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Back Talk

Tony Ferguson
Columbia University

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Papa Lyman
from page 88

sion. From G.K. Hall Shirley did marketing and editorial work for **Pergamon, Libraries Unlimited, and Fulcrum**. Last July she took over the position of editorial director at **Scarecrow Press** from the retiring **Norman Horrocks**. I have frequently had occasion to marvel at Shirley's command of several foreign languages and her savvy in marketing. I predict continued success as head editor of this prestigious publisher ...

In the days when **Wilcox & Follett Co.** owned only a handful of college bookstores, four at Big Ten universities maintained excellent trade book departments. I was business manager of **Follett Book Company** and as such one of the few staff members active in trade book merchandising. Thus I had some input in the direction of branch store trade policies. In 1938 Follett's Illinois book store in Champaign needed a trade department manager/buyer and I was put on the trail of likely candidates. I had come to respect and admire a young trade department clerk in **Kroch's Book Store** on Michigan Avenue, Chicago. (Kroch's had not yet made public its ownership of Brentano's Chicago and the stores were operated separately.) Her name was (and still is) **Elsa Lichtenstein**. Elsa went through the usual hiring gamut and then created and managed the trade department at Follett's University of

Illinois College Book Store. After three years in Champaign, Elsa decided to go to New York and got a job with Follett's number one competitor, of all people! She started at **Barnes & Noble's** retail store at 18th Street and Fifth Avenue. Elsa served under the presidencies of **John Barnes** and **Warren Sullivan** before **Len Riggio**, of **NYU Book Store**, took over ownership. Elsa eventually became head of the art book department of the **Barnes & Noble** store in Rockefeller Center. She retired in 1993 after a career of over fifty years as one of the best known art book people in the business. Her name was and is revered by all publishers of art books past and present.

Any history of women in publishing should probably begin and end with **Sara Miller McCune**. I first knew her as Sara Miller, a very pretty and charming member of Macmillan's sales department. It was she who helped the department out of the jam created by sending a huge shipment of books to a Wisconsin country schoolhouse instead of the intended **University Book Store** in Madison. This created a furor among college store managers but Sara helped settle it at an ABA meeting in Washington. After Macmillan Sara spent time as sales manager of **Pergamon Press** in Oxford, England. Upon her return to America, she married **George McCune** who had been a Macmillan sales manager and together they founded **Sage Publishers** in 1964. After a few years in New York, the business

was moved to California where it has grown to be one of the leading English-language publishers of books and journals in the social and behavioral sciences, with nearly 2000 titles now in print. Since the sudden death of George in 1990, Sara has spent time as a foundation executive, but as chairman of **Sage** she travels to visit its offices in London and Delhi, India while George's son, **David** has taken over as president of the company. Sara has taken part in several **Charleston Conferences**, contributed the first publisher profile to *Against the Grain* (v.1, no.2, June, 1989, p. 28) and also was interviewed in *ATG* (v.5, no.5, November 1993, pp. 32-35).

It is quite possible that I have neglected to mention some of my acquaintances among the top American female publishers. As others come to mind, I'll include a thumbnail sketch in a future column. 🐼

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My thanks to **Janet Domzella**, Director, **Lewiston Public Library** for help with facts about **George T. Delacorte**, garnered from *American Biography*, 1965.

Back Talk
from page 90

sitions, URL address maintenance, and preservation functions. Our shelves may be digital, but the work of filling them and keeping them filled continues to be complicated and important. Job security for the information professional is assured.

Lest any of this be interpreted as negative toward the brave new digital world or that I am pining for the good old days when books were books and journals were a fiscal disaster, that is not my intent. I am enthused about the superior access that will be afforded by digital monographs and periodicals, by the whole

new educational opportunities that multimedia will provide, and by the expanded use our special collections will receive. My purpose is to simply point out that from the vantage point of someone who is already involved to a fairly significant degree in the acquisition of digital materials, this new paradigm does not do away with the need for librarians — it demands them.

On the other hand, while our future is assured, we can't just expect to do everything the same. We have to focus on the enduring nature of the functions librarians have always performed: selection from the universe of publication that which is useful and affordable,

working with information providers to secure access to the needed material, providing bibliographic access so that you can find what you want when you want it, providing the setting where materials can be used effectively, training people how to find what they need and how to use it when they find it, preserving today's acquisitions for tomorrow's researchers, planning and budgeting, and dealing with the politics of the supporting institutions so that capital, material, and personnel resources are available to make all of this work. We have work before us. Break up your funeral flower arrangements into nice bouquets for your desks and get back to work. 🐼

Rumors
from page 44

doctor was awed that I knew an author in his magazine!

I just had an idea for a new *ATG* column — Arguments I Have Known. The editor would be — ta da — **Lyman Newlin**! The man is amazing! Now he even has an email account <broadwater@ag.net>! Read his reminiscences of women he has known (and arguments he has had) in **Papa Lyman**, this issue, page 67.

