From the Reference Desk

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of both responsibilities and information that enriches the process and the result.

**RESPONSE:** Submitted by *Rick Anderson* (Director of Resource Acquisition, University of Nevada, Reno)

In the University of Nevada, Reno Libraries we try to keep professional boundaries kind of fuzzy. Whoever is best suited to a particular task tends to be the one who either gets the assignment or picks it up and runs with it, and we don’t worry too much about whether that task is within the person’s job description. *Donnie Curtis,* whose title is Director of Research Services and who oversees all the branch libraries as well as the Collections Work Group, has been a prime mover in a couple of projects that fit Kent’s query: setting up SFX for our libraries, and working with database providers to set up links within their systems. The following information is reprinted from an email exchange with her:

For setting up links to publishers’ databases, the process is fairly simple: they just need to know which of their journal subscriptions we subscribe to, and in most cases we get all of them. Sometimes we can enable the links ourselves in an administrative module. *Donnie* has generally been the one to take care of this process.

Setting up SFX has been a bit more challenging. In setting up our SFX system, we were asked to provide journal titles and ISSN numbers for our packages. To make SFX work, you need an ISSN for every journal, and we have to strip them out of URLs or research them in other sources. We had students from all over the libraries help with some of that work.

To set up our own SFX service, we went through the SFX global database of open-url-enabled full text titles and “activated” our full text targets. It was just a matter of clicking on a button for each title; there is also an online activation for entire packages. It is time-consuming, but you only have to do it once. We also had to give them a list of miscellaneous journals (mostly free), but that was easy to do from the internal spreadsheets we maintain to generate our Web lists. (These used to be maintained by *Donnie* but are now managed in the Catalog Department.) To make some of the links work, we had to join CrossRef. All of these tasks were spread around according to available time and personal inclination — *Donnie* and *Maggie Ressel* (one of our reference librarians who, again, is good at and interested in this sort of thing) did most of the work and solicited and organized help from others, and *Maggie* has been mainly responsible for the day-to-day maintenance.

The bottom line is that we’re no more certain than anyone else about what position “ought” to have primary responsibility for these duties; setting up SFX involved personnel from all over the organization. We try to use everyone’s particular talents and interests as fully as possible and keep boundaries as porous as we reasonably can.

**RESPONSE:** Submitted by Ladd Brown (Head of Acquisitions, Virginia Polytechnic Institute & State University)

The not-so-short answer is: whoever “owns” the idea usually has to make sure the links are registered properly and check out, or has to find out just how the e-resource is tied to any existing print subscription, or has to find out if there is a license agreement involved and make sure it is forwarded to the proper person. Most often, these duties logically fall to someone who is relatively familiar with the titles and their content and the importance to the curriculum or to the collection. In most shops, this is the responsibility of bibliographers, reference librarians, and the reference staff.

Like a crafty pitcher, electronic resources are coming at us from all different speeds and many different angles. When the workflow is more circular and less linear, traditional library units lose their territorial significance and project management techniques and strategies come into play. (By circular, I do not mean a solar system model, but rather a series of intermeshing gears, sort of like a clock or transmission. Our Link-Out story illustrates this example.)

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**From the Reference Desk**

Column Editor: **Tom Gilson** (Head, Reference Services, College of Charleston) <gilsont@cofc.edu>

**Whether it is international terrorism or a convenience store robbery, crime grabs headlines. It is often at the forefront of popular concern while at the same time being a subject of continuous scholarly study. Now there is a new four-volume encyclopedia that clearly demonstrates both these points.**

Sage Publications has just released the *Encyclopedia of Crime and Punishment* (2000, 076192258X, $600) edited by David Levinson. Although the primary emphasis is on the United States, the coverage is international and multidisciplinary, and while it utilizes current research from diverse areas, the *Encyclopedia* is firmly grounded in the field of criminal justice. There are 439 articles gathered around major themes like crimes and related behaviors, law and justice, policing and forensics, as well as those centered on corrections, victimology and punishment. There are also entries covering the social context of crime, crime in individual nations/regions, the impacts of religion on concepts of criminal justice and special populations such as women, street youth and the homeless. Other broad categories include concepts and theories, research strategies and methods, and organizations.

