

A STUDY OF INTERLIBRARY LOAN OF VIDEO AT INDIANA UNIVERSITY, BLOOMINGTON

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BACKGROUND

In the fall of 1994, the American Library Association's (ALA) Video Round Table conducted an electronic mail survey regarding the interlibrary loan of videotapes (Brancolini 1995, 4). The purpose of that survey was to determine the extent of various media libraries' resource sharing activities and to determine those libraries' perceptions of the advantages and disadvantages of interlibrary loan of videotapes. In general, most library managers reported that although they and their patrons would like wider access to videos via interlibrary loan, their actual volume of borrowing and lending in this area was generally quite low. Problems such as overly-complicated coordination, failure of other libraries to reciprocate, and fear of losing expensive titles to irresponsible patrons or postal service were often cited as obstacles to the process.

As a response to some of the opinions expressed in that survey, and to gauge the success of its own video interlibrary loan program, the Media and Reserve Services Department (MRS) at Indiana University, Bloomington's (IUB) Main Library conducted a use-study of all incoming (Lending) and outgoing (Borrowing) requests for videotapes during the four-month period December 12, 1994-April 15, 1995. The MRS video collection of about 6,000 titles supports the instructional and research interests of one of the nation's largest concentration of humanities and social sciences scholars. Since 1988/89, IUB has maintained formal interlibrary lending relationships with the seven other IU system libraries around the state, and with four other major Indiana state institutions (Purdue, Ball State, Indiana State University, and Notre Dame) as well as the Consortium on Inter-Institutional Cooperation (CIC), which consists of the Big 10 Universities (University of Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota, Michigan, Wisconsin, Michigan State, Ohio State, Penn State, Northwestern) and the University of Chicago. Finally, IU lends to any in-state secondary institution.

STUDY GOALS

The study was intended to demonstrate a number of points. First, it would evaluate the current system to gauge how well IUB and other member institutions were living up to the letter and the spirit of the rules outlined in the IU Libraries' *Interlibrary Loan Policy for Non-Print Materials*. Was there proper reciprocity among member institutions (i.e. did they lend as freely as they borrowed)? For instance, fill-rates in the Lending component would demonstrate how well IUB was fulfilling its end of the contract. Were requests for videos being denied that could have or should have been filled? Conversely, fill-rates in the Borrowing component would suggest how well IU's lending partners were reciprocating.

The *Interlibrary Loan Policy for Non-Print Materials* states that increased access to media materials through interlibrary loan does not relieve libraries of the responsibility of developing their own core collections. Thus, the study was also seen as a collection development tool both for IUB and other institutions.

Titles requested in the Borrowing component might suggest weaknesses in the MRS collection. Conversely, certain titles requested by outside institutions might represent core materials that the borrowing library could be reasonably expected to acquire themselves.

A third goal was to attempt to analyze the extent to which individual patrons were exploiting the system by making requests that were outside of the intent of interlibrary loan agreements. The policy states that interlibrary loan is meant primarily to help students and instructors obtain 'useful' materials (as opposed to titles requested for recreational purposes). Thus, the study sought to make assumptions about the 'usefulness' of requests by comparing the academic department of individual requesters to the type of title requested.

Finally, the study was intended to make recommendations, if necessary, for amending the existing policy and to explore straightforward ways to integrate more precise and comprehensive data collection on interlibrary loan of videos into MRS' regular operations.

METHODOLOGY

To gather statistics for the study, the separate Lending and Borrowing divisions of Indiana University's Document Delivery Services (DDS) provided access to photocopied requests for videos. These records provided three basic areas of information necessary to achieve the goals of the study: 1)the character of the requesters (academic department and status); 2)the nature of the titles requested (broad Library of Congress classification); and 3)statistical information regarding the requests themselves (date request was received, whether filled or unfilled, institution making or filling a request, etc.).

The validity of the study depended upon acquiring and recording 100% of Lending and Borrowing requests, both filled and unfilled during the study period. This presented some difficulties due to the sheer volume of requests that DDS received on a daily basis as well as the number of channels that requests followed during processing. Isolating requests for videos was further complicated by the fact that no space existed on interlibrary loan request forms to indicate format of item requested; therefore accuracy depended greatly on the alertness of DDS staff members. However, 100% accuracy in recording Lending filled requests was achieved by checking the requests received from DDS against MRS' own records of tapes lent out on interlibrary loan.

