Beware the Virtual Library
Guest Editorial
Susan Sturgeon
For the first time in my career, I genuinely fear for the future of public college libraries. College and university libraries, even those with level funding, are rapidly divesting themselves of their print subscriptions. Libraries cannot afford to pay for both print and on-line resources, or even microfilm and on-line resources, because of the mistaken assumption that electronic resources are equivalent to and less expensive than print. Print journals have become the first target in the line of budget cutting fire.

In a review of the cuts at the Fitchburg State Community College Library, the virtual library is described as "a virtual library where nothing exists but links to pre-existing resources" (Spindel, 2002). The Fitchburg State College Library has frozen book purchases and eliminated all microfilm subscriptions, including the New York Times (Spindel, 2002). The Fitchburg State College Library has only 33 microfilm subscriptions left, periodical binding was reduced by 75% and the approval plan for book purchases was canceled.

Part-Time/DGCE Faculty Test Unemployment Compensation Eligibility

Certain faculty teaching in the Division of Graduate and Continuing Education and some day division part-time faculty at the State Colleges may be eligible for unemployment compensation for the weeks between two successive DGCE or day division semesters. Eligibility will apply to faculty whose ON-LINE employment is as a DGCE or part-time faculty member. In other words, to qualify for unemployment compensation, the faculty member cannot also teach full-time in the day unit or hold a full-time job outside of academia.

Faculty members must meet the threshold requirements entitling them to unemployment insurance (Massachusetts General Laws, chapter 151A, section 28A(a)). This section provides a specific exemption from unemployment insurance coverage for the period between academic semesters and years for services performed in an instructional capacity for an educational institution. The reason is that, in most instances, the employee has a contract or "reasonable assurance" of employment in the second semester or next academic year. This exemption, however, does not apply in the context of the M SCA - D G C E or an on-line day unit part-time faculty. Under the DGCE collective bargaining agreement, the term of each appointment is specifically stated to be "for no more than one (1) instructional period" (Article VI(C)). Moreover, the DGCE collective "Letter of Appointment" states that the "course may be cancelled if enrollment is insufficient" (Appendix C).

The Division of Labor and Workforce Development's Board of Review, the administrative body that hears unemployment appeals, has consistently found that even if a DGCE faculty member has been offered one or more courses in a subsequent semester, that faculty member does not have "reasonable assurance" of employment until the semester actually begins and is, therefore, eligible to receive unemployment compensation for the intervening weeks. If you are denied unemployment compensation, as an AN TA member, you are eligible for legal services to assist you with an appeal. Some day division part-time faculty may also be eligible for unemployment compensation in these circumstances. If you have a question about your eligibility, please contact your local chapter president (see sidebar on Page T line).
At the State House

Highlights of Legislative Debate on the FY ’03 State Budget

As we go to press in late June, both the House and the Senate have proposed budgets for FY 2003. On page 4, you can see charts on the budget categories. The differences between these two budget proposals will be reconciled in a conference committee, which will then report the proposed budget. The House aims to do bill by bill the education funding. As promised by Senate President Tom Birmingham (D-Central), the Senate passed the state employee contracts that had been languishing for months in the House. Unfortunately, the Senate fund the contracts from the “Rate Payer Parity Fund.” Since the contracts have different sources of funding in the House and Senate, they will be considered “non-comparable” by the state budget. However, we remain optimistic that the conference committee will not pose an insurmountable hurdle to the final passage of the contracts.

State Employee Health Insurance

The House Ways & M. E. Committee had proposed increasing the percentage rate paid by state employees for their health insurance from 15% (“80/20”) to 20% (“80/20”). Such a change would have constituted a 33 1/3% increase in costs paid by state employees for their group health insurance policies. M. T. A. and the public employee labor coalition worked intensively to oppose this House Ways & M. E. proposal. A while several legislators tried to thwart our amendment to retain the 15%, we prevailed by a margin of 142-11.

Unlike the House, the Senate took no actions to increase the percentage that state employees pay for their group health insurance coverage.

Campus Budgets

M. T. A. supported and filed several amendments to increase funding for U. M. A. state and community colleges, and libraries and reference materials. While we did not receive the funding levels we sought, the House did agree to restore some of the cuts made by House Ways & M. E.:

- $16.4 M restored to U. M. A.
- $16.6 M restored to the state college campuses
- $17.9 M restored to the community colleges
- $2.4 M restored to the library and reference materials

In addition, $160 K was restored to the community college workforce training programs.

Virtual Library

Virtual Library continued from page 1. This is a nightmare for librarians who try to keep on top of what is and is no longer available. And what will researchers do when the inevitable widening gap arrives?—when libraries that stopped getting the print journals then lose access to the on-line version, dropped by publishers because it is too old? Online access to individual titles is also impeded by different interfaces, methods of access, restrictions on access and publisher’s inflexibility. Computer available is an issue for patrons—we have begun to see images formats that are more powerful, expensive computers and the use of additional helper programs, such as A. D. A. C., to view. Even when these technical problems are solved, the use of e-journals is often frustrating. Libraries and patrons must view usernames and passwords, and some journals allow only single user (no institutional) subscriptions. And once located, no one will read an article on-line—it’s simply not comfortable, and you can’t mark up your copy for later quick review. Library patrons want hard copies. Downloading for printing takes an inordinate amount of time, and what you still have in the end is print.

