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Group Therapy

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Group Therapy

by **Rosann Bazirjian** (Assistant Dean for Technical & Access Services, University Libraries, The Pennsylvania State University, 507 Paterno Library, University Park, PA 16802-1812; Phone: 814-865-0404; Fax: 814-865-3665)
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GRIFE: Submitted Anonymously

We seem to be getting more and more journal titles mailed to us "free" because we have a subscription to another title by the publisher. Is this just a way of publishers "sneaking" a title into the collections? I am loathe to add these titles to our collections (though some of them are quite scholarly), because I am afraid that there will eventually be a charge for the subscription. If we add the title to our catalog, it will look like we subscribed to the title. My tendency is a) either to throw the issues away or b) route them to the library or departmental liaison for their input. But I would like other opinions from publishers, vendors, and librarians (why are publishers doing this? is the practice increasing or am I just off base?) How are other libraries handling this phenomenon?

RESPONSE: Frank Mapes (Vice President/General Manager, EBSCO Information Services Publisher Services/Publisher Relations)

I am not aware of this being a trend for publishers. It is possible that some of the consumer publishers, where the situation involves advertising, might do this type of thing to increase the circulation level and therefore increase advertising revenues. In regard to scholarly material, these types of publishers understand libraries and would be less likely to take an approach of providing a free subscription for one year and charge for it the next year. I can say that we have not seen this type of activity being done through EBSCO.

My suggestion should the library receive issues to unwanted material and are using a vendor, that they simply advise the vendor to contact the publisher and have him stop sending the issues. Any of the issues received should either be discarded or sent to the agent if they have a missing copy bank. A missing copy bank, if you are not aware, is a service provided by agents like EBSCO to inventory issues and supply these issues to help satisfy claims when publishers no longer have the issue. Some publishers extend their subscription term and, of course,

this does not satisfy the void as libraries archive and need the missed issue. Many libraries send their grace duplicates or just unwanted issues on to EBSCO to be stored in our missing copy bank so they can be used for other libraries that have a claim and the publisher is unable to provide the missed issue.

RESPONSE: Paul Canning (Director, Publication and Information Marketing, IEEE)

The IEEE has been introducing new journals, transactions and magazines at an important rate to keep pace with developments in science and technology. IEEE does not "sneak" new titles into collections. However, we do have a strong track record of introducing new journals, twenty-five new titles in the last seven years. This year, *IEEE Security and Privacy Magazine* was introduced after first appearing as a supplement to *IEEE Computer Magazine*. In 2004, *IEEE Distributed Systems Online*, offered with open access at no cost to subscribers.

Introducing a new journal is a costly venture, and as a not-for-profit society, IEEE must ensure that new journals make both scholarly and economic sense. Often editors perceive gaps in the current literature as part of the ongoing development of an existing journal. Journal supplements are a natural outgrowth of the process and are a smart first step before launching a new, independent journal from a variety of perspectives.

- **Authors:** Journal supplements are a means of introducing the journal concept to the community of potential authors. New areas of technology and science most often do not have a ready pool of suitable authors and the supplement is an efficient means of soliciting future papers for publication.

- **Readers:** The supplement allows IEEE to gauge reader feedback. Is the journal meeting the needs of its target readers? Is the technology adequately established that the subject is relevant and compelling to a core group of scholars? Would the possible new journal find interested readers from other areas of technology? By issuing a new journal prototype, IEEE learns how best to serve the new community of readers.
- **Librarians:** Is the new journal compelling from a librarian and collection development perspective? Is the material covered by existing, related titles? Can a technology librarian justify adding it to the collection?

The IEEE understands the quandary faced by library staff not only posed by cataloging the supplement but also the tentative nature of the venture. The IEEE understands that this may be new ground in supporting converging technologies and new methods of scholarly communication. IEEE endeavors to work in partnership with the library community in service of the scientists and engineers that we both serve.

