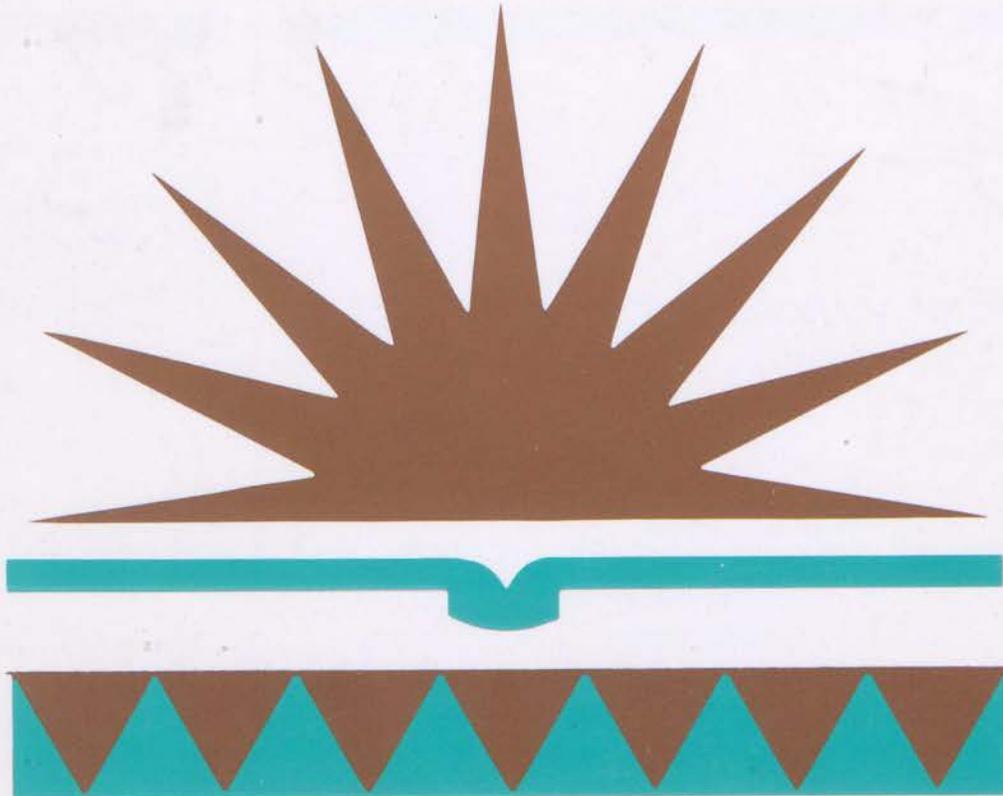


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# ARIZONA LIBRARIES

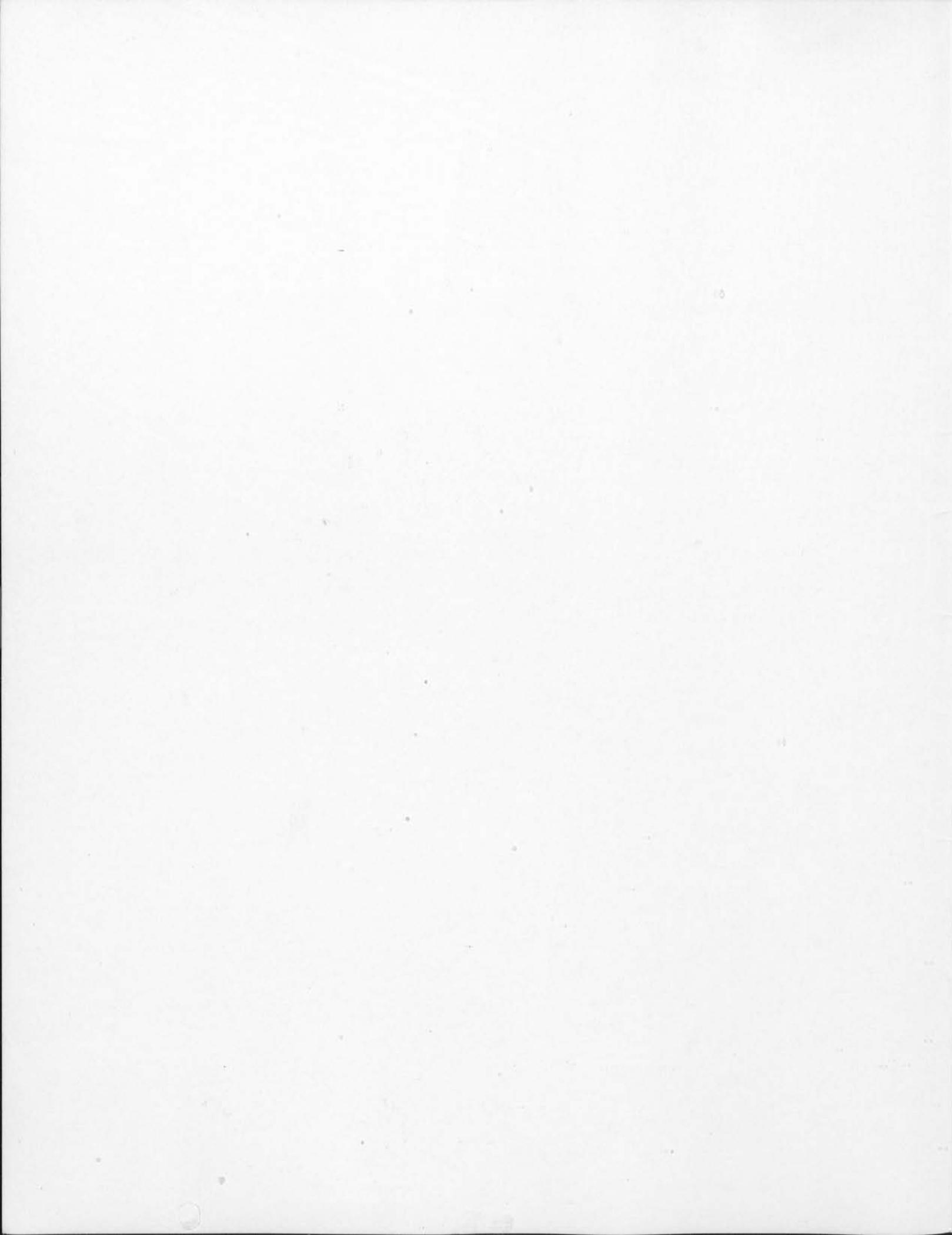
Fall 1989

Number 3



ARIZONA  
CENTER FOR  
THE BOOK





State of Arizona  
Department of Library,  
Archives & Public Records

Sharon G. Womack, Director  
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# ARIZONA LIBRARIES

