

scholarship and service that survive even in the age of the information engineer.—*Mary Jane Parrine, Stanford University, Stanford, California*

**Wittig, Rob** (for In.S.Omnia). *Invisible Rendezvous: Connection and Collaboration in the New Landscape of Electronic Writing*. Hanover, N.H.: Wesleyan/Univ. Pr. of New England, 1994. 187p. \$18.95 (cloth). (ISBN 0-8195-5275-5.)

*Invisible Rendezvous* has two main themes. One is a history of Invisible Seattle (In.S.Omnia is an abbreviated form of Invisible Seattle Omnia), a performance art and computer bulletin board group, many of whose participants work in the publishing or printing trade. The other is a treatise on the effect of computer networks and group communication on writing and creative efforts in general.

Between chapters group members provide pictures of themselves in action, their projects, copies of e-mail messages, charts, and graphs to illustrate their philosophy. On several reprinted flyers they invite the participation of "artists, poets, actors, dancers, architects, idle men, fallen women, all persons of slender means, dubious antecedents, and questionable loyalties."

Invisible Seattle is passionate in its quest to find and free the artist in everyone. Its project to write a novel of the city, with all the inhabitants contributing, is characteristic. "Literary workers" donned white coveralls and stopped people on the city streets, asking them to tell a story or complete unfinished sentences. There would not be one official version of the book, but a number of variations on the story. The protagonist and the love interest, Terry, were never identified by gender. The group also compiled an "atlas" of the city, composed of locations collected, again, from people on the street, and offered building permits for new or modified constructions (asking if an addition to the structure would include ears, feet, or wings). Another Invisible Seattle project drew up a new, alternate constitution.

Invisible Seattle also created a computer bulletin board through which members and others could communicate electronically and write collaboratively. A considerable portion of the book is devoted to discussing the way this medium affects the creative process. This analysis is tied into the works of Jacques Derrida (one of the sponsors of their Fulbright grant), and Michel de Certeau, Umberto Eco, and Georges Perec are among those listed in the bibliography.

Alas, the organizers of In.S.Omnia seem to think they have created something new. Writing and creating collaboratively, however, is certainly not a new development. One of the examples given in the book, wherein one computer group user starts a story and others join in and add sentences, is reminiscent of a child's party game in which each child adds a sentence in turn. Using this technique in cyberspace is merely moving it to a new medium.

While Invisible Seattle's passion is admirable, and some of its ideas are thought-provoking, it falls prey to a common fault of the passionate—that they alone have discovered the Promised Land

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and that everyone else would be improved by adopting their frame of mind.—Julie Still, Rutgers University, Camden, New Jersey

### Short Notices

*The Economics of Information in the 1990s*. Ed. Jana Varlejs Jefferson. N.C.: McFarland, 1995. 93p. \$15.95, paper. (ISBN 0-7864-0130-3.)

These proceedings of a 1994 symposium at Rutgers University contain five contributions, an introduction and conference discussion, and an annotated bibliography. Its central concern is to assess the impact of digital technology on the economics of information production, storage, and dissemination. The papers come from five very different perspectives: an economist (Malcolm Getz), a library school researcher (Paul Kantor), a publisher (Janet Bailey), a public interest advocate (James Love), and a library director (Arthur Curley). Although each is of some interest, they are all quite short—barely scratching the surface of such a complex (and crucial) topic. (BW)

**McDermott, Patrice.** *Politics and Scholarship: Feminist Academic Journals and the Production of Knowledge*. Champaign, Ill.: Univ. of Illinois Pr., 1994. 197p., alk. paper, \$13.95. (ISBN 0-252-02078-2.)

*Politics and Scholarship* examines the history of three feminist academic journals and traces their evolution and transformation: *Feminist Studies*, *Frontiers*, and *Signs*. McDermott chooses journals affiliated with major research universities in order to investigate the different ways they address both the feminist and the scholarly communities. She shows how, increasingly, feminist scholars choose to publish in feminist journals that replicate traditional academic publishing standards because of the recognition afforded them by tenure and promotion review committees, as well as their wider audiences and more stable financing. (EW)

*Journal of Electronic Publishing*. Ann Arbor: Univ. of Michigan Pr. (ISSN 1081-2711.) URL: <http://www.press.umich.edu/jep>.

As of June 1995 this "electronic archive" on electronic publishing included thirteen articles, divided into six categories: Copyright Issues, Digital Issues, Economic Issues (with FAQs on "usage-based" pricing by two University of Michigan economists), Imaging Issues, Policy Issues ("Institutional and Policy Issues in the Development of the Digital Library"), and Technical Issues (e.g., a critique of HTML by Philip Greenspun). Some of the articles provide hypertext links. The phrase "a lawyer has at his touch" connects, aptly enough, to the homepage of Cornell Law School's Legal Information Institute, and the terms "adze" and "diao" to dictionary definitions. Unlike much of what one finds on the Web, however, this particular publication is clearly more interested in providing substance rather than flash. (SL)

**Haricombe, Lorraine J., and F. W. Lancaster.** *Out in the Cold: Academic Boycotts and the Isolation of South Africa*. Arlington, Va.: Information Resources Pr., 1995. 158p. \$29.50. (ISBN 0-87815-067-6.)

Stemming from Haricombe's dissertation at the University of Illinois, this study "was designed solely to determine to what extent scholarship in South Africa may have suffered as a result of various manifestations of an academic boycott." These manifestations included the banning of South African scholars from conferences, rejection of manuscripts by South African scholars for publication, nonrecognition of South African degrees, etc. Access to information played a key role in the boycott, and the authors devote some attention to the debate among librarians (especially at the 1987 ALA conference and its aftermath), and to the actions they and publishers took to isolate South African scholarship. The bottom