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The Intersection Where Collection Development and Acquisitions Meet Interlibrary Loan

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BORN & LIVED: Born in Cienfuegos, Cuba and have lived in Cuba, Montreal, CA, USA (Philadelphia, New York, New Orleans, & Bloomsburg PA) and Rome, Italy.

EARLY LIFE: Attended school in Cienfuegos; family moved to Montreal, CA and attended school there; returned to Cuba and then came to USA where I finished Grammar School and High School at Villa Maria Academy, Green Tree, PA.

FAMILY: Have one son (married), Joseph and Pam, and two grandchildren, Andrew and Benjamin, who live in North Carolina.

EDUCATION: BA — Marymount College, Tarrytown, New York; MA — Villanova University (Spanish Lit); MS — Drexel University (Library/Information Science). Have also attended University of Rome, (Italy) and done additional graduate work at Temple University, Philadelphia.

FIRST JOB: Taught Spanish and Italian at Villanova University; as a librarian: Humanities Bibliographer at Tulane University 1991-1999.

PROFESSIONAL CAREER AND ACTIVITIES: Began my current position as Coordinator of Collection Development & Acquisitions at Bloomsburg University in 1999. Have been active in ALA and in various committees of ALCTS; currently Chair of the Gifts Discussion Group of the Acquisitions Section. While at Tulane, was also active in SALAM.

IN MY SPARE TIME I LIKE TO: Read, visit museums and listen to classical music.

FAVORITE BOOKS: Machado de Assis' *Bras Cubas*; Garcia Marquez' *One Hundred Years of Solitude*; Cortazar's *Hopscotch*; and above all Cervantes' *Don Quixote de La Mancha*.

PET PEEVES/WHAT MAKES ME MAD: Incompetence.

PHILOSOPHY: Take one day at a time.

MOST MEANINGFUL CAREER ACHIEVEMENT: Haven't gotten there yet!

GOAL I HOPE TO ACHIEVE FIVE YEARS FROM NOW: To contribute to my field.

HOW/WHERE DO I SEE THE INDUSTRY IN FIVE YEARS: Very changed! It is difficult to say at this transitional stage where exactly we will be, but good leadership will be terribly important.

The Intersection Where Collection Development and Acquisitions Meet Interlibrary Loan

by **Maria Silva Kuhn** (Coordinator of Acquisitions and Collection Development, Harvey Andrus Library, Bloomsburg University of Pennsylvania, Bloomsburg, PA 17815) <mkuhn@bloomu.edu>

The intersection where Collection Development and Acquisitions meet Interlibrary Loan is the result of shrinking budgets and the consumption by electronic resources of an increasingly larger portion of the library's allocation. This well known dilemma has forced many academic libraries to look towards resource sharing as an essential component of Collection Development and Acquisitions.

Resource sharing is not a new concept for libraries' but the rise in the costs of library materials at the same time that advances in technology made cooperation among libraries easier than before, has made this solution attractive and possible. "Perhaps the most important development for academic libraries during the current decade has been the move from organizational self-sufficiency to a collaborative survival mode as personified by the growth of library consortia."² Gone are the days when resource sharing was considered with trepidation and when all librarians had to offer as an alternative to students and faculty was the traditional ILL mode, with its cumbersome forms and delays.

Now that the growth of library consortia and advances in technology have made resource sharing a more attractive and plausible alternative, recommending its use to patrons has become more acceptable than before. This has opened new possibilities for Collection Development and Acquisitions librarians who can now give careful

consideration to what must be purchased for the permanent collection in contrast to what can be obtained quickly through resource sharing in order to satisfy requests whose importance to the overall collection may be relative.