Fall 1989

No. 3

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ARIZONA LIBRARIES is published four times a year by the State of Arizona Department of Library, Archives & Public Records. Manuscripts should be submitted typed, double-spaced, and sent with self-addressed, stamped return envelope to the Editor. Guidelines available upon request. Address all correspondence to:

ARIZONA LIBRARIES  
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Cover: The copper and turquoise logo of the Arizona Center for the Book combines traditional Native American design elements with a stylized book and rising sun. The logo was designed by Linda Archer, Art Director of The Oryx Press, Phoenix.

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The contributors:

Platt Cline is a lifelong newspaper publisher who has written several books about the Flagstaff area of Arizona. His devotion to and support of books and libraries was recognized in 1988 with the dedication of Northern Arizona University's Cline Library.

Noted bookman, author, and library school dean, Lawrence Clark Powell is Professor Emeritus at the University of Arizona in Tucson, where he maintains office hours at the University Library.

Award-winning poet and Guggenheim Fellow Alberto Rios is Director of the Creative Writing Program at Arizona State University in Tempe.

Gordon and Patricia Sabine are both former professors of journalism. Gordon Sabine is currently Special Assistant, Office of the Dean, Arizona State University Library, Tempe.

Phyllis B. Steckler is President of The Oryx Press in Phoenix, a major publisher to the library and information trades, and a contributor to the Phoenix Zoo project which has rescued the rare Arabian Oryx from near-extinction.

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"The Mountain" by Platt Cline, published in *Plateau* 56:3, The Museum of Northern Arizona, Flagstaff, 1985; reprinted with permission.

"Concerning an End to His Life" by Alberto Rios, first published in *Western Humanities Review*, published in *The Lime Orchard Woman*, 1988; reprinted with the author's permission.

*Books that Made the Difference* by Gordon and Patricia Sabine, published by Library Professional Publications, an imprint of The Shoe String Press, Hamden CT, 1983; reprinted with permission.

## Up Front

Since *Arizona Libraries* is a topically focused magazine, the Up Front column is designed to weave a thread of commonality through disparate articles, tying them to the theme topic and serving as an introduction to the contributing authors.

We find ourselves, in this issue, somewhat up a stump, as this particular batch of authors needs no introduction. So instead of telling you Who, we'll tell you Why.

In the two year period spanning conception to reality for the Arizona Center for the Book, a number of Arizonans have brought their time, creativity, and vitality to the project. There were planning groups, steering committees and, now, a formal Advisory Council.

During this time, following the decision to celebrate the Center's inaugural in print, these individuals were asked if they would like to write a contribution or recommend a favorite selection for inclusion. While many declined, bowing to time constraints and workloads, several accepted. The results are the five pieces on the following pages.

The first selection, by Platt Cline, was suggested by Scottsdale Public Library Director Linda Saferite, who represented the Arizona State Library Association on one of the advisory groups. She has a second home in northern Arizona and Cline's "The Mountain" is a moving, painterly approach to the dominance of the San Francisco Peaks upon the Flagstaff area.

Lawrence Clark Powell has served on planning groups for the Arizona Center for the Book from the beginning. Ever one to pose the disquieting question, Powell serves up three of them in "Who? When? Where?" The article was originally produced as remarks to a luncheon group in November 1987, at the Writers of the Purple Sage II conference in Tucson.

Alberto Rios has also been involved in the Center's planning efforts from the outset. Currently Vice Chair of the Advisory Council, Rios selected for inclusion a poem which, like the Powell selection, raises questions and—perhaps for some—a few hackles as well. "Concerning an End to His Life" offers a different insight into the roles which books may play in our lives.

Gordon Sabine too has served on planning groups since the Center's inception. He and his wife, Patricia Sabine, interviewed 1,400 persons as part of the Books that Made the Difference Study for the national Center for the Book in the Library of Congress, asking "What book made the greatest difference in your life," and "What was that difference?" The selection printed here is a response gathered a mile and a half deep in the Grand Canyon.

Phyllis B. Steckler is the charter Chair of the Advisory Council for the Arizona Center for the Book. "The Enduring Value of the Book in the Age of the Computer" is an original article for this publication. As a publisher, Steckler's investment in the value of books may seem apparent, but as a writer—more importantly, as a reader—she takes us well beyond the obvious in her perceptive probe of "the future of reading thoughtfully."

Enjoy.

## The Mountain

Those of us who live at the foot of the San Francisco Peaks share an acknowledgement and appreciation of the Mountain as the dominant, deeply meaningful fact in our environment, a thing of great beauty which changes moods, colors, shadows, feeling each minute, hour, day, and season. It is true that many of us, engrossed as we are with seeking and achieving, getting and spending, at times take this tremendous benefaction, the Mountain, for granted. Yet, even so, we are aware of it subliminally as a general and at the same time highly personalized backdrop and stage for our lives, a source of spiritual provender, an imposing affirmation of stability and, in a sense, security in an uncertain world. We feel that whatever else may pass, the Peaks are always there.

I suspect that if a catastrophe of unimaginable magnitude were to raze our city, atomizing our buildings, streets, monuments, possessions—us—with other life of whatsoever kind over a vast area, in a few centuries or millennia the Mountain would again present an appearance more or less as we know it today. Water and wind, frost and sun, and various life forms including Man may slowly erode and soften its lines—but so slowly that a thousand years would reveal no recognizable change. The Mountain could change radically and rapidly in appearance only from some need deep within its own vitals. On the slope of Agassiz near the crater's edge, there is an area perhaps half the size of a city

block where the temperature is said to hover constantly around 70 degrees, melting away the snows of winter rapidly—suggesting that there may be a tenuous but nonetheless constant filament of transference, we might say of impulse, between the eternal fires of continuing creation far below the Earth's surface and the crater of this perhaps only quiescent volcano. The Peaks may change—but only when the Earth itself wills the change.

