Dear Professor Marty:

Thanks so much for sending me a copy of the University of Chicago Magazine containing John Easton’s piece on Bibfeldt. I had already put together a final exam for my students in the course on Scholarly Communication and had included a question on Bibfeldt, but the article helped me immensely.

The Bibfeldt exam question was a smash hit, to judge by some of my students’ responses. As I hoped, the question about Bibfeldt did provide some comic relief. Many students took creative liberties on their own and fashioned wonderfully imaginative accounts of B’s comings and goings. A fair number were completely baffled at first and the test question forced them to exercise their bibliographic and Internet skills to the utmost. Apparently, there is an enormous amount of Bibfeldtiana floating about in cyberspace! Several students successfully tracked down The Relieved Paradox, at local bookstores and in the public library; but curiously, no Arizona university library had yet obtained or ordered the book.

Thinking that you might want some of this material for the Bibfeldt Archives, I photocopied my students’ responses. The quality is variable, as you will see; I have excised their names from the responses. I also enclose the exam question itself.

In relation to HUC days, I remember Sam Sandmel very well and was quite shocked when he died at a comparatively young age. My mentor at HUC was Ellis Rickin, a truly dynamic lecturer. I was very fond of Julius Lewy with whom I studied Ugaritic, one of the academic joys of my seminary experience. Right now I maintain a desultory correspondence with Jake Marcus, Director of the American Jewish Archives; he is now in his 95th year and works every day, telling me that although it is difficult for him to come to the office daily, he doesn’t like the alternative!

I thank you again for your rapid response to my February letter. My students will, I am sure, never forget Bibfeldt.

Yours sincerely,

Allen B. Veaner
Adjunct Assistant Professor

Enclosures

P. S. At one time I managed the microfilm & photoduplication Service at Harvard. Somehow I recall Chicago’s similar service was in Swift Hall; it had a high reputation for quality work.
1. Critically analyze, respond to, and comment on the large paragraph beginning "The book may become less important" from Irving Louis Horowitz's Communicating Ideas, 2nd ed., page 113, bearing in mind that the Internet existed in relatively primitive form when Horowitz prepared his manuscript.

2. Pretending that you possess infinite power and authority, but limited time (say, five to ten years), devise a practical plan--not a blue sky "what if" concept--for resolving the dual pricing policies of publishers of academic journals so that all the stakeholders in the scholarly communication process get a fair shake. You should describe in some detail the economic, social and educational impact of your plan upon each stakeholder.

3. Identify the scholar Franz Bibfeldt. Track his career in terms of his education, academic affiliations, publication history, memberships in scholarly organizations, achievement of tenure and advancement in rank. When and where was Bibfeldt first cited? Describe the definitive Bibfeldt bibliography. Is anyone preparing a biography of Bibfeldt? Who? What is Bibfeldt's significance for scholarly communication? Cite resources you used to establish your findings; cite with enough specificity that others could retrace your steps.