December 1998

Computer Science Bestsellers, 1998

Francoise Crowell
YBP, fcrowell@ybp.com

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

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

Recommended Citation

Crowell, Francoise (1998) "Computer Science Bestsellers, 1998," *Against the Grain*: Vol. 10: Iss. 6, Article 3.
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.7771/2380-176X.3029>

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.

Mergers and Acquisitions — Who Owns What Now?

Column Editor: **Linda Defendeifer** (Assistant Librarian, Assistant Professor of Library Administration, University of Illinois College of Law, 504 E Pennsylvania Avenue, MC-594, Champaign, IL 61820)

<defendei@LAW.UIC.EDU> reply to: defendei@law.uiuc.edu; Subject line: ATG M&A [mm/yy].

Everyone has experienced the elusive quotation: the one you read, note, and discard, and which over the years re-states itself silently to your recollection so often that you wish you had made a record.

Mine concerns an existentialist so conscious of the passing of time that he was incapable of acting, as if the clock face were an immobilizing Medusa. I have no idea where I read about him, but I have identified with him many times.

The image of the frozen existentialist captures my reaction to the dizzying pace of publisher mergers and acquisitions, although it works for other change, too (every time—literally—that I copy at my favorite photocopy franchise, I have to learn a new machine).

The April, 1998, issue of *ATG* brought you a ground-breaking column by **Mary Brandt Jensen**, "Who Owns What Now? —

Law Publisher Genealogy." From that excellent beginning, your editor would like to continue covering the courtship rituals and consummations of publishers large and small, and I have agreed to edit a column on the topic.

WE WILL NEED YOUR HELP!

We need your help in the large view to define the scope of the column: would you like to know just who's marrying whom, when, and with what dowry? Or would you like to go deeper to find out how and why?

We also need your help in the devilish details; in fact, we need assistance just

keeping up with the dating scene. We're not too proud: even rumor and innuendo have their value as starting points. Credited excerpts (no copyright violations, please!) from news stories, your own experiences with products, your reflections on the range and quality of available materials, all are welcome. I promise to attend to each and every one of them, and of course to attribute when appropriate.

Please email your contributions to me using this address AND THIS SUBJECT LINE, or mail them to the address below: defendei@law.uiuc.edu ATG M&A [mm/yy].

I look forward to hearing from you and to exploring, together, the fascinating and frightening brave new world of publisher combinations. Joining our resources, we may be able to break the Gorgon's spell. 🐉

Computer Science Bestsellers, 1998

by **Françoise Crowell** (Bibliographer, YBP) <FCrowell@YBP.com>

Column Editor: **Bob Nardini** (Regional Vice President, Collection Management Services, YBP; ph.: 800-258-3774x3251; fax: 603-746-5628) <rnardini@ybp.com>

It requires the help of a computer to create some order in today's enormous annual publishing output of books in Computer Science. We have asked ours to search the YBP system to locate the 25 Bestsellers in the field (defined narrowly as "QA76," the world's best known LC classification).

Over the past 12 months, these 25 Computer Science titles are the ones our customers have purchased most often. The list divides fairly evenly between humanities and social science approaches to computers, such as *Technology and Privacy*, from MIT Press, our top seller at 130 copies, and "real" Computer Science, such as the *Fortran 95 Handbook*, also from MIT.

Library selectors may now choose one of two options: 1) buy all of these titles before they go out of print (which is certain to be soon); 2) instead, wait for them to go out of date and be supplanted by something newer (not much longer a wait, probably). We hope that our latest list proves useful, or at least interesting, to Computer Science selectors. (Is

there a more difficult job in all of librarianship?)

Technology And Privacy: The New Landscape; ed. by Philip E. Agre. MIT Press 1997 \$25.00 Cloth 026201162x

Tapscott, Don, 1947- *Growing Up Digital: The Rise of The Net Generation*. McGraw-Hill 1998 \$22.95 Cloth 0070633614

Yourdon, Edward. *Time Bomb 2000: What the Year 2000 Computer Crisis Means to You!* Yourdon/Prentice 1998 \$19.95 Paper 0130952842

Picard, Rosalind W. *Affective Computing*. MIT Press 1997 \$27.50 Cloth 0262161702

Gelernter, David Hillel. *Machine Beauty: Elegance and the Heart of Technology*. Basic Books 1998 \$21.00 Cloth 0465045162

Heim, Michael, 1944- *Virtual Realism*. Oxford Univ Press 1998 \$26.00 Cloth 0195104269

Norman, Donald A. *Invisible Computer: Why Good Products Can Fail, the Personal*

Computer is so Complex, and Information Appliances are the Solution. MIT Press 1998 \$25.00 Cloth 0262140659

Jones, Capers. *Year 2000 Software Problem: Quantifying the Costs and Assessing the Consequences*. Addison-Wesley 1998 \$29.95 Paper 0201309645

Shneiderman, Ben. *Designing the User Interface: Strategies for Effective Human-Computer Interaction*. Addison-Wesley 1998 \$44.95 Cloth 0201694972

Robertson, Douglas S. *New Renaissance: Computers and the Next Level of Civilization*. Oxford Univ Press 1998 \$25.00 Cloth 0195121899

Knuth, Donald Ervin, 1938- *Art of Computer Programming; v. 2: Seminumerical Algorithms*. Addison-Wesley 1998 \$49.95 Cloth 0201896842

Norton, Peter. *Peter Norton's Upgrading and Repairing PCs*. Sams 1997 \$29.99 Paper 0672311402

Hobart, Michael E., 1944- *Information Ages: Literacy, Numeracy, and the Computer Revolution*. Johns Hopkins Univ 1998 \$29.95 Cloth 080185881x

Fortran 95 Handbook: Complete ISO/ANSI Reference; Jeanne C. Adams et al. MIT Press 1997 \$50.00 Paper 0262510960

continued on page 57

Something About Books— Why Do You Have All Those Books?

by **Jack Walsdorf** (V.P., Library Relations, Blackwell's Book Services)
<jack.walsdorf@Blackwell.com>

Visitors to my house, especially those who do not know me well, are confronted with a dilemma. Do they acknowledge the thousands upon thousands of books, and therefore ask the inevitable question: "Have you read all these books?" and the even more personal question: "Why do you have all these books?" Or, as is most likely the case, do they ignore all these books, pretend they don't exist, and save themselves the trouble of an explanation.

