2016

Reversals of Fortune: The New Normal of Collection Development

Karen Harker
University of North Texas Libraries, karen.harker@unt.edu

Coby Condrey
University of North Texas Libraries, Coby.Condrey@unt.edu

Allyson Rodriguez
University of North Texas Libraries, Allyson.rodriguez@unt.edu

Emily Billings
University of North Texas Libraries, Emily.Billings@unt.edu

Follow this and additional works at: https://docs.lib.purdue.edu/atg

Part of the Library and Information Science Commons

tion development policies state that librarians need to be able to justify the purchase of books they buy for the library collection. This way in the event that it is challenged by a library patron who feels the book is damaging for the public to read, a librarian can justify that he or she did not purchase a book based on their own biases or with an agenda in mind. Librarians can prove this through book reviews that also recommend the book as a good read. Therefore, it's hard to justify purchasing books that are culturally diverse, but not reviewed well.

These books must be new and recent, not only for modern children to get an accurate picture of the world, but culturally diverse or not after a certain amount of time some library books can become damaged from overuse and are hard to reorder when they become out of print. Also, due to shelf space books are weeded from the library's collection if they are not popular enough to be checked out frequently. This is usually done based on the book's circulation statistics and usually has very little to do with the book's content. If more books with diverse characters are diverse the less of a chance there will be that they will get weeded.

Diversity in the United States is growing. It is predicted that in the next 50 years the minority populations in the United States will surpass the white population by almost 10%. It can only be justified that there is a proper representation of the minority population in literature, especially in children's first interaction with books in their public library's picture book collection. A librarian should not have to struggle or work hard to find the books that this mother's son has asked for.

Bibliography

"**ALSC** Strategic Plan, 2012-2017" **Association for Library Service to Children**. *http://www.ala.org/alsc/aboutalsc/stratplan* (accessed May 19, 2016).

"Core Values of Librarianship" **American Library Association**. *http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/statementspols/corevalues* (accessed May 19, 2016).

NoveList K-8. *http://web.a.ebscohost.com.online.rhpl.org/novpk8/results?sid=f95e36ff-da10-4fbe808940ae51e49e20%40sessionmgr4001&vid=1&hid=4104&bquery=diverse&bdata=JnR5cGU9MCZzaXRlPW5vdnBrOC1saXZl* (accessed May 19, 2016).

Rhodes, J. "Jewell Parker Rhodes on Diversity and Character-Driven Stories." Publisher's Weekly. *http://www.publishersweekly.com/pw/by-topic/childrens/childrens-authors/article/66454-jewell-parker-rhodes-on-diversity-and-character-driven-stories.html* (accessed May 19, 2016).

The Open Book a blog on race, diversity, education and children's books. *http://blog.leeandlow.com/2015/03/05/the-diversity-gap-in-childrens-publishing-2015/*.

against the grain
people profile

Angela S. Warsinske

Youth Services Librarian, Rochester Hills Public Library
500 Olde Towne Road, Rochester, MI 48307
Phone: (248) 650-7144 • <angela.warsinske@rhpl.org>

BORN AND LIVED: I was born in Canton, MI and since then have lived in various places in southeast Michigan including Ypsilanti and Wixom.

PROFESSIONAL CAREER AND ACTIVITIES: I am a member of the **American Library Association**, **Public Library Association** and the **Association for Library Services to Children**. I started working in libraries after earning my undergraduate degree. While earning my Masters in Library and Information Science I worked as a circulation clerk at the **Canton Public Library** and as an information resources assistant at the **University of Michigan's Art, Architecture and Engineering Library**. I currently work as a full-time youth services librarian at the **Rochester Hills Public library**. Before becoming full-time I worked part-time as the only youth services librarian at the **Inkster Public Library** and substituted as a librarian at the **Baldwin Library** and **West Bloomfield Public Library**.

FAVORITE BOOKS: *Alice in Wonderland* by **Lewis Carroll**, *Everything on a Waffle* by **Polly Horvath**, and *Walk Two Moons* by **Sharon Creech**.

