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Something to Think About -- Serial Weeding for Real!

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Something to Think About — Serials Weeding for Real!

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Wow! I hope you all are catching your breath from the holidays! We just don't seem to slow down here. We are in the process of weeding our serials collection extensively to save money. It appears our expenditures will be far less this year than last. How do you go about deciding what to cut and what to keep? Well...I'm betting each library has its own criteria and routines for that solution! We have attacked this problem in stages. First, we looked at our vendor renewal and began finding some titles that were expendable, the "fluff" of the collection. For us as a specialized university, we were looking at the browsing materials plus others that were general in nature. If the title was indexed and had full-text in our databases with no embargoes, it got cut. Making Excel sheets of titles and the pertinent information for decision-making was certainly the easiest thing to do. We split up the titles among our librarians and brought them back to a consolidated meeting where we each presented out titles, and everyone voted yea or nay. We were able to compile a list that afternoon, corrected the serial renewal form, and sent it off to the vendor. We have also gone through our standing orders with

Thomson Gale and Baker & Taylor studying the pertinence to our curriculum. A number of other titles were cut here as well. These added up to more money than the journals. The next step we took was to look at our current standing orders for microfilm. We receive 183 titles on film normally, but the weeding process kicked out 118 of those titles, so our expenditures will be far less next year. The new renewal comes in May each year, so we sent a list to the microfilming company and they have corrected our renewal list for this coming May. It will be much easier for the company and us as well. Our last step was to look at a series of titles that we kept two copies because of a specific index called *Tradescan*. The company producing that special index decided to stop the publication in December, so we are now beginning to cut some of those double orders and consolidate our titles into one location. The ceased titles are being placed in Special Collections while the active titles will be in our Periodicals section for the most part. We

are also questioning whether more of the ceased titles on our shelves might be moved to Special Collections to allow Periodicals to become a more active collection. We believe the activity around those titles will be increased and the traffic patterns will be smoother for our patrons, as well as emptying some more shelves. Who would ever have believed we could make such tremendous changes in our presentations of the materials?

Have you made a lot of changes in the last year? It's nice to know that bad economics can make for better decorating and usage. Perhaps hard times do help us find things to think about and allow our creative minds to explore new paths. It's good to think about these things! 🌱