

The Table of Contents

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Acquisitions

Dean's Preface

It's Complicated...Book Buying

A book. Seems easy, straightforward, and black and white, right? Unfortunately, it's not. Acquiring books can be hard, occasionally complicated, and very gray. Every transition in format comes with challenges as was made hilariously evident in this [Medieval helpdesk sketch](#) from many years ago. Just like the complications involved in using books, and ebooks specifically, we're also experiencing complications in buying books.

First, not all books are available electronically! Older books, roughly 2007 and earlier, continue to be available only in print, with exceptions for titles in large digital collections like [HathiTrust](#) and [Internet Archive](#). In general, purchase or Interlibrary Loan are the methods we use to get these "older" books for our patrons.

Not surprisingly, it is the publishers who determine which titles are available in which format, with which license terms (e.g. single user license, multiple simultaneous users, etc.), and at what cost. Libraries purchase ebooks through third-party vendors and do not purchase ebooks directly through publishers or the usual consumer channels (e.g. Amazon) since those are meant for an individual unique user. This uneven landscape between print and ebook buying isn't new but the pandemic accelerated, possibly exacerbated, the changes we're seeing such as higher prices and fewer titles available in our preferred unlimited/multi-user license terms.

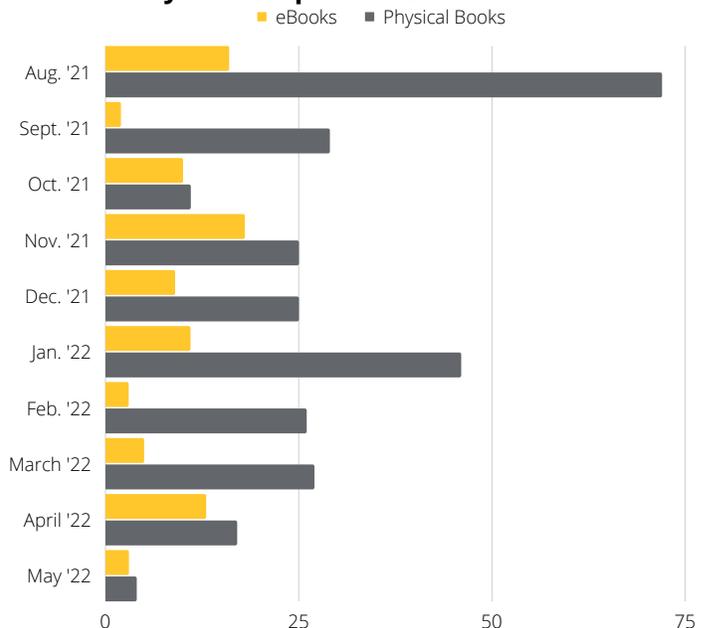
Before COVID shutdowns pushed us to choose ebooks over print, we weighed cost more heavily than format (i.e. we'd purchase what was less expensive) since we could reasonably put a print copy on reserves if needed. We now weigh intended use more heavily. If a book will be used by a whole class and we can purchase a multiple-user ebook, we will do that, even if it's more expensive than the print copy. It's this three-factor consideration of available format, available license terms, and cost for each book title that makes buying a book complicated and why we sometimes can't buy the book at all!

Thankfully, we're not facing these challenges alone; [librarians around the world](#) are navigating the same issues with publishers and purchase decision-making. Hopefully, the many libraries and state legislatures working to improve the situation here in the US [with ebook laws](#) will begin to make positive changes in the license terms and costs available for libraries. As always, we will do our best to get you the book(s) you need in the format that best serves the students and collections. Never hesitate to reach out for a conversation about or assistance with getting books anytime: library@depauw.edu.

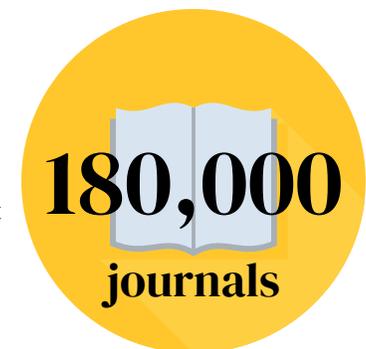
Service Spotlight: Acquisitions and Resource Sharing Manager

This position is in charge of the ordering and receiving of library materials, balancing, monitoring, and maintaining yearly library budgets. It also manages the ordering and renewal processing of databases and works directly with vendors.

Ebooks and Physical Books Purchased by DPU Acquisitions AY '21-'22



DPU Libraries Acquisitions have maintained access to **361** collections of electronic resources this AY with almost **180,000** journals included!



Who is doing the buying? Robin!

Robin Bennett joined the Libraries in the summer of 2021 after working in Admissions for 13 years. She enjoys golfing with her husband and hanging out in the pool. She loves taking walks with her granddaughter and family game nights with her husband, two kids, and son-in-law.