HOW/WHERE DO I SEE THE INDUSTRY IN FIVE YEARS: The industry is one that is ever changing and adjusting to people's needs and is therefore hard to predict. Today's patterns suggest libraries becoming a place for all demographics including those that are not common library users, circulating items beyond books and a more in depth use of technology.

Reversals of Fortune: The New Normal of Collection Development

by **Karen Harker** (Collection Assessment Librarian, University of North Texas Libraries, Denton, TX) <Karen.Harker@unt.edu>

and **Coby Condrey** (Collection Development Liaison Librarian, University of North Texas Libraries, Denton, TX) <Coby.Condrey@unt.edu>

and **Allyson Rodriguez** (Strategic Collections Librarian, Univ. of North Texas Libraries, Denton, TX) <Allyson.rodriguez@unt.edu>

and **Emily Billings** (Electronic Resources Librarian, University of North Texas Libraries, Denton, TX) <Emily.Billings@unt.edu>

Introduction

The "great squeeze" of increasing costs and decreasing funding put our library into a series of budget crises which resulted in severe restrictions of library purchasing. Resistance, anger and frustration from faculty upon learning of the cuts was fueled partly by a lack of awareness of issues and technicalities from both sides. Faced with rising faculty push-back, the university president guaranteed a significant allocation of discretionary funding for collections purposes, but only for three years. This has presented the Collection Development Department staff with a dilemma — how to spend a relatively robust *but temporary* budget, while planning for an unknown future. Through demand-driven acquisition (DDA), in-depth collection assessment, targeted enhancements, Open Access resources, and rigorous evaluation and tracking of current and possible resources we seek to meet the needs of our faculty and students.

Background

Since 2004, the **UNT Libraries** have been funded nearly completely by a student use fee, with undergraduate and graduate hourly caps. Until 2010, the increase in student enrollment exceeded the increase of costs due to inflation. Student enrollment, however, has plateaued since 2011, reducing the purchasing power of the library. From the 2011 to the 2015 academic years, the **UNT Libraries** has reduced its collections budget by 36%, accomplished largely by cancelling most approval plans, eliminating dual print and electronic subscriptions, breaking up selected journal "Big Deals," and reducing firm-order or one-time purchase funds.

Before 2012, collection development at the **UNT Libraries** was largely decentralized, with subject specialists or Liaison Librarians responsible for spending a set amount annually on one-time purchases. The management of this collection development method was cumbersome, given the innumerable accounts (firm orders, subscription, etc. for each subject). Also difficult to manage were the selectors themselves. Many of the funds were spent appropriately, but there were those that were overspent, underspent or unspent.

Methods for the Three Sets of Cuts

Managing Budget Cuts from 2011-2014 — The first year of cuts, $750,000 for budget year 2011-12, was relatively modest and met by eliminating most approval plans, reducing firm order funds by over 70%, and converting from print-plus journals to electronic only. The next year, another $1 million was eliminated from the collections budget. The focus of these cuts were on the recurring expenditures. The criteria used to evaluate these resources were low overall usage, high cost-per-use, overlap, and access restrictions. In addition, we invited the Liaison Librarians to rate resources specific to their fields based on feedback from faculty. Despite liaisons inability to rate related resources purchased from other funds and challenges with librarian ratings of resources, we were able to meet the budget reductions.

For the 2013-14 year, the **UNT Libraries** was provided funding to cover inflation, sparing additional cuts. We used this year to prepare, by compiling more longitudinal usage data and to revise our evaluation methods. The article by **Foudy** and **McManus** (2005) described a method to rank resources for de-selection purposes, incorporating measures of access, cost-effectiveness, breadth/audience, and uniqueness inspiring our current method.

