

2016

If Rumors Were Horses

Katina Strauch

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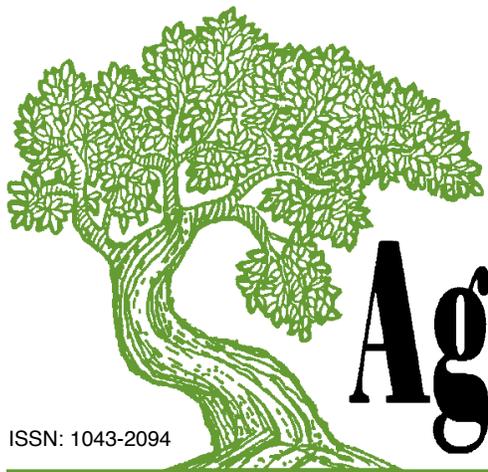
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Against the Grain

“Linking Publishers, Vendors and Librarians”

ISSN: 1043-2094

The Business of Academic Bookselling ... and Buying

by **Bob Nardini** (Vice President, Library Services, ProQuest Books) <bob.nardini@proquest.com>

Nothing makes you feel smarter than being invited to write an encyclopedia article. So I felt awfully smart while writing the entry for “Approval Plans” in the *Encyclopedia of Library and Information Science*, which **CRC Press** brought out back in 2003. That was the second edition of a venerable work that had first come out in 1968. And then last year, when asked to revise my entry for the third edition (still forthcoming), I felt smart again.

Until I re-read what I’d written that first time. Can you retract an encyclopedia article? Probably not. Too bad for me, since some of what I’d said didn’t belong in any encyclopedia. Most of what I wrote was fine, and some of it, to tell the truth, I enjoyed reading back to myself. “An approval plan is an acquisitions method under which a library receives regular shipments of new titles,” I began, a

good enough start, nothing to be ashamed of there. Maybe I should have quit while ahead. Instead, I concluded with a section called, “The Future of Approval Plans.” That’s where I ran into trouble.

Approval plans would spread to overseas libraries, I predicted. Small libraries would begin to use approval plans. Why not? Approval plans were already, for many libraries, “the centerpiece for the collection of monographs.” Didn’t happen, either prediction. Many libraries who’d had one, in fact, had trimmed or even done away with their approval plans. eBooks were not doing well at the time, but I did mention them at least. And

likewise, I mentioned teaching faculty in one sentence and users more generally in another, devoted a couple of sentences to metadata, and followed that by referring in a vague way to “the immediacy of

data” together with “efficiency” a little further on in another sentence.

So, I wasn’t completely off base. But how would I know that the world of academic bookselling was about to change radically, and that the new centerpiece would be usage? That eBook aggregators would arise, first to challenge book vendors and then to merge with them in part so as to be more able to compete and cooperate, simultaneously, with publishers and with one another? That so many publishers would merge as well, that some publishers would become aggregators, and that all would be challenged to attract readers, let alone buyers, for the parallel streams of new books in two formats (or more) that they continued to release in great number? That academic libraries would start to use terms like ROI and become as businesslike as the businesses that served them? That academic librarians would

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If Rumors Were Horses

March and April have been busy! Even though it’s hard to have anything new to say these days with the Internet so pervasive, there is some big news in our industry. I hope you are keeping up with the **ATG NewsChannel** posts which **Tom Gilson** crafts so thoroughly every week. Also, **Erin Gallagher** from **Rollins College** keeps us up-to-date weekly with her Hot Topics! www.against-the-grain.com



Rita and Willie Ricketts with their grandchildren.

YBP has bought **Ambassador Book Services**’ library customers. Your **YBP** representative will be in touch shortly to assist with the transition if not already. <https://www.ebsco.com/promo/ambassador-book-services>

Moving right along, **Follett**, the family-owned bookseller, has acquired **Baker & Taylor**. Reportedly this will boost sales by almost 40 percent and strengthen **Follett**’s presence in a number of markets, from public libraries to foreign countries. Terms of the sale were not disclosed. <http://www.4-traders.com/BARNES-NOBLE-INC-11858/news/Barnes-Noble-Blockbuster-book-deal-Follett-buys-Baker-Taylor-22193388/>

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From Your (pasta-loving) Editor:

Don't you love it? While I was in Italy eating pasta, there were people working away on this print April issue of *ATG*! And it's a great one. The energetic and committed **Bob Nardini** has put together a unique series of articles on the **business of bookselling and buying**. His introductory article — looking through the lens of his encyclopedia article many years ago and how the industry has not — changed is too weak a word — is Morphed a better word? The industry is definitely changing its image...

