

Adult Services Minutes
September 18, 2003

Attendees: Ruth Sweet, Debbie Shoup, Jim Hobin, Suzanne Fisher, Mary Trev Thomas, Margaret Garrett, Jo-Ann Benedetti.

Topics: Changes in reference service; 2004 online database program

Changes in reference service: Libraries are seeing a major shift from print to online; some are significantly reducing their budgets for reference continuations.

2004 Online Database Program:

- Grangers – Some people don't like it. They were shocked by the statistics and felt they were not accurate. It is rare to find the full text of a poem. The database is difficult to use. Recommendation: DROP
- Grolier – There is less use of this encyclopedia than there had been with World Book. Free online encyclopedias and encyclopedias bundled with new computers are prevalent. Recommendation: DROP. Consider adding Oxford University Press Reference Online. The group would like to see a list of the resources <http://www.oxfordreference.com/pub/pdfs/ORO_list.pdf> in this database, which does include an encyclopedia.
- Hoovers – There are already considerable business and financial resources out there. The vendor has not been able to provide statistics on use, despite numerous requests by UHLS to provide them. Recommendation: DROP.
- Learnatest – Statistics on use are confusing, but it was agreed that this is an important resource that only libraries can provide. Recommendation: KEEP AND RE-EVALUATE NEXT YEAR.

LitFinder might be an option, but it was agreed that we should be looking for added value to what we currently have. The group has serious concerns about full text availability and ability to search for authors. Rachel will find out if they plan to add these functions in the near future. It was felt that our database program should focus on what libraries can provide that Google can't. Libraries need to have literary criticism and biographical resources. Rachel obtained quotes for: Gale Literature Resource Center - \$71,250; 1 user for \$7,663
Wilson Biographies Plus Illustrated - \$25,857.00 or \$1,700 per library
Wilson Biography Reference Bank - \$28,817.25 or \$2,725 per library
Proquest NYT Historical Backfile - \$34,120 for remote access; \$20,120 for on-site access only

For next year's trials:

- § Have prices listed next to the trial access information on the web page.
- § Hold a meeting during the trial so everyone can look at the trial databases and discuss them as a group.
- § Get statistics on current database use based on searches rather than hits or visits.
- § Schedule the trials for June.
- § Set up trials of Auto Repair Resource Center and Ancestry Plus.

Other business:

BETH is putting its reference staff out on the floor to interact with patrons, which is especially

important during the renovation and shifting of the collection. There was discussion about how to keep current with reference sources. Libraries are still buying reference books, but are people still using them? While traditional reference statistics are spiraling down, Internet use is way up. These transactions with patrons on computer searching and use should be counted. Many interactions take longer and have multiple questions and answers, and should be counted in a different way.

Next meeting: Tuesday, October 21 at 9:30 AM (rescheduled from Wednesday, October 1, 2003) in the conference room at UHLS.