bibliographic data, and those resources which are directly informative: text, image, sound, etc.

The three links of the the first category

GLOBEPORTAL - World Catalog Window
http://www.utm.edu/vlibrary/glportal.shtml

GLOBEPORTAL is a collection of key World catalog metasites and smaller catalog sites to allow patrons comprehensive access to online library, museum, archive and special collections catalogs necessary for their research. While none of them is a metacatalog of the scope of First Search's "Worldcat", they can collectively take the researcher with patience and good instincts beyond Worldcat's OCLC database limits. The well-planned Berkeley Sunsite Catalog Portal has an understandable anchor position. We have supplemented where we found this resource lacking, where another resource presented a particularly useful arrangement of catalogs, or where a special feature of a particular catalog offered a desirable and effective advanced search feature. Since Firstsearch is a component of UTMartin's subscription databases, I include a link to these databases (accessible to UTMartin computers online and to those using remote access UTMartin accounts). The last section is our portal to significantly large, general and mostly free-access virtual libraries, which catalog web and database resources.

The second:

ARTICLEGATE - Bibliographic Databases
http://www.utm.edu/vlibrary/databas.shtml

Whereas Globeportal opens doors to a comprehensive bibliographic universe of whole documents and artifacts,"ARTICLEGATE", takes a more limited and modest aim to retrieve bibliographic data describing journal articles, book chapters, reviews and other component studies. It is intended to supplement the Paul Meek Library's bank of subscription electronic databases and full-text resources. Unlike these, the following 75 databases do not require a subscription. Most are small and specialized. A handful offer limited full-text resources. Some will take individual subscriptions for retrieval of additional information, or will sell full text, but all give at least basic bibliographic detail free of charge. Obtaining information from these may be more challenging than information retrieval from subscription databases; retrieval mechanisms are varied, and some require a working knowledge of languages other than English.

Third is

PERIODICAL LITERATURE
http://www.utm.edu/vlibrary/period.shtml

This collection contains 31 discipline-specific periodicals indexes made specifically for the Andy Holt Virtual Library, integrated with some which were made for other libraries. All are arranged by discipline. Our consideration of periodical literature has at its base the current collection at the Paul Meek library on the campus of UT Martin. Our aim, however, is to expand beyond that base in the number of journals which patrons may consult. Users should also be reminded that they have bibliographic data and some full text through the Paul Meek library electronic databases, and also through the Andy Holt Virtual Library's ARTICLEGATE - Bibliographic Databases. All links offer consultation of current tables of contents, abstracts, archives or full text, so that patrons may glean bibliographic information, determine the way a topic has been treated or read an article in a journal which might not otherwise be available locally. The collection introduction links three periodical-specific search engines yielding information and web sites for an extremely wide range of journals and magazines. We also included six links to

hundreds of freely accessible full-text journals in a wide variety of disciplines.

In all, the collection leads to nearly 3700 journal sites, and doubles the number full-text journals in the paper subscription base of our six departments. I chose to retain this in the "Bibliographic Data" section because bulk of these links lead to bibliographic information rather than full text. In some cases, these pages have had some public success.

Medieval & Renaissance Studies Periodicals
http://www.utm.edu/vlibrary/chrono2.shtml

is endorsed by

ORB The Online Reference Book for Meideval Studies
http://orb.rhodes.edu/sitelinks.html

and

FRENCH & FRANCOPHONE STUDIES JOURNALS
http://www.utm.edu/vlibrary/revues.shtml

links the last nine issues of the locally edited and eagerly awaited periodical with a focus on fifteenth-century French poetry:

Société François Villon, Bulletin
http://globegate.utm.edu/french/globegate_mirror/villon.html#Société

Within our resources presenting text and other media such as sound and image files, the first subcategory

GENERAL REFERENCE DESK
http://www.utm.edu/vlibrary/refdesk.shtml

chooses a limited number of reference tools for basic and quick research of facts. We link to the Paul Meek Library's online guides for finding reference material in the paper world. Since the focus of Andy Holt Virtual Library is the Humanities and Fine Arts, we have not included reference tools designed for general information retrieval in Mathematics, Business, the Sciences, Engineering, and Agriculture, though these areas are covered in many general encyclopedias, dictionaries, almanacs and biography collections. Our general reference tools include some in the languages taught at UT Martin.

