



University of Missouri-St. Louis

FREQUENCY VARIES

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* * * SPECIAL ISSUE---COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT * * *

A NATIONAL CRISIS IN INFORMATION ACCESS

Richard DeGennaro, Director of Libraries at the University of Pennsylvania, in an article entitled, "Escalating Journal Prices: Time to Fight Back," stated, "the function of a scientific journal as a vehicle for promotion and recognition concerns of authors has begun to eclipse its function as a vehicle for communicating scholarly knowledge." Many new scientific journals created within the last ten years have no individual subscriptions supporting them. Their support is dependent entirely upon library subscriptions. This factor along with the rising costs of raw materials, manufacturing and transportation have caused massive increases in the cost of serials. Journal increases have averaged 18% a year for the last six years, while library income, in most institutions, has lagged 5 to 10% behind the inflation rate. Most libraries have survived the crisis by transferring book funds to the serials budget. The result of this practice has been to seriously reduce the library's capacity for supplying vital research and information sources in book form. Many libraries are spending 70% of their total acquisitions budget for serials. The future is even more grim than the past, with the inflation rate for FY 80-81 estimated at 23 to 28% for serials.

American colleges and universities spent \$306,000,000 for library books/serials in 1974 and \$336,000,000 in 1979. The cost of library materials during the same time period rose by 90%. Libraries, therefore, have approximately half the purchasing power they had in 1974. The loss is evident in greatly reduced book acquisitions and static periodical collections.

Colleges and universities are reacting to the crisis by placing a freeze on new periodical subscriptions, freezing transfer of book funds to serial budgets and by preparing for 5 to 10% annual cuts in their serial budgets, depending upon the difference between income and the inflation rate. These policies are bringing the Librarians into serious conflict with faculty and administration. The faculty see weak collections further eroded by these retrenchment policies. Administrators are creating new programs to attract students in the 80's for which they expect adequate library support. Librarians believe that these retrenchment policies are the only immediate management tools available to them, while pursuing more long range alternatives. The long range alternatives center on cooperative collection development and resource sharing, involving a search for new ways to identify and share limited resources. These actions alone will probably not resolve the problem. Serial cutbacks will probably have to be made unless there is a sizable increase in library funding or a drastic drop in the inflation rate.

Some faculty and administrators contend that the problem is one for Librarians to resolve. Librarians, however, cannot resolve what is essentially a national problem. They can only react with a measured response to the lack of funds by eliminating wasteful spending, improving operations and staff utilization, and by pursuing means to improve access to information sources not directly held by the library. Three major institutions in Missouri are characteristic of many

libraries nationally. Washington University, UMC, and Linda Hall Library in Kansas City are spending nearly 70% of their acquisitions budgets for serials and all face sizable serial cuts over the next few years. These institutions have the richest resources in the state for books and serials. The losses which these institutions will suffer will affect all of us and those losses may never be recovered. (RK)

THE CRISIS IN INFORMATION ACCESS AT UMSL

The critical problem for the library in the next few years centers on information access. At the present rate of inflation in library materials, we will need \$1,384,000 in Fiscal Year 85/86 simply to retain our present acquisitions levels. In FY 79/80 we spent approximately \$532,000 for books and serials. With that budget we were able to purchase 12,000 books and support 2,781 periodical subscriptions. As a comparison, in FY 76/77 we had an acquisitions budget of \$434,000 which enabled us to purchase 13,320 books and support 2,778 periodical subscriptions. At the same time that library materials acquisitions have been shrinking, the amount of information published in book and serial form has been expanding. Our support of serial acquisitions has come at the expense of our book purchases. We have followed the pattern of other colleges and universities and have for several years transferred monies for book purchases to serial purchases.

In FY 79/80 we halted the flow of book monies to serials by freezing the amount to be spent on current subscriptions at two thirds of the total acquisitions budget. This action greatly retarded the historical flow of funds to serials and placed our expenditures for serials at sixty per cent of the total acquisitions budget. We shall attempt to retain this balance in the future while pursuing increased funding for library materials to allow for expansion of our serial subscriptions and book purchases.

We have asked the academic departments to assist us in developing a serials management program by identifying those items which they consider essential to their teaching and research functions. We have also been bargaining for a more favorable discount from library vendors in an attempt to buffer the effects of inflation.

We estimate our budget for library materials for FY 80/81 to be \$632,000, or a 19 per cent increase over FY 79/80. The amount of money available to meet the needs of existing and new programs beyond our present commitment will depend largely upon the inflation rate for FY 80/81. Overall, the picture is one of retaining the status quo, while at the same time preparing for increased acquisitions and retrospective collection development in FY 81/82, if the funds requested are forthcoming.