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Since Man first trod his way through this area 10,000 or 40,000 or perhaps more years ago, the Peaks have served as a landmark. In certain seasons they beckoned the traveler as a source of water and food and surcease from desert heat and at others offered ominous warnings of freezing winds and deep snow, a place where the careless or unfortunate might perish under the attacks of the elements.

The Hopi Indians for many centuries have viewed this distant, gleaming mountain, sometimes seemingly suspended in the sky and radiating an aura of great beauty

and tremendous power, as a place of fearsome but usually benign forces. When the Franciscans established a mission at Oraibi in the seventeenth century in an attempt to convert the Hopis to Rome, they gave the name of their founding saint to this mysterious, beautiful, dominant feature of the distant skyline. In all lands trodden under the heel of the Conquistadores, the proselytizers accompanying them similarly build churches on pre-Christian religious sites.

The Navajo, those comparative latecomers who moved into the Southwest only a bit ahead of the Spaniards, also look on the Peaks as a place of supernatural forces, and the Mountain enters into their mythology too.

Sometimes we are told that the Peaks are sacred to the red man. Perhaps it would be more nearly correct to say that to the Indians the Peaks are numinous. The powers dwelling here are to be acknowledged, respected, feared, placated, cajoled; the Peaks are indeed a place of great power, but power that, if one knows the ancient ways, can be propitiated or at least placated.

Many years ago, deeply interested in the ways and traditions of the Hopi, and enjoying the friendship of some of the elders, I climbed to the highest point of the Peaks with an Indian companion to perform some traditional acts which the Hopis said might benefit all. The two of us went equipped with paahos—feathers, hand-spun cotton string, colored sticks—prepared by

the old men in the kivas; ceremonial meal, instructions, admonitions, and repeated warnings to go with pure hearts to this place of power, without arrogance or selfishness or any other negative quality of heart or mind. We were told that it was not necessary that we should follow the traditional Hopi route via the ice cave at Sunset Crater and up the northern rim of the Peaks. Instead we drove up to Doyle Saddle in a Model B Ford coupe and hiked around the rim. After doing what we had been instructed to do, we returned to the village for exhaustive debriefings. I found myself recovering details of emotions experienced, animals, birds, shadows seen, sounds heard, winds felt, which, it seemed, had been recorded without my full awareness. My perceptions had been keened and my mind quieted and opened by the instructions and admonitions we had been given. I came from that experience with the feeling that I had, at least in a minuscule degree, caught a glimpse of how things may have appeared to the Ancient Ones. I found I had a deeper, more sensitive, indefinable feeling for the Mountain.

The Mountain Men of the century and a half ago must have been aware of our Peaks, the springs, the game—and the savagery of some of the aborigines—as were occasional parties of Mexican ricos, their escorts, attendants, sometimes herdsmen, as they journeyed between the Royal City of the Holy Faith and perhaps the Town of Our Lady the Queen of the Angels or the capital of Alta California named in honor of the Count of Monte Rey, the Viceroy of Mexico.

Early references to the Mountain are to be found in journals of explorers who came this way in the 1850s and 1860s. Lt. Amiel Weeks Whipple in 1853 recorded that "... we are still traversing the wide valley toward the snowy peaks of San Francisco which have for several days been visible." Baldwin

Mollhausen, topographer and artist attached to the party, wrote on Christmas day in camp at Turkey Tanks east of the Peaks: "... we looked up at the sublime summits of the San Francisco Mountains, and needed no temple made with hands wherein to worship our Creator."

Lt. Edward Fitzgerald Beale was given the formidable task in the 1850s of building a wagon road along the thirty-fifth parallel. He made two round trips through this area, and his references to the peaks were glowing: "... Ascending a long slope [we] came suddenly to its termination from whence we enjoyed a magnificent view. The whole river [Little Colorado] for miles was spread out before us; and far in the distance over the green tops of the

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cottonwood trees, San Francisco Mountain . . . stood as a landmark which was to be our guide for many days." Later he wrote: "Our camp is under San Francisco Mountain, which rears its head far above us into the region of eternal snow . . ." On another occasion he recorded: "Numbers of deer and antelope bounding over the green turf make it peculiarly attractive, which the magnificent San Francisco Mountain, capped with eternal snow, renders the landscape perfect . . ." He has also been quoted by another explorer as having noted: "it [the San Francisco Mountain area] is the most beautiful region I ever remember to have seen in any part of the world . . ."

Lt. Joseph Christmas Ives, journeying this way in 1858, referred to the beauty of the area and then, as his party turned eastward toward the Flax [Little Colorado] River, recorded a more ominous note: "Dense and black masses of clouds are still drifting past the San Francisco Mountain summit and the surrounding slopes, and icy cold blasts reach us at intervals from the quarter."

Joseph Pratt Allyn, appointed by President Lincoln as justice of the newly created Arizona Territory's supreme court, came through the area in mid-winter, 1863-1864. The 30-year-old judge had traveled widely in America and Europe. He wrote: "San Francisco Mountain is the most beautiful mountain I have ever seen; it stands peerless and alone, a vast pile of decomposed lava and granite . . ."

William A. Bell, Fellow of the Royal Geographical and Geological Societies, London, came through the area in 1867 with Gen. William Jackson's railroad survey party. The book of his observations records prophetically: "... the most attractive place of summer resort on the line of the road will be met here on Mt. Agassiz [Palmer's name for the Peaks]; it has every attraction—scenery, sky, water, elevation, climate . . ."

There are many specialized ways of viewing the Peaks, ranging from the scientific disciplines to the several forms of art, from sports and recreation to livestock raising, from logging to water development. While we each enjoy in varying degrees the added interest and significance and richness that come with a knowledge of these specialized ways of observing the Mountain, we all share a general view and feeling.

Many have penned descriptions. This one written in 1917 by George Wharton James may suffice: "... Flagstaff . . . is so located that its citizens have the most wonderful views daily of the great San Francisco Peaks that overshadow it. I

have watched the mountains in the early morning hours from the west when they were a deep maroon, shaded here and there with the snow which has softening, lace-like effect. The ridges in front were a deep greenish black, the color becoming more intense until the sun burst over the Mountain's shoulder and flooded the scene with its vivid morning light. Then, throughout the day, I have watched change after change, until an hour before sunset, the eyes were dazzled by the glory, beauty and sublimity of the scene, the sun finally setting in a blaze of gold and scarlet, leaving maroons, pinks, reds, and grays upon the peaks behind . . . this is one of the most perfectly formed mountains in the United States . . ."

