



THE ASSOCIATION OF AMERICAN
UNIVERSITY PRESSES

The EXCHANGE

NEW DIRECTIONS

AAUP Releases Strategic Plan

FALL 2006

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In June 2005, the Association of American University Presses began the process of examining its present services, scholarly communications' likely future, and its members ongoing needs. A new strategic plan for the association, to insure that the association's goals and programs match the mission and activities of university and scholarly presses, developed. In late 2006, the AAUP Board and the Strategic Planning Committee distributed the approved strategic plan to its members.

The AAUP strategic plan reconfirms the association's mission: to assist its members through professional education, cooperative services, and public advocacy. The association recognizes that the landscape in which this mission is conducted has changed dramatically in recent years. This new landscape includes new technologies that have brought change to every step of the publishing process, new partners—both academic and commercial—who are spearheading new experiments in scholarly communications, and shifting markets for the products of scholarly publishing.

The rapidly changing landscape in which university presses operate, with its wealth of opportunities for innovation, often requires more resources and expertise than any one press can bring to bear. The new strategies the AAUP has outlined are intended to enable its members to seize these new opportunities.

One element of the strategic plan is to broaden the association membership and strengthen the representation of all members' points of view, concerns, and interests in the governance and general activities of the association. To serve this goal, AAUP will, for example, increase the participation of associate members (presses affiliated with non-degree granting institutions) in association governance.

Professional development is amongst the most valued service of the association, and such development and training is particularly important in this landscape of change and innovation. The AAUP has outlined a number of current and planned education and training programs for staff at presses of all sizes to learn new tasks and new ways of performing old tasks.

In cooperative services, it is clear that there are several areas where already successful association programs can be made yet more valuable. Online components must be developed to complement existing marketing programs such as course-adoption catalogs and cooperative advertising agreements. The development of new marketing services associated with the popular Books for Understanding program is another goal of the plan.

The association also intends to explore ways in which presses can cooperate in the electronic delivery of content. It is a time of innovation—both exciting and uncertain—in scholarly communications; the new strategic plan of the AAUP maps a path for the association and its members to meet the challenges ahead.

Read the full AAUP Strategic Plan online: www.aaupnet.org/strategicplan/

THE MYSTERIOUSLY KNOWLEDGEABLE SALES DIRECTOR

Or, Using Publisher Alley and Nielsen BookScan Every Day

by Fredric Nachbaur

Soon after joining NYU Press, I subscribed to the sales databases Publisher Alley and Nielsen BookScan as a way to help me better perform my job. The information that both these systems provide has helped me on various levels—from analyzing proposals for weekly acquisitions meetings, to projecting sales for forthcoming books, to determining reprint decisions. I find these services extremely useful and will briefly go through the different functions they provide.

As the marketing and sales director, I am responsible for reading and reviewing the packet of proposals before our weekly acquisitions meeting. In preparation for the discussion, I look at the books previously written by the authors and editors to get a sense of how well their books have sold. I know that different subjects sell at different levels but having an author with a solid track record certainly helps when you are pitching a book to a buyer. It's also good to know when a book hasn't sold well. I look at Pub Alley for a picture of the library market and at BookScan to see the bookstore market.

After reviewing the authors' and editors' own books, I look at the comparable titles that the editors have listed on the proposals. Although it is important to recognize other factors that go into a particular book's sales background such as author, publisher, price and discount, it is really useful to know how a competitive book has performed. A big-name author publishing with a big trade house can't be compared to a first-time author at a university press, so I try to make comparisons with like titles published at similar houses. I know that NYU often competes with Duke or Minnesota in certain subjects, so looking at sales figures from books by these presses is valuable.

I bring all of this information into the acquisitions meeting and it becomes a good source for setting price ranges and print runs, allowing us to make informed decisions rather than basing them solely on guess work. Before the days of sales databases, we had to rely on our friends at other houses to look up sales—it's nice to type in a password and get the information in seconds. Though I've told colleagues that I can show them how to look up information too, they haven't taken me up on the offer, and I secretly enjoy being the only one who can access the information.

