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From the Editor

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Against the Grain

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From your editor

Well, here we are with another issue of *Against the Grain*. It's hard to believe that the months come around as regular as clock-work and it's time to put out another issue yet again!

Quite a few things have been happening in our world over the past few months. Christian Boissonnas, also known as "The Hulk," has begun Acqnet, an electronic network for acquisitions librarians. This is a good way to keep in touch in between issues of *Against the Grain*. Also, it helps us all to ferret out the real issues that are consuming our time over the course of the days. Over the past few months, a lot has happened. Many libraries' favorite supplier of Russian materials, Livres Etrangères, in Paris has gone out of business, apparently because of all of the turmoil over there. This is sad and we wish Georges DeLorme, truly a prince of a man, all the luck in the world. We have seen the purchase of Pergamon by Elsevier (remember, we first told you this was under consideration in *ATG*, 3#1, February, 1991. The acquisition of Pergamon by Elsevier is quite an event, one most of us thought would never happen. Plus there was a Supreme Court decision regarding copyright and creativity in published works which has many of the directorial types on their ear. All of these issues and more are covered in this issue of *Against the Grain* so keep reading!

However, all these serious events notwithstanding — each April, we try to do a little something zany as a tribute to April Fools' Day. In April 1990, you may remember the Barry Fast report that your editor was in the process of suing Boris Yeltsin? Did you catch that or did we trick you? Well — buried somewhere in this issue is something special like that — an April Fools joke. Can you find it?

As our parting shot, it's been suggested by people who like the fact that I have a different quote on my answering machine each day, that I do a quote for each issue of *Against the Grain*. So, here is our quote for this issue: "There usually is an answer to any problem: simple, clean and wrong."

H.L. Mencken

The Acquisitions Librarians Electronic Network

by Christian M. Boissonnas

We have to give the devil his due. The devil in this case is the energetic, peripatetic, incisive, no-holds-barred Frenchman who we all know as Christian Boissonnas, Head of Acquisitions (among other things) at Cornell University.

Well — Christian (after the 1990 Charleston Conference, we might add) began an electronic newsletter/e-mail/bulletin board for acquisitions types.

ACQNET is now three months old — growing, growing, and not gone.

ACQNET aims to provide a medium for acquisitions librarians and others interested in acquisitions work to exchange information, ideas, and to find solutions to common problems. It started with a group of 25 librarians in December, 1990, and the Charleston Conference and *Against the Grain* had a lot to do with its creation. Here is how it went.

Last summer, Meta Nissley, Acquisitions Librarian at California State University-Chico asked me if I knew of any networks for people in our line of work. I knew of the *Newsletter on Serials Pricing Issues*, edited by Marcia Tuttle at UNC-CH and the NOTIS Acquisitions Users Listserv managed by Joyce McDonough at the University of Louisville, nothing else. I told Meta that I would put a questionnaire in *Against the Grain* to see how much interest there was in an acquisitions librarian network. That elicited no response, and I dutifully reported this unpromising result at the last Charleston Conference. This tells us something about questionnaires and the printed word, but I'll leave it to someone else to tell us what.

Enough attendees felt that a network should be started that I told them to send me an e-mail message to confirm their interest. Twenty-five did, and they received their first *ACQNET* issue on December 10, 1991.

ACQNET is a managed or edited bulletin board/newsletter. It is not a free-for-all bulletin board in which all messages go to everybody in no order, with no control. It is more like a newsletter and less like a bulletin board, but issues (postings) are sent very frequently: daily or several times a week depending on traffic. So far, we have had 46 issues. I, as editor, receive all potential postings, organize, edit, summarize, and distribute them to the membership.

I am assisted by an editorial board of four colleagues: Meta Nissley (California State

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