

February 2002

## Letters to the Editor

Katina Strauch

*Against the Grain*, [strauchk@earthlink.net](mailto:strauchk@earthlink.net)

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



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

---

### Recommended Citation

Strauch, Katina (2002) "Letters to the Editor," *Against the Grain*: Vol. 14: Iss. 1, Article 3.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.7771/2380-176X.3127>

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


# From your (number=crunching) editor:

I'll admit it here. I largely hate this time of year. I hate it because of income taxes, end of the holidays and beginning-of-the-year bills which get larger each year. Then right in the middle of running for ALA President, my LTA for accounting quit so I've been doing his full-time job on top of everything else. What to do? Well it's obvious.

I threw myself into what I love best — you guessed it — editing the February issue of *Against the Grain*. This issue is guest-edited by the tireless and astute **Kent Mulliner** and contains some really important papers by **Pru Adler**, **Miriam Nisbet**, **Rick Anderson**, **Mike Bradley**, **Lolly**

**Gasaway** and **Ward Shaw**, regarding the **Tasini** Supreme Court decision. **Karen Hunter** also updates us on her continuing series of yearly articles about the state of the industry: **Surviving Another Year**. We have some new contributions by **Daryl Rayner** who has sent us **Rumours** (not a typo, just bowing to Brit-spell here) from **Paddington** plus an interview with **Richard Charkin** of



**Macmillan**. We have an interview with **Mike Eisenberg**, **Dean of the Information School, U. of Washington** by **Lisa Spagnolo** plus a response re **Tasini** from **LexisNexis Corporate Counsel**, a profile of **Scientist Professor Lali Chatterjee**. Of course, there is much, much more! Meanwhile, reality calls! I have to go and pay more bills. At least Spring isn't far away. **Yr. Ed.** 



## Letters to the Editor

Send letters to <[strauchk@earthlink.net](mailto:strauchk@earthlink.net)>, phone or fax 843-723-3536, or snail mail: **Against the Grain**, MSC 98, The Citadel, Charleston, SC 29409. You can also send a letter to the editor from the **ATG Homepage** at <<http://www.against-the-grain.com>>.

### Dear Editor:

**Norman Desmarais** (*Against the Grain*, v.13#6, Dec 01-Jan 02) raised some interesting questions about the allocation of spending for collection development. Unfortunately, his use of **Allen Kent's** "landmark study of library operations" casts a shadow over the formulas that he contemplates.

Kent argued for reducing collection development expenditures. He used circulation figures as the sole evidence of use of books and a very brief reading room observation to judge use of journals. The report was discredited by library researchers and publicly repudiated by the Pitt faculty senate. **Melvin Voigt** of the **University of California** commented, "It seems so obvious that use of any multimillion-volume research library ... can be meaningfully studied only by concentrating on that research use, not on statistics hopelessly distorted by the intensive use of relatively few volumes by undergraduates." The Pitts-

burgh study stands more as an eyesore than a landmark.

Circulation figures tell only about circulation. Many researchers (myself included) have used huge numbers of books inside libraries without ever checking one out. A fair study of library use will dwell in the stacks and reading rooms to record behavior demonstrated by patrons' activities. There is an urgent need for such research, particularly if it can connect with the consequences of use to estimate the productivity of libraries in eliminating wasteful errors, insularities, and duplications in research and education. The aim of library research in these worst of times should be to justify parity of library spending with R&D and education — not to waste energy competing for control of crumbs falling from the misers' table.

### Albert Henderson


Former Editor, *Publishing Research Quarterly* 1994-2000  
<70244.1532@compuserve.com>

### References

Borkowski, Casimir, and M.J. N. MacLeod. 1979. "Report on the Kent study of library use: a University of Pittsburgh reply." *Library Acquisitions: Practice and Theory*. 3:125-151.

Broadus, Robert N. 1983. "The use of serial titles in libraries with special reference to the Pittsburgh study." *Collection Management*. 5,1/2:27-41.

Hayes, Robert M. 1981. "The distribution and use of library materials: analysis of data from the University of Pittsburgh." *Library Research*. 3:215-260.

Voigt, Melvin J. 1979. "Circulation studies cannot reflect research use." *Journal of Academic Librarianship*. 5(May):66. 

### Rumors

from page 1

played the dead body! Norm says that Barbara was a little annoyed at the article because it mentioned at the end that her character operated a brothel. Oops! But, you know what? I guess that's showbiz!

And, besides being in mysteries, **Norm** and **Barbara** are going to Paris for spring break in April. Lovely daughter, **Denise**, is studying in Paris this semester. Doesn't sound half bad to me. How about a French mystery?

Last **Norm Rumor!** Read all about it in **Albert Henderson's** letter to the editor in this issue (p.6). **Norm** says he'll let Albert's comments re his paper (did you read it? "In Search of Equitable Fund Distribution," Dec/Jan *ATG*, v.13#6, pp. 83-86) stand without comment. He says he

continued on page 8



## AGAINST THE GRAIN DEADLINES VOLUME 14 — 2002/2003

Event	Issue	Ad Reservation	Camera-Ready
SLA, MLA	April 2002	02/06/02	02/27/02
ALA Annual, AALL	June 2002	03/27/02	04/17/02
Reference Publishing	Sept. 2002	07/10/02	07/31/02
Charleston Conference	Nov. 2002	08/21/02	09/11/02
ALA Midwinter	Dec. 02/Jan. 03	11/13/02	12/04/02