Elihu Burritt Library Newsletter

CRASH Shown at Burritt Library
by Susan Slaga

On April 4, 2006, Burritt Library held its first ever movie event. Crash, which won the Academy Award for Best Picture in 2006, was shown to a diverse audience of approximately 40 people from the CCSU community.

Crash explores themes of racism, fear, and isolation through the intersecting lives of diverse Los Angelinos: A Brentwood housewife and her DA husband, a Persian store owner, two police detectives who are also lovers, an African-American television director and his wife, a Mexican locksmith, two car-jackers, a rookie cop, and a middle-aged Korean couple.

After the movie was over, Dr. Jessica Greenebaum from CCSU's Sociology Department led an open discussion about the issues presented in the film. She opened with, "What do you feel is the meaning of Crash?" Audience members shouted out answers such as "diversity," "anger," "prejudice," and "segregation." Greenebaum felt that today many of us are segregated by choice. That is, many people end up spending time with others who are of the same race or ethnicity without even realizing they are segregating themselves. One of the students in the audience was from Los Angeles and added that L.A. is a segregated city.

Greenebaum then asked, "Do you feel this movie is realistic? Or is it too much— like stereotypes on steroids?" The consensus among the audience was that it was realistic though unlikely that the stereotypical situations in

Dr. Jessica Greenebaum (standing) leads an audience discussion after the film's conclusion

the film would happen to the same group of people within 36 hours. Instead, it is a sampling of what happens to some people over the course of their lives.

One audience member suggested we should look at the different sides of people. People do good and bad things. Sometimes people just react to circumstance and may do things that they would not normally do.

Another added that the movie teaches us a good lesson– that we shouldn't judge others. If

The library is pleased to announce the addition of two full-text online resources that were available on a trial basis during the month of February. The **IEEE Computer Society Digital Library** is a collection of 22 society magazines and transactions, and more than 1,700 selected conference proceedings. **LION (Literature Online)** is a fully searchable library of more than 350,000 works of English and American poetry, drama and prose, 175 full-text literature journals, and other key criticism and reference resources.

New Look for the Library Website

The Burritt Library unveiled a new website in January that we hope will make using our online resources and services easier and more efficient. The new site was the product of input from members of the

Informational Database Workshop Held for Students

On Tuesday March 14, 2006, Reference Librarian Susan Slaga held a workshop to introduce students, faculty and staff to resources available through the library's website http://library.ccsu.edu/. It was very successful with over 35 people attending.

"I felt there was a need to show students the basics of using the library for their research. Many of them still just use any article they find on the World Wide Web without knowing if it's an authoritative scholarly article. Many students will also go to a publisher's website where they are required to pay for an article and don't realize that library has already paid for a subscription to the journal," said Slaga.

Slaga spent almost an hour teaching the audience how to set up a PIN for accessing online course reserves and remote access, use the CONSULS online catalog as well as the Academic Search Premier, Expanded Academic, and NewsStand databases." In addition she also briefly showed them Lexis-Nexis databases and

Consider the Source: Why We Must Evaluate Information from the Open Web

by Nick Tomaiuolo

"Open access proponents (especially in the sciences), advocate unrestricted publishing of Web content for the rapid dissemination of research results. But the Web encourages even the most unblushing charlatan to reach connected users worldwide."

Traditional publishing for both books and articles usually requires pitching an editor a solid concept directed at a specific audience. The editor must be convinced that the book is going to generate at least a nominal profit or that the article fills a void in the critical mass of information in some subject area. Individuals could invest their own money and self-publish, but the cost/benefit results are usually disappointing. Because Internet Service Providers give subscribers Web space, and non-subscribers can easily find other free outlets to publish on the Web, the publishing process has undergone a revolution with many positive results as well as problems.

For example, open access proponents (especially in the sciences), advocate unrestricted publishing of Web content for the rapid dissemination of research results. But the Web encourages even the most unblushing charlatan to reach connected users worldwide. Consider how tempting this must be for ersatz researchers and writers, not to mention cranks. Misinformation, hoaxes and deception, whether in print or online, are common. We've recently seen the fall of *New York Times'* journalist Jayson Blair, "memoirist" James Frey, and South Korean cloning researcher Hwang Woo Suk. Retrieving information from the open Internet demands that the searcher become especially prepared to apply critical evaluation skills.

Alexa, a preeminent Web site ranking service, tells us that Wikipedia (http://www.wikipedia.org), the free online encyclopedia, is the 37th most frequently visited Internet site. Wikipedia is also an example of the dilemma of the democratization of Web publishing and open access information. It's a collaborative effort on a massive scale – anyone can contribute, and anyone can submit corrections to its four million entries. Wikipedia's founder Jimmy Wales believes that the ability to dynamically create and correct will keep the information fresh and valid. On December 15, 2005, Jim Giles writing in *Nature* (v. 438:15) reported that an expert-led investigation concluded that the information found in Wikipedia, at least for science topics, was about as accurate as that found in the *Encyclopedia Britannica*. Yet just days before the *Nature* article was published, the author of a Wikipedia article was fired from his job for creating a malicious biographical entry for John Seigenthaler, a former editor at *USA Today*.