Articles included are by **Rick Lugg** (being in the middle), **Stephanie Church** (strengthening the library story), **Carol Joyner Cramer** (alternatives to DDA), **Alan Jarvis** (next for academic publishing?), and **Adam Sandler** (eulogy for a bookworm).



We have interviews with **Rosann Bazirjian** and **N V Sathyanarayana** and **David Parker** has interviewed **Laura Brown** of **JSTOR**, while **Myer Kutz** had a fascinating conversation with renowned attorney **Jon Baumgarten**.

There are several book reviews and reports — **Collecting to the Core** is about advanced astronomy texts and thanks always to **Anne Doherty** for her editing of this continuing column. I can't believe how amazing **Regina Gong** is getting so many great book reviews, and **Tom Gilson** is no slouch either.

Don Hawkins does his usual thorough reporting on the 2016 NFAIS Annual Conference, **Ramune Kubilius** brings us her reporters from the 2015 Charleston Conference, and **Leah Hinds** gives us a few glimpses of Charleston 2016.

Back Talk is about the speedy delivery of books through Amazon, etc. (Is speed the best factor when buying a book regardless of format?) **Leila Salisbury** is **wandering the stacks** in her **From a University Press** column. (I heard this quote recently, "You can't walk the stacks in a virtual library — all you can search digitally is the metadata.") **Michael Arthur** surveys the importance of efficient access and enhanced technical services operations, **Jerry Spiller** fills us in on a new scholarly journal launched by the **Museum of Science Fiction**, and **Michael Gruenberg** asks "when is a trade show not a trade show?" **Stacey Marien** and **Alayne Mundt** get technical about the chaos of media ordering while **Vicki Sipe** and **Lynda Aldana** care about shelf-ready workflow.

It's time to down tools. What to have for supper? Pasta? Love, Yr. Ed. 🍝

Letters to the Editor

Send letters to <kstrauch@comcast.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:

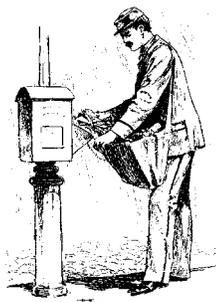
I'd like to fill in some of our gaps. We have a bound copy of vols. 13, parts of vol. 16 through 19, and nothing for volumes 20 through 26. Our new subscription began with vol. 27#6. The simple question I have is to ask if you have any back issues available and, if so, how can I obtain them? I see from the *ATG* NewsChannel Website that you have an article archive going back to 2009, but we'd like to obtain physical copies to fill in at least part of our collection gap.

Thanks for any info. you can pass on. I'm really enjoying *Against the Grain*. It has such a breezy, fun, creative style; it's not like any library journal I've ever read before.

Do y'all know how different and special you are? It's like the difference between a dry, boring, lecture and a chatty, amusing, — but oh, so very knowledgeable — conversation.

All the best, Sheila

Sheila Dorsey (Collections Librarian, Collection Management and Digitization, **South Carolina State Library**) <SDorsey@statelibrary.sc.gov> 🍝



John White's twins, **Norah** and **Zoey**, with their brother **Nate**.

Rumors from page 1

I don't think that I told y'all that the soft-spoken steel magnolia, **Rosann Bazirjian** is retiring. Good news is that she is moving to Myrtle Beach, just up the street from Charleston! Plus she is leaving **Beth Bernhardt** to continue her marvelous work with the **Charleston Conferences!** We have an interview with **Rosann** in this issue, p.40.

The highlight of my March/April was completing staff evaluations which were supposed to be "paperless" until we had to

print everything for the files! Go figure!