Measures Used in Evaluation — We used five measures in our evaluation: Overlap, Usage Trends, Cost-Effectiveness, Cost Trends, and Librarians' Input. For overlap, we examined not only full-text overlap of journals (as compared to subscription access), but also of database indexing. Several tools were used for this analysis for comparing coverage between full-text aggregators, as well as database in-

against the grain
library profile

University of North Texas Libraries

University Libraries, 1155 Union Circle #305190, Denton , TX 76203-5017
Phone: (940) 565-2411 • *www.library.unt.edu*

LIBRARY BACKGROUND/HISTORY: The **University of North Texas Libraries** are the collections, facilities, tools and people who serve the research needs and informational interests of the institution's students, faculty, and staff and the community members of Denton, Texas, and the Dallas-Fort Worth area. Managed resources include over 6 million cataloged items, numerous special collections including government documents, and the **UNT Digital Library** (*http://digital.library.unt.edu/*). The libraries have four public service locations on two campuses and two other off-campus facilities for storage and offices. The institution serves, as of fall 2015, 37,175 students, 2,503 faculty and 2,432 staff.

STAFF: Approximately 55 librarians, 80 staff and 170 student employees.

BUDGET: $18 million, of which $6-7 million annually is for materials.

TYPES OF MATERIALS YOU BUY: Collection development efforts include acquisitions of physical and e-books, audiovisual media, print and electronic journals and databases. By policy, textbooks are not acquired routinely although exceptions are approved on a case-by-case basis. The goal of collection development is to provide access to all types of information sources necessary to meet the research needs of the students and faculty, to support instructional programs, to ensure coverage of interdisciplinary subjects, and to maintain agreements with consortia and systems in which the institution has a role. We have a preference for electronic resources when available and when pricing is commensurate to other formats, due to multiple programs at **UNT** targeted to distance learners. We also emphasize access to research materials over ownership whenever feasible.

USE OF MOBILE TECHNOLOGY: The institution's web site is optimized for friendly rendering on mobile devices. Purchased or subscribed resources may or may not be usable by mobile devices, according to vendor or publisher efforts to adapt products for that environment.

WHAT DO YOU THINK YOUR LIBRARY BE LIKE IN FIVE YEARS? The **UNT Libraries** will continue to prefer electronic resources when possible, to be in the vanguard of developments related to digital libraries and scholarly communication, and to create spaces where people can meet, learn and collaborate.

DEPARTMENTAL INFORMATION:

HOW MANY DIVISIONS ARE THERE IN YOUR DEPARTMENT? The Collection Management Division (*http://www.library.unt.edu/collection-management*) consists of two departments: Collection Development and Cataloging & Metadata Services (*http://www.library.unt.edu/staff-directory/department/collection-management*).

HOW MANY PEOPLE WORK IN YOUR DEPARTMENT? The associate dean of Collection Management leads the two units. Collection Development has eleven employees — six librarians and five paraprofessionals; the unit has a varying number of student assistant and graduate library assistant positions, usually four. Cataloging & Metadata Services has eight employees — four librarians and four paraprofessionals, and two student assistants. (Total salaried, non-student FTEs is eleven.)

The Collection Development department is very fortunate to have such a large complement of professional librarians. The positions handle the following roles:

  department head & coordinator of collection development
  collection assessment
  serials management, receiving & accounts payable
  collection development liaison to public services & monographs ordering
  electronic resources acquisitions and management
  strategic collections analysis & open access resources

The Collection Development unit works very collaboratively, consults with colleagues frequently, and makes purchasing decisions in a team environment. Staff at all levels are empowered to investigate resources, suggest improvements, try new ideas with leeway to fail and try again, to collaborate with others in our division and in other divisions, and to pursue educational opportunities to improve skill sets and advance career goals.

dexing. We also downloaded journal coverage lists from database providers for manual comparison. This method is limited in that it only includes titles, but lacks date ranges.

For usage, we applied the usage measure closest to the end user's experience with the resource. This measure would form the foundation of cost-effectiveness (CPU) and vary by resource: abstract/record view for databases and reference resources; full-text downloads for ejournals and eBooks. Thus, the resources were compared with others of the same type. The three-year average usage and average cost-per-use were the measures used in the analysis.

To incorporate our concerns about extraordinary cost increases, we included expenditures over several years. Adjusting for changes in pro-rated costs for missing or overlapped months, we were able to calculate the average annual rate of change in costs.