Here at **Bloomsburg University of Pennsylvania** we are fortunate to belong to a consortium, **PALCI**, now called the **Pennsylvania Academic Libraries Consortium Inc.**,³ composed of 54 private and public academic libraries in three states: Pennsylvania, New Jersey and West Virginia. These libraries with disparate systems are connected through a virtual union catalog that electronically provides direct access to over 31 million volumes. More than 340,000 students, faculty and staff of member institutions are able to take advantage of this seamless integration of resources through a Z39.50 Web-based interface that enables patrons to search members' catalogs and directly request needed titles. **PALCI** has named this method "**EZ Borrow**." Through "**EZ Borrow**" a patron is able to obtain a book within three to seven

days, the loan period generally given is twenty-eight days, and renewal for another twenty-eight days is also possible. Fast and direct accessibility gives the patron the immediate satisfaction of knowing that the desired title is available and will arrive promptly. The length of the loan is also a bonus for the researcher looking for that esoteric title that is either out-of-print or whose cost is out-of-sight for the smaller academic library.

While direct patron borrowing is obviously a labor saving function for Interlibrary Loan departments, it represents both labor and cost savings to the Acquisitions department who would have to go through the process of searching, ordering, and paying for a title that would be of provisional interest to a student, or because of language, age, or other restrictions, limited to only a handful of users. In the smaller college or university library, where purchases are generally done on the basis of curricular needs, such purchases would be extraneous to the collection development policies of many libraries. Yet by providing this accessibility to a wide variety of materials, faculty and students feel less isolated from the research library world and we in turn are able to concentrate on building a library collection that supports their teaching and research needs.

When asked to purchase an out-of-print title, or an esoteric one that would be of little interest

continued on page 30

Using Interlibrary Loan Data ... from page 26

can yield valuable glimpses into a library's collection needs. Basing responsible purchases on these data necessarily draws from both quantitative and qualitative cost-benefit analysis of borrowing vs. purchasing. Interlibrary loan software with the capability to generate a variety of customized reports is also essential to accomplishing this task. The extent of purchasing based on ILL data is driven by budgetary constraints, collection policies with regard to specificity of curricular support, and access-vs.-ownership philosophies. With meaningful ILL data analysis and a spirit of collaboration, ILL and acquisitions can indeed converge on the task of fine-tuning the library's balance between access and ownership.

The Intersection Where ... from page 28

to anyone except the requestor, I promptly refer both students and faculty to **PALCI**. I explain to them how easy and expeditious the process is—certainly faster than most out-of-print searches, and encourage them to use it to obtain titles that we would either prefer not to purchase or would have difficulty doing so. Inevitably they have been pleasantly surprised at how much faster **PALCI** is than the traditional method of obtaining a title through Interlibrary Loan and are using the system advantageously.

Bloomsburg University Pennsylvania joined **PALCI** in 2000, and the "borrowing statistics" demonstrate how quickly this method of obtaining books from other libraries has become the preferred method:⁴

Books requested by Bloomsburg University through PALCI		
7/2000 to 6/2001	7/2001 to 6/2002	7/2002 to 6/2003
180	329	1,036

Books requested by Bloomsburg University through traditional ILL method		
7/2000 to 6/2001	7/2001 to 6/2002	7/2002 to 6/2003
989	784	705

But more importantly, these figures also prove that while traditional ILL requests are slightly down, overall, more is being borrowed today than before due in part to the ease with which materials can be obtained. Patrons are better disposed to borrowing materials today from their desktop PCs than when they had to go to the library and fill out an ILL request form and wait for a book to arrive. The speed and efficiency of borrowing through **PALCI** has made many friends amongst our students and faculty.

In addition to direct-patron borrowing electronically through **EZ Borrow**, **PALCI** also offers reciprocal borrowing for faculty from member libraries. If a faculty member needs a particular book by tomorrow and if there is a member library who owns the title within a reasonable driving distance, they may go and pick it up. When the loan period is up, they can turn the book in to their own library's Interlibrary Loan department who will return the item.

PALCI also offers a "no fee" for ILL photocopy requests, which has simplified book-keeping for member ILL departments, and has also helped to lower the costs of resource sharing, one of the aims of any consortium.

