

Looking for Tutors and Brokers: Comparing the Expectations of Book and Journal Evaluators

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LIBRARY COLLECTIONS CONTAIN information resources in a variety of different formats. Two of the principal physical forms in which libraries collect information are books and journals. In traditional libraries, these comprise the bulk if not the whole of all holdings.

Evaluating books and journals inevitably raises questions. What criteria do evaluators apply, with equal emphasis to both formats? Which qualities seem to be more sought after in one format or another? Perhaps equally important, when do the differences among the literatures of science and technology, the social sciences and the humanities affect what evaluators feel they should see? Are the pitfalls to be avoided in selecting or retaining a given library item the same whether it is a book or a journal? What is the basis for making distinctions?

This author believes that some answers can be found by tabulating and comparing the critical comments made by book and journal reviewers in a leading selection guide, *Choice*,¹ a work that also serves as a basis for the leading retrospective evaluation checklist—i.e., *Books for College Libraries*.² This approach and these particular guides have insights beyond academic libraries. Bonn reminds us that college libraries face formal and frequent evaluation procedures with general implications for other libraries.³ This study helps identify basic criteria for those examiners who are evaluating a collection by the direct inspection of recent acquisitions and ongoing subscriptions.

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Methodology of the Study

One thousand book reviews appearing in *Choice* between February and September 1983, were analyzed for explicit emphasis in praise or complaint, yielding 1996 comments. Two hundred forty journal reviews, appearing between September 1974 and August 1983 were similarly examined in *Choice's* "Periodicals for College Libraries" column, excepting that greater allowance was made for implied criticisms. This latitude in evaluating comments and the greater time span were necessary because substantially fewer reviews of journals appeared in each issue and the researcher wished to reach a more comparable number of comments—1044 in all—for this format. While only the most explicit comments were allowed for in reviews of books, a lengthier examination of journal reviews ferreted out the criticisms of journals. Most journal reviews are longer than book reviews, providing more potential material—positive and negative—on journals. The discussions that follow treat remarks in approximate order of their importance, and in the tables, the remarks are organized first by discipline and then according to specific comments made in the reviews. The percentages in parentheses following each comment represent its share of the total number of comments for books or journals in that field (see tables 1 and 2).

Positive Expectations for Both Books and Journals

Well-written, Readable, Accessible and Interesting to Undergraduates

Both book and journal reviewers mention these qualities frequently. They placed first or second in book reviews across all disciplines and were similarly first or third among journal reviews. These criteria are at the core of *Choice's* philosophy: Good materials that will be used by undergraduates. Contents must be clearly presented in terms this level of reader can understand, and done so in such a way that he or she will be attracted and sustain interest.

Features Chapters or Articles with Useful Bibliographies, Bibliographic Essays, Etc.

Reviewers tended to regard favorably books or journals which helped readers find additional material on the topic discussed in the work. Further complimentary remarks were made if the bibliographies seemed especially current, complete or featured annotations.

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TABLE 1
1472 FRANK, POSITIVE COMMENTS IN 1000 BOOK REVIEWS RANKED BY
IMPORTANCE IN DISCIPLINARY CATEGORIES

<i>Science & Technology</i> (334 titles)	<i>Social Sciences</i> (333 titles)	<i>Humanities</i> (333 titles)
Good bibliographies & indexes (20%)	Well-written, readable, accessible, interesting (15%)	New slant on old material (16%)
Well-written, readable, accessible, interesting (16%)	Superior analysis, well-documented (13%)	Well-written, readable, accessible, interesting (10%)
Good layout, illus., figures, binding, etc. (14%)	New slant on old material (11%)	Good layout, illus., figures, binding, etc. (8%)
Author's, publisher's credentials, reputation (12%)	Good bibliographies & indexes (9%)	Good bibliographies & indexes (8%)
Comprehensiveness (10%)	Author's, publisher's credentials, reputation (7%)	Highly current, topical (8%)
Logical progression of topics, good examples (9%)	Comprehensiveness (6%)	Superior analysis (7%)
Highly current, topical (4%)	Highly current, topical (5%)	Author's, publisher's credentials, reputation (7%)
Misc. comments (15%)	Better than other works in field (4%)	Best edition of several available (6%)
	Misc. comments (30%)	Multidisciplinary (5%)
		Misc. comments (20%)

