

Personalities in publishing: Gordon Graham

Hazel K. Bell

Gordon Graham once described himself as 'a Transatlantic animal of a publisher': a goal to which he took a roundabout route, since the first nine years of his postwar career were as book salesman in India. But the subsequent segments of his fifty-year career in publishing — International Sales Manager for McGraw-Hill in New York; Managing Director of McGraw-Hill Europe; Chairman and Chief Executive of Butterworths; and now Editor of *LOGOS*, an international book journal — justify his self-description.^[1] People meeting him for the first time often assume he is American — unless they are American, when they assume that he is British.

A Scot, Graham came to publishing via legal training (at Glasgow University) and military service (World War II in Burma and India) — which together provided a fine, firm base for his later avocation to the accidental profession. By the end of the war he was a military Press Relations Officer '(euphemism for censor/propagandist)'^[2] in Delhi, and returned to India for nine years' combining freelance journalism with selling American textbooks to Indian Universities (all 48 of them). In 1955 he removed to New York as International Sales Manager for McGraw Hill; then in 1963 to Butterworths and to London, where he declined repeated offers from Robert Maxwell (a man who 'spread himself too thin').¹ He was concerned with the development of LEXIS, the computer-assisted legal-research service launched in 1973. As he puts it, 'Butterworths licensed the LEXIS system and wired the by no means willing English legal profession into Dayton, Ohio'.^[2]

Graham was a member of the Advisory Board of *Scholarly Publishing*, 1970-96. From 1985-87 he was President of the UK Publishers' Association (PA), after its only contested election; most PA office bearers had come from family houses or the old establishment. It was a time when the electronic onset was beginning to agitate the publishing scene seriously, and President Graham devoted much time to this new alarm. Other areas of concern were publishers' relations with librarians, and competition in the international markets.

Graham saw his retirement from publishing in 1990 rather as 'graduation', and claims since to be enjoying freedom in that state rather than leisure.^[1] The graduation was extended in 1993 to an Honorary Doctorate from the University of Stirling, presented by the Director of its Centre for Publishing Studies as 'marking this University's relationship to a great cultural industry by honouring a leading practitioner of his generation'.^[3]

In 1992, Graham wrote for the International Publishers Association a 24-page brochure, *What*

publishers do - from authors to readers, distributed in its tens of thousands (and in translation) to governments, corporations and academic libraries to explain the publisher's role.^[4] While seeing the purpose of all publishers as alike 'to be the catalysts between author and reader', he maintains 'there is no assembly line': the manifold publishing specialisms differ extremely. The publisher is compared to an orchestral conductor: 'like conducting, publishing is not only an aggregate of creative skills, judgment and knowledge, but also requires exceptional response to the creativity of those whose works are being performed' and sensitivity to the tastes and needs of the audience. The publishers' part is 'both reflecting and helping to shape human progress'.^[4]

Who better qualified to look back on so much experience of publishing and pronounce upon its state and prospects? Graham frequently does so: his journal articles and conference papers fill ten box files.^[2] He holds that there is no such animal as 'the book'; they are each individual, not generic.¹ He views the apparent electronic take-over most caustically. 'To communicate direct is not to communicate effectively',^[5] 'When the *aficianados* of the keyboard, the screen and satellite tire of their endless, unedited, uncontrolled, verbal interaction, I expect to be around to hear these electronic apostles say, "Well, thank goodness that's over". It was only, after all, the development of a new format'.^[6]

In 1990 he 'realized a dream of twenty years' and founded *LOGOS: The Professional Journal for the Book World*, 'addressed to all who are professionally involved with books ... concerned with relations not only between sectors of the book community, but also between national book communities';^[7] 'to focus on meanings, not news; on experiences interpreted as well as reported; on history more as illumination than reminiscence'.^[8] *LOGOS* is now in its eighth year of quarterly publication, read in 34 countries and seen as 'bridging between nations; between disciplines and professions; between private and public enterprise'.^[9] Graham has written to date 31 editorials, musing on the nature, scope and world of publishing. The latest eight form a series, 'The business we're in', in which he posits a matrix for the transfer of knowledge, with seven functions — those of author, editor, producer, publisher, distributor, storekeeper, reader — resulting in seven manifestations — message, text, format, publication, dissemination, access, understanding. Perspective, freedom, creativity and fulfilment are all parts of the process. An editorial has been devoted to the role in the matrix played by each participant. The publisher's is represented as the central of the seven functions, involving catalysis as resulting from his perspective,

decision from his freedom, coordination from his creativity, and publication as his final manifestation.^[10]

Other philosophical speculations in LOGOS have included Richard Abel's pondering 'The book publisher's cultural role', a taxonomic approach to measuring the value of books; a historical comparison of books' price against value; and 'Book publishing: profession or career? The ethical dividing line'. Philip Altbach wondered 'Why are there no profound and passionately argued theories of publishing? ... There has been no constituency for the analysis of publishing, either in its theory or in its practice. ... That the publishing enterprise is not a focus of research and analysis is both perplexing and worrying'.^[11]

Among other bookish 'retirement' activities, Graham has been since 1991 a director of the first Polish publishing house to be privatised after the collapse of communism, and is voluntarily assembling a 700-volume memorial library of the literature of the war in Burma from 1942 to 1945, a project he sees as a contribution to reconciliation between allied veterans and their Japanese former enemies.