Resource Sharing and Information Access

A monumental agreement was concluded this summer between Washington University, the State Library and the University of Missouri Libraries to purchase and develop the Washington Library Network system as a basis for an automated union card catalog for these and other participating libraries. The fulfillment of this agreement will eventually enable a researcher to identify and obtain timely and comprehensive information regardless of its location within the State. Our goal is to have the majority of the holdings of the major libraries in Missouri in machine readable form within a few years, and to also have automated and non-automated means to assure document delivery. The joint decision of the participating libraries to purchase and develop WLN is the most significant step ever taken in Missouri to provide the patron with access to information.

At the same time that this agreement was concluded, the Librarians of the University of Missouri agreed to form a joint Collection Development Committee charged with developing a means to coordinate serial cutbacks and new serial purchases. There is also every reason to believe that similar agreements will be reached among the libraries in the greater St. Louis area within the next year. It is now safe to say, that for the first time in the history of Missouri, cooperative collection development and resource sharing is well on its way to becoming a reality.

During FY 80/81 we will be doing all we can to properly use our human and material resources to meet the needs of our patrons, while at the same time increasing our efforts to develop and improve cooperative collection development and resource sharing among the libraries of the University of Missouri and the greater St. Louis area. (RK)

THE SEARCH FOR SOLUTIONS

Libraries are desperately searching for solutions to the problems of rising inflation and shrinking purchasing power. There is growing evidence that computer technology can assist in buffering the worst effects of the present economic crisis. Libraries envision the research and development of automated bibliographic data bases as laying the foundation for vastly improved cooperative collection development and resource sharing. Every major library network in the United States and Canada is developing or purchasing the technology to create such a data base. These data bases have or will have the holdings of multiple libraries filed in machine readable form, making it possible for a patron, working at a terminal, to simultaneously search the holdings of many libraries. It is estimated that many of these systems will be in operation within two to three years. Developments in Missouri are moving toward the inclusion of most libraries in Missouri, including the Washington University, UMC, UMSL and Linda Hall libraries in a single data base (see article: "Crisis at UMSL..."). Before any existing data base can be utilized as a bibliographic data base, it must receive extensive programming for use as a public catalog. The holdings of the participating libraries must be converted to machine readable form for integration into the data base. If these steps are taken and agreements made to freely loan materials, the data base may serve to greatly expand the universe from which the patron may identify and select materials relevant to their research needs. It is difficult to predict the impact of these activities on library budgets, but it is clear that these systems will make it possible for us to maximize the use of our limited resources.

Libraries are also pursuing other ways in which to stretch their dollars and their limited resources. The Librarians of the University of Missouri system have agreed to pursue a joint program of serial retention, cutting, purchasing and sharing. Washington University intends to call a meeting of all St. Louis area libraries to initiate a discussion aimed at developing a comprehensive collection development and resource sharing program for the greater St. Louis area, including western Illinois. Every major library conference in the State has emphasized the issue of collection development and resource sharing. The conferences are concentrating on the practical steps necessary to implement multi-type library cooperative programs. High on the list for cooperation and resource sharing will be serials. Many see the development of an automated bibliographic data base as the primary means to review and coordinate serial and monograph purchases and identify master copy retention of periodical titles.

There are very few libraries remaining which espouse self-sufficiency. Most librarians have come to realize that resource sharing is the only viable alternative remaining if they are to meet the research and information needs of their patrons. The cost of identifying and supplying massive amounts of data directly and rapidly is more than any one library budget can provide. Whether or not multiple libraries freely sharing their resources can meet those needs is an issue which will be determined in the 1980s.

National developments seem to favor the passage of an act by Congress establishing a National Periodical Center, whose primary mission will be to supply 90%+ of the world's periodical literature. It will serve as a court of last resort when local and regional sources have been exhausted.

The University of Missouri system libraries are members of the Center for Research Libraries in Chicago and as such have access to the extensive periodical and microform collection holdings of the Center. Membership in the Center also provides us with access to the British Lending Library in England, which serves as the national periodical lending library for that country. While the Center and Lending Library are excellent sources for periodical literature, the time for delivery of their materials is often "slow", ranging from 1 week to 1 month.