When the press is low on stock on a new release, usually a general interest title, we don't want to lose momentum

and be left without stock. Before we push the button for a reprint, I review stock levels at the chains and wholesalers to determine if there is too much stock in the marketplace that might be returned. Pub Alley and BookScan, particularly the B&N BookScan feed, are invaluable resources for this information. Without these numbers, we could make disastrous decisions. Of course, due to demands from other channels, I sometimes need to reprint even though B&N and Borders may have a ton of books. However, I may not reprint as much, knowing that I'll get 50% or more back from them months later—just enough to supply other key channels such as Amazon and core independents.

*These resources
allow us to
make informed
decisions.*

Before presenting to my buyer at Baker & Taylor, I need to do a comparison sales report. In the past, I would do a lot of research beforehand and go to my appointment an hour or more early to look up sales data for books related to the frontlist being presented that day. Needless to say, this was not a fun exercise. Pub Alley has made this task quite easy and streamlined and I am thrilled that

I can run these reports with so much less stress. I recently got a refresher training lesson and was still amazed at how easy it is.

Additional data that Pub Alley provides is pricing and models for comparable books. If I want to see how other presses publish cloth religion monographs, I can do so with little hassle by logging onto Pub Alley. This is great data to have for analyzing a subject and determining print runs.

These are brief summaries of how I use Pub Alley and BookScan. I must emphasize that both systems have become part of my daily work routine. In addition to logging into the NYU Press sales and marketing databases, I log onto Pub Alley and BookScan every morning. While I feel a bit like the Wizard of Oz voluntarily lifting the curtain to share the source of my all-seeing book-market knowledge, I would certainly encourage others to take advantage of the information resources that these services make available to us. Not simply marketing and sales departments, but the whole press may benefit from the increased certainty and efficiency this information contributes to publishing decisions.

Fredric Nachbaur is Marketing & Sales Director at NYU Press. AAUP members can subscribe to these databases at reduced rates. More information at www.aaupnet.org/members or email bmclaughlin@aaupnet.org.

REVIEW: *THE ACLS CYBERINFRASTRUCTURE REPORT*

by Robert B. Townsend

American Council of Learned Societies. "Our Cultural Commonwealth: The final report of the American Council of Learned Societies Commission on Cyberinfrastructure for the Humanities & Social Sciences" (2006); available online at <http://www.acls.org/cyberinfrastructure/>.

This report poses an important challenge to the non-profit publishing community, forcing us to consider and explain our role in an increasingly digital culture. The report is nominally a survey of the changing information landscape in the humanities and social sciences, and a proposal for building a new technological infrastructure. But for anyone trying to negotiate between the worlds of print and digital culture, the report's pastiche of techno-optimism, open-access rhetoric, and general indifference to the interests of non-profit publishers will be a bitter pill.

In broad terms, the report offers a "vision" that connects the best developments of the past to the brightest opportunities for the future; a list of "constraints" impeding progress; and a set of recommendations to advance toward that goal. At the level of vision, the report lays out a compelling argument for a vast digital warehouse of information, freely searchable by the public and open to a plethora of new tools for scholars. Unfortunately, the commission goes on to develop its analysis by flattening qualitative distinctions in the "digital information" being produced (as "quantity can become quality"), and erasing the contribution of non-profit publishers to the system of scholarly communication.

To make its case, the commission simply ignores skeptics who ask whether the rush to mass digitization could hurt reading and scholarship, and whether there might be other casualties on this road to progress. This offers a rather narrow view of the "grand challenges" facing the humanities and social sciences, and limits the array of problems that might be remedied by a developed cyberinfrastructure. This seems part of a larger rhetorical strategy in the report, however, which positions potential problems and the costs of digitization as external to its vision of technological progress—limiting them to social, political, or financial failures that can be assigned to publishers and "conservative" academics.

I was particularly troubled at the way the report touches only superficially on the mundane costs arising from the ephemeral nature of the technology, and then largely ignores them when it comes time to offer solutions. Almost every digital project I have been involved with over the past ten years seemed to require starting back at the beginning of a new learning curve, and struggling to see all the necessary choices and consequences. Even after the learning phase was

over, these projects never seem to reach closure. Like Jacob Marley's chains, link-by-link we forge these digital burdens that we can never seem to lay down. The information has to be updated, links fixed, and the technological containers for the data regularly refreshed. The commission never really explores how this makes our choices in this arena more costly, more transitory, and the price of failure higher.

