

November 1998

Book Pricing Update - Reference Publishing in 1998

Amy Capen
Blackwell's

Follow this and additional works at: <https://docs.lib.purdue.edu/atg>



Part of the [Library and Information Science Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Capen, Amy (1998) "Book Pricing Update - Reference Publishing in 1998," *Against the Grain*: Vol. 10: Iss. 5, Article 26.
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.7771/2380-176X.3005>

This document has been made available through Purdue e-Pubs, a service of the Purdue University Libraries. Please contact epubs@purdue.edu for additional information.

Book Pricing Update — Reference Publishing in 1998

by **Amy Capen** (New Titles Account Coordinator, Blackwell's)

Column Editor: **Dan Miller** (Manager, Approval Systems Department, Blackwell's) <Dan.Miller@Blackwell.com>

In last year's *Against the Grain* reference issue we looked at the range of titles Blackwell's treated for its Approval program during the previous year in the reference category, generally encompassing new and subsequent editions of encyclopedias, dictionaries, directories, data books/tables, atlases, and miscellaneous reference works, while excluding popular collection and lower undergraduate textbook titles. In this issue we revisit the same types of publications for the academic year 1997-1998, and see that a comparison shows some interesting trends.

Of the 1,830 reference titles treated, the subjects covered (as determined by **Library of Congress** classification) broke down in this manner: 792 (43%) fell into Scientific/ Technical/ Medical subjects, 542 (29%) in the Arts and Humanities category, 489 (26%) were in the Social Sciences and 7 titles (.003%) were classed as General Works. This represents a dramatic difference when compared to the previous year's titles, when 37% were on Scientific/ Technical/ Medical subjects, 41% of the titles treated were in the Arts and Humanities, 21% were in the Social Sciences and 1% were General Works.

These shifts in percentage of titles covered by subject were largely due both to an overall increase in the number of titles we treated as reference books, and to a substantial increase in the number of reference titles in several subjects within the Scientific/ Technical/ Medical category. What else contributed to these differences? A closer look at individual categories helps explain.

Scientific/Technical/Medical

Including LC classes Q, R, S, T and the Geography sections of G, the Scientific/ Technical/ Medical group was dominated by offerings in QA Mathematics (158 titles), RC Internal Medicine (90 titles), and TK Electrical Engineering (57 titles). This number for mathematics represents an increase from 23 titles in the previous year, which is more easily understood once one considers that 144 fall within QA in 75-76, Computer Science, leaving 14 in the broader field such as *Notable Women in Mathematics: A Biographical Dictionary*. Insofar as we see Computer Science filling a larger share of all reference titles, it

does seem important given such data-packed titles as *Encyclopedia of Networking, Electronic Edition* and the *Microsoft Press Computer Dictionary*. Many of these titles also cover programming languages such as C++ and HTML, reflecting a reasonable length of time between the widespread use of these languages and the need for published reference materials to support them.

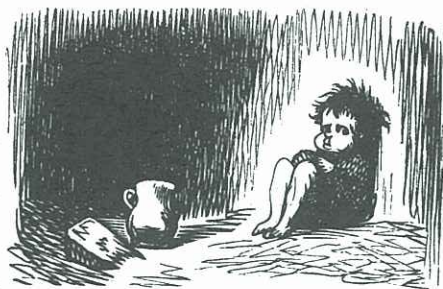
Titles on the use of computers also contributed to the class with the largest share of the Technology category, TK Electrical Engineering, which encompasses Computer Engineering and Telecommunications. We find here titles of note for *ATG* readers such as the *Neal-Schuman Complete Internet Companion for Librarians*, *Protect Your Privacy on the Internet* from Wiley Computer Publications, and *Online! The Internet Guide for Students and Writers* from St. Martin's, as well as the electrical engineering titles targeted to area experts one would expect.

Other subjects where we saw a substantial increase in titles treated included QL Zoology, where we found 36 titles as compared with 11 in the previous year, QK Botany where we found 20 as compared with the previous year's 11, and QD Chemistry where we had 17 to the previous year's 7.

Arts and Humanities

This division includes classes B (except BF Psychology), C, D, E, F, M, N, and P, and as was true in the previous year, titles on Languages and Literature in the P class represented the largest share of the Arts and Humanities titles treated, 217 in total. Here we have such treats as *A Dictionary of Worldwide Gestures* from Scarecrow Press, *On the Air: The Encyclopedia of Old-Time Radio* from Oxford University Press, and *Keep Watching the Skies! American Science Fiction Movies of the Fifties* from McFarland Classics, along with dictionaries and reference works for many of the languages and literatures of the world.

The combined History classes (D, E and F) were represented by 111 titles. Within History class D, titles on the history of Asia contributed the greatest number (16), followed by those on general history subjects (15), Great Britain (10), and Africa (9), as compared with titles on the History



of the Americas and North America in classes E and F combined, which include 42 in total. These history references range from the broad *China: A Historical and Cultural Dictionary* from Curzon Press to the specific *The Corinthian, Attic and Lakonian Pottery from Sardis* from Harvard University Press.

In other Arts and Humanities subjects, we treated 94 titles in Fine Arts, 61 in Philosophy and Religion, and 48 in Music.

Social Sciences

Notably in the Social Sciences division, we saw an explosion in library/bibliographic science titles in the Z and ZA classes, with 151 for this past year as compared to 20 for the previous year. Among these, 12 were titles from the ABC-CLIO World Bibliographical Series, which offers new or subsequent editions covering Prague, Cambodia, Lisbon, Vienna, Corsica, Brazil, Finland, Luxembourg, Namibia, Jamaica, Albania and Yemen. Titles concerned with the Internet or general computer subjects numbered 8 within this category, and last but not least we found here the reference of references: *Dictionary of Dictionaries and Eminent Encyclopedias: Comprising Dictionaries, Encyclopedias and Other Selected Wordbooks in English* from Bowker-Saur.

Next in size came the economics, business and finance group within the H class, with 116 titles, an increase from 75 last year, followed by 47 in education and 44 in law.

The 30 titles treated in political science class J ranged from the intriguing, *Alternate Careers in Secret Operations: Your Guide to a New Identity, New Life, New Career* from Impact Publications, to the utterly pragmatic, *A Guide to the 1997 Mexico City Mayoral Election* from the Center for Strategic and International Studies.

General Works

Among the seven titles treated in LC class A we found, as one might expect, general encyclopedias, dictionaries, indexes and museum titles. Those of you who followed this summer's exciting record-breaking home run streak(s) in Major League Baseball should be sure to look at *Hall of Fame Museums: A Reference Guide* from Greenwood Press. 