Professor Laura Levine of CCSU's psychology department had an alarming encounter of her own with Wikipedia. Dr. Levine stated, "After my students reported their use of Wikipedia I decided to check it out by typing in a topic I knew quite a bit about: the influential psychologist Jean Piaget. I was very disturbed by the result. There was inaccurate information which I corrected. However, when I've

returned to the site there continue to be mistakes. (They define Piaget's preoperational stage as focusing on the acquisition of motor skills when the actual focus is on the development of symbolic thinking.) I now inform my students that I will not accept information from Wikipedia."

Wikipedia is only one prominent example. In an article written for November 2005's *Journal of Academic Librarianship*, I found that while 47% of responding faculty (n=120) felt that the information their students referenced from open access Web resources was "acceptable," only 6% felt that the information was "credible." Only 2% stated that students used "authoritative Web information." Furthermore, 36% believed the referenced Web information was "suspect."

How should we evaluate open Web resources? Isn't the process largely one of common sense?

Consider:
Who takes responsibility for the information? Is that author or page sponsor credible and authoritative?

Is the information objective? Is the overall reason for publication to inform as contrasted with other possible bias-driven motives?

Is the information current? Has it been retracted or superseded? On the Web, this may be difficult to determine, but we owe it to

Password Security (Tech Tips #2)
by Edward Iglesias

No, don't skip over the column. I know you. You're the one that has your passwords written on a post-it note stuck to your monitor. Or, maybe you have memorized it. After all your child's name is easy to remember... Maybe you just chose the name of your favorite season? Don't despair. Nearly all of us are lax about some of our passwords even though we know they are important. With the rise of identity theft and online bill paying, they are more important than ever. If you use the same password everywhere it just takes one instance of poor security to destroy your credit. Here are some tips to help, but remember you are responsible. Most password security comes down to common sense. Nearly every article on the subject gives these three pieces of advice:

⇒ **Do not use personal information.**

⇒ **Do not use real words.**

⇒ **Mix different character types.**

(see http://www.securityfocus.com/infocus/1537 for an excellent introduction to the subject)

Additionally there are resources for figuring out how good your passwords are. I'll list a few at the end of this article.

Of course, once you have a password that looks like 10pxqa6h90 how in the world are you supposed to remember it? Luckily there are a number of technical solutions to this problem that are easy and will actually save you time. Most of these technologies work on the same principle. You have a list of very secure, hard to guess passwords. These are kept somewhere (your hard drive, a USB drive, your PDA) in an encrypted state. This means that even if someone gets hold of the list it is meaningless without a password or passphrase. You then have one secret password or phrase to remember (don't use "open sesame") that unlocks all the others. Below are some options I've found to work over the years.

Browser Based

The simplest way to store passwords is to have your browser take care of it. Unfortunately this is also the least secure. Do not try this with Internet Explorer since it does not offer adequate security. Use Firefox instead. There is a great tutorial on how to do this at Lifehacker that is included in the resources section on the next page. This basically boils down to choosing a master password. Once you do so, you will be prompted every time you are asked for a password. Simply type in the one master password and the form is filled in. Keep in mind this will not work on some sites which have additional security in place to "protect you". If you encounter this situation, you need to move on to another type of password keeper.

Library Website
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campus community. At a focus group held last summer, faculty, students, and staff were asked for their opinions of the existing website as well as what they would like to see in a new one. Based on the input received as well as recommendations from library staff, we designed a prototype that was tested for usability by faculty, student and staff volunteers. Please email comments or suggestions about the new website to Debbie Herman, Digital Resources Librarian (hermand@ccsu.edu).

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ourselves to make an effort to ensure the information's validity.

Finally, is the information accurate? Can we cross-reference the findings with other sources?

Given the reflexive tendency to simply "Google" our information needs, it will become more difficult to force ourselves to critically evaluate Web information. Given the potential for subterfuge with open access, however, no other choice is plausible.

*Databases Workshop
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how to order books and articles through interlibrary loan.

Pizza and soda were served as way to entice students to attend the workshop, but many of them asked questions such as how to search for literary criticism, locate articles about the war in Iraq and how save searches, etc. As students were leaving a couple of them remarked that they never knew the library had so much information available and thought the library has a lot to offer.

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there is tolerance among us, it may prevent violence and help save someone's life.

Burritt Library plans to do more programs like this in the future. Stay tuned!