One other problem encountered in the Lending component was determining the academic department and status of requesters outside of the IU system. Most of these requests came in through OCLC and, as such, included only the name of the requesting institution and not the patron's name, department, or status. However, this information was only applicable to one aspect of the study, namely, determining the "usefulness" of requests. Since there were relatively few requests outside of the IU system and the validity of this aspect of the study did not depend upon a close margin of error, this deficiency was considered minor.

GENERAL FINDINGS

IU Bloomington received 121 total Lending requests for videos and filled 100 for an 83% fill-rate. On the Borrowing side, 40 total requests were received and 20 filled for a 50% fill-rate. Although no statistics were available for Borrowing requests from past semesters, MRS was able to provide the total number of filled Lending requests for Fall 1994 (105) and Summer 1994 (42). These numbers suggest that the volume

of video interlibrary loans, at least on the Lending side, has remained fairly consistent over the past year, although MRS staff commented that their lending volume has risen steadily since 1989 when the *Interlibrary Loan Policy for Non-Print Materials* was adopted.

Though total requests for video have been generally consistent over time, these totals might still be seen as relatively small, particularly compared to total requests for print materials. While it was beyond the scope of this study to investigate so-called “potential” (unsubmitted) requests, three reasons for these might be the patrons’ inability to access IUCAT (IU’s OPAC), skepticism that requests for nonprint materials would be filled, or uncertainty as to whether such requests could be made in the first place.

Potential requests aside, these relatively low totals suggest that most patrons are finding the videos they need locally. (Similarly, the very small number of requests by institutions outside IU’s lending circle (5%) suggests that those outside institutions are finding what they need within their own interlibrary lending partnerships.) This is in keeping with the intent of the policy in that interlibrary loan is meant to increase access to specialized titles by member libraries, not replace acquisition of core materials. Of course, defining a specialized or core material in this context would also depend on discerning the scope of a particular library’s collection development policy, and/or pinpointing those titles that were requested repeatedly over time, which was again beyond the scope of this study. (No repeat requests for titles were made by any library during the course of this study).

RECIPROCATION OF VIDEO LOANS AMONG MEMBER LIBRARIES

The fill-rates for Lending and Borrowing requests at IUB suggest that there was nearly perfect reciprocity among all member institutions within the limits established by the *Interlibrary Loan Policy for Non-Print Materials*. The policy states that member libraries may place loan restrictions on titles that are scheduled for use on the lending campus within the two week interlibrary loan period, or on any high-use titles specifically labeled in IUCAT as “campus use only”. Since the majority of Borrowing and Lending requests were from within the IU system, it seemed relevant to determine how many requests were for titles labeled in IUCAT as “campus use only”. This would provide a more accurate perspective on a library’s willingness to loan by showing how many unfilled requests were actually within the limits of the policy. (Unfortunately, it was not possible to determine how many requests were unfilled because of scheduled use within the two week loan period, nor was it known if non-IU lending partners had agreed to provide campus use only labels in their OPAC records.)

On the Lending side, it is significant to note that of the 21 requests not filled by IUB, 10 were for titles that were clearly labeled in IUCAT as campus use only (7 of these were made by the same IU system patron on the same day). If these ten “legally restricted” titles are subtracted from the total requests received, IUB’s Lending fill-rate would be 90%.

To determine reciprocity on the Borrowing side, it was not feasible to consider each lending library individually. Instead, all IU lending partners were treated as a single entity. In this context, it is significant to note that 12 of the 20 unfilled borrowing requests were for titles held by libraries outside of IU’s lending circle. Of the remaining 8 unfilled requests, 2 were for titles held by IU system libraries that were labeled in IUCAT as campus use only. By subtracting the 12 titles not held by an IU lending partner and the 2 campus use only titles from the total requests received, IUB’s lending partners’ fill-rate would be 77%. This revised perspective illustrates that there is equal intent to reciprocate between IUB and its lending partners.

OVERDUE ITEMS

Two of the goals of the study were to determine if the present interlibrary loan period of two weeks was reasonably sufficient for borrowing libraries to return tapes on time and to establish any statistical relationship between the number of late returns and a borrowing institution's relative distance from IUB.

Of the 100 tapes IUB sent out on interlibrary loan, 70 came back within the two week loan period. Over half (16) of the 30 overdue tapes came back within three weeks, and eight more were returned within four weeks. Because so few tapes were excessively overdue, no identifiable patterns emerged to connect overdue tapes with any single factor, including relative distance from IUB. However, considering that 70% of the total were returned on time and 86% of the total were less than one week late, it can be assumed that two weeks is a very "workable" loan period.