So, you will understand why I was delighted to attend the **18th Fiesole Collection Development Retreat** in breathtaking Tuscany. The weather was perfect despite dire predictions to the contrary. The pasta and wine were ooh-lala and so was the scenery. Tuscany is this side of paradise. The **Casalini's** as always were perfectly flawless hosts and the programs and discussions were stimulating. Sessions tackled "The E-Book Elephant" in Scholarly Publishing with an emphasis on new models and new strategies and much much more. Slides from the meeting are now available at the official **Fiesole Retreat Repository**. www.casalini.it/retreat

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AGAINST THE GRAIN DEADLINES VOLUME 28 — 2016-2017

2016 Events	Issue	Ad Reservation	Camera-Ready
ALA Annual	June 2016	04/07/16	04/28/16
Reference Publishing	September 2016	06/16/16	07/07/16
Charleston Conference	November 2016	08/18/16	09/08/16
ALA Midwinter	Dec. 2016-Jan. 2017	11/10/16	11/28/16

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become much more attentive to their users than to their book collections? And that those books would, as often as not, be seen as a problem as much as an asset?

Approval plans are all about buying books on the chance they might be used. They continue to make sense for libraries with the mission, and corresponding budget, to build research collections. Fewer and fewer libraries, however, can claim that mission, or count on that budget. Instead, the same profiles that fueled approval plans are now the engines beneath the hood for Demand-Driven Acquisition (DDA) programs, generating MARC files under subject and other parameters that can provide patron access to more books than approval plans ever did. Or, many of these same profiles have been retooled for approval plans where no books are bought until a librarian has first reviewed and authorized them online on their vendor's interface, almost like a firm order. How many new books — and which ones, and under what conditions — will academic libraries buy without good evidence their patrons will discover and then open them? Those are the questions faced today by everyone in the business of academic books.

This issue of *Against the Grain* isn't about approval plans. Approval plans, for the past thirty years or so, have simply been my own usual vantage point on the academic book business. In fact the five contributors to this issue, from their own vantage points — three librarians, a publisher, and a consultant — barely mention approval plans. Just a few years ago that wouldn't have been the case. It's a telling sign — as if we needed another — that the business of publishing, aggregating, selling, and buying academic books is going through tectonic change, but at electronic speed.

Among the ways I've been fortunate in my career is that I began it by working for about fifteen years as a book vendor colleague of **Rick Lugg**. Now I'm fortunate once more that **Rick** agreed to write for this issue, since he and his wife **Ruth Fischer** have been as responsible as any individuals I can think of for a healthy portion of that change. When they founded **Sustainable Collection Services** in 2011, their earlier experience as library workflow consultants had revealed to them that academic

libraries held too many print books that rarely circulated, or didn't circulate at all. They built their new business on that insight, and in his *Against the Grain* contribution, **Rick** first provides a recap of how the academic book-selling business has evolved since the 1980s, and then presents data on book circulation that can't be ignored. **SCS**, now a part of **OCLC**, is an example, as **Rick** puts it, of "what the next generation of vendor intermediary might look like," companies who bring analytics to bear on the books and other resources that publishers produce and that libraries buy.

But today's libraries don't simply "buy resources." Librarians realize that another factor that can't be ignored in the market is the purchasing power they have. When academic librarians speak up, publishers, vendors, and aggregators are wise to listen. **Stephanie Church**, of **Case Western Reserve University**, is a librarian with a lot to say. What she says is that assessment is "no longer a buzzword" for academic libraries. A library's importance to a university is no longer assumed. Libraries must prove it, and usage data is one of the ways to "strengthen the story." **Stephanie** also has things to say about print and eBook preferences; DDA, eBook pricing models, DRM policies, and user authentication hurdles; and other questions too. Readers will be thankful that **Stephanie** has chosen to speak up in this issue of *Against the Grain*.

What if DDA went away? While the model has become widespread among academic libraries, one major aggregator has questioned the logic behind DDA.¹ Publishers have recently pulled back or have changed their terms. **Wake Forest University's** library provides "an all-you-can-eat smorgasbord" of books through a large DDA program. **WFU's Carol Cramer** conducts a "thought experiment" in this issue, to find that even with less generous pricing and terms for DDA and Short-Term Loan, "DDA remains by far the most efficient models for an institution like ours." What would **Carol** do if the DDA model was in fact suppressed? To find out, just read her *Against the Grain* contribution.

