February 2001

Group Therapy-Has anyone created a policy for maintaining current titles that are also in full-text database?

Rosann Bazirjian  
*Penn State University, rvb9@psulias.psu.edu*

Follow this and additional works at: [https://docs.lib.purdue.edu/atg](https://docs.lib.purdue.edu/atg)  
Part of the [Library and Information Science Commons](https://docs.lib.purdue.edu/atg)

**Recommended Citation**  
Bazirjian, Rosann (2001) "Group Therapy-Has anyone created a policy for maintaining current titles that are also in full-text database?," *Against the Grain*: Vol. 13: Iss. 1, Article 29.  
DOI: [https://doi.org/10.7771/2380-176X.3349](https://doi.org/10.7771/2380-176X.3349)

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.
The Times They are A-Changin:
Looking Back and Looking Ahead at the O.P. Market

by Jack Walsdorf (Library Relations-Alibris) <jackjuno@teleport.com>

Just over 30 years ago I was invited to speak to the American Library Association pre-conference on Rare Books being held in Kansas City. I opened that talk by taking a page from The World of Books and quoting from the author, Sir Basil Blackwell, who said: “Let me be frank at the outset and tell you that I have never contemplated an audience with less pleasure. For here am I, a jack-of-all trades in the Book World, about to speak of these many trades before those who are their several masters: and I cannot hope to conceal my shortcomings from many of you at any time, nor from any of you for long.”

For my part, I commented that “much the same feeling which came to Sir Basil as he contemplated his audience came to me” as I contemplated the task before me that day so long ago. There I was, at 27 years of age, coming before a representative group of American collectors, dealers and curators of rare books, talking on the topic of the antiquarian book trade.

Much has happened during the intervening 30 or more years since that talk was given, and I felt it would be interesting, educational and perhaps even enjoyable to take a look back to those bookselling days of 30 years ago, to see what was then the norm, and to see how the world of technology and the Internet has changed the bookselling world of the rare, the used and the simply hard to find book.

My objective then, as it will be now, is to look at the background of the rare book trade, something of the current status as well as something of the future of the trade as I believe it will be practiced. To start off, I would like to quote from the English writer Michael Sadleir, who in his 1950 talk “Bookshop and Auction Room” listed different classes of rare bookshops, among them: (1) the top-level rare book dealers; (2) the large-scale general rare booksellers; (3) the specialist booksellers; and (4) the junk shops.²

Who were these people, and how did they operate some 50 years ago when Sadleir was writing, or some 30 years ago when I was first talking about them, and do they still operate today? The first group, the top-level rare books dealers, were then listed as Maggs and Quaritch. As I put it in my talk: “The top-level rare book dealers such as Maggs or Quaritch, have no nonsense about miscellaneous open shelves or two-shilling boxes. When they buy a library, they dispose of all the material which is either below their general standard of individual volumes or series value, or is irrelevant to their several subject specialties.”

The decision to either maintain or cancel print subscriptions when access is available in a full-text database needs to be carefully considered. An important factor is the equivalency of the electronic full text version to the original print version. In the case of electronic journals, the original publisher may also produce both print and electronic formats, and the electronic journal can be considered a true equivalent. However, in the case of full-text databases, the electronic version most often is not a true equivalent. The full text version may only deliver the text of articles and not include accompanying material, graphics, pictures, etc. The full text version may not include all issues or articles. Conversely, full text products offer expanded coverage and features not available in the original print version.

Decisions to maintain or cancel print subscriptions need to be made on a title-by-title basis. If the full text version meets the library’s user needs, maintenance of multiple subscriptions may not be in your library’s best interest as limited resources can be reallocated to purchase additional print titles or electronic resources.