

December 2011

Power and Practice in Academic Library Materials Selection Paradigms

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Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Dr. David Gross of SJSU for guiding me and the rest of my class through the process of writing academic articles, Dr. Afshin Marashi and Dr. Erika Gasser of CSUS for introducing me to Foucault, my supervisor Jennifer Ware, MLS, for encouraging me to think critically about the collection development process, and my family and boyfriend for tolerating with my maanderings about power and the library.

Recommended Citation

Smith, E. S. (2011). Power and practice in academic library materials selection paradigms. *SLIS Student Research Journal*, 1(2). Retrieved from <http://scholarworks.sjsu.edu/slissrj/vol1/iss2/6>

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Power and Practice in Academic Library Materials Selection Paradigms

In his book, *A History of Sexuality*, Foucault (1976/1980) recorded an interaction between several doctors and a mentally impaired farm hand accused of molesting a little girl. In this interaction, the doctors performed a phrenological and psychological examination, eliciting symptoms and interpreting them into a diagnosis of the disease process that they believed had caused his behavior (Foucault, 1976/1980). In Barnhart's (2010) discussion of collection development at her university library, she discussed learning about student research interests through conversation and observation and then purchasing resources relevant to those interests when performing collection development. On the surface of it, these two episodes have little in common: one is a doctor and patient interaction and the other is a library selector making a purchasing decision based on patron interests. However, they have one basic similarity. In both of these interludes, there is a power relationship between the librarian or doctor and the patient or library patron.

An understanding of the role of power in library practice is critical to library and information science (LIS) scholars. As Leckie and Buschman (2010) pointed out in their introduction to *Critical Theory for Library and Information Science*, "A better understanding of critical-theoretical approaches," such as Foucault's understanding of power, "would serve to sharpen the research lens when we examine problems relating to professional practice and real world applications" (p. xii). One area where this understanding could prove helpful is in examinations of current practices and the formation of new ones in the acquisitions portion of collection development. Here, the three major materials selection paradigms—traditional collection development (TCD), low-tech patron driven acquisitions (low-tech PDA), and electronic patron driven acquisitions (e-book PDA)—each present different power dynamics between librarians and patron groups as well as different practical advantages and disadvantages.

Foucault's Definition of Power

In an interview with Gilles Deleuze, Foucault (1972/1977) stated that power is "at once visible and invisible, present and hidden, ubiquitous" (p. 213). In other words, it is everywhere, and although easy to spot, it is hard to isolate. For Foucault, power exists whenever a relationship forms between two or more people. These two people, by interacting, create power within their relationship and define the nature of that power through their interactions (Ricken, 2006). Foucault did not feel that power is a negative thing. Instead, he argued that the negative connotations his readership has with this concept are rooted in a particular type of power that developed in Western Europe (Foucault, 1976/1980).

Multiple types of power existed for him, since individual interactions constantly define and redefine influence (Foucault, 1976/1980; Ricken, 2006). He even suggested that some of these power types have creative, not repressive, effects (Foucault, 1976/1980; Ricken, 2006). This definition has clear applications to the library science field that LIS scholars are beginning to recognize.

LIS Literature on Materials Acquisitions

Foucault's theories are starting to influence the LIS field just as his theories have already had a significant influence on many other fields. Although in the past, many scholars have been against applying Foucault's theories to LIS, today's scholars advocate this approach (Buschman, 2007). In her article on library theory, Buschman (2007) argued that using Foucault to analyze practical problems would help librarians gain a better understanding of their field while simultaneously preventing this tool from dividing a tight-knit community in the way that it has divided other fields, such as history. Buschman's acceptance of this tool, contingent as it is upon applying Foucault's ideas to practical arenas only, indicates a higher degree of receptiveness to his theories than LIS scholars have exhibited for decades (Buschman, 2007; Ollson, 2010).