BORROWING REQUESTS AS A COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT TOOL

One of the goals of the study was to examine the titles requested in the Borrowing component to see if these might suggest any weaknesses in the MRS collection. The head of MRS, Kristine Brancolini, determined that of the 40 titles requested, only three were within the scope of her collection development policy; the rest were either too specialized or marginal or were simply unavailable for purchase.

Although one of the original goals of the study was to examine Lending requests to determine if any of these represented titles that a borrowing library might be expected to acquire for its own collection, it was determined that IUB could not make appropriate recommendations unless the study was continued over more than one semester, in order to verify repeat requests.

'USEFULNESS OF REQUESTS'

As stated earlier, the IU Libraries' *Interlibrary Loan Policy for Non-Print Materials* states that interlibrary loan is meant primarily to help students and instructors obtain "useful" materials as opposed to titles requested for recreational purposes. Excessive requests of this latter type might undermine the primary mission of most academic media libraries, which is to support instruction and research. At worst, it could compel media library managers to keep a tighter reign on certain parts of their collections, or to attempt to investigate the "motive" for certain requests before lending an item.

In order to determine the so-called "usefulness" of requests, the department and status of an individual requester was compared to the broad LC classification of titles he/she requested. Over 95% of Borrowing requests and 93% of Lending requests were for titles whose subject matter was judged to be consistent with the reported academic department of the requester. A glance at the titles themselves (Tables VI and VII) suggests that most requests were academically motivated.

The results were especially interesting in terms of requests for feature films and other dramatic performances. For instance, of the 28 Lending requests for videos classified in Library of Congress Classifications PN (Literature History and Collection) and 8 in PR (English Literature), almost all were made for instructional use by faculty in humanities such as English, Communications, Arts & Sciences, Education, etc. This was further verified by comparing the titles with the courses taught by the respective faculty.

RECOMMENDATIONS

According to this analysis, the present system of interlibrary loan of video at IUB is quite functional. Therefore, no changes in the existing Policy or process are recommended at this time.

One of the intentions of the study was to determine if IUB's present network of interlibrary lending partners was sufficient to meet the particular needs of IUB patrons and to make appropriate recommendations to extend this network if necessary. While the fill-rate for Borrowing requests (50%) suggests that those needs are not being met within the present alliance, a title search of the unfilled requests in the OCLC database also revealed that nothing short of a nationalized interlibrary loan system would be sufficient to significantly increase Borrowing fill-rates.

Integrating more comprehensive recording of interlibrary loan statistics into the regular operations of MRS will be difficult, if not impossible, unless the method of isolating interlibrary loan requests for video is made less labor-intensive. Since a great majority of requests are still submitted to IU DDS in paper form, this study alone demanded the cooperation and diligence of five full-time DDS staff. Isolating requests by format was made more difficult by the fact that there was not a field on either the paper or electronic request forms to indicate the format of the requested item. It is conceivable that if the request system were completely automated and could also include a discrete field to indicate format, a command could be coupled with the format field that would automatically duplicate and forward all Borrowing and Lending requests for videos to MRS.

Another problem of the present system is that it is impossible for a patron to determine if a tape is scheduled for use by a lending institution within the two week loan period. This problem might be addressed by linking the reservation system to IUCAT, in order to include a tag similar to the "campus use only" label. This would notify potential borrowers that the tape is scheduled for use by another patron within a certain range of dates. This of course might create more problems than it solves, because it would require a staff person to enter and delete the information.

REFERENCES

Brancolini, Kristine, and Steven Eghazi. 1995. Internet survey on interlibrary loan and video. *Video Round Table News* 4(1): 4-5.
 Indiana University Libraries. 1994. *Interlibrary loan policy for non-print materials (Revised)*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University.

TABLE I

LENDING-GRAND TOTALS

| | | |
|--------------------------------|-----|----------------------------|
| Total Requests: | 121 | 100% |
| Total Filled: | 100 | 83% |
| Total Unfilled: | 21 | 17% |
| | | |
| Total Requests by IU campuses: | 98 | 81% (of Total Requests) |
| Total Filled: | 82 | 84% (of IU Total Requests) |
| Total Unfilled: | 16 | 16% |

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| | | |
|---|----|----------------------------|
| Total Requests by IU Lending Partners (in-state, C.I.C., etc.): | 17 | 14% (of Total Requests) |
| Total Filled: | 17 | 100% (of IU Partner Reqs.) |
| Total Unfilled: | 0 | 0% |
| Total Requests by Others: | 6 | 5% (of Total Requests) |
| Total Filled: | 1 | 17% (of Other Requests) |
| Total Unfilled: | 5 | 83% |

TABLE II

OVERDUE ITEMS (LENDING ONLY)

