

## **Cooperative collection development: adult nonfiction**

In response to aging nonfiction collections, budget and space constraints, and large numbers of duplicate copies of popular fiction titles System-wide, we began to brainstorm an alternative vision for encouraging member libraries to develop their nonfiction collections intentionally and cooperatively.

When we standardized the length of time that “new” materials were designated as “new” in our automated system, member libraries’ staff began rethinking how they selected materials to purchase. Now that a particular nonfiction title could keep its designation as “new” for only 6 weeks, another library could borrow it for a patron in much less time, and wouldn’t need to purchase it. This brought about the idea of pursuing collection management as a System-wide cooperative project.

Some popular fiction authors publish up to 10 adult hardcover titles per year (James Patterson, Danielle Steel, etc.), often in series, leading to overcrowded shelves. If member libraries purchased one less popular fiction title every two months, could those funds be spent on adult nonfiction, instead?

Staff members at CCLS and member libraries have a broad range of interests, and we can use our varied experience and interests to contribute to our overall collection development.

Our goal is to improve the quality of nonfiction collections in terms of currency and authoritativeness of sources, while covering more subject areas with less duplication.

### **Adult nonfiction ground rules**

Each participating library will:

- select a subject from our list
- add 1 current favorably-reviewed title in its given subject area every two months, a total of six titles per year
- Reviews should come from *Booklist*, *Kirkus*, or *Library Journal*, which are all available through Baker & Taylor Title Source 3 and Brodart Bibz 2.
- Each subject will be assigned to one library. Libraries with larger budgets may be asked to cover two subject areas.
- The time commitment is for two years, with an option to trade with another library after one year.
- Subject area assignments *must* change after two years to encourage development of collection development skills and discourage monopolies.
- Using grant or memorial funds is acceptable, provided the subject matter fits the grant.
- CCLS staff will help with training and encouragement.

### **Locating reviews for quality materials**

By using review sources we already have readily available, we can help you select great materials for your collection *and* cover more subjects with less duplication.

Baker & Taylor Title Source 360: <https://ts360.baker-taylor.com/>

Sample search: Education

Criteria:           Format: hardcover, paperback, library ed., reinforced  
                      Audience: adult, older teens  
                      Reviews: Starred reviews

Search, then choose Book classification: Nonfiction

Sort by release date, and click up arrow

From results, use Stock-price check for availability (in-stock, on-order, VIP)

Click title for more info, including reviews

Brodart Bibz2:

[www.bibz2.com](http://www.bibz2.com)

Sample search: Law & crime (separate terms for search)

Criteria:           Broad classification: Nonfiction  
                      Formats: All print  
                      Age range: adult, older teens  
                      Search can be limited by Publication dates or Number of reviews

Sort

Availability

Reviews

It is not necessary to use either B&T or Brodart to place orders. Each CCLS library has an account already set up with both vendors. Chris can provide login and password if you need them.

### **Signed reviews are important!**

They show the reviewer's professional qualifications and expertise. They also demonstrate the journal publishers' commitment to the quality and fairness of their reviews. This is the reason for limiting our review sources here.

Anyone can leave an anonymous review on Amazon.com, even without reading a title being "reviewed". GoodReads.com came under fire in 2021 when book authors were threatened with bad reviews if they didn't pay so-called "reviewers."

Signed reviews are crucial when challenges to library materials occur. Favorable reviews defend our selection practices, when they are based on the recommendations of experienced professional reviewers. A procedure for handling challenges should be part of all collection development policies; now is a good time to review and update them.

Challenges do happen, and they are on the rise in 2022. School libraries are in the forefront of the current wave, but public libraries are hardly immune from them. It can happen here.

**Contact Chris ([cspink@cclsny.org](mailto:cspink@cclsny.org)) with questions, or for a current list of available subjects.**