Source: *Choice* 20-21 (Feb.-Sept. 1983)

Good Layout, Illustrations, Typography, Binding

A surprising number of comments dealt with the quality of book or journal design and production. This was more understandable in the case of books and journals in the arts and science technology fields where illustrations are often critical to clear understanding of the text. Nevertheless, reviewers in such humanities subjects as theology and literature also stressed visual details, even though illustrations are rarely crucial in those fields. Their comments tended to show some appreciation for the physical book or journal issue as an art form that should be suitably matched to the well-crafted writing it contained.

TABLE 2
 947 FRANK AND IMPLIED POSITIVE COMMENTS IN 240 JOURNAL REVIEWS
 RANKED BY IMPORTANCE IN DISCIPLINARY CATEGORIES

<i>Science & Technology</i> (76 titles)	<i>Social Sciences</i> (97 titles)	<i>Humanities</i> (67 titles)
Well-written, readable, accessible, interesting (12%)	Well-written, readable, accessible, interesting (14%)	Editor's, contributor's credentials, reputation (14%)
Affiliated with major Institution or Prof. Soc. (11%)	Features book reviews, biblio. essays, etc. (11%)	Features book reviews, biblio. essays, etc. (8%)
Features book reviews, biblio. essays, etc. (8%)	Editor's, contributor's credentials, reputation (7%)	Wide variety of topics, broad surveys (7%)
Features regular columnists, news items, calendars, etc. (8%)	Features regular columnists, news items, calendars, etc. (7%)	Rigorous refereeing, responsible editing (7%)
Good layout, illus., figures, binding (8%)	Features theme issues (7%)	Multidisciplinary (6%)
Wide variety of topics, broad coverage (8%)	Wide variety of topics, broad coverage (7%)	Reviews of media, concerts, exhibits (6%)
Editor's, contributor's credentials, reputation (8%)	Multidisciplinary (7%)	Good layout, illus., figures, binding (6%)
Rigorous refereeing, responsible editing (7%)	Affiliated with major Institution or Prof. Soc. (7%)	Affiliated with major Institution or Prof. Soc. (6%)
Controversial correspondence replies to criticism (7%)	Serves special interest group or alternative views (5%)	Well-written, readable, accessible, interesting (6%)
Highly current, rapid publication (7%)	Rigorous refereeing, responsible editing (5%)	Features theme issues (5%)
A leader (7%)	Prints summaries of articles from other journals (4%)	Features interviews, biographical articles (5%)
Misc. comments (9%)	Misc. comments (19%)	Misc. comments (24%)

Source: *Choice* 11-20(Sept. 1974-Aug. 1983)

Authors, Editors, or Publishers are Famous or Well-credentialed

Book reviewers almost always gave the current university affiliation and/or academic pedigree of authors, often mentioning their earlier publications. Similarly, journal reviewers tended to mention the name and background of the chief editor at least. In the humanities, particularly in literary small press reviews, it was common to list a string of recognizable contributors as well. Journal reviewers particu-

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larly emphasized publishers especially if they were professional or research societies. Book reviewers seem to favor university press productions.

Broad Coverage of Field, Comprehensiveness, Wide Variety of Topics within Discipline

Book reviewers clearly favored titles that covered all the major points within the announced topic. Journal critics did not expect each issue to cover all the subdivisions of a discipline. Rather, they favorably recommended journals which regularly featured broad overview articles and which, through a variety of topics covered in each issue, would eventually cover the entire field over several issues.

Multidisciplinary Perspectives

Works which featured authors from differing academic or professional backgrounds were most frequently endorsed by book critics looking at materials with a humanities emphasis. To a lesser degree science and technology publications combined with a social science (or ethical) consciousness were also commended with regularity. In social sciences literature, an occasional combination with archaeology or literature received favorable notice.

Timeliness, High Currency

This quality was everywhere esteemed, although it took on different nuances across the disciplines. In the sciences it generally meant, "contains the latest developments." In the social sciences it often meant, "of use in some current controversy." In the humanities it often meant, "in time for a revival of interest in this topic." In some journals, an added meaning concerned quickly printing papers accepted for publication.