For evaluating our "Big Deals" we not only examined overall usage, but also the distribution of usage across each of the titles in the package. The greater the distribution of titles used, the more effective the deal was as a package. If a package was considered a poor value, then we calculated the cost-per-use based on the subscription cost of each title, comparing that with the cost of obtaining articles from alternative methods like interlibrary loan.

The final component of our scale would be the more subjective measures of quality, which were provided by the Liaison Librarians. We provided the liaisons with an expanded list of resources that included not only those directly paid for by their funds, but also relevant interdisciplinary resources.

Relative Distribution — The usage, cost-per-use and the change in costs were all continuous measures, each on a different scale, making it difficult to compile into a single scale measure. To avoid the scale being unduly influenced by a single factor, we placed all of these measures on the same scale: their distribution relative to other resources of the same type. Using percentiles, we were able to effectively rank the resources on the same scale for each of the criteria.

Finally, we averaged all three scales (CPU, Inflation, and Liaison Ratings) into one composite score, which ranked the resources within their respective categories from lowest- to highest-performing percentile. Those in the lowest 20th percentiles were considered strongly for cancellation, while those in the highest 50th percentile were renewed automatically. Those performing between these two thresholds were examined more closely, with additional feedback sought from the liaison librarians.

Communicating Cuts and Fallout

Preparing for Cuts — We closely examined only resources costing $1,000 per year or more, and recurring subscription, or subscription-like costs. We then set a series of goals, including the percentage across the board and overall dollar amount of cuts to be made, as well as a timeline for liaisons to select items to drop.

---

against the grain
people profile

Karen R. Harker

Collection Assessment Librarian, University of North Texas Libraries
1155 Union Circle, #305190, Denton, Texas, 76203
Phone: (940) 565-2688 • <Karen.harker@unt.edu>
http://librariesareforuse.wordpress.com/

BORN AND LIVED: Born in California, but moved to Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex, Texas, as a toddler. Grew up in Richardson, Texas. Served in the U.S. Navy out of high school, and was stationed in Japan and California. Returned to Texas after service.

EARLY LIFE: Typical family life in suburban Dallas…happily, with no real tragedies or disruptions.

PROFESSIONAL CAREER AND ACTIVITIES: My life has always centered around libraries and librarianship. My mother was a school librarian, and I spent part of my service manning the base library. This led to my first job out of the military at a public library, which gave me the experience that was considered necessary for my paraprofessional position at the **UT Southwestern Medical Library**. After completing the MLS program at **Texas Woman's University** in late 1999, I became their Web Librarian and eventually Research & Development Librarian. Currently, I am Collection Assessment Librarian at the **University of North Texas Libraries** in Denton.

Admittedly, there were diversions along the way; first was my brief stint as a school teacher (it is amazing how many people have these brief stints). Then there was my longer, and potentially more permanent stint in public health. I received my MPH in 2007, took a position as biostatistician for a clinical trial, and nearly completed my coursework for a PhD in epidemiology. But the trial's primary investigator moved to another university and took her money with her, and I was left in a department with nothing interesting to do. I "returned to Mama" when I saw the position for Collection Assessment Librarian, which is a perfect combination of my deep and personal relationship with librarianship and my skills and training in analysis and assessment.

FAMILY: Husband, and hopefully a new dog in the near future; Mother and sister's family living in the area. Father passed away far too recently.

IN MY SPARE TIME: I've been playing ice hockey since the **Dallas Stars** first (and last) won the Stanley Cup. In between games, I play with data, read, and play two instruments: alto sax and clarinet.

FAVORITE BOOKS: My traditional favorites had been those from childhood and college years (*Huckleberry Finn* and *To Kill a Mockingbird*), but more recent favorites include **Thomas Piketty's** *Capital in the 21st Century*, **Peter Heller's** *The Dog Stars*, **Isabel Wilkerson's** *The Warmth of Other Suns*, **Marissa Pessel's** *Night Film*, and **Marilynne Robinson's** *Gilead*.

PET PEEVES: Line-cutting and knee-jerk reactions.

PHILOSOPHY: What you see may not be all there is.

