Crafting an Active Collection for the Research Library

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The Claremont Colleges Library

- A unique consortium: seven colleges, one library!
- The “Goldilocks” Library: large enough to have resources for innovation; small enough to be nimble
- Vit@lization of collections and spaces
Active Print

● The print collection is heart of most libraries, and especially those with strong liberal arts programs

● How to best present the collection – from “warehouse of books” to an active collection
Discovering and Telling the Story

- The story is bigger than circulation statistics
- Active Print Task Forces
- Browsing Study
Browsing study
Approach, pt. 1

21 semi-structured 60-minute interviews

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Approach, pt. 2

Key categories

- Keeping up with current scholarship
- Typical means of finding resources
- Browsing in person vs. online: impetus, frequency, value
- Decision-making while browsing
- Preferred browsing environments
- (Expectations for students)
Emerging patterns

- Who browses in person
- Format of primary sources
- Need for foundational literature
- Speed of discipline
- Quality of library search for discipline
Emerging questions

- Do those who don’t browse our collection browse elsewhere?
- What are the limitations of our collection for browsing?
- What are faculty expectations for browsing prior to arriving at Claremont?
Why do researchers browse in person?

- Resources only available in print
- Tactile engagement and scanability
- Sense of submersion and participation in scholarly tradition
- Creative exercise
Emerging Ideas & Pilot Projects

- Research collections
- Student-curated collections
- Target subjects
- Teaching in the stacks
- Scholarly literature lab
- Enhanced online search
- Readily available contextual/foundational literature
What’s next?

- Assess, reiterate, and expand pilots
- Collaborate and share information with colleague institutions
- Integration with our Master Plan
Questions?

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