

IN MEMORIAM

Phipps Arabie

1948–2011

Phipps Arabie, the founding editor and guiding spirit of the *Journal of Classification* for eighteen years (1984–2002), died 23 June 2011 at the age of 63 after a decade-long struggle with ill health. At the time of his death, Phipps had just retired from his position as Professor of Marketing from the Rutgers School of Business.

Regular readers of the *Journal of Classification* may know of its founding; others, however, may not be as familiar so we briefly retell the story. The roots of *JoC* stem from the North American Branch of the Classification Society founded in the UK in 1964. The North American Branch was active from 1969 until 1984 when it was incorporated as the Classification Society of North America, the same year, by the way, that the first issue of *JoC* appeared. As noted by Phipps on multiple occasions, *JoC* was “a brainchild of J. Douglas Carroll [January 3, 1939–June 7, 2011], who persisted in advocating that CSNA have its own journal.” Although Doug may have been the father, Phipps was surely the delivering doctor putting forth enormous effort in seeing *JoC* successfully launched. Later, he was the driving force overseeing its development and prosperous continuance. I quote a letter (November 5, 1982) that Phipps wrote to the Head of Psychology at Illinois asking for (and receiving) departmental support for initiating *JoC*:

“The Classification Society decided in 1981 to found its own journal devoted to such classification techniques as clustering, multidimensional scaling, and related methods (please see enclosed prospectus). I was designated to be the first editor at our Annual Meeting in Montreal in June, 1982, where these decisions were formally approved. Even before that time, Doug Carroll (President of the Society) and I had been putting in large amounts of time selecting an editorial board and checking with various publishers. Since that time we have met in person and held many telephone conversations with several prospective publishers. We have also received affirmative responses to date from three: Chapman and Hall, Erlbaum, and Springer-Verlag. The last has suggested the attractive possibility of producing the journal here at Illinois on a UNIX-driven phototypesetting arrangement. My investigations of the projected cost have indicated that such an arrangement is highly feasible economically in addition to the obvious convenience.”

Less than a week later, a final deal was struck with Walter Kaufmann-Bühler, the Mathematics Editor at Springer-Verlag, and a strong supporter of the *Journal of Classification* until his own untimely death in 1986. Part of the mentioned “enclosed prospectus” forming the basis of this Springer-Verlag agreement is given at the end of these remarks.

JoC could not have wished for or had a better or more knowledgeable founding editor. Phipps’ tireless efforts and energy literally sustained the journal during its beginning decade(s). It was when he recognized that he could no longer keep up with the incredible demands he had always placed on himself to maintain journal quality that he asked for the journal to be passed on (and as we know, into the capable care of Willem Heiser).

Those who knew Phipps well, also knew he fought many demons. He expressly forbade that any eulogy be placed anywhere other than in the beloved journal he founded as editor. And under no circumstances would he have wished to have any personal details of his life or of his own scholarship reviewed. We know this to be true. At one particularly troubling point in his life a few years ago, he dictated his last wishes to LH on his cell-phone voice-mail.

Howard Moskowitz, a friend of Phipps’ since their undergraduate days at Harvard, posted a short online comment in tribute that may serve for many of us:

“There are so many memories of a shared friendship lasting almost 43 years, beginning in the [S. S. Stevens] Laboratory of Psychophysics, and ending suddenly. G-d rest the soul of my dear friend Phipps. May his soul find the peace that eluded him for so long.”

Lawrence Hubert

PROSPECTUS: A proposed new Journal of classification theory, methods and applications

Background: Various societies dedicated to the advancement of data-based classification techniques were founded throughout the world during the 1960’s and 1970’s. The impetus for the formation of these societies was the realization that advances in clustering and related techniques of classification were taking place simultaneously in a wide variety of disciplines. While this parallel development clearly testifies to widespread interest in classification, the resulting fragmentation often led to reinvention of techniques already known in other disciplines, multiple names for techniques, lack of familiarity with published results from other

disciplines, and other communication problems. The establishment of professional societies devoted to research in classification led to greater awareness of the cross-disciplinary nature of classification, and succeeded in establishing communication channels between workers who might otherwise have remained unaware of advances in each others' field. The substantial growth that such societies have enjoyed has encouraged transmittal of abstracts, pamphlets, programs of annual meetings, etc. As a result, the European Branch of the Classification Society publishes its *Bulletin*, comprised primarily of notes and abstracts, the French and German Societies publish their own Proceedings, and there is an independently published journal, *International Classification*, devoted largely to classification in information and library science. There are also house organs for other groups. Unfortunately, these separate publications have done little to promote the exchange of ideas between members of different organizations (often representing different nationalities). We propose that the new Journal should remedy this problem.

Topics to be covered in the Journal: We envisage the content of the new Journal as the union of the theories and methodologies covered by the separate disciplines: classification, numerical taxonomy, multi-dimensional scaling and other ordination techniques, clustering, tree structures and other network models, principal components analysis, factor analysis, discriminant analysis, and related methods, as well as the associated models and algorithms for fitting them. While the Journal will have a greater methodological than substantive emphasis, we nevertheless expect to see articles with compelling substantive applications supporting advances in methodology. Thus, the substantive disciplines represented in the new Journal should also be the union of the disciplines served by the separate societies, including such fields as anthropology, archeology, astronomy, biology, business, chemistry, computer science, economics, engineering, geography, geology, information and library science, linguistics, marketing, medicine, political science, psychiatry, psychology, sociology, soil science, and statistics.

The ubiquitous need for classification in the disciplines listed above accounts for the tremendous growth of the literature on classification in recent years. While these disciplines have generally provided outlets for publishing applications of such methodology, these outlets have been less effective in disseminating advances that were primarily theoretical and methodological. Once again, we propose to remedy this situation with a new Journal.