MOST MEMORABLE CAREER ACHIEVEMENT: The basic infrastructure of the **UT Southwestern Medical Library**, that I built and implemented, is still in use today, nearly 8 years after I left. True, it looks much nicer and more professional, but it's nice to know that something I worked so hard to develop can still be useful after so many years (in "computer years," no less).

GOAL I HOPE TO ACHIEVE FIVE YEARS FROM NOW: I am working on developing the infrastructure that would enable the **UNT Libraries** stakeholders see the value of our collection on student and faculty outcomes.

HOW/WHERE DO I SEE THE INDUSTRY IN FIVE YEARS: Not very far from where we are going now. I believe the revolution to eBooks will be farther along, as well as further expansion of openly-available content (especially regarding textbooks). But we will still be providing the same basic services of monographic and serial content, as well as access to more digitized primary sources. I hope audiovisual streaming will be opened up, but I'm not holding my breath.

To communicate the data to the liaisons, we simplified the measures previously described. The overlap and usage trends measures were omitted and the remaining measures were relabeled more explicatively. These slightly revamped measures allowed us to organize the data about our purchased resources to more

effectively communicate with the liaisons, and the various academic departments, options for a plan of action.

The liaisons reviewed the spreadsheet, which allowed them to see how resources ranked, plus key information about the resources. Resources were identified as irrevocably cancelled, planned to be cancelled (but able to be switched out), eligible to be sacrificed, modified in some way, or retained and unable to be cancelled. Liaisons were directed to share the data with their faculties with an adequate timeline to reach a collaborative decision about how to reduce their resources to reach the budget goal.

Differences in Perception of Need and Desire — As we communicated this information, it became apparent that some highly-prized resources were at risk. Some faculty were especially vocal in advocating the retention of certain subscriptions to the exclusion of other, higher-ranking titles. The data revealed a dichotomy between faculty perceptions of necessity in a research discipline and empirical evidence about what was a good value.

We countered the considerable faculty push-back as positively as possible, turning conversations with faculty into teachable moments. We encouraged the use of interlibrary loan. We informed faculty of the library's flat materials budget, the impossible inflation rates, and varied pricing structures based on "hidden" factors like potential audience size, simultaneous use, etc. We explained how our usage data was gathered, encouraging faculty to link to an article rather than uploading a PDF copy to learning management systems. We documented our decisions and set up a method to track resources when the performance data did not coincide with expectations: an "endangered species" list of sorts.

The Breaking Point: Big Deal Packages — One of the biggest challenges we faced was dismantling the library's journal packages, not all of which were up for contract renewal. We applied our same analytical methodology to the titles within our "big deals," with the additional measure of the distribution of usage across titles within the collection. Then we targeted between 80% and 90% of the titles in the three major journal packages targeted for elimination. We allowed liaisons and faculty to make a case to retain especially important titles, or to swap out other titles, but we ultimately had to excise a major portion of our journal content received via bundled deals.

The following year, 2014-15, the library's budgetary conditions required more cuts. We turned our focus to the packages up for renewal, notably **Elsevier's** ScienceDirect. While the package was not performing particularly poorly, the cost of the subscriptions was untenable. The proposed eliminations in ScienceDirect were severe, and our ability to subscribe to journals with high ratings was limited due to the comparatively high cost of many of the titles. We again made preliminary recommen-

Allyson Rodriguez

Strategic Collections Librarian, University of North Texas
<Allyson.rodriguez@unt.edu>

BORN AND LIVED: I was born and raised in Austin, Texas, but have lived in several Texas cities, a small town in Oklahoma, and now live in Denton, Texas.

PROFESSIONAL CAREER AND ACTIVITIES: Previously, I worked at a small Air Force Base Library doing a number of tasks. I currently work in the Collection Development Department at the **University of North Texas** where I ensure the accessibility of quality Open Access resources in our discovery systems and complete investigations into over-arching or difficult collection activities. I am a member of the **Texas Library Association**, and the **American Library Association**, **Association for Library Collections and Technical Services**. I am invested in the Open Access movement, the transformation of scholarly communications, and the promise it holds for libraries now and in the future.