The transatlantic creature maintains homes on both sides of the pond. In the landscaped grounds of his house in Marlow, Buckinghamshire, are a custom-built office for LOGOS, a rockery (built with Westmorland stone), bird sanctuary, pool with waterfalls, bridge and dam ('giving a hint of Scotland and Japan'), surrounded by magnificent trees. Here have been held editorial board meetings for LOGOS, a garden party to celebrate its seventh year of publication, and the wedding reception for Graham's daughter, with Scottish country dancing. He and his wife Betty, who was his business partner for forty years, also have a summer retreat in the Adirondack Mountains between New York and Montreal.

While today he continues to function in five of the seven roles he identifies as essential in the process of

knowledge transfer — author, editor, publisher, salesman, reader — and to consort closely with the other two — librarians and printers — he feels the greatest challenge of the electronic age is to the creativities of reading. In a recent editorial, concluding his series on the publishing matrix, he wrote: 'Readers underestimate their power and their responsibility. Our responsibility is to be selective and discriminating. We are doorkeepers of conscience and consciousness'.^[12]

References

1. Graham, Gordon. Recollections and ruminations. *Learned Publishing* 5 (2) April 1992, 97-8.
2. Graham, Gordon. *As I was saying*. Hans Zell, 1994. ix.
3. Publisher and publishing honoured. *Learned Publishing* 7 (1) Jan. 1994, 53.
4. Graham, Gordon. *What publishers do - from authors to readers*. Butterworth & Co, 1992.
5. 'The present generation of publishers is doomed'. *Learned Publishing* 8 (4) Oct. 1995, 250.
6. Graham, Gordon. *The book in the United States today*. Transaction Publishers, 1997. 261.
7. Whurr, Colin. Message from the publisher. *LOGOS* 1 (1) 1990, 1.
8. Graham, Gordon. Wh at LOGOS is about. *LOGOS* 1 (1) 1990, 5.
9. Whurr, Colin. Message from the publisher. *LOGOS* 8 (1) 1997, 1.
10. Graham, Gordon. The business we're in - 7. *LOGOS* 8 (1) 1997, 4-6.
11. Altbach, Philip G. The literature of the book. *LOGOS* 5 (1) 1994, 37-41.
12. Graham, Gordon. The business we're in - 10. *LOGOS* 8 (4) 1997, 174-5.

This article appeared in *Journal of Scholarly Publishing* Vol. 20 (3) April 1998, 182-185.

â€“Gordon Frintonâ€“|Karen Chalmers,â€™ Sarah introduced hastily as Gordonâ€™s fingers flexed with annoyance against her back. The fireworks of a personality clash were in the air. Karen cast Gordon a glowing smile. â€“Sarah has mentioned you, but when I saw you I wasnâ€™t at all sure that you could be Gordon,â€™ she said, typically cryptic, as she rested a determined hand on his sleeve.Â They did it openly or covertly or even unconsciously. None of them was immune to the storm-force potency of his personality. Or that white lightning sexuality that could illuminate the darkest roomâ€“burning, blatant and blinding. God had beamed benevolently on Rafaelâ€™s birth but, even without that striking, hard-boned physical beauty, Rafael would have exerted a magnetic draw for her sex. In August 1937, Gordon W. Allport and Ross Stagner completed and dated the prefaces to their distinctive new textbooks. Allportâ€™s textbook was entitled *Personality: A Psychological Interpretation* and was published by Henry Holt in New York, with a later English edition by Constable & Company issued in London in 1949. Stagnerâ€™s textbook was entitled *Psychology of Personality* and was published in New York and London by McGraw-Hill. In 1961, Allport prepared a revision that preserved the overall structure of his 1937 volume but with major rewriting and a new title: *Pattern and Growth in Perso...* BIO: Gordon Graham. ordon Graham is a 33 year veteran of California Law Enforcement. His education as a Risk Manager and experience as a practicing Attorney, coupled with his extensive background in law enforcement, have allowed him to rapidly become recognized as a leading professional speaker in both private and public sector organizations with multiple areas of expertise. Mr. Graham is a product of â€œThe Greatest Generation.â€“ Published in 1980, this report on motorcycle fatalities was and is recognized as the single greatest treatise on motorcycle safety. After completing his Masters, his off duty time was then spent at Western State University School of Law, where he was graduated in 1982 with his Juris Doctorate. Gordon Graham â€• also known as That White Paper Guy â€• is an award-winning writer who has created more than 200 B2B white papers for clients from New York to Australia. Gordon has written white papers on everything from choosing enterprise software to designing virtual worlds for kids, and for everyone from tiny start-ups to Google. Personalities in publishing: Gordon Graham. April 1998 Â· Journal of Scholarly Publishing. H. Bell. In the first of a new series, Hazel Bell profiles publishing personality Gordon Graham, salesman, publisher, and editor. Read more. Article. The Evolution of Guided Weapons. June 1969 Â· Aeronautical Journal -New Series-. H. W. Pout. Throughout this paper I shall be using the term Guided Weapon to describe a weapon which receives corrections to its direction of flight after leaving the launching device, the corrections being related in some way to the measured relative positions and behaviour of t