

Seton Hall University

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2014

Seven Reasons to be Skeptical about Patron-Driven Acquisitions: A Summary

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Available at: https://works.bepress.com/john_buschman/22/

APPENDIX 9

Questions for the Patron-Driven Acquisitions Presentation

September 20–28, 2011

1. What is involved in setting up your PDA and how long does this setup generally take?
2. Knowing our library's goals and budget, what kind and size of program would you recommend?
3. How does your browsing period work? How is it tracked across sessions and users?
4. When the browsing period results in a purchase, what is the process for notifying the library that the title has been purchased?
5. What type/number of uses triggers a purchase?
6. What profiling options are available?
7. What publishers and content are included in your PDA titles? How many total titles are available?
8. What procedures are in place to avoid duplication of titles with titles already in the library's collection?
9. How and how often can I change the settings for my profile?
10. Can multiple users access a nonowned title simultaneously?
11. What cataloging and discovery service options do you provide?
12. What tools are available for tracking expenditures and how often are they updated?
13. What options are available for putting my program on hold?
14. How do I identify the MARC records that need to be deleted/suppressed?
15. How long are your customers leaving MARC records in the catalog before pulling the unpurchased titles?
16. What usage data is available? How often is it updated? How do I access it?
17. How many Voyager sites do you work with? What are the largest ones?

JOHN BUSCHMAN

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Seven Reasons to Be Skeptical about Patron-Driven Acquisitions

A Summary

What a piece of work is a man, how noble in reason, how infinite in faculties, in form and moving how express and admirable, in action how like an angel, in apprehension how like a god!

Shakespeare, *Hamlet*

*If there be nothing new, but that which is
Hath been before, how are our brains beguiled,
Which, labouring for invention, bear amiss
The second burden of a former child.*

Shakespeare, *Sonnet 59*

LOTS OF SMART THINGS HAVE BEEN WRITTEN AND SAID ABOUT patron-driven acquisitions (PDA) (in fact, some of those smart things are too smart by half—but more on this later). This chapter will be neither a comprehensive literature review nor an original dig-down-deep skeptical analysis of the claims made for PDA (though maybe a bit of an eye-rolling exercise at

trendiness). The task here is to produce a useful summary of the questions and issues that have already surfaced, albeit in a broad and scattered way among a wide variety of forums like formal studies, blogs, surveys, literature reviews, commentary, and conference presentations. This summary will focus on the reasons for a certain amount of skepticism in adopting, implementing, or exploring PDA for decision makers at all levels in libraries. In other words, this chapter is meant to gather and organize much of the widely scattered evidence and analysis that casts doubt on the PDA trend. Since many of these issues have been raised multiple times and in multiple ways, the approach here will be to document some (not all) of the instances where the evidence was gathered or the analysis put forth to make the point (sometimes moments of doubt appear like a cloud in any otherwise sunny report, and therefore tend to be buried a bit). It will proceed somewhat arbitrarily through a series of enumerated points marshaling analysis and evidence and end with a short conclusion. Throughout, I will freely mix general studies and surveys of library users with those focusing on specific groups (public library users, students, etc.).¹ We should probably begin by acknowledging the *prima facie* arguments for PDA: libraries can offer their users “access to the broadest range of high-quality content [by] taking advantage of the increasing availability of . . . content in digital form . . . [which] permit libraries to purchase e-books only when library users have requested them with a given frequency [and still] give the institutions some control over their costs” (DeGruyter 2012). PDA is identified “as an inevitable trend for libraries” and is “poised to become the norm” (ACRL Research Planning and Review Committee 2012, 314). Cutting through the hype larded into those last statements, the bottom line is that PDA “data tells a compelling story that confirms patrons can positively contribute to collection development” (Hoesly 2012, 524). Thus, PDA is part of a broader set of trends taking place in libraries that seek to more sensitively shape library spaces and environments around use and user patterns (Buschman 2012, 4–5) to take advantage of the affordances of e-distribution of reading and research resources. If these are good reasons to take PDA seriously (and they are), the obverse also holds: as professionals charged with guiding our institutions we have a responsibility to take seriously the evidence and analyses that raise penetrating questions about this “inevitable” new “norm.” It is to this task that we now turn.

