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The Neutral Observer / The Saga of Mary Beth Whitley

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The Neutral Observer

by Rick Heldrich (College of Charleston)

The Saga of Mary Beth Whitley: You Decide

About Rick Heldrich — Rick Heldrich is a Chemistry Professor at the College of Charleston. Read the following story. At the conclusion, you will be asked to answer the question — What would you do? Mail your responses to Neutral Observer, care of Katina Strauch, College of Charleston Library, Charleston, SC 29424. The Neutral Observer, no relation to Katina, will report on your collective wisdom in a future issue of Against the Grain. All names, and events in the story are fictitious. — RH

Mary Beth Whitley walked to work every day at about 7:45 AM. She arrived at her desk, made the first pot of coffee for the office and settled down to look over the new journals that had been delivered in the previous day's afternoon mail. Her office did not officially open till 8:30 AM, but Mary Beth had kept up this routine for the past 15 years. She cherished this quiet time, before the noise of the day began, to scan the various

journals. Not that she claimed expertise in astronomy, naval history, plant physiology or topography. In fact, she did not really look in detail at any of the articles. She mostly looked at the titles of the articles, the authors' names and addresses, the layout of the covers and occasionally she'd read the abstract if the title caught her interest.

At a cocktail party or at lunch, she could shatter the myth that librarians had limited interests by bringing up a fact or story she had gleaned from her daily reading. But, she did not read journals for that reason. Her job was acquisitions. She wanted to know what her faculty was reading so she could recommend titles, or on occasion, purchase titles when they were too occupied to do it.

This particular morning, Mary Beth was looking over a journal "Science Teachers' Perspective". To her knowledge, no one had ever requested an article or copy of this journal, but it was inexpensive and had stayed on the shelves as long as she could remember. She read the titles: "How to Motivate Students

with Demonstrations;" "Laboratory Methods Revisited;" "How to get Administrative Support for a New Major;" "Why Do Faculty Fall in Love Anyway?" The last title got her attention, and she turned to read the article.

"Why Do Faculty Fall in Love Anyway?" by Demeter Klausen, Department of Psychology, University of North Solo, Northville.

"The mythology of love is replete with examples of peculiar or aberrant behavior. Otherwise normal faculty individuals will appear to act out of character when they fall in love.

continued on page 77

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Academic and Medical Clients in the southwest) has assumed additional sales responsibilities for Kansas and Nebraska, as well as corporate clients in all of his regional states.

What a small world, writes **Steve Dane** of **Kluwer**. At the **Charleston Conference** he learned that **Ward Shaw (CARL)** was working in Miller Library at Colby College (Waterville, Maine) during the late sixties/early seventies when Steve was a student there!

Al Henderson, who was last seen at the Charleston Conference, is the new editor of **Publishing Research Quarterly**. Congratulations, Al!

Karen Schmidt (we HAVE to get her to Charleston next year) writes about her trip to Oz (Australia) in the fall. She talked to a lot of acquisitions librarians, and introduced them to **ATG**. No one had seen it and everyone was interested! On another front, Karen's wonderful assistant, **Betsy Kruger**, has taken another job at Illinois. She has become the circu-

lation librarian: another good acquisitions librarian bites the dust!

The truly incredible (not to mention

lovable) **Barbara Meyers (Meyers Consulting Services)** is on the move again. Can't keep a good woman down for long! Glad you're feeling better, Barbara! ☺

The Neutral Observer

continued from page 58

Hence the expression, why do faculty fall in love? We have examined this phenomena and can relate it to a release of a known compound trignostolide. Trignostolide had not been associated with this action prior to our work. Our study with blood levels of volunteer graduate students, clearly shows the association."

Mary Beth was shocked. Not by the article, but by the claim. Why, in their own display of faculty publications she had seen a paper abstract by Professor Slick of her Biology Department that had claimed to be reporting essentially the same result. She remembered that Dr. Slick had even gotten the University Regents Award for that particular paper, which, while not published, had been

reported at the University-wide research symposium a month ago. Mary Beth read the Klausen article, but did not understand a lot of the language. She finally got to the acknowledgments and saw there that Klausen had not cited any sponsors of her work. Curious, Mary Beth walked out to look over the display of Slick's work in the main lobby.

Slick's abstract was dated April 1st, 1993. Mary Beth looked at Klausen's article. It had been received on December 20th, 1991, and accepted on November 25th, 1992. The journal was published in June, 1993. Not only that, Klausen included a footnote that she had previously reported these findings at the Society of Misbehavioral Biologists and Psychologists a year earlier in October of 1990. Slick acknowledged funding from the same institution.

What should Mary Beth do? You decide. Provide a statement of what action, if any, Mary Beth should take. ☹

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