

AN ILLUSTRATED QUARTERLY
BLAKE

N E W S

Our New Subscription System

Blake/An Illustrated Quarterly, Volume 8, Issue 4, Spring 1975, p. 104



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News

Our New Subscription System

Some subscribers have had good reason to wonder why The *Newsletter* can't handle its affairs with the businesslike efficiency of *PMLA* and *Playboy*. The main reason is a chronic shortage of money and clerical help. Another reason is a primitive addressing and mailing operation in the University of New Mexico post office. We have tried for years to keep our dealings with individuals, libraries, and subscription agencies clean and efficient, and our occasional failures have made us more and more unhappy with things as they are.

So we have decided to get rid of at least one large trouble spot, our revolving subscription system. We publish four issues a year, and you have been able to begin subscribing with any one of the four issues. That is, your subscription may expire with the summer issue, while someone else's may expire with spring, winter, or fall. This system is easy for a computer to handle, and convenient for subscribers, and thus it is the standard system for commercial magazines.

But the system is very difficult to manage efficiently with limited money and clerical help, and a system that might ideally be convenient to the subscriber becomes inconvenient. Everyone knows that there is no better analogy to the Gordian knot than a fouled-up magazine subscription, and we have decided to go with Alexander the Great.

Our new system of handling subscriptions will be the one used by *PMLA* and some other large

scholarly journals--subscription *by the volume*. Every subscription will begin with the summer issue (the issue with which *Newsletter* volumes begin) and end with spring. All renewal notices will be sent out at the same time every year. New subscribers will be sent the current issue, plus all the previous issues in the current volume.

The new system is much simpler than the old for us, and we are certain it will mean fewer problems for you. But shifting from the old system to the new will be a lot of trouble for all of us, and we are asking you in advance to help us--mainly to bear with us--when the change-over begins this spring.

The procedure will not be complicated. The aim is to move each subscription from its present expiration date to expire with the spring issue. Every subscription will then begin with the summer issue. Of course, subscriptions that now expire with the spring issue will not be changed. All others will be. You will receive a bill for an amount large enough to bring your subscriptions into the new subscription cycle. You will not be paying extra money, of course--just paying on a slightly different schedule.

The procedure and the reasons for it will be explained again when you receive your bill.