Leading Publication, Better than Others in the Field, Superior Analysis

The notion of comparison and competition recurred in reviews of books in the social sciences and humanities and journals in science and technology. In the social sciences and humanities, where there often is a broad assortment of readable works on a given topic, critics felt obligated to assist librarians with fairly frank comparisons. By contrast, in science and technology book publishing, there may be less similarity among a smaller number of titles directed toward undergraduates and book-to-book comparisons seem less urgent. But science and technology journals provided a contrary example. Often there were several

comparable titles in a field, all of them expensive. Economic pressures on serials budgets and the availability of published citation rates prompted reviewers to make comparisons among science and technology journals.

Serves Special Interest Groups or Alternative Viewpoints Well

Both book and journal reviewers seemed well aware that a library containing only totally balanced presentations on topics that are already popular, is itself biased in favor of the status quo. While journal reviewers seemed more readily inclined to recommend purchase of alternative viewpoint titles, book critics were prepared to go along only if a work called attention to its viewpoint with a certain polish and without clumsy distortion.

Negative Expectations for Both Books and Journals

Absurdly or Deceptively Biased

Book and journal critics have repeatedly registered disdain over awkwardly argued, biased works, particularly in the social sciences and humanities. Additionally, they generally did not recommend works that had a bias but did not clearly profess it in the front matter—e.g., prefaces, foreword, introduction—or by subtitling or other prominent methods. In the criticisms for science materials, bias had a different nuance. It meant neglect of one topic or theory for another in what purported to be a comprehensive treatment.

Second-rate, Duplicates Functions of Better Works in an Already Crowded Field

Book and journal critics were particularly sensitive to titles that attempted to compete with already established works. To a certain degree, the reviews of the later works were almost always more exhaustive. The enumeration of advantages of the new title often included criticism of obsolescence in older books, or mention of some sort of stodginess in journal editorial policies. Weaknesses cited by book reviewers were suspicions that a kind of gutless, no-risk “cashing in on the wave” publishing venture was involved. Journal reviewers might pan a duplicative journal by saying that its papers were likely to have been rejected by the better journal(s) in the field.

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Superficial Treatment of Topic

Books and journals in virtually all disciplines appeared to receive poor reviews for too shallow a treatment of their subject. Critics would note in a review that the book or the journal's articles might well be readable, but would not recommend it for a library collection that supported serious instruction or research.

Too Specialized, Too Advanced, Too Narrow a Geographic Focus

The reverse of superficiality—i.e., over-specialization—was also common as a negative comment. There were several variants by discipline. In science and technology fields, one meaning was, “the work is concerned with a subject only rarely dealt with in the undergraduate years.” In the social sciences one might find this comment, “the title is dominated by authors from a consortium of lesser-known institutions focusing on problems peculiar to their locale.” In the humanities there were elements of both variants when reviewers considered whether regional small press magazines were important, or when reviewers decided whether certain particularly esoteric symposia had enough introductory material to help undergraduates understand them, or enough background to provide them with a context.

Poor Layout, Print, Illustrations; Flimsy Binding, Skimpy Issues

In science, technology and humanities books, and in the journals of all disciplinary groups, a poor quality or overly meager physical product could expect to be criticized. This included details such as binding, even of individual issues. While there was some allowance made for products of underfinanced or inexperienced publishers, *Choice's* reviewers had a distaste for typescript or camera-ready-copy publications. Interestingly, the 1970s and early 1980s saw many representatives of this speedy and economic, but often unattractive, genre. The advent of more widespread and more sophisticated office word processors with multisized and multistyled character fonts may reduce this aesthetic complaint, while retaining the original advantages in publishers' cost savings and speedy production.

Poor Internal Indexes; Not Yet Indexed by Others

While the details of these criticisms understandably differed between books and journals, the central issue was the same—no matter how good the contents are, they cannot be easily and systematically explored without good finding guides. The value of books as ready reference tools is considerably diminished when terms they might define

or tables they might offer are not indexed. Flipping through journal issues might provide some serendipitous insights for researchers, but might just as easily cause them to miss the original object of their research through inefficiency and frustration.