For centuries the Hopis have hunted in the area, at stated times taking birds, particularly eagles, so that the feathers could be used for important ceremonial purposes, and for them and other tribes the Peaks were always a source of wild game.

The Mountain has been used in many ways in the century since the first American settlers came. For the hunter the area teemed with antelope, deer, elk, mountain sheep, bear. (The native elk were exterminated long ago; those now in our forests are transplants.) The mountain sheep are long gone, as are the grizzly bears, the last of which is said to have been killed about 1920. In frontier times a few settlers or travelers lost their lives to the claws and fangs of these half-ton carnivores. In early years men seeking gold and other minerals combed the Mountain, and there is evidence of a mine shaft or tunnel on the south-western side of the Inner Basin.

First settlers were stockmen, and within a dozen years or so of establishment of the first ranches, sheep grazing within sight of the Peaks may have numbered several hundred thousand; there were thousands of horses and maybe 100,000 cattle. Numbers have greatly

dwindled. In the summer of 1977 on Coconino National Forest there were about 14,000 sheep, a few horses and less than 20,000 cattle.

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In early days a man could claim for himself 160 acres of public land, and after making improvements, gain title; and many did. Over the years most of these ranches and farms have been taken into the Forest through exchange and purchase, and privately-owned land in close proximity to the Peaks now totals only a few thousand acres. Farming, particularly the raising of grains and beans in the parks around the Peaks, was big business here until after World War II.

More than three-quarters of a century ago the Peaks were tapped for municipal water supplies and still constitute an important source. Logging has been going on since the early 1880s.

From the beginning of settlement, use of the Peaks for recreation has been important. Long ago, pioneer Al Doyle built a horse trail up to Doyle Saddle, and many and many a dude, including a number of notables as well as hundreds of local people, made the trip. Over 70 years ago Dr. Percival Lowell, founder of Lowell Observatory, had some serious discussions with railroad officials about the possibility of building a tramway from the depot in Flagstaff up to the rim of the Peaks. In the early 1920s John Weatherford, pioneer, rancher, lawman, businessman, entrepreneur, built an auto-

mobile road up to the rim and around inside the crater to a point below the summit of Mt. Humphreys. The venture failed, and that road is now negotiable only in part and by the hardy. Not very many years ago the Forest Service seriously supported a proposal for an all-weather highway to circle around to the summit as a major recreational facility. But policies have veered in the winds of opinion and pressure, and the proposal has been pigeon-holed. Since the 1930s the western slope of Agassiz has been used for winter sports. Now there is a chairlift that will take the skier or sightseer nearly to the top of the peak. There are a few summer cabins around the Mountain, but not nearly so many as years ago.

A number of times proposals to place astronomical observatories on the higher reaches have been advanced, but only temporary stations have ever been established.

For generations of Flagstaff residents, trips to view the turning colors of aspen, fall wood-hauling in preparation for the long winter, and selection and harvest of the family Christmas tree have constituted not only pleasant excursions but almost tribal rites.

The Peaks have been used, but during the century since the first permanent settlers arrived, some uses have changed, emphasis has shifted, attitudes and values have been revised, and this process continues. The economic uses have been and continue to be important, but also important to many, perhaps most of us, is sustenance of a different nature coming from the Mountain: food for the soul.

Millions of photographs of the Peaks have been made and are treasured no doubt in every clime. Few people with access to a camera can resist the balanced lines and beauty of our Mountain. The new *Encyclopaedia Britannica III*, with millions of pictures from which to choose a few thousand for use, offers a view of

our Peaks in winter. Artists have painted many views and impressions, and some are very fine.

One time I visited with a dean of the university in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, half-way around the world in central Asia. He said: "Yes, Flagstaff—that forest of pines—that beautiful mountain . . ."

Where is our resident who does not regularly, routinely, look up at the Mountain each day? As our people meet, references to it arise again and again in conversation.

There are many views of the Peaks, and all are thrilling. Perhaps the most popular is the one from town, but there are some really extraordinary ones, including that from Pulliam Airport at any season or time of day. The views from the university campus are great, as are those from the cemeteries. From McAllister Ranch at Woody Mountain the eye sweeps up over tossing corn tassels and sunflowers, then down a long green corridor in the pines, and is then drawn, almost painfully, upward to the very rim—and you realize quite clearly that the great mass is really a crater, not a silhouette as it sometimes and from some places seems to be. The view from Hopiland is superb as are those from Winslow, Anderson Mesa, Williams, Grand Canyon. Many Flagstaff homes have been built to provide views, and one of the most unusual of these is up through the forest at Stille's Horseshoe Ranch just north of the city. That brahmin of Boston brahmins, Percival Lowell, scientist, world traveler, author, member of one of the nation's most noted families which also produced poets, industrialists, diplomats and a president of Harvard, cut windows through inside walls of his home on Mars Hill so that he could see the Peaks from many rooms! There are great views from the grounds of the Museum of Northern Arizona and a magnificent one through the big window at the Harold S. Colton residence, a site previously occupied

by the home of one of our first settlers, John Francis, saloonkeeper, school teacher, stockman, sheriff. The view of the Mountain across fields of snow or sunflowers at Fort Valley is breath-taking. The view from a plane can be almost overwhelming, the great mass of the Mountain rising as it does nearly alone out of the southern expanse of the great Colorado Plateau. Homecoming Flagstaff folk experience an elevation of spirit when the Peaks at long last come into view, whether approached by plane or highway.

The Peaks achieve part of their impact on our spirits by their simplicity of line, balance, by what might be termed understatement. Here is not the thundering melodrama of vast mountain chains, formidable, foreboding, however grand. Never

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## Few people with access to a camera can resist the balanced lines and beauty of our Mountain.

