Letters to the Editor

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I have to tell you that we are breathing a huge sigh of relief here in Charleston now that Hurricane Dennis has blown out to sea. Whew! I think it was Conrad Richter, when asked why he lived near the San Andreas fault, who said that no matter where you live, you have to accept the fact that you aren't far from the potential of a natural disaster. Comforting, isn't it?

Despite all the hurricane scares, though, here is the September Reference Issue of ATG! In 1997, the proliferation of reference materials was discussed by both librarians and publishers. By the 1998 Reference Issue, the discussions expanded to include the increasing array of format choices, and the Web's effect on reference publishing. Here, in the 1999 Reference Issue, Fran and Linda consider how the traditional distinctions between reference and subject-specific materials are becoming blurred due to the growth of products that combine indexing and full text features.

Also in this issue, we have an article by the intrepid Cheryl LaGuardia about CD-ROMs which are still around despite forecasts of their demise. Talk about against the grain! And Tom Gibson—who has done another awesome job of guest editing—ponders the uncertainties of the future for libraries and reference publishing. We have interviews with Dr. Pieter S.H. Bolman, President of Academic Press, Sir Charles Chadwyck Healey, the founder of Chadwyck Healey, and David Tyckson—Head, Reference Services, at CSU Fresno. In Biz of Acq, Brian Flaherty talks about acquisitions librarians working at the reference desk. And Mark McCabe's article on the impact of publisher mergers on journal prices will rivet you, I promise. And, of course, that's just the tip of the iceberg.

Ouch! Since when do hurricanes and icebergs go together? I'm going to be quiet so y'all can get to reading! And, see you in Charleston at the 1999 Charleston Conference—November 3-6! Visit our Website at http://www.cofc.edu/library/conference to register!

Yr. Ed.

Letters to the Editor

Send letters to <strauchk@cofc.edu>, 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:

The article by Rick Anderson (UNC-Greensboro) in the April issue of ATG about licensing (“Biz of Acq—To License or Not to License: That Really Ought to Be the Question,” p.68-70, 72) was fabulous. Everyone needs to read it. I will be making copies for people here where I work. Hear! Hear!

Thanks,
Eleanor Cook
(Appalachian State University)
<cookei@conrad.appstate.edu>

Dear Editor:

As part of a decade-long policy of periodically rotating my professional subscriptions, I had decided not to renew my subscription to Against the Grain. Acquisitions is just one part of my job, and my acquisitions budget is just $40,000.

You, however, continued to send more issues and I continued to read them. When I realized how many titles I would be buying from the useful list of biology bestsellers in the April issue, you won my renewal check, enclosed. What other magazine will walk the plank instead of Against the Grain? Your competitors for my (personal) professional subscription budget include Library Journal, Searcher, and Online. Since I have already renewed these subscriptions for 1999, the decision is deferred another year.

Incidentally, over the past five years, when visiting brew pubs and homebrew shops, I believe I have been mistaken on occasion for the well known acquisitions librarian and beer writer with whom I share a name and avocation. Although I have been a homebrewer for five years, I would not think of writing about beer, not under my own name at least.

Best wishes,
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