Despite this new receptiveness, studies of library acquisitions paradigms tend to either overlook the role of power in purchasing decisions or fail to fully analyze it. The literature addressing TCD completely eschews questions about power, preferring to address the well-known problems and benefits of TCD (Hodges, Preston, & Hamilton 2010b). The literature examining the benefits and drawbacks of low-tech PDA is similar. Here, authors closely analyze the quality of the books added to the collection, break down the types of book requests, and examine the circulation of requested books (Way, 2009). These studies do not address power. Studies of e-book PDA vary more in their focus and methods but tend to concentrate on case studies and vendor negotiation, again largely ignoring power (Macicak & Schell, 2009; Sharp & Thompson, 2010; Zeigler & Robinson, 2010). Even Anderson et al. (2002), in addressing the role of power in e-book PDA, does not do so in a systematic manner or consider the implications of that change in either practical or theoretical terms. Although LIS scholars are not using Foucault's theories in their analysis of library acquisitions, these theories about power are applicable to the topic and reveal that patron-librarian power varies depending on the acquisitions model employed.

Practical Considerations and the Role of Power in Materials Acquisitions

Within collection development, each individual's power over materials acquisitions varies depending on the acquisitions method used. In general, LIS

scholars identify two major paradigms within library purchasing, TCD and Patron Driven Acquisitions (PDA) (Hodges, Preston, & Hamilton, 2010b). Within PDA, there are two different methods of obtaining books. One method, e-book PDA, provides material more rapidly (Nixon & Saunders, 2010). The other method, low-tech PDA, better ensures the permanence of the materials added (Hodges, Preston, & Hamilton, 2010a; Horava, 2010). All three of these collection development methods—TCD, e-book PDA and low-tech PDA—in addition to having different strengths and weaknesses with regard to physical collection building, have different implications for the power relationships between patrons and librarians.

Traditional Collection Development

Hodges, Preston, and Hamilton (2010b) state that the TCD paradigm emerged in the post-war era and is primarily concerned with building comprehensive collections of enduring value. To do this, librarians rely on a number of tools such as indexes, specialist impressions, and collections standards to build a balanced library (Evans & Saponaro, 2005). The exact deployment of TCD methods varies from library to library. However, most of these methods share one constant. Librarians frequently remain open to patron input and actively seek out patron opinions about the library collection. One way library selectors collect this information is by asking faculty what materials they want in the library. Librarians also solicit user input by asking patrons about their research interests and by analyzing Interlibrary Loan (ILL) transaction statistics (Barnhart, 2010; Nixon & Saunders, 2010). Selectors then consider the user input as well as information about the library's existing materials, collection standards, and the selectors' own impressions of the collection when choosing new books for the library. By allowing librarians to refer to user interests as well as other collection development mechanisms when purchasing materials, this method ensures that the immediate needs of users will not endanger the long-term balance of the collection (Hodges, Preston, & Hamilton, 2010b). At the same time, by asking library selectors to obtain user opinions, this method allows librarians to tailor the collection to suit local interests (Evans & Saponaro, 2005).

However, for all of its advantages, TCD has significant disadvantages as a materials acquisition paradigm. One common disadvantage is that librarians have difficulty eliciting a representative sample of user needs. When discussing how they solicit book suggestions, Hussong-Christian and Goergen-Doll (2010) reported that faculty members tend to differ in how they respond. At their library, one faculty member may ignore a librarian's request for research or book interests while another replies with an avalanche of requests (Hussong-Christian & Goergen-Doll, 2010). In this scenario, the librarian has difficulty determining

overall user interests because only a few users are talking. Another difficulty this method presents is that the librarian cannot respond as quickly to known user needs as they can under PDA methods (Alder, 2007). Instead, the librarian must review any patron-requested title and submit the order to the acquisitions department. Then, library staff must order the book and the vendor must ship it. Even when the book arrives the process is incomplete. Catalogers must process the material prior to patron use (Evans & Saponaro, 2005). Depending on the backlogs at any stage of this process, a patron might wait several weeks to receive the book he or she requested. The situation is even worse when librarians employ ILL analysis to acquire patron input. Here, ILL staff will obtain the requested material for the patron through the usual channels prior to informing the selector about the title (Nixon, 2010). This means that the library loses money by ordering the book twice: once through ILL and once as a purchase. Moreover, it is possible that the library will pay for more than one ILL transaction on a single title using this method, because there is such a significant time lag between the first materials request and the eventual purchase. The final major disadvantage with this collection development method is that it does not reverse the decline in library usage. Reynolds et al. (2010), say that the majority of library materials continue to remain on the shelves despite widespread attempts to ascertain user interests.

