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Adventures in Librarianship -- The Grand Tour

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Other tiers of service include textbook lending (only allows three simultaneous users per book) or unlimited access with no restrictions on users or loan instances. In addition, to cover all bases, **EBL** offers the capability to get a short-term rental on a book that is not currently in your collection. These paid accesses can provide valuable information for future collection development decisions.

In Conclusion

With eBooks becoming more and more popular and with new technologies such as electronic ink and electronic paper bringing the experience closer to print, librarians will need to navigate the maze of licensing models to provide the eBooks their patrons want. The print model of licensing seems to be waning as it neither takes into account the way users like to access content nor does it seek to accommodate the electronic environment. Already, database models (and variations) are by far the most popular arrangement. In the future, more innovative licensing models such as **EBL’s “Non-Linear Lending”** are more than likely going to be much more popular as librarians and vendors seek to balance the needs of users and the desires of copyright holders. 🐻

Adventures in Librarianship — The Grand Tour

by **Ned Kraft** (Ralph J. Bunche Library, U.S. Department of State)
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Hello! Hello! If I can have your attention for just. Thank you. My name is **Snorey Keller**. I’m the Acquisitions Librarian here at the **Federal Institute for Departmental Organization**, and I’ve been asked to lead your tour of the library today.

First I’d like to express my surprise and, well just my surprise that the **Chinese Library Delegation** would choose to visit our humble collection while in Washington. Most people think **FIDO** is just the name of a dog. Ha! Yes, well. Okay. I was told you are without your translator today. True? Can I see hands for those who speak English? I see. Can I see hands for those who would rather be anywhere else? Alright then. This should be fun. Please follow me.

This is the Reference Desk. Some call it the beating heart of the library. I don’t, of course, but some do. Right now it’s staffed by our youngest librarian, **Justin Jordan**. I’d introduce you to young **Mr. Jordan**, but as you can see, with his **iPod** on and his back to us, he’s completely unaware of our presence. **Justin!** These Chinese people have several reference questions for you! You see? His head bobs, his fingers drum on the edge of the book truck, but otherwise, oblivious.

Now let’s move to your right, toward the periodical and newspaper reading area. Here we really do have to keep our voices down. “Shhhhhhh,” as we say here in the States. Not so much in deference to scholarly focus, but because **Dr. Wahlon Maas** generally naps in this area. That’s him in his favorite chair. **Dr. Maas** was the Deputy Secretary General of **FIDO** until 1986. Legend has it that after retirement his wife made a few things crystal-clear. So every day he shaves, he ties his bowtie, he packs his briefcase with snacks and whatnot, and he makes his way here to work

on his “memoirs.” The good Doctor prefers to nap with either *Current History* or the *Journal of Counterintelligence*, depending on which chapter he’s working on. Is there a word for pathetic in Chinese? I’m sure there must be.

Back here we have our Directors office. Since it’s 10:30, he must be out to lunch. He may be back after 3:00, and if you can return, I’m sure he’d love to say hello and give you his favorite speech about libraries being the last line of defense against international chaos. But I wouldn’t recommend it if you have anything spicy for lunch. Can I see hands for those who understand the term “wind bag?” No? That’s a shame.

Back in this corner, behind the steel door, is our Technical Services area. Step in please. Don’t be afraid. You’ll get used to the smell. Alright, this is where we sequester the cataloging and acquisitions staff. It’s a safe place for them; we’ve removed all sharp objects; we routinely check for weapons; and a nurse comes around at about eleven with medication for all. They like it here. They may not look it, but we believe they’re happy here. No, sir, please don’t give them any food. That’s number 643, known for her rather sharp claws. And yes that is crying you hear in the background; usually happens about this time of day. No one knows why. Now let’s head out before we attract too much attention.

Finally, these are the Library stacks. They may appear to be a jumbled mess, but let me assure you that our staff knows where everything is. That’s a lie, of course. Just seeing if you’re paying attention. This is the end of the formal tour, but feel free to wander and explore. I suggest you go in pairs for your own safety. Good luck, and watch your step. 🐻

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Here’s your chance to get into print and reach thousands of readers starved for fiction that tells the story of libraries and librarians, publishing and bookselling, but we’re open to any original works—your imagination is the limit.

A fiction page will become a regular feature of *ATG* after this contest, so sharpen your pencils and tell us your story.

Submission lengths, generally, should be 1,000 to 2,500 words. Deadline for entries is October 15, 2006.

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