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Facts and Figures / Acquisitions Expenditures

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New Feature — Facts & Figures

Acquisitions Expenditures

Column Editor: **Anne Jennings**
(Librarian, Sinkler & Boyd, P.A.)

*Consider this ATG's version of Ann Landers. We are interested in y'all — yes, that's YOU — writing or emailing or faxing us particular facts & figures that you are interested in knowing. We don't have to identify you unless you want us to. Send questions, issues, etc. to — **Facts & Figures, c/o Anne Jennings, 348 Spoonbill Lane, Mt. Pleasant, SC 29424. Email: Jenningsa@cofc.edu.***

Against the Grain recently has had several calls for information regarding the increase or decrease in acquisition expenditures, with particular interest as to monographs and periodicals. These piqued our interest as well, and as a result, we looked back over a ten-year period in *The Bowker Annual* to see what the figures demonstrated.

While overall spending by libraries as a whole increased, the most interesting information yielded came from the percentages, i.e., the division of total monies spent in the various categories of purchasing. We specifically studied the figures spent on books, serials and database fees; the latter because of the increasing occurrence of library access to electronic services. The types of libraries we examined were academic, public and special between the periods from 1983-1984 to 1992-1993. This is what we were able to deduce:

Monographs:

Monographic purchasing steadily decreased in all three types of libraries until the 1991-1992 and 1992-1993 periods. At this time, academic and special library acquisition of books made notable increases and public library purchases significantly decreased.

Serials:

The acquisition of periodicals was on the rise in academic and public libraries until 1992-1993 when both demonstrated a decrease in spending, particularly with regard to the academic field. However, special libraries decreased their acquisition of serials until that same period when the figures rose nearly 17 percentage points.

Database Fees:

As expected, the figures for database fees have been on the rise. This was true in all three types of libraries until the 1992-1993 time period. At that time, academic libraries significantly increased purchasing costs by 8 points, public libraries decreased spending slightly, and special libraries made an eleven point drop.

So, what do all these figures mean? Can we draw any conclusions? Most apparent is the instability in acquisitions over the past several years. While the first eight years demonstrate obvious trends toward types of items purchased; i.e. an increase in periodicals and database fees with decreased acquisition of monographs, the last two years show an inconsistent market. Is this a result of the economy, or is it something more relevant to the industry? Is it funding? A shift in pricing? We figure it's *The Savage Marketplace*. All comments and questions are welcome!

**** Note:** When analyzing the figures from *The Bowker Annual*, we did not consider the 1990-1991 time period as those included Canada and caused significant variations in the numbers. ☞

Profiles Encouraged:

Anne Frances Jennings



Born: July 2, 1955, Charleston, South Carolina. I grew up in Orangeburg, about 70 miles up the road.

Residence: Mount Pleasant, South Carolina

Resume: I attended the College of Charleston and subsequently re-

ceived a degree from the National Center for Paralegal Training in Atlanta. I worked for 11 years as a paralegal before returning to the College to complete a Bachelor of Arts in English Literature in 1992. In May of 1994, I received a Master of Library and Information Science at the University of South Carolina. I am employed as a law librarian for a large firm with offices throughout the state.

Family: Four cats; four godchildren (3 girls and 1 boy — each)

Proudest Accomplishment: Making the decision at age 34 to complete my college education and pursue a degree in library and information science. I've heard that the first five years of one's life are the most formative. My last five years have equaled that.

First Job: Summer intern in the Orangeburg office of our district's congressman.

Fondest Memory: Summers along the Appalachee Bay on the North Florida coast with my grandparents.

Favorite Pastime: Spending weekends (May through October) with good friends I've known since childhood in the waters around Charleston, catching crabs and cooking them for supper.

Last Book Read: *Heat* by Stuart Woods.

Pet Peeve (what really drives you crazy): People who just sit around and don't DO anything!

What would you like to be doing five years from now: Enjoying myself and my work as much as I am today. Meeting the needs of others in the area of information service and management. Having a really good time.

Single most important piece of advice: Keep your eyes open and get on with it.

Biggest Surprise: To have been able to stay in the Charleston area following library school and to be earning a living doing something that I actually enjoy!