In addition to presenting some practical advantages and disadvantages, the TCD approach to library acquisitions also creates advantaged and disadvantaged groups in the power dynamic of library purchasing (Hodges, Preston, & Hamilton, 2010b). The TCD paradigm is, of the three methods this article discusses, the one that leaves the most influence with the librarian (Hodges, Preston, & Hamilton, 2010b). A good example of the TCD method is Barnhart's (2010) discussion of how she developed collections before switching to a low-tech PDA model. Barnhart stated that she regularly asked patrons what sort of materials they were interested in. However, she was the one who interpreted those requests as information needs and ordered the books. She had direct control over every element of the book selection process, although she was careful to pay attention to user interests. Other forms of TCD confer a similar level of power upon the library selector. For example, in the ILL analysis method that Nixon and Saunders (2010) related, the librarian determined how many patron requests for an item justified a purchase decision. Again, in this method of TCD, the librarian exhibits a high degree of direct influence over which materials are purchased for the library.

For patrons, the story is more complex. Librarians apportion patron power according to their status within the university so that faculty members, graduate students, and undergraduates experience different degrees of influence over the collection. Of the patron groups mentioned, the group with the most power over

library purchases is faculty. Faculty enjoy a high degree of direct influence on the collection because librarians consult with them. Hussong-Christian and Goergen-Doll (2010) stated that librarians using TCD regularly ask faculty members what books they think the library should purchase. Furthermore, the faculty exercise a high level of indirect power over the collection through their ability to affect usage statistics. Martin (1995) stated that usage statistics are critical to libraries because they show which areas need more funding due to their popularity. However, Nixon and Saunders (2010) warned that course reserves unbalance these statistics. As the individuals who determine course reserves, a faculty member can artificially inflate use statistics and ensure that the subject he or she teaches receives more money in the future.

Power takes a different form for student patrons. Librarians rarely consult these patrons in a systematic manner as they do with faculty. Even Barnhart (2010), someone who deeply respects the selecting abilities of graduate students, stated that prior to her experiment with low-tech PDA she did not solicit student opinions as actively as she sought faculty input. The ad hoc approach adopted by many TCD paradigm librarians who want to cater to student interests is symptomatic of the students' lower influence relative to faculty in the collection decisions made under this model. However, although rarely granted the opportunity to influence library acquisitions directly, students do exercise a great deal of indirect power over the collection's shape.

Graduate students and undergraduates indirectly affect the collection through their ILL requests and their usage statistics. Graduate students in particular make heavier use of ILL services than professors (Bracke, 2010). Given that ILL analysis is one way that librarians determine which books to add to the collection, graduate and even undergraduate students can use this service to communicate their research interests to library selectors. Similarly, both graduate students and undergraduates heavily affect the usage statistics of a library because they comprise the majority of the campus population (Gee & Shirkey, 2010). This in turn affects the overall collection shape as librarians respond to the student information needs expressed through use statistics (Martin, 1995).

In addition to presenting some practical advantages and disadvantages, the TCD paradigm has implications for the influence that librarians, faculty, and students have over the collection. Librarians have the most direct influence over the collection. They initially decide which books to add and they are integral in translating vague user desires, particularly faculty desires, into concrete information needs (Hodges, Preston, & Hamilton, 2010b). The faculty also holds direct power, in that librarians regularly consult with them about purchases, and indirect power, in that they can boost use statistics through putting books on course reserve (Barnhart, 2010; Nixon & Saunders, 2010). Students, despite their lack of direct power, hold a high degree of indirect power over the collection. By

virtue of their numbers, they can dramatically alter use statistics to reflect their needs and interests (Gee & Shirkey, 2010; Martin, 1995).

Patron-Driven Acquisitions

It is clear that different groups hold different degrees and types of influence over library purchasing decisions within the TCD paradigm. However, power also plays a significant role in the new paradigm, PDA. Under this paradigm, librarians emphasize current material demands over long-term collection balance by allowing users to order books through some sort of purchasing mechanism. The mechanisms used to perform PDA vary across institutions. However, they can be broadly categorized into two overall models, the low-tech PDA model and the e-book PDA model (Hodges, Preston, & Hamilton, 2010b). Each of these models presents its own practical difficulties and has implications for the power relationships inherent in library materials purchasing procedures.