Librarians aren't the only ones who need to justify how their budgets are spent. Scholarly publishers, according to **Routledge's Alan Jarvis**, "have to rethink their approach to deciding whether individual book projects are worth pursuing." In his wide-ranging *Against the Grain* contribution, **Alan** rethinks just

about every aspect of academic book publishing: total output, consolidation, the long tail, pricing, publishing models, eBook business models, open access, non-library markets, discovery, DRM, analytics, and more. Read it and you will feel like you've taken a short course in today's academic book publishing business.

If **Mark Sandler** had been a baseball player and not a librarian, right about now his number would be retired, a monument erected in the outfield, he'd be shaking hands in a home plate ceremony, and soon, would be on his way to Cooperstown. Instead, **Mark** is retiring as Director, Center for Library Initiatives, at the **Committee on Institutional Cooperation (CIC)**, a position he held for some ten years, apprenticed with for twenty years working in Collections at the **University of Michigan**. Among **Mark's** grand slams were his roles in **Google's** digitization projects, in the Text Creation Partnership, in shared print, in government documents digitization. I could go on, but best to stop and simply say that anyone who has ever heard **Mark** speak, or read something he's written, knows that they are in for some laughs that won't diminish the thoughtfulness of his contribution. What **Mark** is thinking about in this issue of *Against the Grain* is the future of the book itself in academic life. On that topic, let's just say that **Mark** isn't sanguine. He says a lot more than that, as well, and all of us with our hand in that book culture as it exists today would best pay attention.

All of us in the business of academic book-selling might prefer that things were different — the book unthreatened, library collections revered and not questioned, usage one of those "nice to haves," budgets strong, approval plans soaring, eBook models settled, assessment and analytics merely words in the dictionary. Instead, whether publisher, vendor, aggregator, or librarian, we're all challenged to examine the assumptions and practices that have sustained us in the past. If we are going to engage with our future, one place we are not going to find it, I can tell you, is in the encyclopedia. 🐼

Endnotes

1. **Robert Harington**, "Interview with an Empire: Tim Collins, CEO of EBSCO Industries," March 1, 2016. *Scholarly Kitchen*, Web. March 10, 2016.

I know. This is easy to say, flaunts legal and moral authority, and is post-modern beyond any reasonable test. We are beyond scruples here. But stuff is happening at the edges of what we do. The first edge strategy is realizing this. 🐼

Column Editor's Note: Concepts lifted from an excellent Harvard Business Review monograph, Alan Lewis and Dan McKone's Edge Strategy: A New Mindset for Profitable Growth (HBR Press, 2016).

Ran into **Daryl Rayner** in Fiesole! I hadn't seen her in ages. Remember her **Rumors from Paddington** column in *Against the Grain* many years ago? That was when she was at **Xrefer** (now **Credo**). **Daryl** is now with **Exact Editions**. <https://www.exacteditions.com/>

Following Italy, a wonderful woman got married at **Boone Hall Plantation** in Charleston this past weekend so my-son-in-law and daughter were visiting. We had the awesome job of babysitting my grandson **17-month-old George Jacks!** What a cutie! **George's** dad (a cardio-thoracic surgeon) has taught him to love books! Who would

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Interview — N V Sathyanarayana
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branding the product to gain acceptance as a global company from India. We also needed bigger investments to add new features and functionalities to become globally competitive. There was lot of resistance too from some of the Ivy-league publishers in supporting us, by misreading us as a potential competitor. Hence, it took too long a time to be where we are! We are happy today that people recognize us to partner with us. This change will be a leap forward for Informatics.

ATG: J-Gate, and its subset Open J-Gate, seem to be your key offerings. Can you talk more about them?

