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Virtual Worlds, Real Libraries

Innovators Describe Pioneering Library and Educational Projects in Second Life and Other Virtual Environments

October 20, 2008, Monterey, CA—At the 12th annual Internet Librarian Conference and Exhibition, Information Today, Inc. (ITI) announced the publication of *Virtual Worlds, Real Libraries: Librarians and Educators in Second Life and Other Multi-User Virtual Environments*, edited by Lori Bell and Rhonda B. Trueman.

Eighty percent of Internet users are expected to engage in some form of virtual world activity by 2011 (Gartner Research Group), and librarians and educators are already there. *Virtual Worlds, Real Libraries*—the brainchild of editors Bell and Trueman—is designed to help libraries and schools recognize the importance of multi-user virtual environments (MUEs) and consider ways of getting involved as they proliferate. The editors and 24 contributors describe innovative library, educational, and cultural projects they have undertaken. They recount their experiences working together to succeed in Second Life and other virtual worlds and explain how traditional library services such as reference, teaching, collections, discussion groups, and young adult programs can be applied in a virtual environment.

“This is probably the first comprehensive book about MUEs to focus on libraries and education,” according to Stephen Abram, 2008 President of the Special Libraries Association (SLA), writing in the Foreword to the book. “Those who read [it] and then dive in to experience these worlds ... will be better prepared to evaluate the opportunities that will emerge in the coming years. We might not even be at the beginning of the beginning.” Abram added, “It cannot be ignored or left unsaid that these early pioneers have a palpable passion and excitement for the potential of virtual environments. This energy is one of the most compelling aspects of virtual worlds and of this book.”

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Contributors to *Virtual Worlds, Real Libraries* include these librarians and educators who have done pioneering work in MUVes:

- Tom Peters
- Marty Grover
- Jami Schwarzwald
- Bill Sowers
- S. Thompson
- J. J. Jacobson
- Kelly Czarnecki
- Guus van den Brekel
- Carol Perryman
- Abbi Ball
- Erik Gordon Bainbridge
- Mack Lundy
- Mary-Carol Lindbloom
- DaisyBlue Hefferman
- Barbara Galik
- Skip Burhans
- J. B. Hill
- Todd Spires
- Geraldine Purpur
- Louise Ochoa
- Susan Payne
- Rachel Gollub
- Deni Wicklund
- Jeremy W. Kemp

In addition to an Introduction by Bell and Trueman and the Foreword by Stephen Abram, *Virtual Worlds, Real Libraries* features an Afterword, a glossary, and an index. As a bonus for readers the editors maintain a companion website to the book at www.virtualworldsreallibraries.info.

Book Launch and Signing at Internet Librarian Conference

To celebrate the publication of *Virtual Worlds, Real Libraries*, Lori Bell and Rhonda B. Trueman will sign copies at the Information Today, Inc. booth at the Internet Librarian Conference in Monterey on Monday, October 20, from 5:00–6:00 PM. For more information about the conference venue, visit www.infotoday.com/il2008.

About the Editors

Lori Bell is Director of Innovation at the Alliance Library System and has served as project manager for the Alliance Virtual Library in Second Life since its inception in April 2006. She has worked in a variety of library settings and has been an adjunct instructor at both the University of Illinois and Dominican University. **Rhonda B. Trueman**, Reference Librarian with Johnson and Wales University, Charlotte, NC, serves as liaison to the College of Business and as Vice-Chair of the Library Committee. She has served as the Assistant Director/Director of Operations for the Alliance Virtual Library in Second Life, and is an adjunct lecturer for continuing education virtual world classes through the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign.

Virtual Worlds, Real Libraries: Librarians and Educators in Second Life and Other Multi-User Virtual Environments (272 pp/softbound/\$39.50/ISBN 978-1-57387-361-1) is published by Information Today, Inc. It is available in bookstores and direct from the publisher by calling (800) 300-9868 [outside the U.S., call (609) 654-6266]; faxing (609) 654-4309; emailing custserv@infotoday.com; or visiting the ITI website at www.infotoday.com.

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