

December 2006

People Profile: Eric Calaluca

Editor

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



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

Recommended Citation

Editor (2006) "People Profile: Eric Calaluca," *Against the Grain*: Vol. 18: Iss. 6, Article 22.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.7771/2380-176X.4699>

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.

tronic, reference collection would ever be used in a way proportionate to its cost. This is hardly surprising, given that no library has had, until **Reference Universe**, possessed a tool to actually unlock the reference collection.

However, most on-the-desk reference librarians have been big supporters of **Reference Universe**. Using this tool maximizes the substantial investment the library has made in high-quality reference; they've worked "in the trenches" for years and are grateful to be able to offer more targeted assistance to patrons at the early stages of the patrons' research. **Thomas Mann**, of the **Library of Congress** and author of the **Oxford Guide to Library Research**, called **Reference Universe** "a godsend for reference librarians." That comment sums up the usual reaction of reference librarians to our product.

Print versus Online

I've been asked what I would say to a critic who argues that a resource such as **Reference Universe** is simply preserving an outmoded medium — print — beyond its usefulness. It's the old question of print or electronic. But to me, that's not even the right question, at least not in the realm of specialized reference. Rather, the question for serious librarians is: What is authoritative, and what is not? One of the main functions of any library is to help patrons separate the wheat from the chaff, and sometimes print reference works are the finest wheat. It would be a shame not to take full advantage of them. When one considers that there is little chance that the entire realm of printed reference will ever find its way online, an access tool like this becomes the only avenue of discovery. Ultimately, it's our hope that **Reference Universe** brings back a little bit of the serendipitous fun of roaming the reference stacks and seeing where the next good notion takes you.



against the grain people profile

Eric M. Calaluca

President and CEO, Paratext
2806 Flintrock Trace Road, Suite A-204, Austin, TX 78738
Phone: 512-402-9959 • Fax: 512-402-9979
<ec@paratext.com> www.paratext.com

BORN & LIVED: Born in Detroit, lived in Washington, DC most of my life, now live in Austin.

EARLY LIFE: A great Italian family. 5 boys, 1 girl. Lots of sports. My father was a Mechanical Engineer and my mother loved words. They gave me a love of structures and language.

FAMILY: Married early this year. My wife, **Samantha**, is a graphic designer, and now completing graduate work in psychology.

EDUCATION: B.A. and M.A. in Philosophy from the **University of Dallas**. Minored in Classics. Study of the ancients is the cure for worry... nihil novum sub sole.

FIRST JOB: Technical editor at **General Dynamics**. I got to see F-16s up close, which was cool.

PROFESSIONAL CAREER AND ACTIVITIES: Started at **Chadwyck-Healey** in 1987. Left in 1993 to begin **Paratext**. **Bob Asleson** agreed to join with me in 1999. **Bob** is the most accomplished executive in our industry and also the most decent. I'm a lucky guy.

IN MY SPARE TIME I LIKE TO: Weekend soccer, golf, oil painting, travel, cooking with way too much garlic.

FAVORITE BOOK: *A Soldier of the Great War* by **Mark Helprin**.

PET PEEVES: "The students only want full text!" Since when was education synonymous with making things easier for students?

PHILOSOPHY: Philosophy students don't have 'a philosophy.'

MOST MEANINGFUL CAREER ACHIEVEMENT: It's a tie: **Reference Universe**, and developing the **Patrologia Latina Database** during my time at **Chadwyck-Healey**.

GOAL I HOPE TO ACHIEVE FIVE YEARS FROM NOW: Updating this from a small study in rural Italy.

HOW/WHERE DO I SEE THE INDUSTRY IN FIVE YEARS: Those who understand libraries and love scholarship will really thrive; those who don't will do something else for a living.



The Good Library Campaign and the Future of U.K. Libraries

by **Tim Coates** (Management Consultant and Advocate for Public Libraries) <timcoatesbooks@yahoo.com>
Weblog: www.goodlibraryguide.com/blog

The last ten years in the United Kingdom have been "the *Harry Potter*" decade. If ever there was a star who encouraged children and reluctant book readers to enjoy life between the covers, it was **Harry**, in this series of wonderful books whose stratospheric popularity has inspired awe among everyone connected with books or the publishing industry.

So you would assume that public libraries in Britain have been flourishing during that time. What other institution, after all, could

better benefit from and encourage the fruits of the craze for **Harry Potter** than the public library? But you would be wrong. During those years book borrowing from British libraries has fallen from 420 million books each year to 250 million. The decline is continuous and relentless; at this rate, the graph hits zero in about 15 years' time. By 2020, British lending libraries will be a thing of the past.

Declining Book Collections

How has this come about? Book sales

have been wonderful. Market research shows that the number of people reading and enjoying books continues to grow and touches all corners of our society. Magazine sales are also strong — reading is increasing in popularity. But in Britain, a country long admired for its educational system and for its magnificent contributions to literature, library book collections have fallen, over the past decade, from 80 million books to 60 million books. Although funding for public libraries keeps rising, the

continued on page 40