Excessive Price

While the frequency with which this complaint was made was surprisingly low—and possibly *Choice* and “Periodicals for College Libraries” may avoid reviewing extremely costly materials altogether—its occurrence usually was occasioned by a specific grievance. For books, the critics usually attacked the number of pages for the price. With journals there was a kind of vicious circle: There were too few potential specialists at a typical institution to merit the investment in the high subscription rate, which was due to the fewer subscribers over which costs could be spread.

Expected of Books, but not Frequently of Journals

Logical Progression of Topics, Good Examples

Critics did not seem to expect journal issues to provide step-by-step instructional pieces; however, they noted this as a favorable characteristic of books. Examples and problem sets were also favored, particularly in science and technology fields.

New Slant on an Old Topic

Book critics noted this attribute most frequently when dealing with social science and humanities titles. While some science and technology books and articles in the journals of all disciplines were of similar character, the critics found book-length treatments especially commendable in this category. This receptivity may be due in part to the purposefully disarming “apologia for another book” with which most humanities and social science authors begin their works. Upon reading the better of these, critics seem willing to give authors the benefit of the doubt. Neither authors’ justifications nor their works are likely to end. No interpretation ever seems final, nor are all social problems likely to disappear. The last book-length treatment of Shakespeare or unemployment is yet to be written. Evaluators will read each piece and judge it worthy of collection, largely, if it attempts to offer something new.

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Handy Compendium

This attribute was rarely ascribed to journals, but was frequently mentioned in book reviews. While compendia may contain chapters or papers by a wide variety of authors on a central subject, the items discussed in connection with this comment typically were anthologies or collections of the writings of a single author. These compendia frequently have introductory or integrating essays, chronological tables, a biographical sketch of the author, and often a bibliography. Critics noted that compendia saved time in searching the literature and provided convenient reference matter, and they paid particularly close attention to just how representative the selection writing was.

Best Edition of Several Available

While a comparative and competitive perspective was very common in most book and journal reviews, only among books could virtually identical texts be found. Critics found themselves comparing details such as the introduction, commentary, glosses, physical production, and price. (These are similar to the criteria used for compendia.) In the humanities, there might be a further critical examination of whether the version of the text was the earliest, most authentic, the one favored by the author, etc. Another critical inspection occurred when the edition was one of a standard publisher's series. Some mention usually was made of whether this particular volume met the standard of earlier numbers (see tables 3 and 4).

Negative Comments More Commonly Mentioned with Books

Verbosity, Turgid Argumentation

Book critics in all the disciplines savagely attacked works with unnecessarily elaborate vocabulary or lines of reasoning that were bizarrely complicated. In many cases, the critics suggested this style cast suspicion on the author's understanding of the topic and ability to reason clearly, rather than indicating the topic was beyond an undergraduate's understanding. Journal critics rarely mentioned the difficulties of overly technical language or argumentation, perhaps conceding that sophistication in the topic was more likely to occur in professional research journals.

Obsolescence

Obsolescence was rarely criticized in reviews of journals, save for the delayed appearance of manuscripts submitted long before publica-

tion. Science, technology and social sciences books were closely examined for their currency, not only in facts and interpretations, but in references as well. Obsolescence was usually a damning criticism and the guilty book often was not recommended.

Misleading Title, Neglect of Stated Aims

Book critics were quick to point out cases where the announced goals of the work were hardly dealt with in the text. Apart from concerns about wasting the reader's time or the library's money on an inappropriate title, there seemed to be doubts of the writer's competence to understand the problem or to advance a particular cause beyond a mere statement of thesis.