This is followed by

BOOK REVIEW CENTRAL
http://www.utm.edu/vlibrary/bookrev.shtml

Like our "GLOBEPORTAL - World Catalog Window" page, this one links readers to information about resources that are largely in print. We have selected 52 links connecting library patrons to nearly 100,000 full-text book reviews in a variety of categories. I do remind patrons that the Paul Meek Library's full-text databases offer many more book reviews.

Our next sub-category: "DOCU-STACKS: Online Digital Texts Collections", leads to over a million digital documents. It has needed a weeding and reorganization for a long time and will have to wait until this summer. Its current divisions

1) Large Collections (1000 or over)
http://www.utm.edu/vlibrary/docust1.shtml

2) Smaller Collections
http://www.utm.edu/vlibrary/docust2.shtml

3) Collections of Documents in a Single Foreign Language
http://www.utm.edu/vlibrary/docust3.shtml

4) Collections pertaining to Single Authors, Personalities & Works
http://www.utm.edu/vlibrary/docust4.shtml

5) KIDstack: Collections of Children's Literature
http://www.utm.edu/vlibrary/docust5.shtml

are not transparent enough for ease of navigation.

The last sub-category is "Other Informational Resources Listed By Department". For each of the six pages specific to a discipline clusters corresponding to one of our six departments, the introduction features the departmental mission statement, which is also reflected in resource links to major web sites and free information or media databases related to the disciplines, or sponsored by academic and professional organizations within those disciplines. Therefore the "Communications" page where departmental goals include providing a "professionally oriented program . . . designed to educate students in both the theoretical and applied aspects of the communications discipline", we have linked sites like "FedLaw - Communications and Telecommunications" the "Television News Archive" at Vanderbilt, and the "Public Relations Society of America".

I am constantly debating with myself about whether I should join some kind of virtual library consortium, and when I should step forward to apply for a grant. My most serious problem is time. Currently I hold a position of Professor of French and Director of the Muriel Tomlinson Language Resource Center at the UTMartin. There is no extra time left within this framework, even if I eliminate all scholarly activity related to my field. I will have to solicit a grant and release from some more duties. Also, to find collaborators who are willing to change some of their time use priorities. Without some change, all I can do is to go on a maintenance schedule and hope for the best. With good fortune, here is what I propose for the next few months. 1) Working with a skilled programmer to build search function for the AHVL. 2) A reorganization of the "DOCU-STACKS". 3) Construction of a local digital documents collection page. There are a number of people on campus and in our County who are making online editions of with historical, literary and artistic value. 4) Design a locally-edited electronic periodicals page. 5) Start a faculty and student review service. 6. Design short "how to use" java pop-ups for a number of the pages.

I still have a modest vision for the AHVL, but I will admit that it does have the power to affect changes within the institutional framework of an academic community, in the role it plays vis-à-

vis the public, which it nurtures with its resources and from which it may well recruit students. I hope that a combined use of the AHVL, the Paul Meek Library and Inter-library loan resources will accelerate the research phase of Humanities and Fine Arts scholarship undertaken by the very busy individuals on our faculty, whose primary mission is teaching; the same for members of our student body, many of whom maintain a delicate balance between paying jobs and their studies. For these, the power of a virtual library can be the transformative wind in their intellectual sails.

A Short 21st-Century Bibliography for Digital and Virtual Libraries

Bicentennial Conference on Bibliographic Control for the New Millennium (2000: Washington, D.C.). *Proceedings of theBicentennialConference on Bibliographic Control for the New Millennium: Confronting the Challenges of Networked Resources and the Web: Washington, D.C., November5-17, 2000.* Washington, DC: Library of Congress, Cataloging Distribution Service, 2001.

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