(Total Filled=100)
(Loan length=14 days)

| | | |
|----------------------------|----|---------------------------|
| Total Tapes On-Time: | 70 | 70% (of Total Filled) |
| Total Tapes OD (Over-Due): | 30 | 30% |
| Total OD 1-3 Days: | 6 | 20% (of Total OD) |
| Total OD 4-7 Days: | 10 | 33% |
| (Total OD 1 week): | 16 | 53% (16% of Total Filled) |
| Total OD 8-10 Days: | 6 | 20% (of Total OD) |
| Total OD 11-14 Days: | 2 | 7% |
| (Total OD 2 weeks): | 8 | 27% (8% of Total Filled) |
| Total OD 14+ Days: | 5 | 17% (5% of Total Filled) |
| Total Confirmed Lost: | 1 | 3% (1% of Total Filled) |

TABLE III

NUMBER OF DEPARTMENTS AND STATUS OF REQUESTORS (LENDING)

| | |
|-------------------------------------|----|
| Total Number of Departments: | 26 |
| Total Number of Faculty: | 49 |
| Total Number of Grad: | 14 |
| Total Number of UnderGrad: | 24 |
| Total Number of Staff: | 2 |
| Total Other (Resident/Non-Student): | 1 |

TABLE IV

BORROWING-GRAND TOTALS

| | | |
|--|----|--------------------|
| Total Requests: | 40 | 100% |
| Total Filled: | 25 | 50% |
| Total Unfilled: | 20 | 50% |
| Total Filled by IU Campuses: | 16 | 80% (of 20 Filled) |
| Total Filled by IU Lending Partners (in-state, C.I.C., etc.): | 3 | 15% |
| Total Filled by Others: | 1 | 05% |

TABLE V

NUMBER OF DEPARTMENTS AND STATUS OF REQUESTORS (BORROWING)

| | |
|--------------------|----|
| Total Departments: | 21 |
| Total Faculty: | 6 |
| Total Grad: | 19 |
| Total Undergrad: | 3 |
| Total Staff: | 5 |

TABLE VI

DEPARTMENT COMPARED TO REQUESTED TITLE (WITH LC CODES) (LENDING ONLY)

(Note: This list is meant as an example of the process used to judge the “usefulness of requests; therefore, only requests from the Lending component are provided here. The 9 titles judged “not useful” are followed by: ??-Questionable-??)

ARTS & SCIENCES:

1. Marketing Booze to Blacks (HF 6161)
2. Brief History of Time (QB 981)
3. Juliet of the Spirits (PN 1997)
4. Never on Sunday (PN 1997)
5. Judith of Bethulia (PN 1997)
6. Hedda Gabler (PT 8868)
7. Faust (PN 1995)

ARTS ADMINISTRATION:

1. Name of the Rose (PN 1997)

BUSINESS:

1. Sex, Power and the Workplace (HD 6060)

CAREER SERVICES:

1. Giant (PN 1997) ??-Questionable-??

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COMPUTER INTEGRATED MANUFACTURING TECHNOLOGY (CIMT):

1. Race for the Future (TL 220)

COMMUNICATIONS:

1. Madonna: Truth or Dare (ML 420)
2. Killing Screens (P 96.V5)
3. Plan 9 from Outer Space (PN 1995)
4. Metropolis (PN 1997)
5. Blue Angel (PN 1997)
6. J'Accuse (PN 1997)
7. Animation: The Beginning (TR 897)

COMPUTER SCIENCE:

1. Mao Years: 1949-1976 (DS 777) ??-Questionable-??

EDUCATION:

1. Man the Measure of All Things (CB 68)
2. Protest and Communication (CB 68)
3. Birth of a Nation (F 869)
4. Life in the Balance (GF 75)
5. Home Sweet Home: Kids Talk About Joint Custody (HQ 777)
6. Place Called Home (HV 4505)
7. Innovations in Technology (LB 1028)
8. Iron & Silk (PN 1997)
9. Science Revises the Heavens (PQ 125)
10. First Forests (QH 366)
11. Green Machine (QK 711)
12. Medici & the Library Manuscripts (Z 933)

ENGLISH:

1. Oedipus Rex (PA 4415)
2. Quilombo (PN 1997)
3. I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings (PN 1997)
4. Hamlet (PN 1997)
5. Hamlet (PR 2807)
6. Othello (PR 1995)
7. Otello (PR 2829. A2)

FINE ARTS:

