



eResources Embargo

TO: IHL S Board of Directors
FROM: Leslie M. Bednar
DATE: May 18, 2020
RE: eResources Embargo

When libraries began to close physical locations, MacMillan abandoned their embargo, reverting to their previous pricing model from 2019. In addition, the publisher lowered their prices on some titles. CEO John Sargent stated, “There are times in life when differences should be put aside.” They also dropped the controversial Tor imprint embargo, which was an early “test” embargo. ALA (American Libraries Association) praised MacMillan, stating, “Equitable access is more important than ever as libraries continue to serve their communities amid rapidly changing circumstances.”

It is unclear whether MacMillan came to this decision due only to the pandemic, or if it was due to what Sargent called a “horrific” drop in sales in January 2020. Prior to this decision, MacMillan had also been working with a select group of librarians to develop alternative (controversial) pricing proposals, which includes combinations of metered access, pay-per-use, bundling, and two-year expirations, but nothing has yet been announced.