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would the Peaks be the backdrop for a Hitlerian *Berghof*. Here is something more restrained, more classical in line, more quietly beautiful, but also with its element of grandeur, more suited as site for oracle or temple. Our Mountain is not Wagnerian, but is more like a finely coordinated ensemble, usually subtle in its effects, benignant most of the time, but offering enough excitement to stimulate and quicken our sensibilities, capable of dramatic statements and fierce moods. But the message of the Peaks is never overstated.

Newcomers are sometimes irritated, I suspect, by our preoccupation with the Peaks. But given

exposure, they become devotees, too.

Some Flagstaff residents, nearing their time to die, have asked that their ashes be scattered over the Peaks, and it is interesting that in our cemeteries, a considerable number of graves do not face the traditional east, but northward—toward the Peaks.

Yes, the Peaks are the dominant, deeply meaningful fact of our environment, spiritual as well as physical, noumenal as well as phenomenal, constituting our emblem, signet, lodestone, beacon. Without the Peaks, Flagstaff would be unimaginable.



## Who? When? Where?

When the organizers asked me to bring a bit of wisdom to this luncheon, they didn't seem to know what Yeats had to say about the matter. "Wisdom," Yeats said, "is bodily decrepitude," then he added, "Young, we loved each other and were ignorant."

Now it is true that Youth has obviously left me—a good thing too—ignorance hasn't. As a measure of my limitations, let me confess that I live without a TV, a Computer, or a Word Processor. No wisdom there for me, and so I intend to go on the rest of the way being happily ignorant.

What do I mean by my volley of adverbs, Who, When, and Where? Our organizers scoffed that those words are Journalese—lead questions meant to be answered by reporters. Quite true. My intention however is to apply them to Literature, which is what every conference such as this should regard as its end product. Literature should be the lasting residue of both group and individual effort. Does that sound like Elitism? It is.

The truth is I am interested only in prose or poetry which rises above journalese because it has that mysterious additional life which it imparts to its readers. All other writing passes away, or stands and waits as a reference book, and thus makes work for librarians. Nothing wrong about that, says this former librarian.

I know what Doctor Johnson said about him who writes for any-

thing but money; yet even as he said it, he must have known that his lexicographical drudgery would outlast all the King's gold.

There has always been a time in which more writers starved than grew fat. As a writer throughout my other life, I have never felt that anybody owed me anything as a writer. There *are* ways a writer can make a living from other than writing. Many of us here today prove that. Few of

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### Literature should be the lasting residue of both group and individual effort.

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us ever hit the jackpot, or ever will. Lucky us.

What were some of a writer's survival routes before the age of fellowships, grants, workshops, conferences, and so-called creative writing courses? Melville toiled on the docks, Emerson lectured, Eliot worked in a bank, Auden worked the campuses, Forster was a college don, peripatetic Thomas read his poetry and drank other men's booze, Larkin was a librarian and would have been Poet Laureate if he had not disturbed the Queen's crown with some naughty verses. The same fate befell Kipling.

Does it sound like I disapprove

of creative writing courses? Only of using the word "creative." Good basic writing can be and should be taught. Carpenter work can't be taught too early. Creativity can't be taught for the reason we don't even know what it is.

What do I mean by creativity? The mysterious art of conceiving and arranging language that lives in every word, sentence, paragraph and page, so that its writer is unmistakable from the first. Such a writer has the birthright gift of the Three S's. What are they? The power to see, to sense, to say; that is of sight, feeling, and expression. There are never many such endowed writers alive at any given time. They tend to appear in clusters and to sustain each other and give their names to an age—the Athens of Pericles, the Elizabethan age, the flowering of New England. Here in southern Arizona two have appeared in our time. Who they are I leave to you to guess.

So much for that therapeutic aside. Now a bit more on Elitism. I subscribe to what Cyril Connolly says about writing in *The Unquiet Grave*. He starts right out in overdrive: "The more books we read, the sooner we perceive that the only function of a writer is to produce a masterpiece. No other task is of any consequence."

"Obvious though this should be, how few writers will admit it, or having made the admission, will be prepared to lay aside the piece of iridescent mediocrity on which they

have embarked. Writers always hope that their next book will be their best, for they will not acknowledge that it is their present way of life which prevents them from ever creating anything different or better."

Elsewhere Connolly named what he called the Enemies of Promise, I haven't reread his book of that title since it first appeared in 1938. I remember that his greatest of all the enemies is SUCCESS. I have participated in all but one of these TPL conferences, and each year I have raked out that old chestnut first roasted by Trollope. In case you have forgotten, or this is your first conference, here is what the old sea captain said: "Success", Trollope wrote, "is a poison to be taken only late in life, and then in small doses." Of course those of you who are writers won't believe that. I didn't either, until I arrived at what is called "late in life," and wondered if I had been overlooked.

Now in our time, Success has been hoisted to Celebrity level whose firepower is the Blockbuster which follows the Million Dollar Advance. I do not intend to talk about those living writers whose books are bought and sold by weight—only cite Michener whose books gained weight only after he married a reference librarian.

Literary celebrity reared its ugly head in our time (my time, which is the year 1929) with Oliver La Farge's first and best novel, *Laughing Boy*. It won the Pulitzer Prize and, as its author later observed, hung round his neck the rest of his life like the albatross. Name your own succeeding celebrities: Sinclair Lewis, Pearl Buck, Hemingway, Fitzgerald, Tom Wolfe, Salinger, Steinbeck—all victims of too much too early.

Few writers can reject the embraces of the harlot Celebrity. Let me introduce some supporting data from the last century about one who could. Melville was perhaps the

first to say no to Celebrity. He stands like a lighthouse to warn of the rocks beneath the surface. Every few years I go back to those exalted letters he wrote to his neighbor Hawthorne in the midst of writing *Moby Dick*, that book in which he took a last deep-sea dive.

Melville had to leave town in order to write *Moby Dick*. He left Manhattan for the family's country house in the Berkshires, a stately old place called Arrowhead. High in crows' nest study, with a view north on Graylock, he wrote that great novel in the double sense to save his life. The result was tragic. Save his soul he did, yet at the same time he lost his reputation with the reading public.

Melville's first book made him into what was then a Celebrity. It was the South Sea Idyll *Typee*. Public and publisher clamored for more of

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## Few writers can reject the embraces of the harlot Celebrity.

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the same. Melville tried to give it to them in *Omoo*, *Mardi*, *Redburn* and *White Jacket*.