Some audience members participating in the post-film discussion

Password Security

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A separate program

Another common strategy is to use an external program that keeps your list. One of the best is **KeePass** (see resources section). It uses very good encryption and supports the Windows clipboard feature. Simply download it from the site and install. You will need to create a new database and pick a password for it. As you can see there are categories for different types of passwords, but they are all stored in the same manner. Below is what an email password setup might look like.
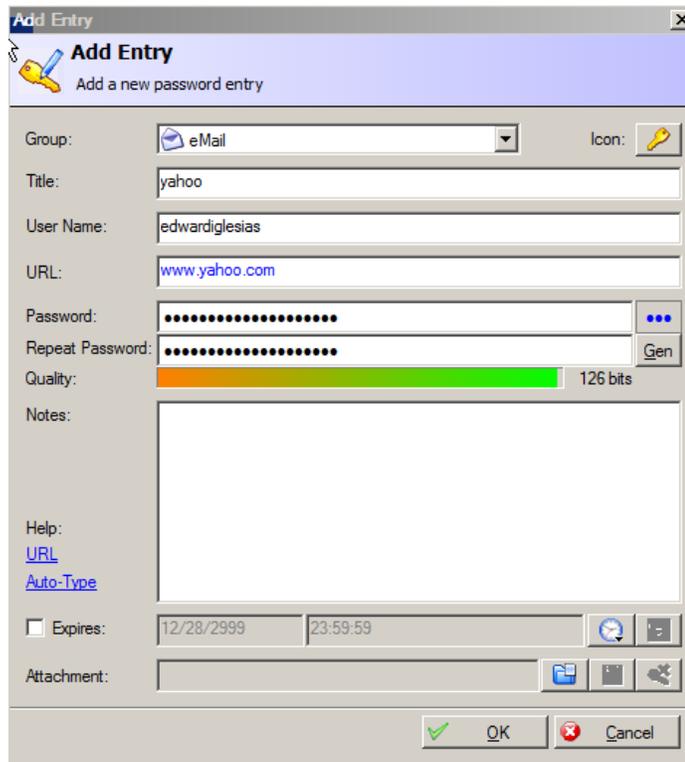
(Continued from page 4)

At this point you would simply hit 'ok'. Once you have your list built up you can click on a field (either username or password) and that field will be copied to the Windows clipboard for a brief period of time. Then you can paste it in the form with Ctrl-v. While this is not the easiest or most intuitive method, it is very secure.

Another program I like for its sheer simplicity is **Steganos LockNote**. LockNote is the very essence of Zen password simplicity. It is a tiny program that looks very much like notepad. Just double click and start typing. Additionally if you already have a list of passwords in plain text just drop it into the window and it is encrypted.
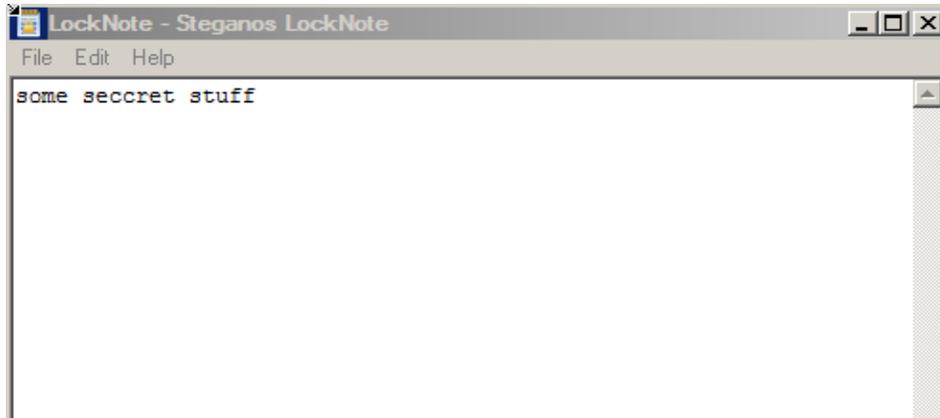
Steganos Locknote Screen

These are just some of the options available, but anything is better that writing it down on a post-it note!

Resources

SecurityStats.com - find out how good your password is.
http://www.securitystats.com/tools/password.php

Using Firefox to secure passwords
http://www.lifehacker.com/software/geek-to-live/geek-to-live-secure-your-saved-passwords-in-firefox-154099.php

Kee Pass
http://keepass.sourceforge.net/

Steganos LockNote
http://locknote.steganos.com/

Password Generators
Nic Wolff's Password Generator
http://www.angel.net/~nic/passwd.html

If you feel brave try
GRC's Ultra High Security Password Generator
https://www.grc.com/passwords

Help Us To Understand How the CCSU Community Rates Library Services!

You can help us gain a better understanding of what the CCSU community thinks about Elihu Burritt Library services by participating in a very important electronic survey.

It is vital that we get the best participation possible so we encourage you to respond. Responses will be held in confidence. No identifying links between the responses and the individual responding will be retained. Only combined data will be reported.

We sincerely appreciate your helping us out with this important project. If you supply your e-mail at the end of the survey, you will be entered in a raffle to win one of several Visa gift cards!

Please complete the online survey at
http://survey.libqual.org/index.cfm?ID=734466

The deadline for completing the survey is May 8th!

If you have any difficulty in accessing or taking the survey, please contact Susan Slaga in the Reference Department at slagas@ccsu.edu or at 832-2095.