To the contrary, the report offers a rather fanciful lesson in the economics of scholarly publishing that makes first-copy costs and sustainability disappear into a fog of "public goods" and "collective action." The resulting picture should really trouble non-profit publishers, as the commission rather blithely erases our role in the system of scholarly communication along with the costs we have to recover. As a result, we seem to be re-cast as an unnecessary impediment to the development of a cyberinfrastructure. When the commission then calls on us to engage with other parties (librarians and university administrators) about these issues, it just seem to be inviting us into a dialogue about the arrangements for our own funerals.

While scholarly communication could undoubtedly be improved by an infusion of funds from the federal government and others, the report undercuts that possibility by being so vague about the actual costs and leaves little room for more modest, incremental alternatives. After framing the issues in terms of large needs and expensive remedies, the commission's only alternative to federal support is to encourage "experimentation with new forms of cooperation between the private sector and cultural institutions." So much for the public good, apparently.

Naïvely perhaps, I continue to think the non-profit publishing community can play a vital and positive role in building up the cyberinfrastructure. We can still stand for a position of cautious optimism that upholds standards of scholarship and quality, explores and adapts to new technologies, and maintains a realistic view of the costs and the benefits of the technology. Hopefully, when the public money fails to arrive and the commission members discover the strings attached by their private benefactors, the non-profit publishers will still be here to muddle along, doing the best we can with what we have.

Robert B. Townsend is Assistant Director for Research and Publications at the American Historical Association.

GOOD FOOD FOR THOUGHT:

Recent Reports on Copyright in Scholarly Art Publishing and Digital Learning

by Sanford G. Thatcher

The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation has consistently been the only foundation that for decades has taken a keen interest in the evolution of the system of scholarly communication. Some credit for encouraging that interest is owed to my mentor in publishing, Herbert S. Bailey Jr., who was director of Princeton University Press for over thirty years (1954-1986). During the tenure of William G. Bowen as Princeton's President (1972-1988), who in that capacity was an ex officio member of the Press's Board of Trustees, Bailey engaged Bowen in an ongoing dialogue about the challenges facing university presses, which were heralded in a series of articles in *Scholarly Publishing* beginning with an essay co-authored by Bailey with then AAUP Executive Director John Putnam in April 1972 titled "The Impending Crisis in University Publishing."

The dialogue continued even after Bailey retired and Bowen became President of the Mellon Foundation in 1988. One result of those discussions was the landmark study prepared by Bailey for the AAUP titled "The Rate of Publication of Scholarly Monographs in the Humanities and Social Sciences, 1978-1988" (1990). During Bowen's long tenure at Mellon, just concluded when he stepped down in June of this year, the Foundation sponsored many other major studies, including *Technology and Scholarly Communication* (California, 1999), and laid the groundwork for the development of such major initiatives as Project Muse, JSTOR, ARTstor, and Portico.

Two new Mellon-funded studies that should be of great interest to university presses appeared during the summer of 2006. The first, issued in late July, was "The State of Scholarly Publishing in the History of Art and Architecture." A good overview of this report appeared in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* at the time of its release: <http://chronicle.com/free/v52/i48/48a01201.htm>. The study, begun in September 1995, had as its goal a better "understanding [of] the challenges faced by both scholars and publishers working in this area." The principal investigators were Hilary Ballon of Columbia's Department of Art History and Archaeology and Mariët Westermann of NYU's Institute of Fine Arts, with research support provided by Lawrence McGill of Princeton's Center for Arts and Cultural Policy Studies

and Kate Wittenberg of Columbia's Electronic Publishing Initiative (EPIC). To their credit, the project leaders sought information and advice from a wide swath of journal editors, librarians, museum directors, publishers, and scholars. The final summit meeting in early March 2006 included, from university presses, Douglas Armato, Susan Bielstein, Paula Duffy, Sam Elworthy, Patricia Fidler, Michael Jensen, Frank Smith, Lynne Withey, and myself.