All of them were based on more of his whaling ship adventures. He added an ingredient however that the public did *not* want: Philosophy. What they wanted was more of that South Sea maiden Fay-away. His public wanted "Typee II," "Typee III," ad nauseam, just as nearly a century later La Farge's public and publisher called for "Laughing Boy II" and so on.

Melville tried to please the public and at the same time to be the self he had found himself to be. He left the Madison Avenue of his time, buried himself in the Berkshires, and sweat out *Moby Dick*. Not only

would he give them what they wanted, he would also give them what they ought to have. He gave them "the works," in which he unloaded everything he knew about whales, oceans, ships, men and life, all in one whale of a book.

His was the most costly creative act in our literature, the only one to stand with *Leaves of Grass*. Melville paid for that book with his own genius. It could never be used in a creative writing class, for it is a bad novel and a great book, one never to be copied.

It was in the course of creating *Moby Dick*, and in the afterglow, that Melville wrote those heart-shaking letters to nearby Hawthorne. "My dear sir," he wrote to Hawthorne, "they begin to patronize. All Fame is patronage. Let me be infamous. There is no patronage in that. What reputation H.M. has is horrible. Think of it! To go down to posterity is bad enough, anyway; but to go down to it as a man who lived among cannibals! *Typee* will be given to babies, perhaps, with their gingerbread. I have come to regard this matter of Fame as the most transparent of all vanities."

That letter was written in June 1851, a month before the book was published. Whereupon Melville exulted to Hawthorne, "I have written a wicked book, and feel spotless as the lamb."

I have mixed feelings about that man Hawthorne. Charges can be brought against him for his preoccupation with his own work, to the neglect of that his fellow writers. There are examples in our own time. Hawthorne was a cold fish, no whale, no mammal. Yet to his everlasting glory, he did not fail to respond to Melville's book.

What would we not give for the letter he wrote to acknowledge *Moby Dick*, a letter long lost and of which we know only from Melville's description of it as a "joy-giving and exultation-breeding letter," and continued in this almost delirious vein,

"... a sense of unspeakable security is in me this moment, on account of your having understood the book."

For lack of another Hawthorne, Melville's genius died. He turned his back on public and publisher and for eighteen years he worked every day as a customs inspector on the Manhattan docks.

Yet he kept the flame alive though burning low. Henceforth he wrote mostly for himself, his family and a few friends, while his masterpiece fell into limbo until resurrected in 1919 by the first biography: Raymond Weaver's *Melville: Mariner and Mystic*. And has never stopped living the long life of constant readership.

I have talked about the Who and the Where. A bit now about the When. If too much early success often proves fatal, when *should* it come? It comes ideally not early or late nor even too much in a single dose, but rather over an extended period, thus sparing the writer the devastating attendants.

In prose which he rarely writes, the poet Jeffers has things to say about Fame and when it best comes: "But a young man writes, 'What good will it do me to imagine myself remembered after death? If I am to have fame and an audience, I want them now while I can feel them.' It seems to me, Jeffers went on to say, that the young man speaks in ignorance. To be peered at and interviewed, to be pursued by idlers and autograph seekers and enquiring admirers, would surely be a sad nuisance." And it is destructive too, if you take it seriously, it wastes your energy onto self-consciousness; it destroys spontaneity and soils the springs of the mind. Whereas posthumous recognition could do you no harm at all, and is really the only kind worth considering."

Although I have not talked about living writers, I intend to make one exception. He is the only writer among us to whom I yield as my senior in age, talent and wisdom.

He is Frank Waters. He personifies for me much of what I have been saying about the three adverbs, Who, When, and Where. If he has at times left the mountains and desert of his birth and long life, it has been to go south to Mexico, not east to Manhattan.

Frank Waters did not come west. He was already here, from his birth in the Colorado Rockies. Although he winters now in Tucson, it is because the snows of Northern New Mexico require a shovel more than a typewriter. Although he would agree that he could have used the money that comes with celebrity, he has been fortunate not to have been buried alive under a block-buster. His prime time was a quieter time when a writer still had charge of his own destiny.

In a Foreword to Tanner's bibliography, Waters is perceptive

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## I saw the land as more important than theories about its dwellers.

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and honest in looking back at fifty years of his own writing. None of his books was initially successful beyond a modest sale. When published east of the Hudson and drew favorable reviews, they were still allowed to go out of print.

To a remarkable one-man publisher, Alan Swallow, Waters owed his survival and resurrection. When Swallow had faith in a book, he kept it in print. Such were *The Man Who Killed the Deer* and *People of the Valley*. They remain high among the literature about the Indians and Hispanics of the Southwest, even as *The Colorado* is at the peak of books about the West's greatest river before it was doomed to be dammed.

Waters' words from his bibli-

ography are relevant: "Every writer," he wrote, "whether he admits it or not, hankers after fame and fortune. That I did not attain them was the best thing that ever happened to me. I was compelled to keep following the carrot dangling before my nose by doing still another book."

Waters endeared himself to me as man as well as writer when he sided with me in a disagreement with Alan Swallow when asked to write a Foreword to the Northland Press edition of *The Man Who Killed the Deer*. I said that the Where of the book was more important than the What; that is, the Taos setting outweighed the mystical philosophy. I saw the land as more important than theories about its dwellers. I still feel that way. Swallow didn't. When we appealed to Frank, he said that inasmuch as the Foreword was by Powell and not Swallow, then it should be left as Larry wrote it. And it was.

I have been reading the latest volume in D.H. Lawrence's collected letters. Volume 4 covers the years 1921-24, during which Lawrence came for the first time to northern New Mexico. It struck me how much alike are his and Waters' visions of that land. Similar also is the way both writers rejected celebrityhood. After the English years of poverty, censorship and rejection, Lawrence's books were at last selling—in America not England. Even so he refused to be lionized. When asked to come to New York and lecture (the time's equivalent of TV talk shows), he refused. He said he didn't want to be seen in the company of Hugh Walpole and his countrymen who were milking the American cow for all she would give down.