TABLE 3
524 FRANK, NEGATIVE COMMENTS IN 1,000 BOOK REVIEWS RANKED BY IMPORTANCE IN DISCIPLINARY CATEGORIES

<i>Science & Technology</i> (334 titles)	<i>Social Sciences</i> (333 titles)	<i>Humanities</i> (333 titles)
Bias, imbalance of topics (25%)	Flawed premises, failed argumentation (22%)	Flawed premises, failed argumentation (17%)
Misleading title, neglect of stated aims (14%)	Bias (12%)	Superficial treatment (13%)
Poor bibliographies & indexes (13%)	Verbosity, turgid argumentation (12%)	Bias (10%)
Superficial treatment (8%)	Superficial treatment (12%)	Superfluous work in already crowded field (10%)
Unevenness of contributions in multicontributor works (8%)	Overspecialized, too much background assumed, too narrow focus (8%)	Unevenness of contributions in multicontributor works (8%)
Obsolescence (8%)	Unevenness of contributions in multicontributor works (8%)	Self-indulgent, self-serving (6%)
Poor layout, illus., figures, binding (5%)	Superfluous work in already crowded field (8%)	Frequent or annoying errors of fact (6%)
Frequent or annoying errors of fact (5%)	Obsolescence (8%)	Poor bibliographies & indexes (5%)
Verbosity, turgid argumentation (5%)	Misleading title, neglect of stated aims (8%)	Poor layout, illus., figures, binding (5%)
Misc. comments (9%)	Misc. comments (2%)	Overspecialized, too much background assumed (4%) Misc. comments (16%)

Source: *Choice* 20-21(Feb.-Sept. 1983)

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TABLE 4
97 FRANK AND IMPLIED NEGATIVE COMMENTS IN 240 JOURNAL REVIEWS
RANKED BY IMPORTANCE IN DISCIPLINARY CATEGORIES

<i>Science & Technology</i> (76 titles)	<i>Social Sciences</i> (97 titles)	<i>Humanities</i> (67 titles)
Overspecialized, too advanced (15%)	Bias (23%)	Bias (23%)
Not refereed, loosely edited (15%)	Overspecialized, too advanced (16%)	Too superficial (18%)
Predominantly staff written (11%)	Poor layout, print, illus., binding, etc. (12%)	Predominantly staff written (14%)
Second rate, duplicates better titles (11%)	Predominantly staff written (8%)	Irregular publishing schedule, chronically late (10%)
Poor layout, print, illus., binding, etc. (10%)	Not yet indexed (8%)	Overspecialized, too advanced (9%)
Not yet indexed (9%)	Too superficial (5%)	Second rate, duplicates better titles (9%)
Too superficial (5%)	Price excessive (5%)	Poor layout, print, illus., binding, etc. (9%)
Price excessive (5%)	Irregular publishing schedule, chronically late (5%)	Not yet indexed (8%)
Misc. comments (19%)	Misc. comments(18%)	

Source: *Choice* 11-20(Sept. 1974-Aug. 1983)

Frequent or Annoying Errors of Fact

Critics felt that recurrent small errors detracted from the professionalism of a book. For example, they complained at the consistent misspelling of names, or repeated confusion over which of several people with similar names did what deeds on which dates. Repetition of an error was not always necessary to do damage to the writer's credibility. An incorrectly printed table of values could cause confusion for students using the table to work problems. Journals rarely seemed to get this sort of close scrutiny, but perhaps they have a self-checking device in being able to insert corrections in later issues.

Flawed Premises, Failed Argumentation

In *Choice*, only books were examined thoroughly enough to conclude whether or not the extended arguments they contained were valid—that is, in the opinion of the reviewer. When the reviewer disagreed with an author, one of two explanations was generally offered:

the thesis was promising, but not convincingly argued; or the argumentation was eloquent, but the author had a poor case to begin with. It should be noted this category of criticism did not invariably end with a negative purchase recommendation. Reviewers seemed to feel that in some cases, lessons could be learned by the reader just in an exploration of the issues involved.

Unevenness of Chapters in Multicontributor Works

While journal critics have come to tolerate a certain variation in the style and length of papers in a journal issue, reviewers of multiauthored books perceive this as a lack of editorial control. This is somewhat unreasonable in light of the current critical favor for multidisciplinary works. It is not at all clear that authors from different traditions can be expected to use the same structure and pattern of argumentation and to bring in their chapters within a two- or three-page variation. However, book critics seem to suggest this is indeed possible within the confines of a single volume—and that a reader deserves no less.