REASON ONE

Librarians Have Been Doing This (PDA) All Along (or at Least for a Long While)

Even the most enthusiastic proponents of PDA admit that it is “nothing new . . . , especially for the print format. Libraries have been using patron requests to help drive collection building for years, through interlibrary loan (ILL) suggestions . . . librarians concluded that they could buy books for about the same cost as obtaining them through ILL and the books tended to circulate more than regularly acquired books”—and we have known this for much more than a decade (Dinkins 2012, 249; Howard 2010; Hoesly 2012). It in fact goes back to the use studies of the 1970s and a culture of poor or prescriptive or librarian-centered selections by librarians—pejoratively cast as “traditional” collection development by PDA proponents (Nixon, Freeman, and Ward 2010; Howard 2010; Wiegand 2011). After all, we are awash in information: “There’s a lot of bad books, and if readers are more involved in the selection, some of those bad books are going to have to go away” (Dillon in Howard 2010). We will return to the virtues of such a collection so built in light of a more considered role of a library near the end of this chapter, but the point here is that PDA is in no way a new and revolutionary idea for librarians and librarianship. Wayne Wiegand (2011) has long shown us that local preferences and usage have effectively shaped libraries over and against prescriptive and traditional models. In other words, libraries have been shaped for many decades by their users’ habits and preferences, and it is a fair assumption that they could not have done so without the tacit cooperation and support of librarians (even if only minimal at times). Those professionals were shaping their collections around patron demand. It is the affordances of Internet sales of books *and* the advent of aggregations of and access to electronic books by vendors that has surmounted some of the difficulties of earlier attempts (Nixon, Freeman, and Ward 2010). The idea, however hyped (and this is what we’re skeptical about here), is not new; it is simply now more efficiently realized.

REASON TWO

Many Readers Still Don’t Much Care for the E-Books That PDA Best Provides

I can hear the howls of protest: the devices have gotten so much better; you can use them in ways that mimic print books now; the (insert fake marketing/demographic moniker for young people that denotes their affinities to technology here) generation is “more comfortable” with e-text; screens don’t

cause so much eyestrain; and on and on. Recall that F. W. Lancaster predicted we would be “paperless” in the late 1970s, and a cursory familiarity with the history of technology shows that—even in libraries—they tend to accrete, rather than purely displace older technologies (Harris, Hannah, and Harris 1998; O’Donnell 1998).² That aside, readers across the spectrum still expect and mostly prefer the affordances of print: 63 percent in a recent *American Libraries* survey expected print books to “never” disappear³ (Helgren 2011). While the recent Pew study fell into the “young are more adaptable” style of preset analysis in reporting the data, they found that the young were “especially likely to have read a book or used the library in the past 12 months” and that “75% read a print book, 19% read an e-book, and 11% listened to an audiobook” (Zickuhr et. al 2012); most tellingly, college students over the course of a half decade or more persistently tell us through the research that for their academic work they dislike the opportunity costs of e-books and their readers (they *do* tend to like the convenience and access) and prefer the study “environment” or “space” of print as most conducive to learning (Levine-Clark 2006; Li et al. 2011; Staiger 2012; Internet2 e-Textbook Pilot 2012).⁴ Two studies a decade apart bookend each other and summarize the issue: two-thirds of the people surveyed in 2002 reported using a library and almost that amount had a library card, and of those who had used a library two-thirds had checked out a book (Davis 2006); in 2012 there are *still* “few differences between readers under age 30 and older adults when it comes to reading books in print” and “some 56% of all Americans ages 16 and older have used the library in the past year, including 60% of those under age 30” in the recent Pew study (Zickuhr et al. 2012). The reason for this continuity of preference for print is fairly simple: “Most . . . read only small portions of e-books, suggesting perhaps that print volumes are a better alternative for immersion in the text” (Levine-Clark 2006; Staiger 2012). In other words, if we really *are* building our collections around patron-driven preferences, these strong preferences *should* actually show up in our analysis: the young have not flocked en masse to e-books, and they are *not* the only users of library materials (so let’s focus on all our users, not our preferred false marketing demographic). The buzz—essentially that the combination of e-books and PDA is “inevitable” and transformative for libraries—is an excellent example of the classic “congealing oil” thesis of Starbuck (1982): we’re “inventing ideologies to justify acting ideologies out.”⁵ E-books and PDA methods are not an inexorable force, but rather will take their place *alongside* the other means that libraries deploy to continue to provide access to information.

