

Supercourse Newsletter  
02 June 2006.

[www.bibalex.org/SuperCourse/Index.htm](http://www.bibalex.org/SuperCourse/Index.htm)  
[www.bibalex.org/english/initiatives/SupercourseArchive.htm](http://www.bibalex.org/english/initiatives/SupercourseArchive.htm)  
[www.pitt.edu/~super1](http://www.pitt.edu/~super1)

Dear Friends,

You can't cross the sea merely by standing and staring at the water. Tagore

LaPorte Birthday Effect : It appears that again this year, LaPorte Birthday has had a profound effect on world giving. Sadly no Mercedes, Pearls or Caviar were received on May 29th. But the most important gifts for science and global health we received from you with your lectures. I am extremely appreciative, as are the teachers of the world. In the 3 months before my birthday, 122 lectures were received in the 3 months prior to May 29. My birthday is a lecture magnet, cool.

I would like a Mercedes, of course...but this is far, far better.

Legacy Lecture Series:

The legacy lectures are heating up also. I have been reading up on archiving. It is not any easy concept to think about keeping content alive for 700 years as the ancient Library of Alexandria. I have been talking with varied archivists. I have not found ANY archivist who specializes in keeping PowerPoint lectures alive. Bill Gates will not even answer my call.

There is a fascinating book called "Double Fold". Nicholson Baker's book critiques the modern library for losing its focus on preserving books and the knowledge they contain. Instead, as he suggested they all too often make unreadable microfilm copies, destroying the originals in the process. Also, scanning may have enormous problems. Think of data stored on 5 and 1/2 floppies from 20 years ago. Our concept is to store in multiple formats and multiple locations.

We are contacting Nobel prize winners. Before contacting them all, we are identifying if they already have lectures available. The Library of Alexander and our collection represents 27 lectures we have stored or shortly will have stored. There is a collection of 12 lectures at the NIH. We see by the end of the Summer that we will have at least 40 this would be the largest academic collection in existence.

We do not want to leave out any country, and therefore we were thinking that we could collect the lecture from the top cited scientist in each country. Eugene Garfield from Citation Index has been a wonderful friend, we may ask him. We would love your thoughts of how we could do it.

Of course, the Supercourse will be included. We want all 2613 lectures to be included in the archives. Won't it be cool for the Supercourse to be a core of global science in 2706? You all have been so nice to us...we want to give you and your lecture near eternity, you deserve it.

Amazing Knowledge diffusion:

Last week I discovered something most fascinating. I was invited to Italy to give a presentation on one of my favorite areas, the epidemiologic transition. This was the 2nd Supercourse lecture [www.pitt.edu/~super1/lecture/lec19181/index.htm](http://www.pitt.edu/~super1/lecture/lec19181/index.htm). I discovered the power of what we were doing, and it is fascinating on how we are pushing a new approaches for diffusion of knowledge. I searched the web for lectures about the epidemiologic transition by choosing in Google advanced search, ppt format. There were 184 lectures found. What was striking is that for the

relevant lectures over half used slides from mine. Isn't that astounding? Imagine what this is means and will mean for all of our lectures. In the next 4-5 years it is likely that our slides will be integrated in millions of lectures world wide. I was flabbergasted to see this seeding phenomena. Instead of a nuclear breeder reactor, we are becoming a scientific knowledge breeder reactor.

1. Your lectures and knowledge is rapidly being incorporated into all of science.
2. We are immortalizing your wisdom
3. We are the world (as I start singing...only kidding)

I would love your thoughts on what this might mean

Another week, another lecture...

We received a wonderful lecture on Polio eradication from Dr. Omar Khan. It gives a wonderful overview of polio history and the challenges of its eradication. Although polio cases have not been seen in the US for the past few decades, Polio remains to be a serious public health problem in many regions around the globe. Dr. Khan's lecture also outlines the geographical patterns of polio epidemics and achievements in polio vaccinations. The lecture can be accessed at <http://www.pitt.edu/~super1/lecture/lec23851/index.htm>

Head Banging:

Your thoughts about how to take care of our Head Banging Bird, were fantastic. It does not appear, however, that there is much evidence based head banging research. The first person to write indicated that we should put up a mirror so that they could see their reflection and be scared. The second person said you have to get rid of all reflections as she is jealous of the "chickie babe" that she sees in the window. We received one suggestion that would work. The suggestion was that the best way to get rid of the bird was to trade Benson in for a Cat. Jan most certainly did not like this idea, and our 12 year old puppy Benson looked with very sad eyes that anyone would suggest that he be traded for "Kitty". Amazingly last week head banger left. I am convinced it most certainly was the result of the global pressure you all put on her. Could you imagine people from Armenia, China, Peru, Cuba, Malaysia, and Egypt all thinking about how to get rid of Head Banging Birds, it had to take a toll. But where has she gone? Turn your TV off and listen, it can happen to you.

"Once upon a midnight dreary, while I pondered, weak and weary,  
Over many a quaint and curious volume of forgotten lore,  
While I nodded, nearly napping, suddenly there came a tapping,  
As of someone gently rapping, rapping at my chamber door.  
" 'Tis some visitor," I muttered, "tapping at my chamber door;  
Only this, and nothing more."  
The Raven, Poe

Best regards from Pittsburgh

Ron, Faina, Mita, Soni, Eugene, Francois, Raina, Arlene, Rashid, Saida, Ezzelden, Julia

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