

Letter

Dear paleontologists and geologists,

Fifty years ago, R.C. Moore established an endowment to support the compilation and publication of the *Treatise on Invertebrate Paleontology*, to be compiled by the Paleontological Institute at the University of Kansas and jointly published with the Geological Society of America, who would also be responsible for marketing and distribution. This has been a beneficial and rewarding relationship that sustained the *Treatise* for most of those 50 years.

Recently, however, the need has become ever more pressing for the *Treatise* to be put into digital form and, perhaps more importantly, to become a living document for students and research paleontologists. There has been a general sense that this must take place quickly.

When we met with leaders in the paleontological community (see below), it became clear that the *Treatise* needs to be reinvented in some very real senses. Because of the urgency and because of the magnitude of the task of reinvention, those of us involved in the business end of the *Treatise* (the co-signers below, plus GSA Executive Director Jack Hess, GSA Director of Publications Jon Olsen, and Jill Hardesty, managing editor of the *Treatise*) concluded that the current relationship between the Paleontological Institute and the Geological Society of America may be more of a hindrance than an advantage at this point in time. Therefore, we have decided that the best way forward, at least for the time being, is for the Paleontological Institute to take over all operations with respect to the *Treatise*.

This should in no way be construed as a lack of commitment on the part of the Geological Society of America to the paleontological community and to the *Treatise*. Indeed, GSA called this leadership meeting, and we note that GSA's current president, Judith Totman Parrish, has very close ties to the paleontological community, having published numerous papers with paleontological and paleobiological content, and, finally, some 20% of GSA members are paleontologists. Rather, GSA is assuming the same role as other geological societies and paleontological societies as an interested party to whom the Paleontological Institute might look for intellectual and financial support as appropriate. This change was necessary to allow the Paleontological Institute to proceed unfettered and to perform the reinvention of the *Treatise* with the greatest speed. GSA would like to emphasize that the door remains open for the *Treatise* to utilize GSA's expertise in publication, distribution, and education and outreach at some future date if such expertise would be beneficial.

We believe that the future of the *Treatise* is bright and are looking forward to seeing its reinvention as a twenty-first-century resource.

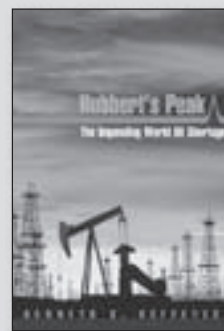
Regards,

Judith Totman Parrish
President, The Geological
Society of America

Paul Selden
Director, Paleontological
Institute

Robert H. Goldstein
Chair and Professor,
Dept. of Geology,
University of Kansas

Leadership Group: Warren Allmon, GSA *Treatise* Committee; Doug Erwin, President, Paleontological Society; Bob Goldstein, Chair and Professor, Dept. of Geology, University of Kansas; Joe Hannibal, GSA *Treatise* Committee; Jill Hardesty, *Treatise* Managing Editor; Howard Harper, Society for Sedimentary Geology (SEPM) Executive Director; Jack Hess, GSA Executive Director; Steve Hasiotis, SEPM; Jon Olsen, GSA Director of Publications; Tim Palmer, Palaeontological Association; Lisa Park, GSA *Treatise* Committee; Judy Parrish, GSA President; Paul Selden, Director, Paleontological Institute, University of Kansas; Paul Taylor, Palaeontographical Society; Roger Thomas, The Paleontological Society; and Richard Twitchett, Palaeontological Association.



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