REASON THREE

PDA Selects E-Books, Which Are Very Expensive in a Couple of Ways

First, as we have said, PDA has come to focus on the synergy between patron demand and the ability to quickly provide e-books. The problem is e-books are expensive. I am not speaking of the 99 cents for a Kindle book rental for an individual customer, but the premium libraries pay for e-books and the ability to lend them. Leasing them in the aggregate is fairly affordable right now, but PDA-selected academic books most often cost more than \$100, and frequently limits (below \$150, for instance) on cost and content must be set (Howard 2010). For public library general reading/readers, publishers have significantly jacked up prices for libraries, or limited use, or both (*State of America’s Libraries* 2012). PDA costs more. Period.⁶ A PDA advocate states that, in the face of “significant budget cuts, and when the money gets tighter, it gets harder and harder to justify spending money on materials nobody wants” (Anderson in Howard 2010). But the notion that PDA provides much more bang for the buck had better demonstrate *proportionately* more to justify what is most of the time a doubling or tripling of acquisition costs: the so-called data-driven, hard-nosed approach can’t fall back on the soft talk of *possible* uses or the convenience of access without data to back up those investments. And better use data on print collections beyond circulation should *also* be part of that mix if we are making legitimate comparisons. Second (and briefly), preservation/curation of e-books is—and has remained for some time now—dreadfully expensive and elusive: Warner (2002, 53) cites a study from the 1990s that stated flatly that “a great deal of money can be wasted . . . without due regard to long-term preservation. It is now relatively easy to [acquire] digital . . . texts or images. However, if there is no plan in place for archiving . . . preservation will be expensive or may even result in the work having to be repeated.” In 2012 it is *still* reported that the “ALA identified sustainability as a core principle for e-book collections [and] sustainability requires secure and ongoing funding, technology solutions that are appropriate to the longevity of the cultural record and long-term management capabilities” (ACRL Research Planning and Review Committee 2012, 314). Little in terms of the structural costs and challenges of preservation has changed in fifteen years—e-preservation is very expensive for libraries—or it is simply obviated altogether in PDA’s leasing/licensing environment (Coffman 2012).⁷