Another one of the goals of **PALCI** from the very beginning was to "secure for its membership discounts on electronic information products such as abstracting, and indexing services and electronic journals."⁶ Smaller academic libraries would be unable to procure for its patrons the desired electronic information resources available today without the special pricing structures provided by consortia such as **PALCI**. Again, consortial purchasing has enabled a small academic library to purchase electronic resources that we would not have been able to subscribe to otherwise. Our electronic resources collection is better, larger, and less

expensive than it would have been without consortial agreements. More importantly, are the effects that these consortia could have on the marketplace and consequently for collection development in the future. According to **Allen** and **Hirshon**, one of the agendas of a consortium is "to affect the future as to how information will be created, marketed, and purchased by libraries. Consortia are seeking not only to have an effect upon the national and international agendas concerning issues such as pricing policies and copyright laws, but also bring pressure to bear upon information providers (particularly commercial publishers) to reduce the rate of rise in the cost of information, and to bring down the unit cost of information."⁷

The effects of belonging to a consortium such as **PALCI** are many. It has obviously had an effect on Interlibrary Loan but also on Collection Development and Acquisitions in our Library. More importantly, it has affected the way students and faculty think about procuring information: no longer is the on-campus library seen as the sole provider, but accessibility to many collections has made them more aware that resource sharing can be to their advantage. According to **Hirshon**, "Library consortia will become even more important in the future by

assisting libraries in implementing and managing the process of change... A library consortium with a broad understanding of how each of its members is coping with these issues has an ideal opportunity to explore these issues objectively, to understand and articulate trends as they are emerging and to create standardized methodologies that individual libraries can employ and customize at their own institutions."⁸

Endnotes

1. For an overview of library consortia see Kopp, James J. "Library Consortia and Information Technology: the Past, the Present and the Promise." *Information Technology and Libraries*, v. 17 no. 1, March, 1998 p.7-12.
2. Allen, Barbara McFadden, and Hirshon, Arnold. "Hanging together to avoid hanging separately: opportunities for academic libraries and consortia." *Information Technology and Libraries*, v. 17 no 1, March 1998 p.36.
3. **PALCI** was started in 1997 as the Pennsylvania Library Connection Initiative with thirty-five private and public academic libraries. For more information on **PALCI** see <http://www.palci.org>.
4. I wish to thank my colleague Ann Diseroad for providing these ILL statistics and information on our current usage of **PALCI**.
5. Allen and Hirshon, p.39
6. Allen and Hirshon, Ibid
7. Allen and Hirshon, p.37
8. Hirshon, Arnold. "Libraries, Consortia, and Change Management." *The Journal of Academic Librarianship*, vol.25, no.2, March 1999, p.124.

Buyer Beware: Using Interlibrary Loan Requests in Purchasing Decisions

by **Jane L. Ingold** (Assistant Librarian, John M. Lilley Library, Penn State Erie, The Behrend College, 5091 Station Road, Erie, PA 16563; Phone: 814-898-7278; Fax: 814-898-6350) <jli4@psu.edu>

"ILL requests represent a demonstrated need by the faculty and students for materials not in the library, and it is important for bibliographers to consider those needs when planning and evaluating collections. By providing information on items requested from other libraries, ILL data also helps identify areas of the collection that may need to be strengthened to support developing research activity and to pinpoint areas where collecting levels may be inadequate to meet interdisciplinary needs." — (Williams, et al 32)

It is not an uncommon practice for libraries to use interlibrary loan requests as a tool for collection development. In the past a fair amount has been written touting the advantages of this technique. A flurry of activity took place in the early 1990's, highlighted by a 1991 review of the subject by **F.K. Rottman**. Some writers, including **Jo Ann Lahmon**, describe systems for tracking the information in a useful manner, while others such as **Suzanne Ward** describe purchase-on-demand programs. The

Purchase Express program at **The University of Virginia** even aims to have the book in a patron's hand within seven days. (Clendenning 16) **Atkins** and **Weible** used data on unfilled ILL requests to assess lost materials in their own collection at **University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign**. **Yontz** and others studied the problem of patrons attempting to interlibrary loan locally-held materials.

In her Library to Library column **Mary**
continued on page 32