NVS: I will be happy to. We conceived J-Gate in 1999, just when the Web-based e-journal revolution had started. We started working on J-Gate with a vision to develop the single largest e-journal database and portal. Very early on, we realized that our market in India couldn't support a product, indexing thousands of e-journals, for two reasons. One, e-journals were still far from the reach of Indian libraries due to Internet infrastructure limitation which was too slow to happen; two, the number of e-journals subscribed by libraries then was too small, in the range of 100-500. We changed the direction and focused on a customized database, limiting to the journals that libraries subscribed to, which works as a product within the local area network of the institutional campus. In effect, we created a local discovery solution for the libraries and their journal literature holdings. We quickly expanded this concept to a group of libraries and library consortium as a shared discovery and resource-sharing solution. This caught up the imagination of Indian library consortia. The consortia modeled J-Gate solution, popularly called in India as JCCC (J-Gate Custom Content for Consortia), would facilitate online access to e-journals by their

defined right-of-access to resources subscribed by libraries, either individually or collectively. By virtue of indexing articles from their print journal holding also, JCCC facilitated inter-library loan when a user found an article in a journal, which might not be subscribed by his library. JCCC was adapted in 2003 by one of the earliest and largest Indian Library Consortium. It is another matter that big publishers didn't like JCCC for this reason. But, they couldn't stop us, as the libraries wanted it. However there is one instance where surprisingly a leading not-for-profit publisher signed with a consortium to make available his content to the consortium for inter-library loan among its members under CONTU guidelines, but threatened them and us, several years after our service was in use, with copyright violation for facilitating ILL. Fortunately, he was the only one, an odd one indeed!

J-Gate as a customized solution could have been an ideal product for the big global libraries and the consortia to adapt as an effective discovery and resource-sharing platform in the early days of e-journal evolution itself. We marketed global e-journals in India extensively, but we failed to get our unique e-journal discovery solution into the global market. I may say, it is for journalists like you to analyze the reasons for our failure to brand a great Indian product in the global market.

ATG: It's probably not a big revenue opportunity for you, but you are the world-wide distributor for S.R. Ranganathan's journal, SRELS Journal of Information Management. Does that journal have an international following?

NVS: Very little. We took over this 52-year-old journal only two years ago. **Ranganathan** is a great universal brand in the librarianship, like **Melville Dewey**. But

the journal started by him is not widely known outside India which is typical of any Indian scholarly journal. Marketing and branding a single journal is an expensive job. Hence, we have created a platform called i-Scholar (www.i-scholar.in) to host and market Indian

journals with a good e-commerce model. Currently i-Scholar hosts around 200 Indian journals, with archives dating back to first volume. We have started adding

global journals also to our i-Scholar platform. We hope to do better with this strategy. Now that we have made SRELS Journal online through our i-Scholar platform, libraries around the world can subscribe to it easily online.

ATG: What about the future? What new products can we expect from Informatics?

NVS: Our future plan is in two distinct directions: (1) to strengthen our library-centric products and services to maintain leadership in this market and go global; (2) expand our market into many non-library domains of the global information market place. Our strategy is to be a "Technology + Content" Company. We realize that in the digital world, information products cannot be conceived or pursued as a quickly scalable market without the internal strength of technology. Pursuing this strategy, three years ago we created a new subsidiary company called Informatics Publishing Ltd., which is now focusing on our established library market. We are working towards building technology strength within our parent company. We plan to expand into the new horizons of information market place with this strength. You will see a few new products in the coming years, which may even be spun-off into new subsidiary companies. We are, in some way, back to start-up mode. 🌱

Interview — Rosann Bazirjian
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restaurants in Myrtle Beach, so I am looking forward to checking them out. I am also looking forward to getting involved with community events. Now that I am a South Carolinian, I am determined to finish the **Anne Rivers Siddons** novels that I have yet to read. I love getting to know local authors, so I will go to author events and buy their books. I don't know if I will be doing anything library related after I leave **UNC-Greensboro**. Everyone says that when you retire, you shouldn't make any commitments for at least six months. It is important to feel the rhythm of retirement and then make any decisions regarding committees, volunteering opportunities, etc. I will definitely be in Charleston now that I do not live too far away but solely as a tourist! 🌱

Rumors
from page 14

have guessed! From the time **George** was **four months old**, **Sam** (his dad) has been reading **George** a real **print book** at bedtime and **George** actually listens! **Bruce** and I were reading to him in his dad's absence and **George** paid attention! Impressive!