REASON FOUR

We Have Good Reason to Doubt Some of the Usage Claims and Impacts of PDA

There is much chest-beating about PDA's efficacy: "I've got limited resources, the purchase doesn't happen until the need is demonstrated" (Anderson in Howard 2010). But this is merely an exercise in the obvious: like interlibrary loan requests, PDA captures users when "they're pretty far along the road of knowing what they want" (Nixon in Howard 2010). In other words, PDA is a form of preaching to the choir. These are already library users relatively deep into the discovery or access tools libraries provide and they are requesting materials. Of course those materials are going to be used; they're being requested *for* use. It is the *follow-up* that gets a little vague, with little data systematically collected. There, *assumptions* tend to take over. When ILL books were purchased in an early version of PDA, "if the book is read twice, we feel the book is well worth the purchase price"—but there is no systematic follow-up data (italics added, Nixon in Howard 2010). The same applies to PDA purchased e-books: "Not only are the requesting patrons' needs satisfied, but also it is *highly likely* that those books will interest other patrons in the future" (italics added, Nixon, Freeman, and Ward 2010, 120; Arch et al. 2011); "I am *convinced* it will be either cheaper or deliver more use or both" once the PDA model is more worked out⁸ (italics added, Lewis in Schwartz 2012). But those are assumptions and hopes, not data-driven decisions. In fact, we have excellent usage data for our e-book aggregations and of the data points that trigger purchase, but like the ILL-generated purchases, little to no follow-up data on second, third, and more uses of PDA-generated purchases. A study identified the top fifty used PDA titles (out of 12,000 catalog records available to search) at a very large state university research library, and found around 70 uses per title or less for the bottom quintile—in other words, those 50 titles represented .0416 percent of the universe of items which *could* have been found and used with some frequency, and the bottom quintile showed relatively modest use given the very large population served and the academic- and research-intensive nature of the environment (Fischer et al. 2012). As a brief corollary, e-book purchases (whether PDA-generated or not) still represent a low percentage and low raw numbers among library purchases (this is sensible given the added costs) and circulation, the vast majority of libraries do not loan the reading devices (ditto), and patrons still widely find the interfaces difficult (*State of America's Libraries* 2012; Howard 2010; Doyle and Tucker 2011; Dinkins 2012; Esposito March 27, 2012; May 8, 2012; Duncan and Carroll 2011). This is an awful lot of sound and fury over a small market and hesitant use and adoption.

REASON FIVE

PDA Isn't about Us

... or most of us at the very least. An earlier analysis showed the number of "page views you need to drive to get to only \$50 million in revenue—the size of a mid-sized publisher. Short answer: way more than most people ever imagine"—a 200-page book selling 20,000 copies would generate 4 million page views and only a few thousand dollars of ad revenue—so "publishers and authors have to get a LOT more readers to bring you up to the level of revenue you get today from a printed book" (O'Reilly 2007). In PDA-Big-Thinker-World, this paradoxically means that collections *will inevitably* be PDA-driven, electronic, smaller, and specialized, relying on the yet-to-be-invented-or-funded "national infrastructure [and] Web-scale enterprises tak[ing] on an increasing role in preserving and providing the content that is not unique to a particular" library (Schwarz 2012). If this kind of Library Magical Realism confuses you, that is because your/our frame of reference is off. Most of the Big Thinkers are looking at the *overall* market for e-books and the role of PDA in helping to develop that emerging market, and it has more to do with Amazon and Google and Apple than it does, for example, with Appalachian State University Library or the Monticello (Indiana) Public Library: "The purpose of this meditation is not to deliver yet another angst-filled blog post about the horrors of capitalism. . . . Rather the point is to come up with scenarios against which strategic plans can be made. Publishers now have a glimpse of . . . consumer book markets and now should be thinking about a significantly restructured library market" (which is, by the way, a grave threat to university presses) (Esposito March 27, 2012; May 8, 2012; January 3, 2012; Brantley 2011). Thus in another wing of PDA Big Thinker World, "open access will be the dominant model. . . . many university presses will have gone under, and the rest will have been reorganized into broader units" (Schwarz 2012). The real market and money is in the STEM (science, technology, engineering, and medicine) literature which is much more highly and easily monetized, and endlessly discussed (by the Big Thinkers): open access (OA), versions of OA, the economic models and their (de)merits in the possible/desirable transition to OA, and on and on in blogs like *The Scholarly Kitchen*⁹ and Yale's LibLicense e-mail list. It is clear that *here* the economic stakes are quite high, and it is here that the much earlier visions of reshaping and monetizing library collections and services¹⁰ have been most thoroughly realized. In other words, the trunk from which current PDA discussions emanated *never really concerned patrons* in the broadest sense, but rather the "saving" of libraries by monetizing their services and assets, transforming them, the big-market shift to e-content, and how to manage the billions in assets of the economically important STEM

literature for STEM researchers. Main Street Public Library, the garden variety non-research academic library, and your local school library are *not* the point, and never were.