The second study, released in August, was a white paper written by a team led by William McGeeveran and William W. Fisher under the auspices of the Berkman Center for Internet and Society at Harvard University with the title "The Digital Learning Challenge: Obstacles to Educational Uses of Copyrighted Material in the Digital Age": <http://cyber.law.harvard.edu/media/files/copyrightandeducation.html>. This resulted from a year-long investigation intended to "explore whether innovative educational uses of digital technology were hampered by the restrictions of copyright." Not surprisingly, given the "copyleft" agenda that the Berkman Center typically pursues, the authors "found that provisions of copyright law concerning the educational use of copyrighted material, as well as the business and institutional structures shaped by that law, are among the most important obstacles to realizing the potential of digital technology in education."

*University
presses are vital
to a collaborative
solution to
current copyright
challenges.*

Unlike the authors of the report on art history, however, the Berkman Center authors, while claiming to draw on the advice of "experts in the field," neglected to include any publishers among those consulted even though their conclusions and recommendations rested on assumptions about how our industry functions. It is hardly the first time that university presses have been ignored as sources of advice when such reports are undertaken. Another recent instance was the ACLS Cyberinfrastructure report (see review, page 3). But it belies the good intentions of such an effort, which in its final section recognizes the need for wide collaboration to solve the problems identified, when a sector like ours vital to any solution is omitted from the discussion at the outset. And an invitation to the authors of the Berkman Center report to engage in dialogue with the AAUP has so far gone unanswered.

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FRANKFURT REPORT

by Peter Givler

In addition to being the top international venue for the buying and selling of rights, the Frankfurt Book Fair is also the locus for meetings of several international publishing organizations with which AAUP has been strengthening its ties.

The International Publishers Association is an association of 76 national, regional, and specialist publishing associations. It was founded in 1886 to promote compliance with the Berne Convention, and while copyright is still a major concern, so are the freedom to publish, standards, and literacy.

According to IPA by-laws, only one publishing association from each nation can be a voting member of IPA; for the U.S. that membership is already held by AAP. However, at the IPA Executive Committee meeting in Frankfurt, Bob Faherty, Director of the Brookings Institution Press and past University Press representative to the Board of AAP, was approved as the voting member for the U.S. on the Executive Committee.

For the last several years I have also been sitting in on the meetings of the IPA Copyright and Freedom to Publish committees; this year I also sat in on the meeting of the IPA Literacy and Book Policy Committee.

We are including in this issue of the *Exchange* (below) an address given by the President of IPA, Ana Maria Cabanellas, to open a forum titled "Publishers and Search Engines: Facing the Challenge."

The purpose of the forum was to introduce a joint project of IPA and the World Association of Newspapers, the development of a standard for machine-readable rights metadata that can be attached to copyrighted material on the Web. The standard, built on ONIX, is known as Automated Content Access Protocol. One way to think of ACAP is as

A LEVEL PLAYING FIELD

International Publishing Update 2006

by Ana Maria Cabanellas

The following is adapted from Cabanellas' Presidential address to the International Publishers Association in Frankfurt on October 6, 2006.

The International Publishers Association is a federation of national publishers associations, with some 76 members in 65 countries. Founded in 1896, it represents the interest of the publishing industry at international level, namely before United Nations organizations and wherever the interests of the publishing community are at stake.

the next generation of robots.txt: a way of telling spiders not just whether they can crawl/not crawl, but if they do, what the conditions of use are.

The International Federation of Scholarly Publishers (IFSP) is a new organization, of which AAUP is a founding member, whose aim "is to ensure that not-for-profit scholarly publishing is fostered and supported in all countries of the world, that the standards of not-for-profit scholarly publishing are maintained and enhanced, and that copyright and freedom to publish are strongly defended." The principal ways of working toward those goals are by enhancing communication between the members of IFSP, and by working with and through IPA. IFSP is an affiliate member of IPA and has permanent observer status on the Executive Committee of IPA.

Currently, in addition to AAUP the other members are the Association of Learned and Professional Society Publishers, Canadian University Presses, the International Museum Publishers Association, and the International Development Research Council of Canada. Publishing associations in Africa, Asia, Europe and Latin American have also been targeted for recruitment.

IFSP had its second annual meeting in Frankfurt, at which I was selected as President, succeeding Sally Morris of ALPSP. Since there were several potential new members at the meeting, the bulk of the discussion was devoted to issues relating to membership.

