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Beyond Boundaries: Knowledge Innovation and Generation

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Against the Grain

"Linking Publishers, Vendors and Librarians"

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Beyond Boundaries: Knowledge Innovation and Generation



by **Karen Christensen** (CEO, Berkshire Publishing Group, 314 Main Street, Great Barrington, MA 01230; Phone: 413-528-0206) <karen@berkshirerepublishing.com> *Weblog: www.berkshirerepublishing.com/blog/*

While gathering the articles for this issue on innovation, I've met with environmental leaders in Beijing, talked to an African trader in Guangzhou, had lengthy arguments about free and paid content with colleagues in San Francisco and New York, and got to know a number of China policy experts in Washington, DC. I'm writing now from London, where I attended the **World Congress of History Producers** and London Information Online. This global kaleidoscope of topics and media is reflected in the contributions you see here.

While **Berkshire Publishing Group**, the company I founded with anthropologist **David Levinson**, is known for creating reference publications, we have long described ourselves as a "knowledge and technology" company because

our interest is in finding fresh ways to make massive amounts of knowledge accessible. When **Katina Strauch** gave me the opportunity to develop an issue of *Against the Grain*, I asked to focus not on reference publishing but on innovation — in journals, academic and trade books, as well as in the world of encyclopedias and online publications.

Our professional world is continually changing, evolving, and perhaps even morphing into something quite different, and each of us is being asked to manage more information and come up with fresh solutions to new challenges. The articles here have a practical edge, presenting the views and recommendations of leaders who have been in the trenches in publishing, scholarship, and library service.

You'll find new voices, people who haven't written for *Against the Grain* before. I met **Howard Burrows** — virtually, that is — when we were both asked to serve on the advisory board of **Larry Sanger's Digital Universe Project**. Larry was the cofounder of **Wikipedia** and has an interest in ensuring that experts have a voice in content creation online, but he believes that this has to be free, supported by advertising or donations. **Howard**, a scientist in New Hampshire, replied to a blog comment I made about the idea that information should always be free, and I was struck by his analysis of the economics of knowledge creation. He's developed this more fully in "A Healthy Knowledge Economy," and I know

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If Rumors Were Horses

Many exciting things have happened in our world this month. It's hard to keep them straight much less remember them all. Let's see. Some of the **Rumors** are really long, but the information is important. Sorry if you think they're too long ... but **Happy New Year** anyway!

Cambridge Information Group (CIG) has entered into an agreement to acquire **ProQuest Information and Learning**, a segment of **ProQuest Company (NYSE: PQE)**, for approximately \$222 million. Under the agreement, **CIG** will combine its Bethesda, Maryland-based **CSA** subsidiary with Ann Arbor, Mich.-based **ProQuest Information and Learning**



to create a new, privately held independent company. The new company plans to continue operations in both locations. As we all know, both **CSA** and **ProQuest** offer libraries and their users access to high-quality electronic re-

sources which serve a combined customer base of more than 25,000 library customers. **CSA's** products include **CSA Illumina**, the platform from which more than 100 scholarly databases in the natural sciences, social sciences, arts and humanities and technology fields are made accessible; **Ulrich's Serials Analysis System**, a tool for library professionals to identify, analyze, evaluate and create reports about the library's print and electronic serials holdings; and the recently launched **CSA Illustrata**, which permits searching and retrieval of charts, graphs, illustrations and their captions within articles and documents. **ProQuest** provides global access to one of the largest online

content repositories in the world. It is best known for its extensive collection of business, economics, general reference, genealogy, humanities, social sciences, scientific, technical

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and going over to **Coutts!** Hope to have more information shortly!

And, speaking of Charleston regulars, **Janet Flowers** and her husband are off to Calgary to visit grand kids for several weeks. I am jealous!

Blackwellian and Oberlin alum **Scott A. Smith** <Scott.Alan.Smith@Blackwell.com> has created an endowed fund for the **Mudd Library** in honor of emeritus professor of German **Sidney Rosenfeld**. The fund supports purchase of library materials in German, including scores.

And we have TONS of meeting reports from the **2006 Charleston Conference** thanks to the thorough and hard-working **Ramune Kubilius** <r-kubilius@northwestern.edu> and **Heidi Hoerman** <hoerman@sc.edu>! The reports will begin running in the **February** issue of **ATG**. Say tuned.

The glib-penned **Tom Leonhardt** spoke glowingly about our old pal, **Fred Lynden** in **ATG**, v.18#4, Sept. 2006). And, guess what, we heard from **Fred** a few weeks ago! He sent us a meeting report all the way from Russia! See this issue, p.78.

SirsiDynix has signed a definitive agreement to be acquired by **Vista Equity Partners**, a \$1 billion private equity firm focused solely on investing in software and technology-enabled businesses. Terms of the agreement were not released. The deal was expected to become final in mid January. www.sirsidyndix.com/
www.vistaequitypartners.com

The awesome **Ann Okerson** wrote recently on **Liblicense**, that while **Sally Morris** is retiring from **ALPSP**, she is hardly leaving the scholarly communications world, as she will

be editing the journal **Learned Publishing** and bringing to it the same kind of thoughtfulness and excellence we have come to expect from any **Sally Morris**-led activity. Hear-hear!