Lawrence reached America via Ceylon, Australia and California. After two weeks near Perth, he and Frieda settled for two months in a seacoast village forty miles south of Sydney. From there he wrote to an English friend, "We live mostly

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with the sea—not much with the land—and not at all with the people. We don't know a soul on this side of the continent. I have letters of invitation and do not intend to present them." Even so he read the Sydney newspapers and met a politician and a labor leader, and before the two months were over, he had written *Kangaroo* which some say is still one of the best of all Australian novels. And quite simply because it has the three S's.

Both Lawrence and Waters demanded that their publishers respect their rights, creative and financial. Both were professional writers of the highest integrity, and both were spared celebrityhood.

If one is to write Literature—that is prose which endures—the Where is perhaps the most important of the adverbs. The river of *Huck Finn*, the ocean of *Moby Dick*, the Big Sur coast of Jeffers, the Southwest of *Laughing Boy*, *The Man Who Killed the Deer* and *People of the Valley*, clear back to the wine-dark sea and Ithaca of *The Odyssey*. In all of them the Where is what is lasting, not the fashions, politics, manners, trends, all the changing ephemera of mankind, but rather the eternal emotions of love and hunger, of survival through war, famine and pestilence, played out in the natural setting. These give lasting life to literature.

And finally, you ambitious writers, speakers, and plain listeners, will go about your lives paying no attention to my fanciful prejudices. "Will Time say nothing but I told you so?" The poet asked, then answered, "If I could tell you, I would let you know." Well, I tried.



## Concerning An End to His Life

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One can't tell anything by his books.  
He did, after all, collect  
Everything other people left  
So when the chief detective comes,  
Says *aha* I will tell something  
About the ending of this small man  
By the kinds of books he kept  
The detective will be wrong, deciding  
This man was insane or red socialist,  
Or simply unhappy: he finds  
In a library of otherwise paperback books  
Two accidental cloth volumes  
By suicides of note.  
The detective will have to say  
This, of course, is why he died.  
Thinkers are too easily done in.  
But the books, all of them  
Topped equally by a little dust  
Had nothing to do with his ending.  
Like each of us he had a woman's heart  
Stuck plain in his thick man's body  
But couldn't begin to explain to anyone  
Because he was afraid more than anything  
That another man like himself  
Would be called over and have to pretend  
Convincingly that he didn't understand.

## Books that Made the Difference

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We are a mile and a half down inside the Grand Canyon. There is a small landing area where the mule train and its passengers rest on the way up from the floor of the canyon. A few short trees, a breathtaking view, but no facilities, no water.

Up the trail comes a party of one, a man hiking, not riding, yet breathing easily—scarcely any sweat. This is Paul Beach, at fifty-eight the sixth most senior pilot of the 750 flying for Hughes Airwest, putting into practice some of the taste for adventures he acquired as a youngster when he read a book of first-person experiences of some other adventurers.

“There were articles by Admiral Byrd about flying to the South Pole, and by the World War I flying ace Eddie Rickenbacker, and others, and I knew I wanted to be a flier from that moment on.”

This was his first trip into the Grand Canyon. He and his wife and friends had stayed overnight at Phantom Ranch deep inside the canyon. They had come because “I fly over this beautiful country all the time, and it’s always a challenge to see what it’s like on the ground.”

Captain Beach has logged some twenty-eight thousand hours in the air. After vacation, he’ll again be in command of a multi-million-dollar jet to Salt Lake City to Seattle to Reno to Las Vegas, then back home to Phoenix.

# The Enduring Value of the Book in the Age of the Computer

Prophecy is a dangerous but necessary business. In an age of rapidly proliferating new technologies, most of us are compelled to consider various projections of the future in order to run our businesses or manage our professions. Today, things evolve so fast that both our vision of the future and our recall of the recent past can become blurred in the breathtaking, relentless pace of change.

My company will be venturing into the risky waters of prophecy soon as we plan to publish a book of interviews with prominent leaders in the library field called *Libraries in the Nineties*. As I was reading the manuscript, I was struck by the following sentence, "Just a decade ago, few people could locate the ON switch on an IBM PC."

I paused for a moment and thought, "This statement isn't right: there weren't any IBM PCs a decade ago!" The now ubiquitous PC was not even introduced until 1981! It's hard to believe that as recently as seven years ago we got along without them. (Of course there were Apple IIs and Tandys and Kaypros and a few other microcomputers around, but they weren't considered serious or necessary tools of business.)

And if the rapid proliferation of new technology can fog our memory, it can even more easily muddy the waters of the future. Too often we assume that technology always drives the market place, that if a new tool has been brought to the

market the mere fact of its existence will compel people to buy it and use it. If you want a vivid example of the dangers of such forecasting, go back in the computer literature about five years and reread the projections

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**... things evolve so fast that both our vision of the future and our recall of the recent past can become blurred**

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being made at that time about the "sure" growth in the home computer market. Unfortunately, many new enterprises went bankrupt because they based their futures on such prophecies.

## The Book in the Future Project

With these dangers in mind, let me share my thoughts about the future of two things that are dear to me — books and computers. And I'll do this with a perfectly relevant experience fresh in my mind. A few years ago I had the pleasure of participating on an advisory panel for a project called the Book in the Future which was coordinated by the Cen-

ter for the Book in the Library of Congress. Serving on the panel were distinguished librarians, writers, publishers, information scientists, and others in a position to consider the future role of the book in our society. The fruits of that project included a report from Librarian of Congress Daniel J. Boorstin called *Books in our Future* and a larger book, edited by John Y. Cole, *Books in our Future, Perspectives and Proposals*. Both are available from the Government Printing Office and I recommend them to you.

I don't intend here merely to repeat the findings reported so eloquently in these books. I will, however, echo the consensus "bottom line" and offer my own views in support of it. And the bottom line is that by the turn of the century (and I won't dare to prophesy beyond that point!) the book will still play an essential, if changing role in the communication of "knowledge, and experience and imagination." To that, however, I'll add the not very surprising projection that computers and related technology also will play an increasing role in doing those same things.

And I should emphasize that while there was a consensus opinion expressed by Daniel Boorstin, the diversity of views offered by the individuals who contributed papers to *Books in Our Future: Perspectives and Proposals* fully reflects the underlying uncertainty one rightly feels about the future of these two media. There are those who foresee

a "paperless society" in which all information and knowledge is readily accessible via electronic technology. Others, even those who accept and project a growing role for computers in storing and disseminating "books," argue that even more paper will be consumed in the production of "on-demand" print-outs that will be used and discarded. Some envision the death of libraries; others see a vital new role for libraries as distribution centers for electronic networks that will reach into our homes.