Low-tech PDA. The theory behind both the low-tech PDA collection development model and the e-book model addressed later in this article, is that academic library users are specialists in their fields. Since users are specialists, this model proposes that they are able to decide for themselves which books meet the information needs of practitioners in their respective disciplines (Hussong-Christian & Goergen-Doll, 2010). Although this is a radical theoretical reorientation in library acquisitions, there are good reasons for making this switch. One major reason is librarians' continued failure to select books that users will check out (Reynolds et al., 2010). However, solving the problem of low use statistics by implementing low-tech PDA presents a new set of practical and theoretical complications.

Low-tech PDA employs a wide variety of mechanisms to solicit book orders. These mechanisms include everything from online purchase request forms to classes that ask students to select future library purchases (Hussong-Christian & Goergen-Doll, 2010; Barnhart, 2010). However, the most common mechanism used in this method of collection development is ILL. Libraries that base their low-tech PDA model on ILL typically follow a pattern like the one described by Fountain and Frederiksen (2010). Fountain and Frederiksen (2010) state that under a typical ILL purchase program, the library purchases requested books instead of borrowing them from other institutions. Library staff usually firm order the material through a vendor and then rush process it before delivering the work to patrons (Fountain & Frederiksen, 2010). Prior to the initiation of that process, however, the book must pass a checking mechanism. Few libraries purchase all of the books requested through ILL. Instead, they apply a broad set of selection

criteria in order to determine which ILL books to purchase (Fountain & Frederiksen, 2010). In these criteria, libraries generally include a price ceiling and limitations on both subject areas and publication dates (Way, 2009). Some libraries go even further in asserting control over the process. These institutions have librarians review all requests prior to purchasing materials (Hussong-Christian & Goergen-Doll, 2010; Nixon, 2010)

As a collection development method, low-tech PDA solves some acquisitions problems and creates others. One problem it solves is decreased circulation. The Anderson et al. (2002) study of the Purdue University library system found that 68% of the books purchased through this sort of program circulate repeatedly. This circulation statistic is astonishing given that only 16% of regularly ordered books in the institution analyzed circulate repeatedly (Anderson et al., 2002). Similarly, the study revealed that the books ordered under low-tech PDA seemed to be as valuable to the collection as books acquired through standard channels (Anderson et al., 2002). Another positive effect of this model is increased user goodwill. Reynolds et al. (2010), related that faculty appreciated the program so much that they mentioned this library initiative when recruiting prospective university students. Even the costs and turnaround times are viewed in a positive light. ILL staff has found that buying books is just as time efficient and financially expedient as borrowing them (Alder, 2007).

Despite solving some practical problems, low-tech PDA programs tend to create other difficulties. One difficulty is the perennial question of collection balance. Reynolds et al. (2010) reported that after testing a low-tech PDA model, 37.5% of librarians felt that PDA requests failed to align with their collection criteria. Of those 37.5%, at least 68% felt no need to change their collection development patterns (Reynolds et al., 2010). This finding suggests that some users were ordering materials that failed to mesh with the overall collection. To mitigate this problem, libraries usually restrict PDA allocations to a small proportion of the overall materials budget. Only 6% of the library budget at Texas A&M University libraries went to the PDA program (Reynolds et al., 2010). Another practical problem created by low-tech PDA programs is that patrons may not want all of the books they request through mechanisms like ILL in the permanent collection and would not check them out if they were present there (Hussong-Christian & Goergen-Doll, 2010). This problem is largely due to the way that libraries frequently structure PDA programs. These programs are set up to make a purchase automatically without following up with patrons to see if they actually want their requested books added to the collection. Indeed, the automation of this system was a major complaint voiced at Oregon State University Libraries. One patron commented, "An automatic system is too simplistic....a system that asks a patron,... whether a purchase is considered advantageous... seems more flexible" (Hussong-Christian & Goergen-Doll,

2010). As this patron suggested, following up with the user can circumvent the possibility that libraries will purchase materials that users do not need (Pitcher et al., 2010). Thus, while this system does present some practical difficulties, libraries can formulate solutions to them.

