One Root, Many Trees: Reviving Collections Practices

Presented by:

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Knowns and Unknowns:

- Complexities of evolving print/digital environment call for collaborative problem-solving;
- Print monographs continue as primary vessel for Humanities research;
- Yet digital publishing will continue to alter existing publishing practices and collection strategies;
- Collections of Distinction: expertise applied to identify and deepen areas of research value.
The 1940s...

Enrollment in Higher Education, c. 1940: 1,494,203
c. 1950: 2,444,900
(NCES)
The 1960s...

Enrollment in Higher Education, c. 1970: 8,004,660 (NCES)
The Book Boom

Approximately 45.7 million “distinct print book publications” in N. American academic libraries.

Brian Lavoie, Constance Malpas, J.D. Shipengrover, ‘Print Management at ‘Mega-scale’: A Regional Perspective on Print Book Collections in North America.” OCLC. 2012.
And thus . . .

“There was a vision of a distributed national collection [across academic libraries] that was international in scope and of strategic value, although it was never realized.” [my italics]


Institutions of Higher Education:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1940</td>
<td>1,708</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>2,525</td>
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<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>3,535</td>
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(c. 1950-2000: Growth of Libraries and Collections Departments to Maintain and Develop Collections)

(NCES)
“Long-form humanistic scholarship has been a vital medium through which the humanities achieves impact both within and beyond the academy; it plays a role in maintaining a diverse ecology of inquiry and methods, so that the research of the humanities influences and is influenced by the work of the social and natural sciences. . . . We realize that long-form scholarship may change as new forms of digital publication become available . . . but we recognize that evolution of the monograph will be gradual.”

Collections of Distinction:

“Distinctiveness is a desirable feature of local collections . . . If a significant portion of each participating institution’s print book collection is distinctive -- that is, comprised of publications not widely available at other institutions -- then combining print book holdings into a collective collection yields a print book resource that is, from the perspective of the user, far more extensive than what it on hand locally.”

“Print Management at ‘Mega-scale’”
Annual Levis Reading Prize
Sponsored by: VCU English, VCU Libraries, VCU College of Humanities and Sciences, and the family of Larry Levis

Awarded by the Department of English and its MFA in Creative Writing program at Virginia Commonwealth University, the prize is given annually in the name of the late Larry Levis for the best first or second book of poetry published in the previous calendar year.
Curating an Arts Collection
Arts at Virginia Commonwealth University

- VCUarts is ranked as the #1 public graduate program in the fine arts by U.S. News and World reports (2016).
- VCUarts is ranked #2 public or private, second only to Yale (2016).
- The arts collection sits within the general collection of James Branch Cabell Library, the library for the academic campus.
Curated collection

- This year the fund for arts formerly on approval is $15,000. In 2013 we spent $33,000 on these areas through our approval plan.

- Greater flexibility for different formats.

- A collection that fits the needs of its stakeholders without wasted money or space.
Building the Engineering Collection Single Handedly: One Collections Librarian’s Experience
Foundational competencies

- Knowledge of the publishing industry, its current practices and trends, development and implementation of collection development policies

- Effective management of budgets The handling of approval plan, acquisition processes

- Weeding of obsolete materials, and the general principles involved with the preservation of collections

- Collection Librarians should have a deep understanding of the mission, vision and objectives of their institutions

- Demonstrate expert knowledge of the content and format of information sources including ability to critically evaluate, select and filter them
I view Collection Development as an art
The quality of the collection depends on how much you put into it, and how comprehensive the Collection Policies are
My Style is to be:
   - Strategic
   - Cautious
   - Intentional
   - Mindful of Accreditation

Faculty are my best allies
Build relationship to the point that I am their ‘Go to’ person for intellectual resources
Developing Engineering Collection

- Core Electronic Resources – non existent
- Budget limited
- Collection-rudimentary

VCU SOE four Years old

Programs:
- BS in: Mechanical
- Electrical
- Chemical
- Biomedical
Developing Engineering Collection

Situation in the fourth year of the School of Engineering:

- Monograph collection in engineering was rudimentary
- Journal collection seriously inadequate
- Core electronic resources almost non-existent
- There was no provision for standards
- Citation database did not go far back enough
- Funding was not consistent
Collections Expenditures 1983 +

Funding not consistent
Prepared the Collection Development Policies for Engineering Disciplines
Approval Plan

- Approval Plan - quickest way to build monograph collection
- Choosing the Vendor
- Invested time in developing the profile
- Monitored approval plan shipments
- Selecting Publishers for the profile
Aggressive Purchasing - Electronic Resources

Databases include
- IEEE - 2007
- Scifinder
- SpringerLink
- Inspec
- Web of Science
- NTIS
- Engineering Village (Compendex)
- Knovel

Journals From Societies-crucial
Examples: ASME, OSA, SPIE, SAE, IOP, AIAA, AIP, AICHE
IEEE
Reputable Publishers’ Backfiles
Conclusion

Our Collection can stand side by side in comparison with research libraries of the same size and stature - Excellent in terms of meeting our needs

I built the collection from the ground up

It took much less time to catch up with our peers

I was able to do this only because I am dedicated Collections Librarian.
One Root, Many Trees: Reviving Collection Practices

- Management of Collections
- Critical Partnerships
- Stewardship
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Management of Collections
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Management of Collections

Local Needs

Shared Investment

Coordinated Decisions
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Management of Collections
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Management of Collections

The Virtual Library of Virginia
The consortium of the nonprofit academic libraries within the Commonwealth of Virginia
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Critical Partnerships – Collections and Outreach
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Critical Partnerships – Collections and Faculty
Critical Partnerships – Collections, Acquisitions and Vendors
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Stewardship
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Stewardship
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Stewardship

[Bar chart showing budget data]
Final Thoughts
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