Legacy Missions in Times of Change: Defining and Shaping Collections in the 21st Century

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Oya Rieger
Ithaka S-R

Antje Mays
University of Kentucky

Charleston Conference™
Issues in Book and Serial Acquisition
Legacy Missions in Times of Change: Evolving Nature of Collections

Oya Rieger
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Our goals:

1. Characterize evolving nature of collections
2. Highlight change agents and their impact on notion of collections
3. Through live-polling, discuss how academic libraries are developing strategies to understand and meet their users’ needs
1. How do we define the library collection?
2. What do collections imply?
3. What is involved in building a collection?
4. What does it means to build a collection or develop a collection policy?
What’s a Collection Anyway?

Oya Y. Rieger

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Topics: Collections and preservation, Cross-institutional collaboration, Digital scholarship and data management, Discovery and access, Libraries, Scholarly communication
Tags: Library collections

Introduction: Collections at the Heart of Academic Libraries

In 1953, Kenneth J. Braugh stated that the mission of Harvard’s library was to collect and preserve everything. Those days are long gone. For the last couple of decades, given the rapid expansion of scholarly content sources and types, even the best-funded research libraries have become cognizant that a comprehensive collection is an unattainable vision. Nevertheless, many research library mission statements continue to give prominence to their role in making the world’s knowledge accessible.

Key Drivers of Change

- Changing nature of scholarly record
- Preference for discovery and access at scale and online
- Growing emphasis on OA and transforming scholarly communication
- Increasing prominence of distinctive collections
- Evolving library priorities
Regardless of the expansion of library services upstream to support early stages of scholarly workflows, libraries continue to be identified and branded by their collections.
A 2017 study based on 82 million holdings in 212 libraries found that 42 percent of books had never circulated and that 75 percent had three or fewer circulations.
Facilitated collection as a coordinated mix of local, external, and collaborative services built around users’ actual needs and behaviors, moving from a just-in-case to just-in-time information landscape.
Vision to create a broad network without institutional boundaries...
Librarians have been discussing the idea of building capacity through collaborations and consortia since Farmington Plan (1942)
Many libraries feel pressured to focus on their own home institutions’ priorities and prove their importance and uniqueness to their senior leadership.
Redefining Library Collections
Collective Collections

governance and ownership models
retention commitments
preservation strategies
access and discovery
Digital Scholarship

collections as data
librarians as technologists
Selection and Budget Models

subject and liaison models

collection development policies

interdisciplinary and inter-institutional research
Value Driven Collections

inclusive and diverse collections
partnerships with community archives
Research Workflow Tools

scholars’ daily workflows
seamless end-to-end services
Legacy Missions in Times of Change:
Impacts on Collection Services & Roles

Antje Mays
Director of Collections
University of Kentucky Libraries
Collections: Evolutions and Pressures

Business models & Budget constraints → keeping up, or diverging?
- Publisher packages
- Consortium deals
- Digital proliferation: e-resources and streaming media
- Resource licensing frameworks

Broadly speaking...
- Access vs. ownership: leased content vs. outright purchase
- Supporting OA infrastructures vs. selecting materials:
  - → headed for resource competition? (time, budget capacity, organizational focus)
- Unique local collections ↔ digitization projects
- Selection versus curation
Divergent Portfolios, Diffusion of Effort

- Evolving library directions:

  - maker spaces
  - emerging technologies
  - artificial intelligence
  - machine learning
  - augmented reality
  - research data services
  - data curation
  - digital humanities
  - open access
  - institutional repositories
  - the library as publisher
  - collections as a service...
The Collections as a Service movement

Collections as a Service: A Research Library’s Perspective
Julie Linden, Sarah Tudesca, Daniel Dollar

Abstract
ACRL’s “2016 Top Trends in Academic Libraries” noted a “shift to the incorporation and integration of more continuous, ongoing, flexible, and sustainable review of collections.” and “an increasing need” to align collection development with “institutional research and curricular requirements.” This article describes these trends playing out at a top-ranked research library. Given the library’s long history of collecting print books, the article examines the monographic acquisitions program from multiple angles, including circulation, expenditures, approval plans, and e-book usage. There are also suggestions for additional metrics to evaluate collections as a service, as well as questions posed to frame an ongoing research and assessment agenda. The models described in this case study and the proposed research and assessment agenda can be adapted by other academic libraries, both to fit local institutional needs and as collection development and “collections as a service” are increasingly realized within interinstitutional collaborative networks.

Transforming Monograph Collections with a Model of Collections as a Service
Doug Way

abstract: Financial pressures, changes in scholarly communications, the rise of online content, and the ability to easily share materials have provided libraries the opportunity to rethink their collections practices. This article provides an overview of these changes and outlines a framework for transforming monograph collections with a model of collections as a service.
Pain Points for Liaison Librarians:

- Major families of pain points
- (as identified in the “Dangerous Liaisons...” 2018 Charleston Conference session)
Liaisons: Structural Pain Points

High turnover:
- High librarian turnover

Information Silos:
- Different liaisons doing different things and not sharing ideas to collective group.

Loss of Focus → Losing Sight of Values
- Balancing between changing to meet current campus needs and constantly pivoting so quickly that we lose sight of core needs and values
Liaisons: Pain Points - Workloads

- High workload due to increasing instruction needs.
- Large portfolios, competing priorities, lack of time to excel in multiple areas.
- Liaison is being asked to represent everything the library does.
- Liaisons are overworked; much campus growth, same number of subject liaisons even as # of functional liaisons continues to grow. Sustainability!
- Time, liaison responsibilities are secondary to functional (but to do it "well" it's a lot of work), varying levels of comfort with outreach and communication to faculty.
- Work overload.
Liaisons: Pain Points - Spread of Duties:

• High workload due to increasing instruction needs.

• Not enough time to focus on faculty needs given all my other responsibilities. There is not a culture at my current institution of having close ties with the faculty. Our liaison faculty role is simply another title we have but with no responsibility.

• Liaison is being asked to represent everything the library does.

• Time, liaison responsibilities are secondary to functional (but to do it "well" it's a lot of work), varying levels of comfort with outreach and communication to faculty.
Liaisons: Team issues ↔ Information silos

- Wild Wild West - Other librarians reaching out to liaison programs without informing the actual liaison.
- Difficulty with teamwork and collaboration, building new relationships with faculty, lack of awareness of new expectations around assessment, outreach, project management/time management and planning.
- Different liaisons doing different things and not sharing ideas to collective group.
Liaisons: Pain Points - Skill needs

• Lack of mentoring for new liaisons.

• Knowledge.

• Large portfolios, competing priorities, lack of time to excel in multiple areas.

• Difficulty with teamwork and collaboration, building new relationships with faculty, lack of awareness of new expectations around assessment, outreach, project management/time management and planning.
Poll opens 2pm Wednesday, November 6th.

After the Conference, see compilation of anonymous poll responses on revised slides → [https://sched.co/UZR5](https://sched.co/UZR5)

Interactive sneak preview poll: [https://libguides.uky.edu/ChasConf](https://libguides.uky.edu/ChasConf)
Poll Results Reporting Out


- Session participants see poll results first ↔ will email December.
For further reading: References


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Questions?

Oya Rieger
Ithaka S-R
https://sr.ithaka.org/people/oya-y-rieger

Antje Mays
University of Kentucky
https://works.bepress.com/antjemays
Thank You