1. Guardian of the Forces (B 12470)
2. Behind the Mask (DT 515)
3. Yoruba Ritual (DT 515)
5. I Need Your Full Cooperation (HQ 1154)
6. Four Artists: Robert Ryman... (N 6494)
7. Will to Provoke Featuring Survival Research Labs (N 8222)
8. Swoon (PN 1997)
9. First Signs of Washoe (QL 737)
10. Diana's Hair Ego (RA 644)

GENERAL STUDIES PROGRAM (GSP):

1. Among the Wild Chimpanzees (QL 737) ??-Questionable-??

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HISTORY:

1. Evolution and Human Equality (GN 281)
2. Women in American Life (Pt. 1) (HQ 1410)
3. Women in American Life (Pt. 2)(HQ 1410)
4. Women in American Life (Pt. 3)(HQ 1410)
5. Women in American Life (Pt. 4)(HQ 1410)
6. Return of Martin Guerre (PN 1997)

INDIANA RESIDENT/NON-IU STUDENT (INRES):

1. Doors of Perception (BF 575)
2. Brief History of Time (QB 981)

MUSIC:

1. Oh Happy Day (PN 1995)

LIBRARY:

1. In China Family Planning Is No Accident (HQ 766) ??-Questionable-??
2. Of Mice and Men (PN 1997) ??-Questionable-??
3. Sam Shepard's True West (PN 1997) ??-Questionable-??

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES:

1. Romance of the Rose (PQ 1483)
2. Le Corbeau (PN 1997)

ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERSHIP & TRAINING (OLS):

1. Life in the Trees (QH 366) ??-Questionable-??

PIERCE EDITION PROJECT:

1. Alex Haley (E 185)
2. To Paint the Stars: Life and Mind of Van Gogh (ND 653) ??-Questionable-??

PSYCHOLOGY:

1. Mind of a Murderer (KF 224)

STUDENT ACADEMIC COUNSELING SERVICE (SACS):

1. Between Black and White (HQ 777)

CONTINUING STUDIES:

1. Touch of Sensitivity (QP 451)
2. Meet Marcel Marceau (PN 6120)

SCHOOL OF LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE (SLIS):

1. Santa Claus (GT 4992)

SCHOOL OF PUBLIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS (SPEA):

1. Birth of a Nation (F 869)
2. Excellence in the Public Sector (HD 70)
3. Electric Valley (HD 9685)
4. Suburbs: Arcadia for Everyone (HT 351)
5. Throwaway People (Frontline) (HV 5833)
6. When Children are Witnesses (KF 9672)
7. America by Design-Public Places & Monuments (NA 075)

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8. America by Design-The Street (NA 075)
9. Factory and the Marketplace (Q 125)
10. Plague on our Children (RA 1242)
11. Chemical Valley (TD 195)

SOCIAL WORK:

1. Case of the Bermuda Triangle (G 558) ??-Questionable-??
2. Developing Positive Self-Images in Black Children (LC 2771)
3. Understanding Advance Directives (R 726)

UNIVERSITY DIVISION:

1. White Man's Country (DT 43357)
2. Blues Masters: History of the Blues (ML 3521)
3. Transplant Experience (RD 598)

UNKNOWN: (No departmental info available):

1. Barn Burning (PN 3511)
2. Art of Dancing: Introduction to Baroque Dance (GV 1618)
3. Republican National Convention (E 840)
4. Grey Gardens (CT 275)
5. Kind Hearts and Coronets (PN 1997)
6. Baroque Dance, 1675-1725 (GV)
7. Reassemblage: From the Firelight to the Screen (HQ 1814)
8. Something Within Me (LB 1591)
9. Bicycle Thief (PN 1997)
10. Einstein on the Beach: Changing Image of Opera (MI 500)
11. Bradshaw on the Family (HQ 536)
12. Soft Self Portrait of Salvador Dali (ND 196)
13. Macbeth (PN 1997)
14. No Father, No Mother, No Uncle Sam (D 810)
15. Beauty and the Beast (PN1997)
16. Corner in Wheat (PN 1997)
17. Black King (PN 1997)
18. Two Dollars and a Dream (HD 9970)
19. In a Brilliant Light: Van Gogh in Arles (ND 653)
20. Filming of a Television Commercial (PN 1995)
21. Rosencrantz & Guildenstern are Dead (PN 1997)
22. Goin' to Chicago (E 185)
23. Wild By Law (QH 76)
24. Ripples of Change (HQ 1763)
25. Dylan Thomas Return Journey (PR 6039)
26. Passion for Customers (HF)
27. Bob Knight for AIME (GV 884)
28. In the White Man's Image (E 97. I1335)
29. Trelawney of the Wells (PR 5182)
30. Last Laugh (PN 1995)