Corrections from the Last *ATG* (v.8#1, p. 31 —

Lucretia McClure <LMCL@db1.cc.rochester.edu> says there are

a few typos in her **Op Ed** (v.8#1, p.31). I am sorry, y'all. Now when I look at them I can't explain *what idiot* would have made these mistakes! Here goes. A sentence is left out in the second paragraph: "Medical literature is full of literary treasures as well as elegantly-described science. Librarians had the pleasure of introducing these works to readers and helping students on their way to becoming physicians." And — in the fifth paragraph, five lines from the bottom the sentence should read, "scientists who will chart" (rather than check) And — top paragraph of second column, gleaned and gathered (rather than gleaned and fathered), And, last line of that same paragraph should say, "read and study" instead of "ready and study." There you have it. To paraphrase **Edna St. Vincent Millay**: The person who edits a journal appears before the public with her typos exposed ... 🐼

Back Talk

The "L" Word

by **Tony Ferguson** (Associate University Librarian, Columbia University) <ferguson@columbia.edu>

Librarians take off your black arm bands, stop the funeral dirge, cease the endless wringing of hands, stop sounding the death knell of collection development, stop moaning about the end of librarianship as we know it today. We are all going to be busier in the future than in the past. If you haven't been indulging in this sort of behavior, you don't need to read this column.

Why am I so optimistic about the future of librarianship? Aren't I daily informed about the Internet and the digital library in my morning newspaper, from television, from my mother who dips daily into various chat lines, and even in notices from the PTA which is engaged in saving young minds from the desolation of a non-digital future? Don't I know that we are in the midst of a revolution, a paradigm shift, from print to digital forms of information and that commercial publishers and their lackey librarian cohorts are a thing of the past. Do I dare utter the informationally incorrect blasphemy that I doubt that we are the buggy makers of recent past?

YES! We will continue to be needed. The methods we employ to achieve the functions for which we are responsible are changing, but our overall goals remain the same and will continue to be valued. I have always thought of librarians as people in the business of bringing researchers and the information they need together as quickly and efficiently as possible. Consequently, I see nothing that makes me see the unemployment line in my future.

Indeed, in the digital library, we have job security as never before. Let me enumerate a few examples: In the past we worked with students and faculty to figure out their needs and then acquired materials to meet these needs. In the chaos of the freebie Internet where home pages multiply like rabbits, where materials are arranged like housing debris following a tornado, our users need professional hunters and gatherers to understand their needs and then select and present it in a useful manner.

Intellectually, the collection development process of buying digital products and books and journals have a lot in common, but electronic materials take ten times as much time. In both cases we get brochures in the mail and we read reviews in the literature, but then we talk to the publisher on the phone about technical matters, we host demonstrations, we pilot new tools, we gather evaluations from other librarians and users, we review contracts, we compare vendors, and then we go through some of the same steps at renewal time. And buying digital materials is the easy part. Cataloging them, paying for them, preserving them, etc., make them more like rare books than the

run of the mill materials that we acquire most of the time. And all of these activities require greater coordination of effort than in the past. At many institutions, teams composed of selectors, reference librarians and systems support professionals and technicians are being created to make sure everything goes right. The digital library is anything but simple.

Budgeting for the acquisition of digital materials is also a complex enterprise. In the past we budgeted for the purchase of print books and journals safe in the knowledge that once they got here there were established programs to catalog and shelve them and that users would cradle them in their own hands and read them with their own eyes. Digital materials require us to budget for electrical outlets, furniture, terminals, printers, and connections to the campus backbone or local area networks before or in addition to providing funds to purchase the intellectual content. Unless we perform these new functions, the tapes, CD-ROMs and gateways that we select or establish are worthless.

Digital information brings with it new issues that need the attention of information professionals. Because it can be copied so much easier, caring for the rights of authors and publishers of digital materials is much more time-consuming than for printed books and periodicals. Preserving the digital outpourings of the Internet and the titles we buy with our cash makes dowsing the "slow fires" of the print world seem like child's play. The preservation problem is so large and potentially expensive to solve that today's librarians are already finding themselves at conferences trying to figure out how they can work together to maintain access to an eternally unstable medium.

Digital information also requires that we develop new relationships with our vendors. Collection development began outsourcing the selection function with the **Farmington Plan** and then with the approval plans that followed in its wake. We now need to work with vendors to outsource parts of the selection, acquisition

continued on page 89

ADVERTISERS' INDEX

15 ACM "High-tech publications"	52 COUTTS
33 ACM "The E Guide"	27 EASTERN BOOK
53 ACADEMIC PRESS	21 EBSCO SUBSCRIPTION SERVICES
71 ACCENTS	49 GREENWOOD
43 ALPER	29 INPUT CULTURE
7 AMBASSADOR	2 JAEGER
19 AMERICAN MATH SOCIETY	65 MAJORS
91 AMERITECH	75 MCGRAW-HILL
76 AMIGOS	92 MIDWEST LIBRARY SERVICE
79 ANNUAL REVIEWS	69 MIT PRESS
5 ATG	77 READMORE
45 BAKER & TAYLOR	59 REED REFERENCE
73 BLACKWELL	55 ROUTLEDGE
3 BLACKWELL NA	13 ROWECOM
23 BOOK HOUSE	9 SWETS
57 BOWKER "Ulrich's"	63 UNCOVER
51 BRODART	11 YBP
81 CHADWYCK-HEALEY	

Ads Manager: Edna Laughrey Internet: elaughrey@aol.com
phone: 313-429-1029, fax: 313-429-1711
Executive Support Services, 740 Woodland Drive, Saline, MI 48176