

Based on this effort, ASU Library began work in January 2018 on a three-year implementation grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation to reinvent the library's strategy and practices for open stack collections. This project enables ASU Library to conceptualize and develop intentionally designed print collections to engage, educate, and inspire scholars and learners. Insights resulting from this project will inform the curation of the open stacks in the renovated Hayden Library, scheduled to open in early 2020. Hayden Library serves over 50,000 students enrolled in residential programs at Arizona State University's Tempe campus.⁷ The renovation of the 252,670-square-foot library provides an opportunity to explore and better understand why and how people use this large, primarily undergraduate, library.

The numbers of degree and nondegree programs at ASU increase every year as the university aims to become a "fifth wave" institution, which expands the capacity and reach of higher education to millions more Americans and people around the world otherwise at risk of being left out of a global knowledge economy.⁸ The design principles for renovating this central building on the Tempe campus reflect the need for flexible spaces supporting a wide variety of academic and intellectual engagements, along with quiet study and reflection. The plan for the building increases classroom and study spaces. It also opens additional entrances and cross-through points to further integrate Hayden Library into Tempe campus life, especially during the summer months, when members of the ASU community naturally seek air-conditioned settings. The plan also significantly decreases the open stack footprint in the building, necessitating a careful look at the print collections that will return to Hayden Library. We want to learn how our print collections contribute to how users perceive and distinguish different parts of the facility, and how those perceptions intersect with the services we provide.

A Key Component of Space Design

A driving force for the open stacks concept is the continually increasing importance of space in academic libraries, which asks that we assess our spaces as services to our users.

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Pressures to increase areas for student study and group work, faculty research, and coffee breaks and refreshments most often leave their traces on new library designs by reducing the overall space devoted to collections. We believe that the print collections that are retained should be a key component of space design, serving as important actors within the space and engaging their audience rather than serving merely as a backdrop for study.

By designing a physical space, we also design the experience of that space. By deliberately including print collections as part of the experience, we create the opportunity for programmed events and displays that explore books and other tangible formats as a vital force in the library, in the academy, and in broader contexts. Much of the information embedded in print resources cannot be shared widely on the Internet due to



copyright law, cultural and privacy concerns, commercial interests, or lack of funding to digitize and make the content available. In addition, readers may prefer print for some purposes even when a digital surrogate is available. While the subjective experience of reading or browsing a book in print is not inherently better or worse than engaging with the same content in a digital format, the experience is nevertheless different. Depending on the book, and the reader, that difference can be meaningful.

As people move through and interact with library spaces, how they perceive library resources can encourage new knowledge and ways of thinking. Aspirational missions of the academic library to enable and support individual academic success, to foster exploration and discovery, and to curate and steward narratives and records of collective social change are still relevant and important. The digital age has moved more of the experience we create and facilitate to a virtual setting, but the in-person experience still matters. As a result, the interpretation and presentation of our print collections still matter. Library spaces can become destinations for inspiration, discussion, learning, and scholarship, and we propose that print collections are essential in this endeavor.

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Experimentation

The open stacks at ASU Library will become more specialized and more highly curated. The library will employ a user-centered, inclusive, and data-driven approach to collection development, display, and ongoing analysis. To achieve this, we have undertaken a series of experiments to better understand selection methodologies that will engage the various constituents who will experience our collections in Hayden Library and other library locations. One preliminary experiment now underway, "Required Reading," is a student curation project in which students express their interests, share meaningful works with others, and help build the library's collections.⁹ The project included an open call for undergraduates to submit their top "required reads," a description of the importance of each of these books in their lives, and a photograph of themselves. The library purchased student-endorsed books not already in our collections and then collocated collections from two of the submissions in a high-traffic library location on the Tempe campus. We hope that the display will grab the attention of passersby while providing a platform for the voices of students regarding the meaning and importance of library collections. We plan to review circulation and other use data after a suitable interval of time.