IN MY SPARE TIME: I love to read, bake, and spend time with my husband and our two dogs, Spartacus the dachshund and Olive the lab.

FAVORITE BOOKS: How can anyone choose?

dations to the liaisons and faculty, and allowed a period for feedback and negotiation.

When the faculty realized the impact of a second year of cuts, there was another outcry. Tensions rose leading to the faculty senate discussing the funding problems in open meetings, the local press reporting the story, and university administration becoming concerned about image. The university president intervened allocating funding to stave off the second round of cuts. He also committed to continuing the extra funding for two additional years, giving the university and library administrations time to address the shortcomings of the library's funding model in a long-term way. For the short term, though, we were able to renew our remaining big deal packages mostly intact.

Summer of Love

The infusion of funding created a different set of challenges for the collection development librarians. Partially in response to expected shortfalls in funding, the collection development department was implementing an entirely new philosophy (ABCD or access-based collection development) (**Crawford** et al., 2014) that emphasized access over ownership. After conducting so much analysis of resources, it seemed cavalier to ignore our analysis. We refused to reinstate everything we cancelled. We reinstated many titles that were in the moderate ranges, but aggressively pursued better pricing from vendors, modified arrangements with vendors reducing costs, promoted "endangered" titles, and financially and fundamentally supported interlibrary loan.

The plan to use the money as effectively as possible incorporated three elements that the department recently had developed and put in place: the ABCD group, adoption of demand-driven acquisitions programs, and an

initiative to "enhance" the collection in targeted disciplines.

ABCD Group — The ABCD group consists of key librarians who collectively oversee the use of the materials budget, investigating resources, and selecting purchases. The department's leadership and the librarians responsible for assessment, liaison communications and monographs acquisitions, strategic collections, serials, electronic resources, and media meet regularly to plan spending, identify needs and desires, report options from vendors, and make decisions. The ABCD group cohesively operates with a sense of collective purpose, and from a comfortable position of accountability for spending decisions.

DDA — DDA has become an important part of the ABCD plan. We have embraced the new model as an effective way to make a wide range of materials available to researchers without buying all of them up front; we monitor its use regularly to avoid overspending. We have implemented a variety of DDA-like programs for streaming media, some major eBook publishing firms, and through our primary monographs vendor who allowed us to consolidate management of multiple eBook platforms. With an institutional profile capturing the scope of the university's research interests and automatically loading selected discovery records into our catalog, we feel confident we're meeting a wide range of needs with reduced intervention by staff while ensuring that the eBooks purchased are ones valuable to researchers.

Targeted Subject Areas — Finally, we have devoted a substantial portion of the new monies to support selected programs or research areas. The collection assessment librarian annually evaluates the support of several specific disciplines on a ten-year, rotating basis. Using these disciplinary collection assessments

from the previous year as a starting point, a sub-set of the ABCD group investigates ways to enhance the resources supporting research in the targeted disciplines. Given the large amounts of money, title-by-title procurement is not feasible; instead, the guiding principle is to identify purchases that provided access to many resources at a single pass. The ABCD group reviews and discusses the final recommendations for each enhancement purchase.

Preparing for the Inevitable Drought

Endangered Species — The Endangered Species list was created to monitor our ongoing subscriptions using the criterion created during the budget crisis. These resources, as well as those newly added to our collection, are given three years, during which time the liaison librarians promote or review the resource. The ongoing and open nature of the list offers our liaisons ample opportunities for feedback and awareness not previously provided. The analysis gives us valid reasons for cutting a product and using the money in other, more productive ways.

Open Access — Beyond the current methods outlined above, we must prepare for a lack of funding. Including high-quality, librarian-evaluated Open Access materials in our library catalog is one method of preparing for the future. However, simply pointing a patron to an Open Access resource may not be enough. We are exploring ways to harvest and archive a local copy of Open Access resources through collaboration with our Digital Library. Furthermore, our current budget allows us to support Open Access Initiatives, such as Knowledge Unlatched or Independent Voices, providing current and future access to scholarly materials and ensuring the future of our collection.