REASON SIX

PDA Strongly Smacks of Just Plain Old Marketing

To be very clear at the outset: librarians' motives are not in question concerning PDA. The publishers and the vendors are, well, out to create and massage a market—the publisher and vendor white papers frankly say so. PDA is just another way to market their products. There is nothing nefarious in that. But as was characterized a while ago, it is those within librarianship “oriented toward national and international networking trends, and frequently remote from professional concerns and routine organizational problems [who are] often openly allied with . . . administrative networks [and] the elite corporate culture that controls [network] technology” who tend to skew the issues (Winter 1993, 184)—PDA now included. Some characteristic prior bold predictions and “visionary” directions for libraries have been quoted here. The point isn't that they are venal in the “innovations” heavily promoted, but rather the point is the climate in which few professionally prosper by taking the sensible position that most people still like to read print books and that to actually learn something requires lots of hard work and study in a rationally constructed collection. That is, the path to professional publication, notoriety, publicity and promotion is simply often easier trod by exploring and researching and explaining the affordances of the latest publisher/vendor-sponsored information tool or package. The *result* is that much research and professional discussion appear as mere adjuncts to vendor/publisher marketing efforts. A previously cited study is a good example. Despite a heavy preponderance of negative comments from the *actual* users, the study skewed presentation of the results to highlight first and foremost that “only a minority of users elected to purchase a paper copy (12%)” vs. an eText, that “lower cost . . . was considered the most important factor¹¹ [with] the portability of eTexts also ranked very high as a factor leading to future purchase.” The study therefore concluded that “each institution [should] proceed in developing a plan for . . . optimal procurement, distribution, funding, and management [of eTexts and] focus on the impact . . . on [the users] as one of the most important considerations.” Where there *were* problems others were to blame: “the enhanced eText features [were not used, thus] little benefit from the . . . platform's capability” was realized (Internet2 e-Textbook Pilot 2012). In other words, the *core* constituencies that *used* these e-books didn't use their

features and/or didn't particularly like them, but the answer was to double down and figure out how to finance, distribute, and promote them. As should be clear from many of my earlier comments, these investigations too often and too easily slide over into marketing itself (or pretty close) or at best, why-we-should-try-and-promote-the-resource/tool-of-the-moment.¹²

Outside of moralizing or inveighing against this slippage and these practices in the name of a measure of professional authenticity and autonomy¹³ there are real costs. First and foremost, the long-advocated move to business-style marketing of the library, its “products” and services, makes the overt claim that libraries operated “without regard to . . . needs or demand” (Koontz, Gupta, and Webber 2006, 224; Weingand 2002; 1995). PDA is clearly cast as rectifying that. Within the marketing ethos, privacy is simply less of a value: patron records represent a “competitive opportunity” (Estabrook 1996). With the synergies of PDA and e-books, privacy is out the window: reading devices either owned by the individual (using a library e-book) or loaned out by the library itself capture and convey information about who is reading what and use it for marketing purposes (Caldwell-Stone 2012; Electronic Frontier Foundation 2012). PDA is just another step in this broader marketing process and the obviation of private inquiry in the (library) name of “efficiency, predictability, calculability, and control” (Quinn 2000, 259). The fact is that practices like PDA that emanate more from concerns for monetization, marketing, and the economically important STEM literature *do* have an impact not just on the practices of librarianship, but on its purpose and ethos as well:

Supplying books that patrons (or should I say “customers”?) order from a catalog of possibilities alters the fundamental nature of libraries. The library is not a mall where individuals select the goods they plan to consume, like groceries or shoes. It's a commons, a resource for the entire community furnished with books that can be shared amongst ourselves and beyond local boundaries so that, by pooling our library holdings, we all can accommodate the unanticipated and occasional need. Sharing among libraries is something that most ebooks don't allow. And building a collection for the future seems to be a thing of the past. (Fister 2010)