Speaking of which, I read **Mark Sandler's** essay (this issue, p.26) with great interest. Yes, students prefer not reading books. And Websites may have more visitors than books, but the print book is not going anywhere. Generations have always liked to take the easy way out. But I believe that as a profession we are focusing too much on the fact that there are now more competitors than we have ever had. But we still need to preserve print books. Whew! Got that off my chest!

Speaking of which, have you encountered this book? **The Bad-Ass Librarians of Tim-**

buktu by **Joshua Hammer**. Just out. The story of a librarian in Mali who arranged to save hundreds of manuscripts from destruction.

Did you see the **Phil Davis** April 1 post about **Sci-Hub**? **Lolly** talks about **Sci-Hub** in her questions and answers column. And I had an intriguing conversation about **Sci-Hub** with **Georgios Papadopoulos**, Founder and CEO of **Atypon**. Wonder if we can get him to Charleston in November? <https://www.crunchbase.com/person/georgios-papadopoulos#/entity>

Oh! This just out from **Jim O'Donnell**, University Librarian, **ASU** — Like WOW — Dear colleagues, I'm delighted to announce additions to the senior leadership team, additions that will energize us for the challenges ahead. Joining us later this summer from **Purdue University** will be **Tomalee Doan**, arriving in the role of Associate University Librarian for Public Services. She will initially be responsible for public and access services in all library locations, for student success

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The Scholarly Publishing Scene from page 53

entities to effectively monitor and meaningfully hinder persistent infringing by uploading, downloading and retransmission of copyrighted works over the Web. Several of the Digital Millennium Copyright Amendments of some years ago (I am proud to say my partners and I secured trial and appellate judgments upholding their enforcement and Constitutionality) attempted to handle this with a regime of takedown notices and related principles. In some ways — at least as the statute has been interpreted by some courts — that system has largely been undermined by the “whack-a-mole” problem of repeated, unmonitored uploads and retransmission of precisely the same material. That problem continues to be the focus of attention in the copyright owner and technology communities. Another is the well-known litigation of authors’ organizations against the **Google Books Project**. The lawfulness of that project as “fair use” was sustained at trial and on appeal, but the authors (with support of publishers and other organizations) are currently seeking review of the decision by the Supreme Court. This dispute has really captured my attention, in the form of at least public speaking and informal consultation here and abroad, notwithstanding my retirement.

In summary, I believe the courts’ **Google Books** decisions are quite wrong, and more specifically have at least ignored and undermined, if not silently but unduly overruled, major copyright precedents that have held sway to preserve a vibrant and vital copyright system for many years and that are of increased importance today. In other words, I believe these decisions — and a few other case holdings that resemble the errors of the **Google Books** courts in some though not all respects — have effected fundamental, unwarranted and unwise expansive change in American fair use doctrine. Additionally, I fear the attitude of some who believe that the decision is a “one off,” or sui generis one — that is, one that is effectively limited to the **Google Books Project** given the astonishing but rather unique scale, commitment and investment **Google** brought to its mass copying project. I adamantly do not share that limited view of the case. Even if the breadth and reach of the **Google Books Project** is viewed as singular, there are many other un-authorized large scale and “mass digitization” projects in the wings with respects to all sorts of copyrighted works; indeed, the essence of

rapid developments in digital replication, error checking, storage, and the like are certain to enhance this trend — notably, the very term “mass digitization” has become a term of art in the United States and abroad and is not limited to **Google** (or to books). Furthermore, even if one were to (wrongly) put aside the **Google Books** decision as limited to its facts, my concern remains with respect to *the way the court reached its result* — that is, its ignoring, limiting, or silently overruling key precedents; hence, this impact of the decision may well be systemic and far from a limited one.

I must acknowledge that some of your readers will not share my view of the **Google Books** case; it will certainly not be the first time that library interests and I have disagreed on matters of copyright law. But I would ask those readers to at least avoid knee-jerk reaction to the seemingly perennial copyright owner/user divide and give attentive thought to the potential negative impact of unauthorized mass copying on the creative heritage intended to be underpinned by a vibrant copyright system.