Parting Thoughts

As we approach our uncertain future with funding for collection development, our decisions become more important in providing access to quality resources that are in demand now. Cost for materials and demand for items increases every year, but with strategic growth and detailed plans, we are able to transition and remain relevant to our users. We were fortunate to gain a temporary infusion of funding. With these funds the ABCD group, DDA, and targeted subject area enhancements will prepare us for the possible drought. The continued detailed monitoring and analysis of our electronic resource subscriptions and the addition of open access resources will take the collection in new directions.

References

Crawford, L. S., **E. F. Avery**, **K. Harker**, **T. Enoch**, and **C. Condrey**. "White paper: redefining collection development at University of North Texas Libraries." May 2014. *http://digital.library.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metadc335286/.*

Foudy, Gerri and **Alesia McManus**. "Using a decision grid process to build consensus in electronic resources cancellation decisions," *The Journal of Academic Librarianship*, volume 31, #6, pages 533-538. November, 2005.

against the grain
people profile

Emily Billings

Electronic Resources Librarian, University of North Texas Libraries
1155 Union Circle, #305190, Denton, TX 76203
Phone: (940) 565-3956 • <Emily.Billings@unt.edu>

BORN AND LIVED: I was born in Mount Vernon, TX and have lived all my life in the East Texas area.

PROFESSIONAL CAREER AND ACTIVITIES: While I pursued my undergraduate degree in English, I received a job in the university library. I LOVED working there so much I decided to become a librarian. My first professional position was as a Public Services Librarian at a community college. I have participated in the **Association of College and Research Libraries**, Immersion program teacher track as well as the **Texas Library Association**, TALL Texans leadership program.

FAMILY: I am very close with my two younger sisters and parents.

IN MY SPARE TIME: I spend a lot of time knitting and reading fiction. I volunteer with the SPCA, the Junior League, and the Zeta Tau Alpha sorority.

FAVORITE BOOKS: I enjoy reading romance or science fiction novels. I have read *Frankenstein* by **Mary Shelley** numerous times.

HOW/WHERE I SEE THE INDUSTRY IN FIVE YEARS: I see the industry improving and expanding on the evaluation of electronic resources especially in the areas of accessibility and usability.

You Want to Do What?: Graphic Novels in an Academic Library

by **Christi Piper** (Instruction Librarian, University of Colorado Colorado Springs' Kraemer Family Library) <cpiper@uccs.edu>

and **Joel Tonyan** (Systems and User Experience Librarian, University of Colorado Colorado Springs' Kraemer Family Library) <jtonyan@uccs.edu>

and **Emilie Vrbancic** (Undergraduate Experience Librarian, University of Washington's Odegaard Library) <vrbancic@uw.edu>

In the spring of 2015, a series of coincidental events took place at the **Kraemer Family Library** at the **University of Colorado Colorado Springs**: we had a faculty member approach the librarians with a request for us to be involved in the annual **Denver ComicCon** and noticed that more faculty on campus were using graphic novels in their classrooms. This led a group of librarians to question whether the library was truly meeting the graphic novel needs of the campus. Specifically, we wondered if more students than we were aware of were interested in graphic novels and if the demand was being met. In order to explore that question, we designed a student feedback survey and began to reach out to faculty already integrating pop culture materials into their curriculum.

We focused our survey efforts on reaching a wide-range of students to gauge interest in graphic novels and to try to understand the level of awareness of the library's collection. The results were eye opening. Of the 459 students who completed the survey, over 57% responded that they read graphic novels, but 74% of the same population did not know that the library had a collection of graphic novels. This lack of student knowledge about the collection prompted an investigation of how well our current graphic novels collection was, or was not, circulating. When the circulation statistics were run, we found that 58% of the 230 titles had been checked out at least once in the past year. We also found that there had been over 150 consortium requests for graphic novels to be brought in from other libraries. Some people were obviously finding the collection and it was getting good use, but we were not keeping up with the demand for more and newer titles, as in that same year only 22 new volumes were added to the collection.