In addition to having practical benefits and drawbacks different from the TCD model, low-tech PDA methods also create a different power dynamic between librarians and patrons within the university. The patron comment Hussong-Christian and Goergen-Doll (2010) recorded reveals one aspect of this dynamic. Here, as before, librarians ultimately decide which materials to purchase via mechanisms like closely controlled auto-purchase programs. The patron still has little influence over whether or not the library will purchase the book (Hussong-Christian & Goergen-Doll, 2010). However, there is a significant difference in perception under this system. Since libraries advertise these programs as a way for patrons to add books to the collection, the influence librarians wield during the selection process is more visible to patrons (Bernhardt, Daniels, & Steinle, 2007; Reynolds et al., 2010). The patrons who make requests start to expect that the library will automatically add books they suggest. Even libraries that do not advertise this program receive the same exposure, although more slowly. Gee and Shirkey (2010) pointed out that there was a strong possibility that programs of this type receive extensive advertisement via word of mouth from patrons. As before, this increased visibility changes the dynamic between librarians and patrons. Reynolds et al. (2010) reported that some librarians were unhappy with the books that users selected while patrons complained of a caste system. One patron reportedly told the library to “ASK the borrower of a book if they would like it to be purchased” (Hussong-Christian & Goergen-Doll, 2010; Reynolds et al., 2010). Furthermore, the increasing visibility of this inherently unequal relationship could actually undermine library selectors’ influence over the collection altogether. Foucault (1976/1980) stated, “silence and secrecy are a shelter for power, anchoring its prohibitions” (p. 101). This suggests that by publicly acknowledging the existence of a power relationship librarians destabilize that relationship’s foundations.

In addition to altering the visibility of librarian influence over the collection, this system increases the user’s overall power in the library materials purchasing process. For faculty, this type of system means that they do not have to negotiate with the librarian every time they want to add material to the collection. Instead, they can simply order the item they want through the library’s PDA mechanism and, provided the materials fit the collection plan, the library will add the item without further ado. At the same time, they will continue to receive extensive attention from library selectors who continue to need their input when purchasing books with the portion of the budget not devoted to PDA methods of collection development (Hussong-Christian & Goergen-Doll, 2010).

Furthermore, this system perpetuates the power that faculty have over use statistics via their control of course reserves. It is still possible for a professor to inflate circulation by requiring students to read a text that has been placed on course reserve. In fact, one study of low-tech PDA had to account for course reserve inflation (Martin, 1995; Nixon & Saunders, 2010). It is clear that faculty influence over the library collection definitely increases under this model.

Graduate students also experience a dramatic increase in purchasing influence under the low-tech PDA model. Under TCD, many librarians ask graduate students about their research, but they do not approach this task in a systematic manner (Barnhart, 2010). This relationship changes with low-tech PDA because an automatic system regularly consults them about their information needs. The change is so dramatic that Anderson et al. (2002) concluded low-tech PDA “supports collection development influence by many serious scholars who would otherwise have little input on building the collection” (p. 9). Furthermore, graduate students tend to use that power. Anderson et al. (2010) reported that this group ordered the most books through the ILL PDA mechanism. Furthermore, this group can still influence collection shape through their use statistics. For graduate students this system represents a dramatic increase in their direct influence on the library collection.

While low-tech PDA almost universally increases the influence of faculty and graduate students over library purchase decisions, its effect on undergraduate power is more variable. Depending on which mechanisms the library selectors use to create a low-tech PDA program, this group may not experience any change in their level of collection development influence. In some libraries, the selectors deliberately exclude undergraduates from the pool of potential patron selectors and only order materials requested by graduate students and faculty (Hussong-Christian & Goergen-Doll, 2010; Tyler et al., 2010; Way, 2010). However, when the library selectors do permit undergraduates to participate in these PDA programs, this group’s influence over the collection increases dramatically. Research has shown that although undergraduates do not request books through low-tech PDA mechanisms as frequently as graduate students, this population does request a high enough number of books to have a direct impact on books added to the collection (Tyler et al., 2010). Furthermore, low-tech PDA collection development in no way undermines the indirect authority undergraduate students wield through use statistics. If anything, their indirect power through use statistics increases because, under the low-tech model, these numbers become an important tool used to justify the continued existence of the program (Way, 2010).

