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Eamon Fennessy Interview
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ATG: I know you write a lot as well for journals like **LOGOS**.

EF: Yes, in addition to writing regularly for *Against the Grain* I have written about rights and permissions for the UK-based **LOGOS**, as well as for other associations such as the **National Federation of Abstracting and Indexing Services (NFAIS)**, the Paris-based **International Council for Scientific and Technical Information (ICSTI)**, and for individual authors who have written monographs and ask me to address specific rights issues dealing with copyright.

ATG: Is education a part of your business, telling people about intellectual property, copyright and ownership?

EF: You are right again. I am particularly interested in copyright education. We offer basic copyright courses in-house for publishers' staffs. This is something that is a labor of love (although we do get paid for the service). We want people to be aware that if they create something it is theirs and they should always thoughtfully consider transfers of these intellectual property rights. We also want everyone in the communications chain to appreciate the value of intellectual property. I have given copyright courses for **NFAIS** and for **MITRE** (a consulting firm for the defense industry) and have spoken on copyright concerns to the **International Publishers Association**, to the **Scientific, Technical and Medical Publishers**, and at meetings sponsored by the **Association of American Publishers**. On the university circuit I have had the pleasure of speaking before undergraduates and post graduates in business and law schools.

When I first became involved in this business I expected it to be static and unchanging. I could not have been more wrong. Copyright and communications technology have been so dynamic over the years that we are all changing how we look at copyright and other forms of intellectual property, patents and trademarks.

ATG: Obviously copyright presents a big area of contention between libraries and publishers. What's your position in this debate?

EF: Librarians correctly want to distribute information and they have a clientele that now prefers information electronically. There are also publishers who want to provide that information and at the same time protect their intellectual property. We want to be fair to both interests. **The Copyright Group** arranges

electronic access to information while encouraging copyright law observance laws for the benefit of the rightsholder and the user. Librarians and other users of information acknowledge that property should not be appropriated without permission.

I think most publishers are reasonable. If an item is needed for educational use on the spur of the moment, rightsholders appreciate that users may not have time to obtain permission and in that instance the work may be photocopied for a class meeting that day. If, on the other hand, an educator sits down in October and decides he or she would like to use copyrighted works for the February semester, permissions should be obtained. Rightsholders, whether it is the author, the publisher, or someone else, want to know how their works are being used before permissions are granted. Will it be for a literary review, for re-selling to students, or other users?

This permissions area is important and by using a little planning users can enjoy the works and comply with the Copyright Law, Title 17 of the U.S. Code.

ATG: Tell us about your background and training.

EF: I have my Bachelor of Science degree from **Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service**, and my MBA from **Fairleigh Dickinson University** in New Jersey. For additional post-graduate work I studied at the **Sloan School of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology** and at **Pennsylvania University's Wharton School of Finance**.

ATG: How many people work at *The Copyright Group*?

EF: There are three of us and we are kept on the run. Today's Information Industry has become Technology personified and it revolves around intellectual property. Look at the NASDAQ and its high flyers ... LYCOS, EXCITE, AOL, MICROSOFT, etc., etc. Each of these firms deals with copyright issues and intellectual property each and every day. There is plenty to keep even more of us busy but so far we are handling the challenges and are looking for more opportunities.

ATG: Where do you think librarians should fit into this whole thing?

EF: I would like to see librarians taking a more direct role in the distribution and acquisition of electronic information. Librarians can provide an invaluable service to their employers, whether on an academic campus, in a public library, or in a special library in Corporate America.

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Profiles Encouraged


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Professional Activities: Prior to joining the ACS in 1997, Bob was Vice President for Publishing at the **Massachusetts Medical Society**, owner of *New England Journal of Medicine* and other medical publications. His career spans scholarly, professional, trade, college, and school segments of the publishing industry. Currently, Bob is chairman of the Board of Directors of the **Copyright Clearance Center**. He also serves on the Executive Council of the Association of **American Publishers' Professional and Scholarly Publishing Division**, the Board of Directors of the **Council on Library and Information Resources** and the Executive Board of the **International Association of Scientific, Technical, and Medical Publishers (STM)**.

Avocations: Books, music, and exercise.

Last Book Read: *Citizen Soldiers* by Stephen Ambrose.

Pet Peeve: Drivers ignore stop signs and lights in Washington, D.C.

Favorite Quote: All the best one-liners that Woody Allen ever wrote. 

Origin of Incunabula

Incunabula is the term used to describe all books printed from the first, the Gutenberg Bible in 1450 through the year 1500. The term comes from the Latin words meaning "thing in the cradle." The largest collection in the United States is in the Library of Congress which holds 5,600 such books.

— excerpted from Nat Bodian's
The Joy of Publishing