Group Therapy

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Group Therapy

Column Editor: Rosann Bazirjian (Florida State University)

Hey y'all out there! Do you have any gripes? Come to your therapist!
Try <rbazirji@mailer.fsu.edu> or FAX 904-644-5170.

GRIPE: Submitted by Dottie Marcinko (Head, Acquisitions Department, Auburn University Library)

Are flyleaves on the endangered species list? They're not real flies, but you see them infrequently in certain locals these days, especially in nonfiction paperbacks. Could we start a movement to increase their population once more? They are really quite handy little pages, and being blank they couldn't cost too much, certainly no additional editors or proofreaders would be needed. They do lend an air of respectability to the title pages that follow and on a more mundane point, they also give libraries a place to put local slips or pockets. In this right-handed world, it is still easier to open the front of a book with your left hand and do your business with your right. Use the back of the book and the end paper if you like, but I'm for choice, and I'd like to see a flyleaf in every book we buy.

RESPONSE: Submitted by Lisa Freeman (Director, University of Minnesota Press)

Flyleaves, or end sheets, are generally found only in hardcover books, where they serve the primary purpose of hiding the ugly reverse side of the board on which the "cloth" (or synthetic substitute) is applied and the gap between the cover and the sewn signatures. (You'll notice that a true end sheet is in fact a sheet that runs from the far edge of the inside cover across the join between the cover and the folded-and-gathered signatures, thus covering the join as well.) End sheets serve no similar function in paperbacks, which are for the most part glued (not sewn) into a heavier paper cover that looks just fine on the reverse.

I am not aware of ever having seen a true end sheet in a paperback. More likely, the publisher had an extra page in the front signature and chose to leave it blank. The pressure to reduce costs has meant that many of these kinds of aesthetic amenities -- dedications on separate pages, blank pages between part sections -- have gone by the wayside. 🗩️