All of these developments have been designed or are being designed to assure patron access to information despite fluctuations or cutbacks in individual library holdings. Several problems stand in the way of successful resource sharing programs: (1) identification of materials available for loan; (2) the time which it takes to deliver the materials; and (3) whether or not the item can be legally requested from another institution under the copyright guidelines. The development of an automated bibliographic data base will greatly reduce the problem of finding out where materials are located. The time it takes to deliver materials can probably be resolved through special delivery systems, such as exist in Missouri, or through the use of telecommunications for greater distances. One critical problem remains which does not lend itself to immediate resolution. The present copyright guidelines are designed to limit the number of photocopy requests which one library can request from another library. These guidelines are designed to protect author and publisher rights. If a library has frequent requests for material from a journal not owned by the library, it is prohibited from requesting a photocopy of the material from another library. Once this is the case, there are very few alternatives remaining to enable the library to meet the patron's needs. The material can be purchased by the library; the library may refuse the request; the patron can be sent to the nearest library owning the material; or the library can attempt to borrow the physical volume from another library. None of these are very acceptable to the patron except the purchase of the material or the actual borrowing of the physical volume. The purchase of the material will probably not be possible for budgetary reasons. If the volume is fairly current, it will probably not be possible to borrow the physical volume. The other solutions remaining are normally not acceptable to the patron. As long as the copyright law remains in its present state, it is unlikely that these problems and barriers will disappear. One can purchase a copyright clearance for each item which exceeds the guidelines, but this in the long run is as expensive as purchase of the volume and therefore limited by the same budgetary concerns. There are still, however, vast amounts of material which are not of high use and therefore are excellent candidates for cooperative collection development and resource sharing.

Even given all of these problems and concerns, libraries have little choice but to pursue these solutions at every level in an attempt to provide access to information which might otherwise be denied their patrons. (RK)

REPORT FROM THE HEAD OF COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT

Although dollars spent for books and serials increased last year (7.7% and 5.04% respectively) the libraries' purchasing power decreased. With an inflation rate of fourteen per cent in the average cost of a book, we lost close to seven percent in our monograph purchasing power. The 5.04 percent increase in the cost of our serials was registered in spite of a fifteen percent cut in serial purchases and with a "no growth" policy in effect.

We are attempting to address this continuing erosion of our ability to supply access to information to the IJMSL community in a number of ways.

A policy specifying trade paperback editions for firm orders has been adopted. In the case of several major publishers (Princeton University Press, for example) the price differential is often more than 100 percent.

Blackwell North America (our approval supplier), while doing what can only be considered an excellent job in covering most subject areas, has consistently charged us about 8% more for firm orders and titles selected from their notification slips than we would pay elsewhere. To offset this we have shifted many purchases to individual orders that formerly would have been supplied by our approval vendor. While helpful in stretching acquisition funds, this process is much more costly in terms of personnel time than using an approval supplier.

Another activity which has permitted us to purchase more books for our money has been the practice of identifying and purchasing basic titles from OP (out-of-print) sources. Because the libraries' collections are fairly new, there are significant retrospective gaps in almost every area. An OP title averages about half the cost of a new book. Thus older material, when it fills discernible gaps, is one of the few "bargain" areas left in the book-world. We have also purchased heavily from "sale" catalogs of University presses, filling in gaps in areas where coverage was lacking in previous years.

These actions, plus the fifteen percent cut in serials, meant that for the first time in many years our book acquisition rate did not decrease in spite of a budget that did not keep pace with inflation.

It must be stressed that without the fifteen percent cut in serials and the stabilization of our serials list (drop-one-add-one policy), funds available for monograph acquisitions would have decreased by about \$45,000.00 and we would have purchased almost 2,500 books less, a drop of roughly 20%!

As part of an overall serials management policy, several departments on campus have been asked to identify a core of serial titles which must be preserved permanently. Other titles have been placed in a research-support group and as the percentage of library funds dedicated to serials grows past the 60 percent level, we will attempt to shift some of those titles to alternative methods of access (i.e. micro-format, gifts, cooperative retention decisions with other libraries, etc.).

An increasingly important element in maintaining the libraries' collections is the acceptance and processing of gifts. The Education Library through the efforts of its staff received approximately \$8,000 worth of textbooks as gifts from publishers, permitting that library to update one of its most heavily used collections. Other gifts that had an appreciable impact included the generous gift of Dr. Lewis J. Sherman's books which represent a major addition to the libraries' collection of material in psychology; a major gift of back-runs of biology journals from Dr. Martin Sage; and a significant collection of bound chemistry titles from Eli Perry, a Monsanto chemist. These and other gifts donated to the library were valued at approximately \$35,000.00.

In an attempt to increase receipt of new titles we have made several changes in our approval program. In Education we have changed our approval vendor and in the areas of Psychology, Sociology and Physical Education we have

made significant changes in our Blackwell approval profile that have significant impact on our coverage.

Retrospective collection development in these and other areas must await adequate funding or fortuitous gifts. (CH)

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