As you would expect from a high quality reference set, there are a number of added features in this encyclopedia. Each volume contains a reader’s guide which groups related articles by the major themes mentioned above, as well as an alphabetical list of entries and a chronology. Sidebars and black and white illustrations break up the text and many of the articles contain a convenient summary paragraph. There is also a list of contributors, and an 80-page general index. And there is my one concern. The index while thorough, employs the annoying practice of referring to page numbers without reference to the specific volume.

At the same time the volumes themselves are not labeled with their page ranges nor is there a key to the volume page ranges in the front of the index.

Despite this minor complaint, the *Encyclopedia of Crime and Punishment* is an impressive reference. The coverage is comprehensive and the treatment scholarly. The contributors are academics or professionals in the field and the resulting articles are thorough and serious, often with substantial bibliographies. The main audience will be college students and faculty as well as criminal justice professionals. However, larger public libraries will also find it well worth considering for their informed lay readers and serious high school students. Broader in scope than the *Encyclopedia of Criminology and Deviant Behavior* (Brunner-Routeledge, 2000, 1560327723, $520) and far more scholarly and up-to-date than *Jay Robert Nash’s Encyclopedia of World Crime* (Crimes Books, 1999, 0923582002, $625) this set is destined to be a standard in the field.

Great Britain has played a key role in world politics during the last century. Anyone needing proof need look no further that the *Oxford Companion to Twentieth Century British Politics* (2002, 0198601344, $60). The names of the people covered in this one volume reference bear witness to this fact. *Churchill, Mountbatten, Anthony Eden, David Lloyd George,* and more recently *Margaret Thatcher* and *Tony Blair* have all played critical roles on the world stage. While general editor *John Ramsden* has assembled a work that points this out, more importantly, he and his contributors continued on page 48

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cover the less known people as well as the many diverse political institutions, numerous events, and divisive issues that make up the fabric of British political life. In short, the Oxford Companion to Twentieth Century British Politics offers a thorough and comprehensive look at almost every facet of British politics in over 3000 brief, but factual, articles. This is a reference book that is well-suited for getting quick facts and clear, lucid definitions and explanations. Students, scholars and general readers will find it a handy and useful compendium of relevant information. The only downside is the lack of an index. Access is provided by the alphabetical arrangement and a classified content list. An index would have made this book near flawless for its purpose. However, the Oxford Companion to Twentieth Century British Politics is so rich and diverse in contents, and so reasonably priced, most libraries with interest in British politics will find it a natural purchase.

Routledge’s Companion Encyclopedia of Middle Eastern and North African Film (2001, 0415187036, $135) is a unique resource. In this work, editor Oliver Leaman focuses on a neglected body of non-western film in a serious, scholarly fashion. Given the title, some may question the inclusion of Central Asian countries like Azerbaijan and the exclu- sion of countries like Chad and the Sudan. However, Leaman explains his reasoning in his introduction and by and large, his selection is on the mark. Aside from a chapter on Central Asian film there are separate chapters on Egyptian, Iranian, Israeli, Libyan, Turkish, and Palestinian film. There is also a chapter on the cinema of Lebanon, Syria and Iraq as well as one on the films of the Maghreb (Algerian, Moroccan, Tunisia, and Mauritania). The length of the chapters reflects the strength of the cinematic tradition of the countries treated. In each case, Leaman has drawn on experts in the area to bring together a discussion of the cinema of a specific country with a list of major films and individual filmmakers and actors. Conveniently, this organizational scheme allows the reader to get a full impression of the cinema in each country within a single chapter. Admittedly, this could cause problems for ready reference purposes but luckily there is a general index as well as a title and a name index that provide access to specifics.

The Companion Encyclopedia of Middle Eastern and North African Film does film students a real service. It pulls together information on a diverse but geographically related body of filmmaking and makes it accessible in one well-organized volume. Academic libraries serious about supporting film study programs will want it in their collections.

Although produced by academics, Mar-