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The Nemesis

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The Workaholic Nemesis

by Chuck Hamaker (LSU)

Just to help us remember that it isn't only the big commercial publishers who are problems with uncontrollable interests in increasing prices, Clarendon Press, Oxford England has come out with a revised edition of H. A. Priestly's *Introduction to Complex Analysis*.

The book originally retailed in 1985-86 for \$24.95 (197 pages). The new improved and vastly better 1990 edition is 214 pages and has a list price according to Yankee of \$72.00, a list price according to BIP of \$49.95 and a CIP record entered in August of 1989 of \$37.50. Sort of a Ripley's believe it or not situation. Since the book is a textbook, (Advanced Undergraduate is Yankee's coding) I assume this really is aimed at grad students in mathematics. And we know they are a rich audience. But pity the poor graduate student. For the library world, I guess we can only hope all of this is one big typo.

One of the biggest typos in recent weeks however, deals with that tycoon of tycoons Robert Maxwell who must feel a bit like Donald Trump these days. *USA Today* reported in late September that he was going to have to sell off 400 million dollars worth of the empire to pay some short term debt. The week after that article, NPR (National Public Radio) ran a spot indicating the "real" figure was \$700 million. So far the only sell off I am aware of is Collier Macmillan's sale of P.F. Collier to Germany's Bibliographisches Institut & F.A. Brockhaus. I could be mistaken but I think that means *Collier's Encyclopedia* can no longer even vaguely be considered an American product. I guess

that's only a fair turnabout since *Encyclopedia Britannica* stopped being a British product at the end of the 19th century. Is Maxwell's problem the one academic and research libraries are struggling with? Did he borrow from the continent for the Macmillan purchase and now must repay in vastly devalued dollars because of currency exchange performance? Somehow, I think that would be poetic justice, if he is paying back DM or even British pounds with costs to service short term loans rising in the 20% plus range. As Donald Trump has learned, it takes a lot of cashflow to pay for the casino.

One of those jazzy little newsletters that libraries often don't buy crossed my desk lately, this one on a topic of a great deal of interest to us. *Media Letter: Interactive Media Technology for Business, Education and Entertainment* 1,1 (June 1990) has a number of short articles that are written in an English even I can understand. The editor Denise Caruso informs me: "You belong to a select group I believe is especially likely to reap financial and professional rewards from multimedia as it develops into a powerful communications tool for both corporate life and in education and the home." Interestingly enough, although librarians traditionally consider themselves "information providers" they are not mentioned in the ranks of those who have a stake in interactive media and multimedia technologies. "Included in your ranks are: Information providers such as film studies, television networks, news services, traditional publishing houses, photo and music archives...."

A major theme of the newsletter is that multimedia is "about the business of collaboration." Among the issues of common concern to the library, publishing and vendor community addressed in the newsletter are articles such as Caruso's own "Forging a New Copyright Ethos: Nobody wins unless everybody wins" and John Kelly's "Lessons from the Near Future: Developing Multimedia Publications." Sean Callahan's thought provoking article "Forum: How about trying an idea before its time has come" starts out with the provocative statement: "The single biggest issue in multimedia — and electronic publishing in general — is the concept of fair use, compensation and ownership of intellectual property (music, photographs, illustrations, video, etc.) as defined by the copyright laws." He also indicates "Media providers — owners and authors of intellectual property — have been skeptical about digital technology for some time, but I sense a change of attitude in the past year, and it is becoming increasingly hostile." Callahan believes those with the greatest potential interest in this issue, Apple and IBM, etc., "have taken the position that they will support any constructive effort in this area, but will not initiate any action." He volunteers his electronic mailbox as a "repository of industry views on intellectual property rights in the digital world." Contact him through (Applelink:Savitar; Presslink: CALLAHAN; Connect: SEANCALLAHAN).

And if you have \$395.00 for 12 issues send it to: *Media Letter*, P.O. Box 5199 Belmont CA 94002-9998. In this particular instance

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Library Profile

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technology librarians manage their own branch libraries and function as an independent "cluster."

Automation profile: LIAS (Library Information Access System), locally developed, is the Libraries' online catalog, and supports cataloging, circulation, fund accounting, and electronic mail. MicroLIAS, an IBM PC-based version of LIAS, can be used to create and maintain databases by downloading records from LIAS or by manual input of data. Recently Acquisitions implemented the Fund Accounting control System (FACS) of LIAS, which allows online access to and manipulation of acquisitions budget data for twenty library locations. FACS is available to all collection development personnel and library administrators. Library Computing Services, part of Penn State's computing division, is in the process of migrating LIAS from Honeywell to DEC computers. When this project is completed, LIAS development will focus on the acquisitions component. Library personnel work closely with Library Computing Services in developing and implementing each LIAS component. ♣

And They Were There

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For librarians, Frankfurt could be an important experience. You can meet with book suppliers from many countries. There is a librarians/booksellers meeting area reserved for this purpose. You can talk to the top people in larger publishing houses (by appointment only, and usually for just a few minutes), expressing your views on issues of professional interest. You can see, by country, what is being published. There are halls devoted to art books, children's books, and other specific subjects. For anyone with an interest in the book world, and I do mean world, Frankfurt is a worthwhile experience.

****Some tips on attending the Frankfurt Book Fair****

Hotels are full for miles around, and prices go up about 25% for the duration of the fair. The Book Fair office can help find private home accommodations in and around Frankfurt. Many people stay in Weisbaden or Heidelberg, which are less than an hour away by train. Moderately priced hotels in Frankfurt are about \$125.

Germany, indeed all of Western Europe, is expensive. Restaurant prices are comparable to better restaurants in large US cities.

Busses and trams run to the fair, and cost about one dollar. Taxis are comparable to prices in the States.

There are 10 halls the size of a typical ALA convention. You will do a lot of walking. People wear business attire at the Fair. The weather is comparable to our northeast in October. Don't arrive the day before the Fair; give yourself a couple of days to get over jet lag. The Fair will exhaust (and exhilarate) you. ♣

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Schools, non-profits and government agencies get a price break: \$95.00. \$495.00 outside North America (Only \$8.33 per issue more for foreigners — have they been watching the British or what?) and a special corporate price of \$200.00 each for 10 or more subscriptions. Hey Katina, take a page from this group, break our newsletter down by "type" of subscriber and you could really make some money on *Against the Grain*. For 12 pages (this first issue's size) 12 times a year (144 pages in all) the bargain rate for Europeans et. al. works out to \$3.44 a page. There are lots of quotable quotes in the *Newsletter* and they fit all sizes. ♣

Some Thoughts

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opted out of some years ago when schools of library science became trade schools imparting only vocational training. The obvious and natural avenue of re-entry is to address the problems and relationships of the organization and management of the products of scholarship across space and time in a scholarly way. The obvious and natural time for re-entering the realm of active scholarship is now, a time when scholarship is in a fundamental disarray.

As the first step, I submit that a small cadre of like-minded book people, prepared to commit to the long, arduous and often discouraging course which this transformation of the role of scholarly librarianship and of the scholarly enterprise will require, band together in a committee to formulate a position and an action program aimed at bringing this transformation about. The Charleston Conference has proved itself to be an enduring gathering of book people prepared to consider and investigate radical departures from the presently accepted dogmas of librarianship and the place of libraries. I submit that a handful - 8-12 - of people who have over the years proved themselves to be the backbone of the Conference gather together to explore the way to proceed.