Make no mistake, electronic resources are as expensive or more expensive than print and are often only available in addition to the print subscription, and often for an added fee. By and large, journals are NOT AVAILABLE FOR FREE ON THE INTERNET! (This is a myth! Generally, the only journals available on the internet have no charge and do not have a point of view to sell. There is little internet quality control or peer review of journal articles. In the past, some journals were free for awhile to抽查 services and publications. The future is approaching much faster than I had anticipated. In spite of these pitfalls, I see the day in the not too distant future when public college libraries subscribe to no journals in print at all. And, with a few expensive exceptions, if the on-line full text database or journal within the database disappear, the library will have NOTHING to show for years of payments. When we pay for on-line subscriptions, we are paying for ACCESS, NOT OWNERSHIP. If the choice is to cancel those subscriptions, I urge the librarian to bear in mind that the database information is ‘leased,’ so the institution usually does not retain access or ownership to the years for which it paid.”

In fact, I am no Luddite! I love on-line resources! I used them for this article! They are convenient, but they should not take the place of print journals. I worry that lack of funds is making print journals a very convenient target. I worry about the future and the future is approaching much faster than I had anticipated.


Starron Spurgeon is the Serials Librarian at the Salem State College Library.
IN THE ASSOCIATION

Report on the 2002 MTA Annual Meeting

The 2002 MTA Annual Meeting was held on May 17 and 18 at the Hyatt Convention Center in Boston. The M SCA's endorsed candidate, Catherine Boudreau (M CCC), won the presidential race with seven-year percentage of 799 to 395 for Timothy Collins (Springfield Education Association). The Hyatt Convention Center race went to a tie between W (H anover Education Association), who received 188 votes; and K erry Costello (A anover Education Association) who received 317 votes; and W illiam Coleman III (M CCC) received 56 votes in the VP race. A nnual full-time MTA dues increased by $10, and the $30 special assessment for the communications campaign was approved for an additional year.

The M SCA thanks the following members of the M SCA who represented their colleagues at this year's MTA Annual Meeting:

Afshan Bokari
Athena Boukoula
Ronald Volpert
Gerald Concannon
Nancy Dennis
Bill D ersey
Joseph B iware
Sue E rwards
Richard Elia
M assoud F arahabkhs
Lynne H yarahin
M argaret Hickey
Stanley Jackson
M aurven K elly
A lla Kucher
Saul L evine
T homas Luddy
J oanne Likhitch
M TA Board members

O ur congratulations are extended to Cathy and Anne for their victories, and our appreciation is extended once again to those members who volunteered their personal time to participate in this important meeting.

Time to Get Involved: 2002-04 MSCA Committees Forming

MSCA Committees Forming

M SCA has several standing and ad hoc committees that carry out important work on behalf of the union's membership. We need your energy, ideas and participation on these committees in order to fully represent the membership's positions on the issues and tasks before us.

Each chapter is entitled one representative to each committee. You must be a union member (full-time, part-time, or DGCE) in good standing in order to represent your chapter. All positions on all committees are for a two-year term, beginning the first Friday in October of the current year. All chapters will elect a chairperson for a two-year term, commencing the second Friday in October of this year. Current committee members must be renominated if they wish to continue on the committee.

If you are interested in serving on any of the committees listed below, please contact your local chapter president (listed in the sidebar panel on this page) in order to be nominated. A nalytical is there is no uniform deadline, it is recommended that you contact your local chapter president no later than mid-September if you are interested in any M SCA Committee.

Please do not hesitate to consult the M SCA Constitution or contact M SCA President Pat Markunas (978) 542-7282 or Pmarkunas@aol.com, if you have any questions.

Standing Committees:


Bargaining Committee (DGCE unit): M embers are responsible for the preparation of a bargaining proposal and negotiating the contract for the M SCA DGCE unit, set to expire on August 31, 2002. Negotiations are expected to commence during the spring 2003 semester.

G rieevance Committee: M embers typically serve as the local chapter grievance officer; the Committee is responsible for processing grievances in accordance with both contracts and with acting on grievances on appeal from any chapter.

Legislation Committee: M embers propose and recommend action on both federal and state legislation of benefit to public higher education, the state colleges and public employee unions.

A ffirmative Action/E qual O pportunity/D iversity C ommittee: H eaders will work on affirmative action/equal opportunity/diversity issues related to the campuses, the union and its chapters, and collective bargaining. This Committee is currently involved in information-gathering about discrimination issues on the campuses; it is also responsible for monitoring A AA/E O/D IV practices on the campuses.

E lections Committee: M embers will conduct and certify the nominations and elections of M SCA Officers in accordance with the M SCA Constitution. T he next M SCA Officers election is scheduled for the spring 2004 semester.

Credentials Committee: M embers will recommend procedures to be followed in the seating of delegates to the annual M SCA Delegate Assembly.

Resolutions Committee: M embers will review and recommend action on all proposed resolutions to the annual M SCA Delegate Assembly.

Special Committees and Other Chapter Representatives:

Salary Database Committee: M embers work on collecting and verifying salary and other union member information to update and maintain the statewide salary database for the M SCA.

Contributing Editors, M SCA Perspective: M embers serve as local campus resource persons for articles, guest editorials and general editorial policy for the M SCA Perspective.
### FY2003 House Education Budget

#### FY 02 data include supplemental funding (including M SCA FY02 collective bargaining allocation) but exclude Section 9c cuts/set-asides.

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<th>FY03 H W M</th>
<th>FY03 House</th>
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<th>O ver H W M</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>SWM $</th>
<th>O ver House</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>SWM %</th>
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<td>7066-0000</td>
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<td>Mcnair Program</td>
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<td><strong>Grand Total</strong></td>
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<td>111,933,124</td>
<td>19,398,503</td>
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<td>-6.2%</td>
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#### FY 03 Senate Ways/Means Higher Education Budget

#### FY 02 data include supplemental funding (including M SCA FY02 collective bargaining allocation) and Section 9c cuts/set-asides.

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Please note that this spreadsheet does not include the additional monies added to each campus when the contract funding amendment passed. A spreadsheet with those numbers will be available later this summer on the MSCA website.