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Book Pricing Update — British Book Prices 2000-2001

by **Tom Loughran** (Manager, Approval Systems Blackwell's Book Services, 6024 SW Jean Road, Bldg. G, Lake Oswego, OR 97035) <tom.loughran@blackwell.com>

What has been mostly speculation in the economic news lately, became a reality in British book publishing last year. In contrast to talk of the possibility of deflation in the US economy, there was an overall drop of 9% in the price of British books treated on **Blackwell's** approval plan last year.

Every year, we do an annual Cost & Coverage Study of the prices of books covered on approval in the previous year. For purposes of the study, the year begins in July and ends in June.

While the decrease was general, one might have missed it, were one, say, a Music Librarian, since Music titles increased 58% over the year. Other areas experiencing an increase, although not as dramatic, were Applied Arts (+11%), Auxiliary Arts (+23%) and Performing Arts (+14%). The Fine Arts, Performing Arts and Architecture experienced a 6% increase. This was balanced by a 6% decrease

(overall) in the Humanities (History, Philosophy, Religion, Folklore and Language). Literature was mixed, with a 4% increase in the average price of a literary text, but a 6% decrease in the average price of a book of criticism. For all of Humanities and Fine Arts, there was a 4% drop in the price of an average book (from 32.07 GBP to 30.82 GBP).

Overall, the price of the average Social Science title dropped 10%, although there was a 14% increase in the prices of both Library Science and Psychology books. Prices for Political Science titles fell 11%, Economics titles fell 11% and Anthropology titles fell 26%.

Titles in the Sciences and Technology fell only slightly less than did Social Science titles. Overall, the drop was 7% (from 55.37 GBP to 51.22 GBP). Within the broad discipline, General Science fell 1%, Biology -7%, Botany -10% and Chemistry -23%. Zoology titles rose 14%, on average, from 49.68 GBP to 56.80

GBP, and there were modest increases of 1% in Physics and Forestry titles. Undoubtedly, the most shocking rise was in the price of an average Dentistry title: from 24.38 GBP to 45.71 GBP, or 87%. Admittedly, there were only 13 titles treated in Dentistry. I am sure the 6% drop in the average price of a Medical book relieved some of the pain.

All of these prices were for books treated on the UK approval plan based in Oxford, England. It is instructive to note that the average price of a UK origin title treated on the US approval plan last year was \$64.05. Using the exchange rate of \$1.54 = 1 GBP, the average price of UK origin title sourced from the UK was \$61.35, or 4% less. After the first of the year, I'll review the average prices of both US and UK origin books to see where we stand.

The Collection Development Role of the Library Liaison: A View from Both Sides of the Fence

by **Sean Kinder** (Humanities and Social Sciences Librarian, Western Kentucky University) and **Jack G. Montgomery** (Coordinator of Collection Services, Western Kentucky University, Library Automation and Technical Services, 309 Cravens Library Complex W.K.U. Libraries, One Big Red Way, Bowling Green, KY 42101) <Jack.Montgomery@wku.edu>

This article explores the complementary role of collection development in the library liaison process as exemplified here at WKU and offers the perspective of the library's Collection Development Officer and the viewpoint of a librarian new to the role. Hopefully, this article will provide insights into the role of the library liaison in the collection development process.

Part One: The Role of The Collection Development Librarian

Each librarian in the **WKU** Department of Public Services has a series of academic departments and/or programs assigned to them for liaison services. Their orientation to this role is given by the Collection Services Coordinator, who works cross departmentally although officially assigned to the Department of Library Automation and Technical Services. The Collection Services Coordinator also coordinates the activities of the library liaisons, administers the Collection Development program, manages the acquisitions process and acts as a program liaison to the Afro-American Studies Program as well. One advantage of this cross-departmental position has been to create enhanced interdepartmental commu-

nication and promote better understanding of the integrated nature of our roles, needs and policies. This cross departmental position also provides a seamless link between the entire process of materials acquisition for the library. This position was established almost two years ago and has already been heralded as a positive organizational decision.

The Collection Services Coordinator (hereafter called CSC) establishes the overall materials budget and, in a nutshell, makes certain that the Collection Development policy and liaison program functions as intended. As an example, on a biannual basis, the CSC and the appropriate library liaisons meet with the departmental and program representatives from each college to exchange reports and information, give and receive feedback and plan the future of Collection Development at the University. These meetings establish and maintain that vital communications link so important to effective relations between the academic departments and the library. Another role for the CSC is to assist the liaison in learning to interpret the information on orders and fund expenditures available to each librarian and faculty member on the library's TOPCAT in-

tegrated library system employing the Endeavor Voyager acquisitions/serials subsystem. The role of the CSC has a large educational component as he must communicate with all parties involved in the Collection Development process. Part of that communication process is to orient new WKU librarians to their role in collection development. As an example, here is a list of the basic definitions and instructions given to each liaison at the time of their initial orientation to their role as liaison in the **WKU** system.

Definition of a WKU Library Liaison: The **WKU Library Liaison's** collection development role is a relational one established either formally or informally by the liaison for the specific purpose of seeking input and guidance and input on the selection of library materials. Liaisons at **WKU Libraries** are assigned and coordinate their roles through their supervisor and the Collection Services Coordinator. It should be added that the departmental or program liaison also provides reference services, bibliographic instruction and assists the teaching faculty with their research as requested.

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