Finally, I should note that AAUP did not take a booth at Frankfurt this year because of an overfull schedule. It would certainly be preferable for the Association to be more visible at the Fair, and in the coming year we will be evaluating the additional cost of taking and staffing a stand in relation to other AAUP priorities.

Our two most important issues are copyright and the promotion and protection of freedom of expression. We support the interests of publishing as an economic sector and a cultural institution, as well as its role in literacy promotion. IPA is also involved in the development of international publishing standards and metadata projects, the most famous being the International ISBN Agency.

I would like to answer one question many have asked about the IPA's concerns: why are publishers taking an

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International Update, continued

initiative in Internet issues? Aren't they too insignificant? Shouldn't we wait and see how the music and film industry are developing online? Shouldn't we just wait until iTunes starts selling books on a large scale?

To answer, let me ask you: how big do you think book publishing is compared to the other creative industries? Who is bigger, in commercial terms: the music, the film, the computer games industry, or book publishing? The answer may surprise you: Global book sales at publisher prices are about 69 billion Euros or US\$88 billion.

This is more than four times what the music industry sells in recordings, both online and offline. It is also more than four times the size of the global sales of the computer games industry. It is twice the size of the global sales and rentals of film DVDs and video tapes.¹ In fact, book publishing sales are slightly bigger than all of them combined.

The above figures do not include newspaper publishing and they do not include large parts of the magazine industry. Many of you will say: well, ok, so you are big, but publishing is surely not very highly developed on the Internet!

Few will say this about newspaper publishers whose Web sites are among the most popular information sites. But unknown to many, large parts of traditional publishing have been using the Internet from the outset. In particular, the scientific, technical, and medical publishers are technologically very advanced.

The reason why we are underestimated in the electronic environment is because we are not visible. We are not visible because our business models largely rely on payment for access. We must protect our content. The most important reason for our invisibility is that much of our content cannot be easily found using search engines.

This is something we would like to change, but cautiously, in a marketplace that has clearly established rules and where all operate under the same terms and conditions.

I would like to raise a few other issues that are important to publishers: Firstly, piracy remains a chief concern for publishers in the developing world. Secondly, state publishing is putting publishers under pressure. How can we compete against governments who think it is more efficient if they write, print, and distribute books themselves?

The final issue I want to raise is the crisis of the book in large parts of the developing world. Africa, Latin America, and the Arab region account for less than 5% of the world's publishing output. Areas with great cultural richness, ethnic diversity, and important history are nearly white spaces in the

publishing environment. This is a dangerous development. We are witnessing the collapse not only of the book industry but of the culture of reading, and the culture of books.

Many will say, well maybe books and reading are a historical medium and with the advent of radio, television, and the Internet, we no longer need a book culture. This is a very dangerous idea. Firstly the Internet remains based on literacy. Literacy precedes computer literacy. The book is, however, also a tool that teaches us abstract thinking, logic and a systematic discourse. It fosters our ability to get to the bottom of an issue. Literacy, in the sense of an active book culture, is deeply connected with the ability of a society to maintain a peaceful pluralistic internal and external dialogue.

For the book is at the heart of deep thought, the basis for substantial discourse across civilizations, across generations, even across historical ages. It is no wonder that India, the world's largest democracy, is a society steeped in books. This is the kind of book policy all nations must aspire to.

No society can leapfrog into the information society without supporting a national book industry. The book is an essential tool.

Today the Internet brings the publishing world closer together. The books on offer at the Frankfurt Book Fair are all available every day, almost everywhere to almost everyone. There are also new competitors, namely the millions of people who write and upload information on the Internet. How can publishers react?

To be clear: I am not advocating protectionism. Quite the opposite—the Frankfurt Book Fair is proof how firmly international cultural exchange is woven into the very fabric of publishing. We love the free circulation of books and the free exchange of ideas and rights. But all need a fair opportunity. We, the small publishers can compete, provided there is a level playing field.

Smaller publishers must play to their strengths, which are flexibility, innovation, and our ability to take risks. We must be more creative and more reader-oriented. We must be quick, and know our markets well. And above all we must have quality and reliable content.

Small local publishers have a chance, but only if there is this level playing field. The same applies to competing with new services on the Internet. Personally, I am not afraid of the many excellent Web sites which provide content free of charge. They are simply other competitors. I can compete with them provided that we all play by the same rules.