Self-Indulgent, Self-Serving

Book-length works purporting to give “inside information”—including some memoirs and assisted biographies—were closely scrutinized for real substance, factual accuracy and potential importance to their fields. Works which tended to make their participant-author a hero, or which served as a chopping block for the author’s enemies, or seemed to be attempts of family or friends to cash in on a favored topic of dubious value, generally were not recommended. According to *Choice*’s editors, many of the more obvious examples of the genre were not even selected for review.

Expected of Journals but not Frequently of Books

Rigorously Refereed, Responsibly Edited

As a factor of quality, *Choice*’s critics often indicated whether or not a journal’s research articles had been examined by experts. During the preliminary reading, these referees will suggest revisions in the texts before they appear, and indeed they will often reject poor material outright, thereby saving the reader’s time and insuring a certain reliability in the journal’s contents. While books certainly have editors who suggest revisions to authors, and who often reject book-length manuscripts, editors are usually full-time employees of the firm and not hand-picked experts in each field covered by each book. Book editors were rarely mentioned by *Choice*’s critics, and in fact, book editors’

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work and contributions of an author's colleagues in reading book manuscripts before publication seldom receive much attention outside of the author's preface. In contrast, while anonymous refereeing of individual articles in journals remains the norm, an increasing number of journals publish annual lists of their referees, nominally to thank them. In a real sense, this practice serves to alert the readership to what amounts to an extended editorial board of experts willing to associate themselves with the journal.

Features Current Book Reviews, Bibliographic Essays

While books are valued for their references and bibliographies, only journals are capable of current reviews on a continuing basis. Journals scored well with critics when their reviews were signed, fairly extensive, seriously prepared, evaluative, numerous, dealt with the most recently published titles, and appeared regularly.

Features Regular Columnists, News of the Field, Calendars of Professional Events, Etc.

Journals often were expected by *Choice's* critics to provide some items of general interest in each issue. This is partly a hedge against those times when no research papers appeal to a given reader, or, as is frequently the case with undergraduates, the reader has yet to develop full subject literacy. This task generally is given to permanent staff writers in larger circulation journals, or to contributing editors who turn out signed columns in each issue. These pieces can be monthly overviews of the profession, popularizations of hot research topics, columns for teachers of the subject, editorials from the association's president, news on governmental actions affecting the field, and others. Book reviews, already discussed, were the preeminent feature column noted by *Choice's* journal critics, but each of the following kinds of columns merit some independent discussion.

Features Current Reviews of Nonprint Media and Entertainment

While there are certainly entire books consisting of reviews of films, concerts and exhibitions, *Choice's* critics stated that publishing such reviews in journals had advantages of currency and continuity. While most such reviews understandably were in humanities journals, some social science, science and technology journals were cited for reviews of instructional audiovisual materials. Much as they did with book reviews, the critics tended to differentiate superior quality media reviews on the regularity of their inclusion and on the reviewers' sophistication in the media they reviewed.

Features Controversial Correspondence, Replies to Criticisms, Open Refereeing

Journals of all disciplines which published letters raising issues in their subject area, or more often letters criticizing previously published papers, were viewed as more lively. The effect may well be to make the reader feel a part of the academic forum. The letters encourage the reader's impression that a given journal's articles are followed closely, and that their readers care enough, have sufficient credentials and a sense of obligation to offer competent feedback. A more recent trend in some social science journals, with which some of *Choice's* critics were impressed, is the openly-refereed journal. Here articles are published along with the signed commentary of several reviewers. While this practice goes against the dominant tradition of anonymous review, it offers the advantage of beginning debate and discussion straightaway.

Features Interviews, Biographical Articles, or Obituaries

While there are certainly many book-length biographies of major figures, usually the well-established ones in most of the professions, there are many more article-length pieces on contemporary figures. If the interviewer is sharp, and the celebrity is candid, the piece increases a reader's sense of involvement in the field. Particularly in the humanities, interviews of literary figures, artists and performers by journal staff writers or by contributing editors received positive emphasis and special mention.

Features Abstracts, Summaries, or Reprints of Articles from Other Journals

While books that are essentially collections of articles reprinted from journals have been praised as "handy compendia," there is a parallel trend, for journal critics to praise journals that carry short summaries of papers published in other journals. Reviewers founded their praise on three premises: (1) the reader's time is saved; (2) awareness of the professional literature is increased; and (3) perceptions of the journal's involvement with the field are heightened.

