November 2013

A Closer Look at Issues

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Against the Grain

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Recommended Citation

DOI: https://doi.org/10.7771/2380-176X.1135

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A Look at Issues
From Your Editor

It's hard to believe that it's another year. I remember way back when — when I wondered if I would make it to the year 2000 because I would be so OLD then! Oh well. Time marches on.

Robert Maxwell — Goodbye to all WHAT? Well, it seems like it would be impossible for us to go to press without saying ANYTHING about Robert Maxwell. After all, he died on November 6, 1991, and he was an era for us in acquisitions and collection development. When I heard about his death, I ran out and bought EVERY newspaper I could find (in Charleston) that talked about Maxwell. The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, USA Today, The Charleston Post and Courier.

It was right at the beginning of the Charleston Conference (November 7-9) and we had a minute of silence, posted the newspaper clippings, etc., etc. The death seemed mysterious. For a novelist like myself, rife with plot lines. We were all curious. What had happened? Life truly seemed like fiction.

Then, as I was vainly trying to follow all the articles written about Maxwell, we all heard about Maxwell's finances. The fact that his empire was crumbling. Ian and Kevin Maxwell both having to step down maybe with jail in store. Pension funds. Newspapers. Tape recordings. The Mossad.

Robert Maxwell remains a legend as enigmatic in death as he was in life. However, I can’t help but wonder if Mr. Maxwell deliberately left as his legacy Pergamon Press, his flagship company, untouched. We’ll probably never know, but one thing’s for sure Robert Maxwell is a man most of us will remember for a very, very long time.

May he rest in peace.

And we certainly can’t leave out the famous interchange(s) between Michael Boswood and Donald Koepp, University Librarian at Princeton University. In November, 1991, Koepp wrote Boswood regarding pricing of Pergamon journals for 1992. Pergamon had increased 1992 prices to “eliminate differential pricing, which in the past was favourable to customers in the USA,” according to Boswood. This move toward a “worldwide” price amounted to significant increases in the prices of some Pergamon journals. Koepp is suggesting that librarians consider canceling titles based on who the publisher is and, also, that libraries not pay journal subscriptions until they are sure of the price that they will pay for a journal in a specific year.

Marcia Tuttle’s electronic Newsletter on Serials Pricing has been full of this issue. It looks like some things may change because of this.

Baker & Taylor. It was announced at the Charleston Conference (following an article in the New York Times) that Baker & Taylor would be sold. And B&T has been sold even as we speak. Time will tell what will happen next.

Publishing in the Soviet Union. This is still obviously up in the air. I even got a letter from Edwin Sherman who is in and out of Russia all of the time. He said that there’s no point in writing down anything because the climate is changing so fast. Of course, there are valuable people out there trying to keep a handle on what’s happening, not the least of which are Harrassowitz, Faxon and Collet’s and others. To be continued.

And last but definitely not least, contributions are being taken up for Lyman Newlin by Academic Book Center; 5600 N.E. Hassalo St.; Portland, OR 97213; (503) 547-7704. We figure we’ll have a housewarming in New York once Lyman’s house is rebuilt. You know who’d be the life of the party. Lyman is INCREDIBLE!

Call for Abstracts

The 1992 Charleston Conference
November 5-7, 1992 Charleston, SC

We are interested in abstracts in all areas of acquisitions, collection development, and scholarly publishing. We are especially interested in innovations, trends, and state-of-the-art.

Send abstracts (100 words), papers, ideas, etc., by June 1, 1992, to: Judy Webster; Head, Acquisitions Dept.; Univ. of Tennessee Library; 1015 Volunteer Blvd.; Knoxville, TN 37996-1000. (615) 974-4431 (phone); FAX(615) 974-2708; Webster@UTKLIB.LIB.UTK.EDU

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