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Group Therapy -- Purchase vs ILL for Newer Books

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Group Therapy — Purchase vs ILL for Newer Books

Column Editor: Jack G. Montgomery (Associate Professor, Coordinator, Collection Services, Western Kentucky University, Bowling Green, KY) <jack.montgomery@wku.edu>

Column Editor’s Note: We are reviving this column in Against the Grain due to reader demand. Do you have a gripe or an issue you’d like Group Therapy to address? Would you like some advice on how to handle something? If so, please write me at <jack.montgomery@wku.edu>. You can identify yourself or remain anonymous, but either way, you’ll get an answer. ~ JM

RESPONSE:
Submitted by Kathleen E. Richardson (Professor, Technical Services Librarian, Bluegrass Technical and Community College, Lexington, KY)

If the request is for something new (i.e., a potential ILL problem), we evaluate the request to see if the item would fit into the collection. If I’m not the subject liaison for that area, our ILL wrangler or I will ask the appropriate librarian or one of our faculty who’s active in collection development for that subject about the suitability of the item. An inexpensive item or one we would probably have purchased anyway we will order immediately, as long as it’s readily available. (This isn’t formal—our excellent ILL wrangler makes the initial call based on number of holding libraries, just how new the item is, etc. We won’t be asking any library to loan us a copy this week of Dan Brown’s The Lost Symbol, for example.)

If the budget is exhausted or the item is too expensive or outside our collection’s scope, when we fill out the OCLC ILL request form online, we check the policies directory for each of the libraries whose codes are going into the lender string. Most libraries seem to keep their policies up to date, so we avoid asking for new materials if the holding library’s policy states it doesn’t lend them. If it will lend new materials, we’ll also look at the holding library’s catalog to learn the status of the item via the links to local catalog sites from OCLC’s ILL system, since there’s no point in asking for something that’s checked out, on order, or on reserve. (We want the requests we send out to have the best possible chance of being filled the first time around, which spares everyone frustration and doesn’t waste the time of ILL staff at lending libraries who have to process requests.)

RESPONSE:
Submitted by Eleanor I. Cook (Assistant Director for Collections & Technical Services, Academic Library Services, Joyner Library, East Carolina University, Greenville, NC)

Our Library has been doing “purchase on demand” for books that fall into this category. Our ILL and Acquisitions departments have a procedure worked out to do this. If you are interested in the particulars I suspect I could get more detail, but from what I know of it, it works well and helps both areas achieve their mission. I believe that ILL actually is authorized to do the purchasing but then they feed the information back to Acquisitions somehow.

<http://www.against-the-grain.com>

This is also very relevant! Ithaka has just released a report on print collection management in the wake of digitization. “What to Withdraw: Print Collections Management in the Wake of Digitization” analyzes which types of journals can be withdrawn responsibly today and how that set of materials can be expanded to allow libraries the maximum possible flexibility and savings in the future. Roger will be talking about this in Charleston!

http://www.ithaka.org/ithaka-s-r/research/what-to-withdraw

Speaking of Roger, BTW, his four-month-old daughter, Scheherazade, is a fast-growing bundle of joy but it’s been a long time since they had a real night of sleep! Let’s all ask to see some pictures when we see him in Charleston!

And with all this talk of “¢”, I was captivated by a charmingly gorgeous little...continued on page 12