The Timeless Nemesis

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The Bowker/Ulrich Serials Librarianship award Deana and I received is primarily for the work we have done in helping further understanding the problem of European Journal pricing. Since I consider the problems libraries are having with STM journals to go well beyond the "European" issue, I have focused for this Against the Grain on a primarily American publisher, John Wiley and Sons.

To understand the pricing behavior of Wiley journals I have divided the LSU list into 3 sections corresponding to some of Wiley’s internal divisions. The Wiley-Liss titles they recently acquired, are not included in this analysis.

I. Wiley Scripta.

For 1992 the translation journals showed the most moderate price increases, but this is in sharp contrast to the 1990 and 1991 increases. The 8 titles LSU receives increased 21% in 1990, 31% in 1991 and 12% in 1992. In 1989 Doklady, Earth Sciences Sections cost $610. For 1992 the 9 issues will cost $1,400 for a cost per issue of $155.56. This is the highest price per issue of any Wiley title examined. The 8 translation titles cost $4,725 in 1989 and $8,390 in 1992. The 12% increase from 1991 to 1992 was with no apparent increase in size, i.e. the number of issues in 1991 and 1992 are identical. At almost double the CPI, this is standard operating procedure, but a welcome relief from previous years. The titles produced 90 issues in 1989 with 103 predicted in 1992. 13 issues more since 1989. $3,565 more. I don't think 13 issues growth warrant a cost increase of this size since 1989. The cumulative effect on the book budget is that buying this "growth" of 13 is-