as well. Many stores will offer significant discounts to libraries, and while discounts may vary according to the dollar amount purchased, in many cases bookstores may match or exceed the discount level of jobbers. A large library purchase may be incentive enough for a bookstore to be flexible with their billing terms as well. And used bookstores typically offer lower prices even before library discounts are considered.

On the other hand, there are reasons why bookstores aren’t typically the first choice for libraries. Bookstores are not designed to deal with the volume of requests and all the requirements that libraries place on their book vendors. They may not be able to offer the number of titles or match the discounts of jobbers, not to mention the lack of other services that libraries take for granted, such as status reports, claims and returns, and pre-processing. Even when purchasing on a small scale librarians face challenges if they wish to buy books at a bookstore. If you are browsing and choosing titles off the shelf then you have the real possibility of buying duplicate titles your library already holds. Some librarians may not feel comfortable enough in their knowledge of, or familiarity with, certain subject areas and may be reluctant to purchase titles without reviews, even when the books themselves are readily available for review. Finally, if shipping is not available you must be prepared to load heavy boxes of books into your vehicle and then unload them again at the library.

Discount Wholesale Bookstores — Filling the Gaps

You may have purchased books for personal use from Daedalus or Edward Hamilton catalogs or from discount bookstores in outlet malls, but there do exist wholesale bookstores that operate on a scale large enough to make them worthy of consideration for libraries. One example is the Green Valley Book Fair.

Green Valley Book Fair (http://www.gvbookfair.com/) is a wholesale book enterprise near Harrisonburg, Virginia that offers 500,000 books at discounts ranging from sixty to ninety percent. They don’t stock used titles, but do have out-of-print titles — primarily remainders, overstocks, and h pants, which are books returned to publishers because of slight damage to the book or dustjacket. They carry books from a number of publishers, including academic presses. While the stock constantly changes, publishers have included Oxford, Cambridge, Smith- sonian, Twyone, Harvard, Princeton, Que, Knopf, HarperCollins, and Macmillan Reference.

What kind of library would be interested in using a resource like Green Valley? Marshall University Libraries have a collection of less than 400,000 monographs and a materials budget that is fairly low, with firm orders totaling less than $200,000 annually. An Amigos examination showed that between 1989 and 1997 we bought only 32% as many titles as our average peer institution, which has led to quite a few gaps in the collection. Green Valley offers an opportunity to take a small amount of money and fill in a few of these gaps and strengthen the general collection.