Coffman (2012) confirms this with his usual blatant advocacy and lack of tact: “The fact is that well over half the ebooks currently available can be read at no cost whatsoever and most of the rest are available at prices so low as to unlikely challenge any but the most destitute among us. And this raises some very real questions about the continued value of the ‘free’ lending library in the age of the ebook”—and PDA, I would add.¹⁴ Any notions of social solidarity or sharing (core to common support of a common resource like a library) are just blown away by practices like PDA when they are not introduced and

contextualized intelligently and professionally—marketed and hyped, in other words (Buschman 2012; Jaeger et al., 2011).

REASON SEVEN

PDA Doesn't Necessarily Support the Broader Aims of a Library

Fister (2010) again sums up a central point:

[A] library is more than a shopping site built to satisfy immediate patron needs. A well-chosen collection is a cartography of knowledge that helps guide the novice researcher toward books that they would never think to ask for. Patron-driven acquisition puts an enormous amount of faith in catalogs. With all due respect, they work pretty well when you know what you're looking for, but I have yet to meet the metadata that is better than what cataloging and classification can provide in combination. Umberto Eco . . . said . . . that "the whole idea of a library is based on a misunderstanding: that the reader goes into the library to find a book whose title he knows." Its real purpose, he said, "is to discover books of whose existence the reader has no idea." For him, open stacks were a triumph. When libraries turn to ebooks, browsing will be circumscribed by the cleverness of your interface and the dimensions of your computer screen.

And behind PDA are some other highly questionable assumptions. The first is that libraries (through tactics like PDA) can be a part of the royal road to learning-made-easy by crowd-built collections which are inherently better/more useful. Remember gaming and the theory/wish that it would dramatically enhance learning and literacy through the enthusiasm of gamers and the concomitant enthusiasms of librarians (Gee 2003; Lipschultz 2009)? That trend seems not to have worked out if national test scores are to be believed after decades of gaming from Pac-Man to current sophisticated shooter games. Leckie (1996) aptly summarizes the reasons why: researching something to learn requires mastering at a minimum a measure of the broader context in which the subject resides, and then being able to ask a sensible (and answerable) question about the subject, and *then* being able to systematically query the organized literature about it to read/learn.¹⁵ An expert, Leckie argues, knows that one doesn't simply "research" a topic like climate change as a beginner; one reads to get an introduction to *how climate change is thought about and researched* (the polar ice cap, ocean temperatures, rising land temperatures, the increasing occurrences and severity of separate—and specific—forms of weather like hurricanes and tornadoes, and so on). Then one picks an area of interest and queries that through its organized literature (that is, what a library provides access to in a multiplicity of ways, including a classified print

collection). PDA, as noted, obviates this kind of learning and learning by those things "accidentally found on purpose" (Duff and Johnson 2002; Mann 2007) that a library enables. After all, things have to be *there* and structured to be queried in the first place. In fact, PDA advocates *celebrate* the hopscotch and out-of-nowhere selections made for their libraries (Howard 2010), but that clearly only works *within* a reasonably constructed context—a library already extant. PDA-built collections obviate the central point of discovery: what one *doesn't* know. Second (and closely related), PDA represents (illustrated by the Fister quotes) a furthering of the library-as-hardware-store model to provide "instant information gratification" (Isaacson 2002; Budd 1997). Libraries are built to enable a community of inquiry, not the exchange value of I-want-it-so-you-buy-it-for-my-specific-needs. Third, the all-too-quick response is that PDA simply enables people to get their hands on what they find with broader/bigger/faster "research" tools (think Google). Mann (2007) explodes this myth: a hyper-abundance of "results" simply makes the inquiry incoherent and disables systematic ("accidentally found on purpose") inquiry. Either that or demand is often/largely driven by simple marketing: the PDA-generated product is in demand because it is out there in the zeitgeist in the form of marketing and advertising. Fourth and last, like the *Citizens United* decision in politics (Buschman 2012), PDA privileges a set of library "speakers"—those who can and do engage this particular choice process and "speak" through PDA. But a library is supported by its *community* (town, county, university, school) to serve more than just a vocal or savvy clientele:

