

Q&A FOR PATRONS AND STAFF

Can you please buy the eAudiobook format of [insert title]?

Thank you for the feedback on the books and formats that interest you. We will be able to purchase the eAudiobook format of that book on February 1, 2020, because that publisher placed restrictions on library purchases in July 2019, and we are currently part of a boycott to protest those restrictions and try to reverse them. In the meantime, we have the book you want in another format, or we would be happy to help you find new similar eAudiobooks while you wait.

What publisher placed restrictions on libraries and what were the restrictions?

Blackstone Publishing, which supplies many of our audiobooks, placed a restriction on libraries in July 2019. Libraries must wait to purchase an undetermined number of their eAudiobooks for 90 days after the books have been released to the public. They hope that library patrons will not wish to wait 90 days to borrow the book, and will buy the book privately instead.

What are the details of the boycott?

[insert your own details here and delete the WDLC details below. We left it in as a template you can use]

The Washington Digital Library Consortium, of which WCLS is a member, has chosen to boycott Blackstone Publishing's eAudiobooks for six months, beginning August 1, 2019 and ending January 31, 2020. The Washington Digital Library Consortium (WDLC) is a group of 44 of public libraries from all around Washington State which have pooled their resources to offer eBooks and eAudiobooks through the vendor platform OverDrive. WCLS card holders may recognize this service under the names Washington Anytime Library, OverDrive, or Libby.

If you're going to buy the book I want in February, Blackstone still gets the library's money. So what good does this do?

Our goal with the boycott is to communicate with Blackstone and other publishers. We do not expect to affect Blackstone's income significantly unless several of the extra-large library systems in the country join the boycott. Rather, the boycott is about communicating that publishers should not expect to do "business as usual" with libraries at the same time that they place restrictions on libraries. Many publishers offer us wonderful books without placing restrictions that hurt library patrons.

Additionally, Blackstone is one of four publishers who have introduced new restrictions on libraries in the last 15 months. We see a pattern and believe that to protect library patrons from future restrictions, we need to make it clear to publishers that we are paying attention and actively advocating for the best services that publishers can provide. If we do not, we foresee more restrictions and higher costs. Since library budgets are unlikely to keep pace with costs that rise in this way, we will be forced to purchase

fewer items. In other words, we believe that the short-term restriction of the boycott on one publisher will help avoid longer-term restrictions on our whole collection.

Will it help for me to contact Blackstone with my feedback?

We very much appreciate it when patrons take the time to show support for their library and advocate on its behalf! If you would like to contact Blackstone directly, you can email them here:

libraryservices@blackstoneaudio.com