Other matters of continuing concern and dispute are the development, legal propriety, and impact of so-called electronic reserves that arguably serve as the digital equivalent of the unauthorized course packs of the photocopying era; the ability to effectively restrain electronic reach of off-shore or foreign piracy sites; and the effect of 11th Amendment providing immunity to state institutions from copyright infringement actions. Additionally, there have been comprehensive roundtables, hearings and reviews and reports in **Congress** and among agencies with respect to numerous copyright issues in the current and still expanding digital era, though the practical effects of these efforts in terms of legislation and regulation largely remain to be seen.

I should mention that many of these issues are also being voiced, debated and examined abroad. One of particular interest in that arena is the question of whether the so-called “flexible” doctrine of fair use as followed in the United States should replace or supplement the more specifically defined and limited regimes of “fair dealing” and “specific exemptions” that prevail in other countries. In several instances I have expressed considerable concern to foreign audiences as to the wisdom of their governments doing so — especially if American fair use law is understood to now reflect the new, unduly expansive fair use interpretations and doctrinal changes of the **Google Books** case and some other quite faulty (in my opinion) decisions.

In my view, judges are sometimes unduly influenced by the magic of technology... Do you see things that way too?

Yes, and very much so — and not only among judges, but also among legislators and other policy makers here and abroad. The basic problem, as I see it, is the overt advocacy by some technology interests and the receptive tendency of some judges and policy makers to be so favorably overwhelmed by the exciting promises, benefits and convenience of new technology that they view copyright as an impediment, so its protections ought to be diminished if not swept aside. This view is entirely short sighted and counterproductive to a healthy environment for intellectual scholarship and creativity.

One example of this trend in advocacy is the use of the word “innovation” in copyright debate today. Proponents of diminished copyright protection commonly argue the purported “stifling” of technological innovation posed by strong copyright law, and pretend that technology companies, as opposed to the creative copyright industries, are the only “innovators.” (Some technology companies have quite explicitly urged governments abroad to limit copyright protection as a means of encouraging their local investment or presence.) Unfortunately, these arguments conveniently overlook at least two points: *first*, that a great deal of technologic innovation in products and services of the digital economy are produced by the time, effort, and investment of the creative industries themselves, as repeatedly shown in new, emergent, exciting and popular offerings (new media, new platforms, new formats, new research tools, etc.) of motion picture companies, scientific publishers, and others — actions that are critically underwritten by the protections offered by the copyright laws to the creative works of these companies made available through their own innovations in new entertainment and scholarly products and distribution mechanisms. *Second*, in the case of copyright works being made available to the public, *successful or meaningful* innovation even if initiated by technology companies can only be viewed as a partnership or fusion of scientific invention and copyright creativity. This is exemplified in a recent newspaper article appraising the future of virtual reality in entertainment media that noted: “[w]ithout compelling content, even the most impressive piece of technology won’t appeal to more than a hardy base of early adopters.” 🌿

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and instruction, and for coordinating the **Hayden Library** renovation project. **Lorrie McAllister** will arrive in late May from **MIT**, in the position of Senior Administrative Librarian with the title of Assistant University Librarian. Her responsibilities will include supervision of the library’s data gathering and assessment exercises; strategic initiatives at

my direction, to include print collection strategy and digital special collections; and our operational relationship with EdPlus, **ASU**’s online learning organization. Finally, our colleague **Dennis Brunning** has agreed to serve as Interim Associate University Librarian for Academic Programs starting on June 1. This position has responsibility for Collections and Scholarly Communication, Archives and Special Collections, and Academic Program Services, subject to the caveat of impending reorganization. **Dennis** has been

Editor-at-Large and a columnist for *Against the Grain* since 2008, and has been a contributing editor for *The Charleston Advisor* since 1996. <http://www.against-the-grain.com>

I am running out of column inches but have to get this last bit in. Another WOW! The awesomely wonderful **Steve Oberg** (Wheaton College) has been elected Vice President/President-Elect of **NASIG** for the 2016 election year! Congratulations, **Steve**!

Love to all of you, **Yr. Ed.** 🌿

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