It is tautological that a perfectly functioning market [which is what PDA aspires to] responds properly to *market-expressed* preferences. However, people identify and reveal preferences [and needs, I would argue] in many different ways and at many different times and in many different contexts. . . . Why should the . . . expression that tends to be the most impulsive or the most self-centered be privileged over . . . other[s]? (Baker 1997, 398–400)

PDA—if overrelied upon and oversold—will skew collections as badly or worse than the practices it represents as outmoded. And again, PDA simply serves those particular library users already deep into the discovery or access tools libraries provide.

CONCLUSION

At the outset I noted that the order of the reasons given would be a bit arbitrary, and they also do not entirely cohere as a group: we've-been-doing-a-version-of-this-for-a-while (Reason One) doesn't sit comfortably with the inherent argument that PDA essentially moves us further toward a consumer/

customer model that doesn't serve us well (Reason Seven). Likewise, the notion that we're not that important as a market (Reason Five) is belied some by the idea that vendors/publishers are eager to cooperate with us to market (Reason Six). That's okay. In fact, the reasons and arguments for PDA are all over the map (since they come from many corners and perspectives), and the purpose of this chapter was to organize the scattered reasons for skepticism about the varieties of those arguments, claims, evidence, approaches, and assumptions. In other words, the case for PDA doesn't necessarily cohere without its internal contradictions either, but that doesn't mean we can simply ignore the case. Nor is this a purely intellectual exercise: it is a contribution to a practical discussion about an ongoing and developing practice in the field which no one is going to "win" on debating points. Finally, this isn't about stopping PDA dead in its tracks. Rather, it is about developing a *taurus cacas olefacto* concerning the subject: the vague and the qualitative nature of PDA assertions/evidence can have a number of interpretations; if there's a chain of argument with PDA (and there is), each step must work (including the premise)—not just most of them; it is worth remembering Occam's Razor (when there are multiple interpretations of PDA, the simplest one is likely the most accurate); and last, can the evidence for PDA be falsified? (Sagan 2011). If, as a result, PDA takes its place as a sensible tool in librarianship's toolkit—and not as an overhyped savior to libraries/librarianship, then it will have an honorable role. This chapter was a contribution toward this tactic of librarianship assuming that honorable role.

NOTES

1. I leave it to any critics to convincingly point out real differences among them more significant than those fleeting distinctions in marketing categories that are themselves products conjured up whose purpose is to market and sell or set the stage for same (Buschman 2007).
2. For that matter, how many of us still have our teeth set on edge that we are, for the foreseeable future, still dependent on microform machines and their bulky/balky reading/copying mechanisms for access to valuable bought-and-paid-for collections?
3. In the typical fashion of hype around this subject the prediction that e-books would circulate from libraries at about the same rate or more as print books made the splash.
4. This last study is a particularly egregious example of trying to tease out "support" for e-textbooks from manifestly mixed or negative results. The treatment of the literature review is especially revealing.
5. As Fister (2010) put it, this is "a prediction combined with an assumption: this is what people will want as soon as they wake up to the new