RESPONSE: Robert Alan (Head of the Serials Department, the Pennsylvania State University Libraries)

I agree that "free" journal titles sent by publishers to gain new subscriptions are annoying and in most cases should not be added to the collection. At Penn State's University Park campus, the Serials Department receives and processes between 150,000-160,000 serial items per year. Of that total, an estimated 1,000-1,200 are unsolicited journal issues received in the mail from publishers. These "free" journal issues are not really free as the management of unsolicited journals requires a commitment of valuable staff time.

Penn State maintains bibliographic and serial control records in its SIRSI Unicorn system for unsolicited journal titles. At Penn State these records are called "tracking records" but many other libraries follow similar procedures and call the records "decision records." Staff members identify most of the unsolicited items at the time of check-in. If a title is not in Unicorn, check-in staff will check further to determine if the journal has possibly changed title. If check-in staff cannot resolve it, the title is referred to ordering staff as a problem. Ordering staff will review further to determine if the title is associated to an existing order, gift, exchange

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MC: BUSCA intends to further fortify its current range of activities. We like our independent corporate spirit while also acknowledging all the gracious support that has come our way. Hopefully, in five years we will be radiating lots of good energy.

ATG: *Where do you find your greatest sense of professional accomplishment?*

MC: In the expressions of appreciation from customers, employees, and suppliers.

ATG: *Finally, what do you do with your "copious free time?"*

MC: Connecting with family and friends, hiking near waterfalls and my own creative writing...

ATG: *Michael, thank you so much for your time. Is there anything else you'd like to add?*

MC: Please visit our new **BUSCA Book Outlet & Arts Store** in the heart of the Finger Lakes on Seneca Lake: 5930 Route 414; Hector, NY 14841; Telephone: 607-546-4247, located 25 miles west of Ithaca and 10 miles north of Watkins Glen. We are on the wine trail!

From the Reference Desk

by **Tom Gilson** (Head, Reference Services, Robert Scott Small Library, College of Charleston, Charleston, SC 29424; Phone: 843-953-8014; Fax: 843-953-8019) <gilson@cofc.edu>

You don't see them being published much anymore, but as the *New York Times Guide to Reference Materials* says, "Finding a good bibliography is like striking gold. With *American Foreign Relations since 1600: A Guide to the Literature* (2003, 1576070808, \$255) ABC-CLIO has just adding another shiny nugget to the collection. Edited by **Robert L. Beisner** and **Kurt W. Hanson** this two-volume set continues and builds on scholarly efforts that go back to the now obsolete *Guide to Diplomatic History of the United States 1775-1921* (1935), and **Richard Dean Burns'** dated *Guide to American Foreign Relations since 1700* (1983). In fact, this set is a "second edition" of **Burns'** work, both being compiled under the auspices of the **Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations**. But the new edition is substantially different. It omits the lengthy, historiographical essays that introduced each chapter in the **Burns'** edition. Instead, this new edition includes over 16,000 entries compared to the 9,000 of the prior edition, and many date from 1983 to the present. All of the entries are annotated with descriptive and evaluative comments. The bibliography is arranged

in 32 chapters, primarily in chronological order. There is a thorough and comprehensive author and editor index, as well as an index of subjects, events, places and areas. Because of the number of entries, the later index must be used in tandem with the table of contents that lists the chapter numbers. Editor **Robert L. Beisner** and his contributors deserve a great deal of credit for their scholarly dedication in producing this very impressive work. *American Foreign Relations since 1600: A Guide to the Literature* is an essential addition to academic libraries supporting courses in the history of American foreign policy and foreign relations. Many individual scholars, feeling that they have struck gold, will be adding it to their personal collections.

There are some reference titles that invite attention, drawing the reader in out of sheer curiosity. **Oxford University Press'** new *Dictionary of American Family Names* (2003, 0195081374, \$348.50) falls into that category. Patrons of both public and academic libraries will find it hard to resist. Editor **Patrick Hanks** lists over 70,000 surnames based on a study of the frequency of surnames, as they exist in the United States. **Hanks** claims that "over 85% of Americans will find an entry for their surname" within the covers of this three-volume set.