In short, under the low-tech PDA method, just as the challenges associated with materials acquisition changes, so does user influence in the power relationship between librarians and the public. While this acquisition method solves the problem of depressed use statistics, it raises concerns about the

relevance of patron-selected materials to the overall collection (Anderson et al., 2002; Reynolds et al., 2010). Similarly, under this system, patrons gain overt power in determining which books to add to the collection but find that power circumscribed by the role of library selectors as gatekeepers (Bernhardt, Daniels, & Steinle, 2007; Reynolds et al., 2010). The high visibility of their role as gatekeepers in turn destabilizes library selectors' collection influence by rendering their power vulnerable (Foucault, 1976/1980).

E-book PDA. It is clear that low-tech PDA presents different practical as well as theoretical questions than TCD. Similarly, the power relationships evident in the e-book PDA method differ dramatically from those in the low-tech PDA models. The e-book PDA model developed as an outgrowth of low-tech PDA and the common understanding that many users prefer e-books to paper copies (Littman & Connaway, 2004). This method also cuts wait times to a minimum. As Nixon and Saunders (2010) pointed out, ordering an e-book results in a near instantaneous copy of the book since there is no shipping time. Just like other models, e-book purchasing models vary in implementation details. Broadly speaking, this model allows users to select books for the collection. The vendor ensures the availability of books fitting the library selection profile. The library then loads the records for these books into their catalog and waits for users to select them. Whenever a user selects one of these e-books and browses it for a certain length of time, he or she triggers an "event" in which the vendor rents the title to the library for a small fee. After a predetermined number of events have occurred, the library automatically purchases the book (Macicak & Schell, 2009). The goal of this type of program is to avoid purchasing books that only a few users will want while continuing to provide access to both these books and other, more popular materials.

The advantages of this PDA method are manifold. This type of purchasing significantly reduces the overhead costs associated with processing and storing hardcopies of library materials. Gee and Shirkey (2010) compared the price of storing paper books to the prices associated with storing e-books. They found that paper books cost an average of \$10 a year to store, while e-books cost only \$.15 (Gee & Shirkey, 2010). Another advantage of this type of system is that e-books are popular with users. Littman and Connaway (2004) found that e-books bought under the TCD method circulated at a higher rate than bound books purchased in the same manner.

Despite the many benefits and promises of this model, there are significant drawbacks associated with the e-book industry that librarians and vendors have yet to overcome. One problem that concerns library selectors is this collection development method's lack of stability. Some articles mentioned worries over the proprietary nature of e-book formatting and the future transferability of platform

specific materials (Hodges, Preston, & Hamilton, 2010a; Horava, 2010). Another common concern over this method of collection development is that the library may not actually own the materials they pay for. Some vendors interpret a book “purchase” as a purchase of access rights for as long as the library pays a subscription fee (Macicak & Schell, 2009, p. 35). Finally, there is the perennial question about cost and format. Publishers typically release e-books later than bound books but charge the same price for them (Hodges, Preston, & Hamilton, 2010a). This forces libraries with tight budgets to choose between providing access to material immediately in the form of a bound book or providing e-book access later (Hodges, Preston, & Hamilton, 2010a). Libraries could partially mitigate this final difficulty by running an e-book PDA program in conjunction with a low-tech PDA system. However, the overall concerns about pricing, preservation, and format remain.

Just as e-book PDA changes the practical considerations that librarians must take into account, it also affects the power structure between patrons and librarians. For librarians, the effects are positive. Under this system, librarians can decide if they will permit patrons to purchase books at all. In some institutions, selectors and the e-book vendor have agreed that selectors must review any book worth more than a specified amount of money before the library buys it, even if patrons have triggered enough events to purchase the item (Macicak & Schell, 2009). Presumably, this dollar amount can be set at zero. Furthermore, librarians can perform this analysis in near total privacy. Levine-Clark (2010) pointed out that e-book systems allow selectors to hide from patrons how Online Public Access Catalog (OPAC) activity triggers purchases. This privacy option reinforces the librarian selectors’ influence on purchasing decisions. Users cannot protest the decisions made to add or reject PDA books because they frequently do not know that librarians are making these decisions. The privacy option also re-stabilizes librarians’ influence over the collection, something that low-tech PDA destabilized if Foucault’s theory that visibility undermines power is correct.