- reality"—confirmed by one publishing industry study: "The users must be gradually brought to accept them. . . . They won't go away this time; this time they're here to stay" (Renner 2009).
6. Tim O'Reilly (2007) laid out the basic math of why this is so a while back (more on this in a bit). His analysis stands in direct contrast to the PDA-slanted coverage. For example: "Contrast those approximately 350 e-book purchases per year, all bought based on usage, with the 10,000 physical books . . . acquire[d] on speculation. Of those 10,000 titles, only about half will be checked out." In other words, the \$69,000 spent on those 350 e-books were somehow of less value than the \$600,000 spent on the 5,000/10,000 books of the print books acquired that circulated (Kolowich 2011). By PDA's hard-nosed cost calculations, it fails: PDA e-books cost just under \$200 per used copy but the print books cost \$120 per used copy—or 40 percent less with a potential future use on hand double that.
 7. Coffman doesn't lament this and in fact celebrates it. He has been beating the drum for over 30 years to monetize and privatize library services and collections, as will be seen from other citations to his writings.
 8. This from a PDA Big Thinker who has *not yet* implemented PDA in his library.
 9. See for one example the article and discussion at <http://scholarlykitchen.sspnet.org/2012/07/16/predictable-problems-the-uks-move-to-open-access>.
 10. "Commercialization will change the strategic directions for library customer services. . . . Fee-based access and retrieval services could provide the necessary capital to continue funding high-cost technology. Ultimately [it] may be what makes libraries more expensive, more lucrative, and, ironically, more customer-service oriented because it will be the marketplace that will determine which services are essential" (Hirshon 1996, 19–20; Coffman and Josephine 1991; Coffman 1998; Esposito 2006). This is a particularly good example of what Day (2002; 1998) has called a "transformational discourse" or a "discourse fashion."
 11. They were given away.
 12. Hence the aptness of the Starbuck (1982) thesis noted earlier: inventing an ideology to justify acting an ideology out.
 13. I do not use the term pejoratively here. Budd (1997; Higgs and Budd 2007) is particularly incisive about the problems and values larded into unmindful adaptation of practices and vocabularies not informed by conscious reflection on professional and social values.
 14. It is breathtaking how Big Thinkers (like Coffman) pass over the needs of the poor—or even those in some straits during our recent and ongoing economic struggles when library use picked up dramatically (www.cbsnews.com/8301-18563_162-4770599.html).
 15. To say nothing of the hard work of literacy and all that it enables as Postman (1979; 1985) has long demonstrated.

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DRACINE HODGES

11

Patron-Driven vs. Librarian-Selected

Three Years of Comparative E-Book Usage

LIBRARY PHILOSOPHIES FOR COLLECTION BUILDING ARE RAP-
idly morphing. Libraries are in a period where traditional methods of col-
lection development must be maintained, while concurrently moving toward
a future with increasing focus on patron-driven collection development
(PDCD). This paradigm shift has received much fanfare in the profession,
but there is a healthy amount of critical hesitancy to embrace models of this
type.¹ Many argue against the idea of patron-driven collection development
as the magic bullet for the shortcomings of traditional collection development
practices.

PDCD practices are evolutionary, not revolutionary, in that they comple-
ment but do not completely supplant existing selection by trained library pro-
fessionals. Philosophical discussions abound with PDCD. Having nonlibrary
selectors acquire titles of interest or for immediate use fulfills one function,
namely access, but by removing the librarian selector it also affects overall col-
lection-building strategies and allows purchase of titles that might not have
been considered appropriate for a specific academic collection. On the other
hand, PDCD allows patrons to acquire titles that fall in the interdisciplinary

ALA Editions purchases fund advocacy, awareness, and accreditation programs for library professionals worldwide.

CUSTOMER-BASED COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT

An Overview

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An imprint of the American Library Association

CHICAGO 2014

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Printed in the United States of America

18 17 16 15 14 5 4 3 2 1

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ISBN 978-0-8389-1192-1 (paper).

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Customer-based collection development : an overview / edited by Karl Bridges.
pages cm

includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-0-8389-1192-1 (pbk. : alk. paper) 1. Patron-driven acquisitions (Libraries)

2. Academic libraries—Acquisitions—United States—Case studies 3. Libraries—Special collections—Electronic books. I. Bridges, Karl, 1964- editor.

Z689 C87 2014

025 2'1—dc23

2014023029

Cover design by Kimberly Thornton. Images © Shutterstock, Inc.

Text composition by Dianne M. Rooney in the Chaparra, Gotham, and Bel Gothic typefaces.

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