As of this writing, ASU Library is developing "10 Compelling Ideas" as discrete open stack collection development experiments. We selected these projects through a card sorting process, matching an internal stakeholder with an external stakeholder, a physical library location where the experiment will take place, and an assessment mechanism. The resulting set of experiments will inform decision-making about the hundreds of thousands of volumes that we will bring back to the renovated Hayden Library in

2020. We will track engagement with community-based initiatives as we seek partners to suggest parameters for collections, identify titles worthy of inclusion, and apply their experiences to build collections. We can also gain information from those who engage with our collections by encouraging patrons to share reactions and reflections.

One experiment we plan to explore is a collection about collecting. We will seek input and insight from other collectors at ASU, whether they work with maps, insects, art, meteorites, or other collectibles. Then we will develop a bookstore-style display about why, how, and what people collect. This project offers an opportunity to reflect on why libraries collect and the impact that collections have on individuals, communities, and society. We believe that this effort will reveal some of the hazards as well as the benefits of people superimposing order upon the world. In addition, this experiment aims to

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increase transparency in collecting processes to help patrons learn about scholarly and information resources. This collection, and other deliberately designed open stacks collections, can also be explored as data, allowing us to share, examine, and improve the principles informing the design.¹⁰ The more our communities know about libraries, library processes, and information resources, the more they will

make use of what we offer and, we believe, the better prepared they will be as learners and members of society. This relationship works both ways: the more we learn about our communities and how they interact with books and library collections, the better we will create collections for the future.

The Future of Open Stacks

By mobilizing the conversation about print collection development at a national scale, we can move toward a shared understanding of goals for a national and global print collection that will benefit generations of scholars. These conversations may then inform shared print archiving initiatives as well as local open stack collection development. We also hope that academic libraries will use open stack collections as part of space planning and service efforts. The American Library Association (ALA) and other professional associations lack a formal venue for conversations about general print collection development. Nevertheless, we see an opportunity to expand existing conversations around shared print collections to include the deliberate design of open stacks in library spaces. In the months to come, we hope to revive these conversations at professional meetings and among those who share our interests.¹¹

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Notes

1. Here we rely on the social praxis model developed by Matthew Smith and Ruhiya Seward. See Matthew Longshore Smith and Ruhiya Seward, "Openness as Social Praxis," *First Monday* 22, 4 (2017), <http://firstmonday.org/ojs/index.php/fm/article/view/7073>.
2. Rosemont Shared Print Alliance, "Welcome to the Rosemont Shared Print Alliance," 2018, <https://www.rosemontsharedprintalliance.org>.
3. HathiTrust Digital Library, "Shared Print Program," https://www.hathitrust.org/shared_print_program.
4. United States Government Publishing Office, Federal Depository Library Program, "The National Plan for Access to U.S. Government Information," 2016, <https://www.fdlp.gov/project-list/national-plan>.
5. Arizona State University (ASU), "The New American University Is ASU's Reconceptualization of 21st Century Higher Education," <https://newamericanuniversity.asu.edu>.
6. ASU Library, "The Future of the Academic Library Print Collection: A Space for Engagement," 2017, <https://lib.asu.edu/sites/default/files/marketing/ASU%20Whitepaper%20-%20Which%20Books.pdf>. See also ASU Library, "The Future of Print," <https://lib.asu.edu/futureprint>.
7. ASU, "ASU Facts," <https://facts.asu.edu/>.
8. ASU, Office of the President, "Our Imperative Is Innovation," 2016, <https://president.asu.edu/node/2110>.
9. This project was led by ASU Library's open stacks curator, Rachel Leket-Mor. To learn more, see ASU Library, "Students Curate Collections That Inspire, Reveal," 2018, <https://lib.asu.edu/librarychannel/Students-curate-collections-inspire-reveal>.
10. Here, we intend to learn from the burgeoning collections as data communities of practice. For more, see "Always Already Computational—Collections as Data," 2018, <https://collectionsasdata.github.io/>.
11. Contact the authors for information about opportunities for conversation.

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