Sometimes even I question my buying habits. Why for example, did I buy that copy of **Allegra Goodman's** *Kaaterskill Falls*, even before I had read a review or heard that it was a finalist for the **National Book Award**? Because I liked the dust jacket, one of the most interesting I have ever seen. And why do I now own two copies of *The Man Who Once Played Catch With Nellie Fox*, a novel by **John Manderino**? Because I bought the first copy after reading the blurb, which said the author lives in Madison, Wisconsin. Having graduated with my M.L.S. from **University of Wisconsin** in Madison, I couldn't pass up what turned out to be a very good baseball novel. My second copy came from Atlantic Books in Charleston, bought because it was signed by the author. And why do my bulging book shelves now contain a copy of *Ambrose Bierce: A Sole Survivor*, edited by **S.T. Joshi** and **David E. Schultz**? Because one of the editors, **David E. Schultz**, is the son of a longtime friend from Milwaukee. My copy is signed by both editors, and inscribed "To John J. Walsdorf, bibliophile."

All this leads me to a new pile of yet unread books, the result of a chance encounter on a cross-country flight. Normally I board the flight with one thought on my mind; get an aisle seat with nobody in the center seat, and settle down to read a book. This time the man in the seat next to me was plowing through **Richard Ford's** *Independence Day*, and I casually remarked that I had just finished and greatly enjoyed his latest work, *Women With Men*. We chatted a bit, and before I knew it, we were exchanging titles of recently read and enjoyed books. The deal was struck: I would give him four titles of books I recently read and enjoyed, and he would do the same. His list included **Isabel Allende's** *Eva Luna*; **Ian McEwan's** *Enduring Love*; **Andrew Miller's** *Ingenious Pain* and **Francisco Rebollo's** *Rasero*. My own list included the **Richard Ford** title, plus **Kent Anderson's** *Night Dogs*; **David Guterson's** *Snow Falling on Cedars* and **Donna Tartt's** *The Secret History*.

So, four more books are now added to my shelves, four more un-read books. Which finally leads me to the book I was reading when the flight started: *Ruined by Reading: A Life in Books* by **Lynne Sharon Schwartz**. Originally published by Beacon Press, Boston, 1996 and now released in paperback, also from Beacon Press. Here is a book that starts off asking the right questions: "Lying in the shadow of the books, I brood on my reading habit. What is it all about? What am I doing it for? And the classic addict's question, What is it doing for me?" (p.1)

Here is an author/reader who confronts the basic question of "not finishing a book." As she puts it: "In truth I have made some tentative steps towards freedom. Over the last ten years or so, I have managed not to finish certain books ... I take up the new book in good faith, planning to accompany it, for better or for worse, till the last page us do part, but ... it stops being fun." (p. 5) She continues by saying that there are so many delectable books in the world, why linger with one that doesn't offer new delights.

Here, also, is an author/reader who can share that special feeling that book lovers have. As she puts it: "There is nothing to match the affinity of people who were defined and nourished by the same books, who share a fantasy life." (p. 47)

"So," she asks, "what has been the point?" Not to amass knowledge, and not to kill time. "For in the end, even if all my books were to vanish, I would still have them somewhere, if I had read them attentively enough. Maybe the words on the page are not even the true book, in the end, only a gateway to the book that recreates itself in the mind and lasts as long as we do." (p. 85)

I guess the next time someone asks why I have all those books, I'll try to remember these words of **Lynne Sharon Schwartz**.

Computer Science Bestsellers from page 56

Solomon, James D. *Mobile IP: The Internet Unplugged*. Prentice Hall 1998 \$46.99 Cloth 0138562466

Software Visualization: Programming as a Multimedia Experience; ed. by John Stasko. MIT Press 1998 \$55.00 Cloth 0262193957

Nichols, Kenneth, 1954- *Inventing Software: The Rise of "Computer-Related" Patents*. Quorum 1998 \$55.00 Cloth 1567201407

Hansen, Brad. *Dictionary of Multimedia: Terms & Acronyms*; 1998. Fitzroy Dearborn 1997 \$40.00 Cloth 1579580173

Arnold, Ken. *Java Programming Language*. Addison-Wesley 1997 \$37.95 Paper 0201310066

Flake, Gary William. *Computational Beauty of Nature: Computer Explorations of Fractals, Chaos, Complex Systems, and Adaption*. MIT Press 1998 \$45.00 Cloth 0262062003

Neural Networks and Pattern Recognition; ed. by Omid Omidvar. Academic 1998 \$49.95 Cloth 0125264208

Gross, Thomas, 1954- *Iwarp: Anatomy of A Parallel Computing System*. MIT Press 1998 \$45.00 Cloth 0262071835

Glass, Robert L., 1932- *Software Runaways*. Prentice Hall 1998 \$29.99 Paper 013673443x

Levy, Pierre, 1956- *Becoming Virtual: Reality in the Digital Age*. Plenum 1998 \$26.95 Cloth 0306457881

Szyferski, Clemens. *Component Software: Beyond Object-Oriented Programming*. Addison-Wesley 1998 \$44.95 Cloth 0201178885