In my view, books will sur-

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**... no medium facilitates the serendipitous accumulation of knowledge as well as the book does.**

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vive and book publishing will thrive, and not just because you can take books to the beach and to bed, as one prominent commentator has noted. Others are quick to point out that we can now take our laptops to the beach and to bed if we're so inclined. No, books will survive because books continue to do something important better than any alternative medium. To understand this, we have to discern the difference between knowledge and information.

Ours has been called the age of information. The new communications and publishing technologies facilitate the accumulation of information — sometimes more than we can deal with! The accumulation of knowledge, however, is often serendipitous. And no medium facilitates the serendipitous accumulation of knowledge as well as the book does.

As an illustration, consider the difference between two similar tools — a dictionary (in book form) and a spelling checker (an electronic adjunct to a word-processing program). Spelling checkers are wonderful tools within their obvious limits. They save time and eliminate errors. Using one, however, rarely imparts knowledge to the user. What is conveyed is information — that a word in a text doesn't match any of the words in the spelling check list. Usually this merely identifies a typo that can be corrected. Occasionally, it identifies a word we don't know how to spell. The checker may suggest alternative spellings from which we can select the correct spelling. At most we've been reminded of how to spell the word correctly.

When I look something up in a dictionary, however, different, far richer experiences occur. As I search for the word I want, my eye passes over other words and illustrations that may catch my attention. I may choose to linger a while and read the entry for some of these because my curiosity has been aroused. Even when I find the word I set out to check, I'm given far more than the correct spelling. The etymology of the word, its relation to other languages and words, its variant meanings and spellings — all these are there for me to ponder and absorb. That's the serendipitous accumulation of knowledge.

Because we need powerful tools to convey information and the knowledge to use that information well, books will survive not despite electronic alternatives but together with them. And book publishing will thrive into the next century not despite computers but because of them. It's not an either-or, one-or-the-other issue.

### **Books and Computers — Allies, Not Adversaries**

Books and computers are best seen as allies in the information age, not as competing alternatives. I've

held this view for quite a while, going back to my days at the R.R. Bowker Company where, in the 1960s, I was given the assignment of automating the files from which the huge and essential *Books-in-Print* volumes were produced. This became the first effort to produce a major serial reference work from a computer database, and it opened my eyes to the ways a new technology can advance and facilitate the production of books, and, in this case, serve the whole book industry.

When I established my own publishing company, The Oryx Press, in 1975, I did so with the understanding that computers and related technology would be used wherever suitable to support the publication process. Following that decision, I have seen my company and the book publishing business in general apply computer technology to nearly every aspect of the business. True, some have been dragged kicking and screaming into the automated age. But today it's hard to

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**... it's hard to imagine how the business survived prior to computers.**

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imagine how the business survived prior to computers.

Books are now written with computers, and edited on computers, and type is set from this digital record. And even the more mundane aspects of book publishing — warehousing, order fulfillment, and record keeping — would anyone want to return to the old manual procedures for these tasks? The business of book publishing and bookselling is thriving because computers support the distribution of books to bookstores and libraries

in ways that could not have been imagined a quarter century ago.

In fact, one might ask, as at least one of the advisors to the Book in the Future Project did, "What's all the fuss about?" If computers and related new technology pose a threat to the future of the book, we should be able to detect some evidence by now of the decline of the book publishing industry. Industry statistics, however, belie any such trend. Book publishing has always been and will surely remain a high-risk business. Its sales and profit margins are small compared to those of many other industries. This has always been the case. However, it is quite clear, at

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## Small presses and fine-edition publishers are proliferating, not declining in number.

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this time at least, that the industry remains vital and healthy.

The number of book publishing companies in the U.S. has grown from 1,250 in 1972 to 2,128 in 1982. This growth has been supported and facilitated by the application of new technology that makes it easier than ever for anyone to produce camera-ready typeset pages with a desktop publishing system that can be bought for less than \$10,000. Small presses and fine-edition publishers are proliferating, not declining in number. The amount of money spent on books each year is growing, not diminishing, and the rate of growth is increasing, not decreasing. The number of new titles produced each year (more than 50,000) appears to be leveling off — to the relief of publishers, booksellers, and librarians, all of whom have been concerned

for years about the "too many books" problem. Finally, there are more bookstores accessible to more people than ever before. These numbers don't reflect the trends of an industry in decline.

Of course, all is not a bed of roses. Library budgets for the purchase of new books have been squeezed by diminishing tax bases in some areas and the escalating costs of serials, especially of those published abroad. The vitality of the book publishing industry has made it an inviting target for larger enterprises. Book publishers are bought and sold in breathtaking acquisition and merger deals that, some fear, may consolidate control over the printed word in the hands of a few giant conglomerates, several of them located outside the United States. However, these and other legitimate concerns are not the worries of business facing imminent demise.

### The Future of Reading Thoughtfully

Thomas Jefferson once said to John Adams, "I cannot live without books." I suspect that most people reading this article feel the same way. Perhaps our fondness for books — their feel, look, smell — limits our ability to envision what some believe can be an even better world beyond books. Perhaps.

But, the medium aside, there remain more serious questions that bear on the future of all these publishing formats. The growth and extent of illiteracy, and what Boorstin calls aliteracy—the lack of motivation to read—are much more compelling issues, in my mind. If we don't remain a nation of readers, it won't matter how the material is published — it won't be read.

In addition, we must concern ourselves with difficult questions about what we're doing with all the information that is being published. We've all heard the saying, "We're drowning in information and starving for knowledge." We cannot make

knowledgeable use of wonderful new information media unless we support an educational system that promotes literacy and thought.

Liberal education, the thoughtful reading of the best books our civilization has produced, remains the best antidote I know to this problem. The future of the book is not threatened by computers or other new information media. The greater threat comes from illiteracy, aliteracy, and the resulting disinclination to engage in the qualities of thought that come from reading great books. If we address the problems of illiteracy and aliteracy by supporting our schools, libraries, colleges and universities we'll ensure not only the future of the book, but the thoughtful use of all the new information media.

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