Just as the switch to e-book PDA has power implications for librarians, it has consequences for users. Under this purchasing model, most users experience a significant loss of knowledge owing to the opacity of the materials purchasing process. The loss of knowledge in turn leads to a loss of power. Because librarians’ ability to approve or veto items selected under this model can disappear from view, users do not know enough of what is going on to protest the decisions that librarians make (Levine-Clark, 2010). Where the low-tech PDA system makes librarians’ influence over the collection obvious, the e-book system obscures it.

Although both faculty and graduate students lose power to librarians due to their loss of knowledge, the apportionment of power between these groups does not change. Faculty still have influence over the collection by virtue of their

ability to order books through the new method. They also retain their ability to increase use statistics by requiring students to read certain books and through the fact that library selectors continue to consult them when supplementing PDA books with traditionally selected materials (Fountain & Frederiksen, 2010; Hussong-Christian, & Goergen-Doll, 2010; Martin, 1995; Nixon & Saunders, 2010). Graduate students also continue to enjoy a high degree of influence over which books the library adds to the collection (Anderson et al., 2002). In short, the influence these two groups enjoy vis-à-vis each other remains unchanged.

For undergraduate students, however, the story is more complicated and depends on the system used by the library. Although the literature on e-book PDA does not discuss this, an examination of the San Jose State University Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Library demand-driven e-books pilot suggests that e-book systems can differentiate between user types (SJLibrary Catalog, 2010). This in turn suggests that undergraduates may or may not be allowed to add items to the collection. However, undergraduates who can affect library purchases enjoy increased influence under this method because their knowledge of available resources increases. Undergraduates often come to college in need of a great deal of information literacy education. Library instructors often express frustration with the reliance of this demographic on Google (Gigliano, 2008). The advantage of e-book PDA for this group is that it takes relatively little information literacy to affect the collection. The student researcher does not need to know about or use advanced research tools like WorldCat to influence library purchase decisions. Instead, all they need to do is explore the OPAC (Macicak & Schell, 2009). Although research has not revealed any studies confirming an increased undergraduate influence on library collections that rely on e-book PDA, it seems likely that because this system requires less information literacy, an undergraduate is more likely to add a book to the collection.

The e-book PDA method, just as it presents different practical problems than the other two systems, creates different power structures as well. Among the host of problems that libraries and vendors must solve are questions of ownership and preservation (Hodges, Preston, & Hamilton, 2010a; Horava, 2010; Macicak & Schell, 2009). However, this method simultaneously solves problems of usage by providing patrons with information in a format they prefer to use (Littman & Connaway, 2004). In terms of materials purchasing influence, this method causes patrons to lose power because they may not know what their OPAC activity is triggering (Levine-Clark, 2010). However, despite this overall power loss, some user groups do gain more influence over the collection under this system. In particular, undergraduates may add more books to the collection because these items are easily discoverable.

Conclusion

In an academic library, materials acquisition methods are fraught with questions about library finances, collection balance, implementation methods, and the apportionment of power. The varying roles of librarians, faculty, graduate students, and undergraduate students in the materials selection process reveals that power dynamics exist in library acquisitions methods just as they existed in the doctors' examination of the farm hand (Foucault, 1976/1980). The existence of power structures in this area of library practice has implications that extend well beyond the scope of this article. How do the varying needs of different academic disciplines promote unbalanced collection influence between university departments and how can librarians correct for it? How does the power relationship between vendors and librarians affect the influence that students and faculty have in e-book collection development and how can librarians better negotiate with vendors in order to provide their new library selectors with as many high-quality possibilities as possible? It also raises questions about how, in libraries formed around the power dynamic of TCD, users and librarians will adjust to their new, more cooperative materials purchasing roles and how their expectations of each other will change. This study raises more questions than answers. However, in keeping with Leckie and Buschman's (2010) admonitions about the importance of applying theory to current practice, it does reveal that power dynamics affect the materials acquisition process differently depending on the model employed.

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