Copyright Reports, continued

Both of these reports contain good food for thought, and they are to be congratulated for acknowledging the complexity of the problems and challenges facing higher education in the arenas they take as their subjects for investigation. Copyright issues lie at the center of both reports.

For art history, the difficulties and costs of obtaining permissions for the use of images have always been impediments to successful publishing in the field. The problems are well analyzed in Susan Bielstein's new book, *Permissions, A Survival Guide: Blunt Talk about Art as Intellectual Property* (Chicago, 2006). Among the most contentious issues has been the copyright status of photographs that are noninterpretive reproductions of works of art that are themselves in the public domain. Museums and other providers of images long assumed that such photographs qualified for full copyright protection as independent creations, but a federal district court judge ruled in the case of *Bridgeman v. Corel* in 1998 that this kind of photograph lacked sufficient creativity to ground a claim of copyright—precisely because, to be successful in portraying the works of art faithfully, they could not be interpretive works of art themselves!

Outside of law reviews and books like Bielstein's, this new report contains one of the best discussions of this controversial but crucially important case currently available. Although this decision offered some relief to beleaguered scholars and their publishers, the report recognizes that copyright issues become even more complex for electronic publications, but makes recommendations nevertheless for

joint action by image-owners and image-users to alleviate the problems while touting the advantages of the digital environment for the healthy advance of the field.

For its part, the Berkman Center report lays out in an exceptionally well-organized manner, complete with succinct descriptions and useful links to other resources, the host of copyright issues that, in its view, constitute "impediments" to the full realization of the benefits of digital technology in higher education. The major "obstacles" it identifies are of four types: "unclear or inadequate copyright law relating to crucial provisions such as fair use and educational use; extensive adoption of 'digital rights management' technology to lock up content; practical difficulties obtaining rights to use content when licenses are necessary; undue caution by gatekeepers such as publishers or educational administrators." Among the "paths toward reform" that it supports in the final section, the report encourages the greater use of "open access" and Creative Commons licenses—without, however, showing any awareness of the potential costs in shifting to a model of full open-access publishing or of the shortcomings of the Creative Commons license (which relies on a crucially vague distinction between "commercial" and "noncommercial" use). For all its biases and weaknesses, however, the report still merits careful reading by staff at university presses as it well represents widespread sentiments among our administrator, faculty, and library colleagues.

Sanford Thatcher is Director, Pennsylvania State University Press, and President-Elect, AAUP.

International Update, continued

On the Internet our market is quite different. We are now faced with new partners, such as the Internet booksellers, the online libraries, and the search engines. These relationships need to develop. Industries have their own cultures and we need to understand and adapt to the cultures of our new partners. Understanding means that both sides must try to step into each other's shoes. Such adaptation needs to go both ways.

¹ Music: According to the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry global digital and physical sales of recorded music totaled US\$ 21

billion in record companies' trade revenues (<http://www.ifpi.org/site-content/library/worldsales2005-pr.pdf>).

Film: Total sales and rentals of DVDs and video in the industrialized countries are around \$45 billion (<http://www.iof-video.org/EuropeanOverview2004.pdf>).

Games: The global market for consumer software (games) is \$21 billion (http://www.elspa.com/docs/Fact_Card_01.pdf)

Ana Maria Cabanellas is the President of the International Publishers Association and publisher of Heliasta, a small press in Argentina publishing in a wide variety of fields—from specialist legal dictionaries to children's books.

CALENDAR

PSP 2007 Annual Conference
Washington, DC
February 5-7, 2007

2007 Southern Presses Meeting
Jacksonville, FL
February 16-18, 2007

AAUP Financial Managers' Meeting
San Antonio, TX
March 8-10, 2007

Humanities Advocacy Day
Washington, DC
March 26-27, 2007

London Book Fair
Earls Court, London
April 16-18, 2007

2007 AAUP Production Managers' Meeting
Chapel Hill, NC
May 17-19, 2007

BookExpo America
New York, NY
June 1-3, 2007

AAUP 2007 Annual Meeting
Minneapolis, MN
June 14-17, 2007
Questia Grant Deadline: April 18!

ALA Annual Conference
Washington, DC
June 21-27, 2007

Western & Mid-West Presses 2007
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September 20-23, 2007



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