Emerald Group Publishing is celebrating forty years in academic publishing in 2007. This milestone will be celebrated throughout 2007 and will include special events at Conferences as well as a new program for library science students, expanded offering of awards and the launch of eight new journals. Emerald was established in 1967 by a group of senior academics who, dissatisfied with the international publishing distribution outlets of the time, formed **MCB University Press**, an alternative publishing house that focused on niche management disciplines including strategy, change management and international marketing. In 2001 **MCB University Press** adopted the name **Emerald** as its new organizational identity, stemming from the working title of its flagship product **Emerald (the Electronic Management Research Library Database)**. www.emeraldinsight.com

Recently got an email from **Matthew Ismail** <mdismail@aucegypt.edu> Head of Collection Development at the **American University in Cairo**. Matthew was asking for advice on formulas for allocating funds for book purchases. With the rise in electronic resources, he is finding that the old established ways of judging the adequacy of electronic holdings is quite primitive. He is writing an **Op Ed** for a future issue of **ATG** and would like advice from any of us! By the way, he says that it's about 60 degrees and sunny in Cairo right now, about 50 degrees at night, which is usual for the winter. Recently, they were riding the shuttle low to the corniche along the Nile and could actually see the **Pyramids** over in Giza. Given the level of pollution in Cairo, he says that's unusual. Stay tuned for the **Op Ed** and contact **Matthew** if you are so inclined.

World Book, Inc. has announced the appointments of **Patti Ginnis** to chief marketing officer and **Ben Hinton** to managing director of international sales.

Ginnis has more than 15 years of experience in marketing and a strong background in the educational reference publishing industry. Most recently she was senior vice president of sales and marketing for **Encyclopedia Britannica**. She holds a B.A. from **Illinois State University**. Before joining **World Book**, **Hinton** worked in roles of increasing responsibility for the global reference publisher **Thomson Gale**. He began his career at **Thomson Gale Australia** (now **Thomson Learning Australia**) managing customer and product matters throughout the Pacific Rim. He also has held technical sales roles in the U.S. and marketing and sales management roles, where he was responsible for increasing **Gale's** international market share, revenue, and customer awareness for both print and digital products. **Hinton** holds a bachelor's of Information Technology (Commerce) from **Australian National University**. **World Book** celebrated its 90th anniversary in 2007.

www.worldbook.com/

The International Association of Scientific, Technical & Medical Publishers (STM), a publishing trade association, has issued a position statement on 'The Use of Orphan Works.' An orphan work is a copyrighted work for which the user can't identify and/or contact the legitimate holder ("copyright owner") to obtain permission to use the work. Because of this difficulty, orphan works risk exclusion from the cycle of creation and exploitation, since users may choose non-use over the risk of liability for copyright infringement. **STM** believes that reasonable solutions can be found to solve these problems and that good faith efforts to locate and obtain permission

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that all **ATG** readers will welcome his cogent presentation.

David Levinson, who conceived the first of **HRAF's** electronic publications, the **Cross-Cultural CD**, and then led the early development of **E-HRAF** during his 20-year tenure at the Human Relations Area Files at **Yale** before joining me in starting **Berkshire Publishing**, explains why anthropology provides an ideal framework for the integrative, interdisciplinary, global scholarship that is so much needed today, in "Thinking Globally: The Benefits of Interdisciplinary Publishing."

From the UK we have two angles on the book and information world. **Richard Char-kin**, chief executive of **Macmillan**, a dynamic and innovative British publisher whose domain includes *Nature* and *Scientific American* as well as major academic and trade book publishers, explains some of today's business challenges and his ideas about what lies ahead. And

Tim Coates, former managing director of the bookshop chain **Waterstone's**, provides an overview of the current crisis in UK public libraries.

My own article "Social Media Simplified" also has a UK connection: my first job in "social media" was sitting on the floor in a flat in Kensington, sorting through thousands of letters exchanged between **T.S. Eliot**, his first wife, and his friends and colleagues. Here, I offer a new way of thinking about today's flood of new social media — Weblogs, wikis, memediggers, and more — with an emphasis on the underlying issue of what these tools are actually for. In a related article, **Dave Pol-lard**, who writes extensively about knowledge innovation, makes the case for information professionals' future role in "reintermediation" (as opposed to disintermediation, the idea that we need to get of the layers between front-line people and useful information). His article, "From Collection to Connection," also examines new social media tools that will help librarians in this new role.

Finally, we come back to the reference desk,

as **Eric Calaluca** of **Reference Universe** explains the first technology designed specifically to integrate print and online collections, and librarian **David Tyckson** presents the ten great innovations in libraries over the centuries.

These articles show that what really counts is new perspectives and a willingness to try new things and break down boundaries — whether in business practices or organizational structure or the publishing and library supply chain. But these authors are not blind followers of the latest technology slogan, and show a consciousness of the need to blend effectively the best of past and present knowledge — so we can help readers to face the considerable challenges of the future. 🌱

It's worth noting that five of the eight authors of this issue's features are also bloggers. All of us welcome your comments on the ideas presented here, and our Weblogs' details are listed with the articles. — KC