While that might be difficult to test, this dictionary is an undeniably, extensive listing of surnames that provides relevant and useful information. Entries contain the language, or culture, of origin, as well as the particular geographic location and original spelling of the surnames. They also include the linguistic history, as well as the typology, or "whether it is derived from a place name, from a nickname, from the personal

name of a forebear or from a word denoting the occupation or social status of a forebear." Forming the foundation of the set are introductory chapters that discuss family names in diverse cultures and languages ranging from Korean to Irish, Russian to Arabic and from Spanish and Portuguese, to Polish.

Readers from experienced genealogists, to students assigned to find the meaning of their family name, to the just plain curious, will find this a useful and fascinating resource. More extensive than sources like the *Penguin Dictionary of Proper Names*, (1991, 0670825735, \$29.95) and the *Cassell Dictionary of Proper Names*, (1994, 0304344478, OP but available via Amazon), the *Dictionary of American Family Names* is a definite purchase where this type information is in demand.

Oxford has also published a single volume work that will have appeal to a number of libraries. The *Dictionary of Buddhism* (2003, 0198605609, \$35) by scholar **Damien Keown** is a handy, reasonably priced book that contains a wealth of information. **Keown** offers definitions of "various concepts, names, texts and terms related to the main traditions of Buddhism. Diverse traditions from "India, south-east Asia, Tibet and East Asia" are fully covered. For readers less familiar with Buddhism "see" and "see also" references are provided that help give context to the doctrine, practices and issues discussed. Other useful features include a chronology, a guide to Buddhist scriptures, and a pronunciation guide.

With more than 2,000 entries, the *Dictionary of Buddhism* is a serious reference work. The definitions are clear, and generally concise, as well as accurate and objective. This book should prove highly useful to scholars and students. It is broader in scope, and more current than related titles like **Scarecrow Press'** *Historical Dictionary of Buddhism* (1993, 0810826984, \$65) and the *Shambhala Dictionary of Buddhism and Zen* (1997, 1570625204, OP but available via Amazon). The *Dictionary of Buddhism* is appropriate for academic and public libraries and given the price, many will want circulating copies.

Fitzroy Dearborn's recent *Literature of Travel and Exploration: An Encyclopedia* (2003, 1579582478, \$375) brings into focus a genre that is more deserving of attention in scholarly circles. Travel writing often portrays a contrast of cultures premised "on ... opposition between home and elsewhere." Therefore such writing serves to illuminate both the place the writer sees as "home," as well as the place he/she is writing about. Given that such writing has taken place from antiquity to the present, an examination of it offers a lens through which we can study the clash of cultures over time. An encyclopedia like *Literature of Travel and*

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agreement, or membership. Once it is determined the journal issue is unsolicited, a brief bibliographic and serial control record is created in **Unicorn** that is suppressed from public view in the online public catalog. The issue is routed to the appropriate subject selector for review and a decision. When the selector responds, the decision is added to the tracking record. Subsequent issues of the unsolicited journal titles will be processed based on decisions noted in the tracking records. If the decision is to discard and the journal is scholarly in nature, the issue is eventually sent to a back issue dealer to benefit other libraries.

Anecdotal information from staff suggests that very few of the unsolicited journal issues received in the Serials Department result in new subscriptions. Therefore, I question the value

of publishers sending unsolicited issues to acquisition and serial departments as an effective marketing tool.

I have a couple of suggestions for publishers. First of all, why send the sample issues (unless requested) to acquisition and serial departments? Why not only send to the source of purchase recommendations, most often the faculty and subject selectors? At **Penn State**, serial orders are managed in the Serials Department, but the collection decisions are the responsibility of the subject selectors. Secondly, if publishers must send to acquisition and serial departments in hope of eventually reaching the person responsible for the selection decision, please mark the issues as "sample issues" or include a letter indicating the issue is a sample issue. This courtesy will be appreciated by the staff and ensure the sample issues do not end up on the problem shelves. And one last thought, will the rise of e-journals eventually mean the demise of the free print sample issues?