Features Theme Issues

Journal criticism is not without contradictions. While a variety of papers and feature columns is still probably the favored approach for most journals, theme-issue journals are becoming increasingly popular. Ironically, accumulating papers on a single subject is the closest a journal comes to serving traditional book functions. Indeed, many

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journal publishers sell individual theme issues separately. Examples in our own profession include *Library Trends*, *Drexel Library Quarterly* and some Haworth Press titles such as *Science and Technology Libraries*, *Special Collections* and *The Reference Librarian*.

Negative Criticisms Levelled Primarily at Journals

Irregular Publishing Schedule, Chronically Late

While this complaint was noted by critics less frequently than expected by this author, when remarked upon it was seen as violating the currency attribute of journals. A certain dishonesty was suspected when there was a doubling up of issues as numbers failed to appear. Books, of course, can be published later than their announced dates. But it is not quite as common or as easy to determine how late a book is since its cover rarely features its alleged day or month of issue or the date for which it was originally promised its readers.

Predominantly Written by Staff

Though it was considered praiseworthy that journals have staff-written feature departments (just as book authors and editors were expected to be responsible for the entire contents of their works), there was some suspicion of academic journals whose research articles were overwhelmingly staff written. One underlying suspicion was of narrowness or bias of viewpoint. Another criticism questioned the "vanity publication" tinge of such works. A third suggestion was that the journal could not attract papers in sufficient quantity from its field.

Why Are Expectations Different?

Expectations of *Choice's* reviewers for books and journals are different owing to a contrasting view of the proper functions of each format. The reviewers expect books to be *tutors*. Undergraduates spend an extended, important time of their formative lives with books. The book-as-tutor is expected to take its naïve pupils slowly and systematically along a well-planned path, and therefore, the book-as-tutor must be as complete and balanced as possible. It cannot assume that the student will have read much in advance or is reading much concurrently. As is the case with a good tutor, the book will try to introduce the pupil to a new and enlarged view of some piece of the world. It will attempt to show off the best of a range of topics in the field, gathered together to save the student's time and to develop a sense of taste. The book-as-tutor expects the pupil to come back to it from time to time to be

refreshed with a reintroduction to old concepts in times of uncertainty with words that have been read before. While the book-as-tutor tries to be as up-to-date as possible at the time of its first meeting with the student, its strength is much more in reassurance than currency. The individual book-as-tutor probably will last longer in the memory and affections of its pupils than any journal's articles.

Choice's reviewers see journals as *brokers*. The journal-as-broker is as much a vendor of pieces of information as anything else. The key to the journal-as-broker is the involvement of the student in the ongoing bustle of the professional world. The ideal journal-as-broker for *Choice's* reviewers has in-house account representatives who, with their feature columns, vie with experts from field offices who come in more occasionally with their research papers to win the "commission" of students' attention. The editors are viewed as senior partners; for them, the preference of the student for any partner is to the benefit of the whole firm. Further, while the same editor seeks research articles of some durability, the nature of both the field and the publisher's self-interest is seen as dependent on students' valuing the most recent issues at least as much as an older one, and yet recognizing that the forthcoming issues will still need to be seen.

The journal-as-broker expects the student will also be reading other journals; there will have to be competition, issue after issue. The ultimate competition is not just for a continuing subscription; it is for the recruitment of the best of the students to become, themselves, contributors and editors. The identification of a scholar with a journal is held together less by the kind of affection engendered by the book-as-tutor—i.e., "first love"—as it is with repeated, mutually satisfying transactions at a particular brokerage.

Library collections require both tutors and brokers, just as readers want and need the particular qualities each has to offer. Though certain common threads should be present in both forms—i.e., readability, good writing, presence of bibliographies, well-respected authorship, thorough coverage of the field, timeliness, and quality of the physical productions—unique attributes exist that make the sum of the criteria by which they are judged differ considerably. Far from being interchangeable, this author believes books and journals function differently with their readers, each furnishing part of the total learning and information-seeking process integral to college and university settings as well as to other library environments.

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