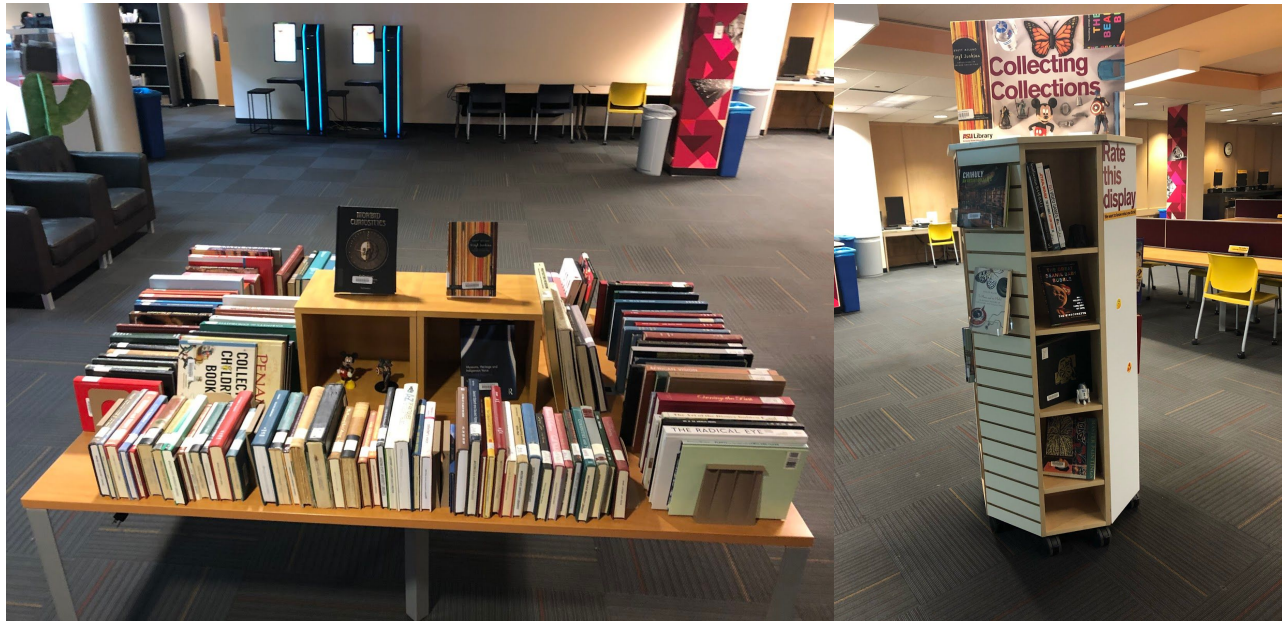


Collecting Collections Report

By: Emily Pattni, Curation Specialist for the Future of Print

Project dates: January 2 to March 1, 2019

Report updated: May 29, 2019



About the Future of Print

ASU Library was awarded a \$381K grant from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation to experiment with different ways in which libraries present print materials to the public. We know that information is more digitally accessible than ever before. As students turn to what is quick and convenient for them, ASU Library is exploring how to present our print materials in ways that remain engaging and relevant to the twenty-first century user. Through a series of book displays, The Future of Print team hopes to gain a sense for how students perceive print collections, how they use the library, and what it takes to engage them in physical books. For more information on our projects, visit <https://lib.asu.edu/futureprint>

Research Question

People interact with books differently when they are at a bookstore than at a library. As we continue to study how our communities engage with print collections, the Future of Print team was interested to see how they respond to library collections that are presented in bookstore-style displays.

Philosophy

The ASU Library seeks to increase browsability and engagement with our library print collections. Browsing library materials is often done using the online catalog. The catalog provides a call number which allows a person to enter the stacks and locate a specific title. Related books might also be in the same area and are sometimes discovered as a result of the library's system of organization. For example, a book about cryptocurrency would be grouped next to other books about cryptocurrency or finance, a related subject, according to the Library of Congress classification system. Though our users do not always understand call numbers, they can still locate a subject of interest by using the library catalog, asking a staff member, or even luck.

Bookstores, on the other hand, rely on book covers to attract readers. They organize books by genre, subject, author, or release date. People that enter these establishments know what genre they enjoy, their personal reading level, or even an author's name. Often, they come into a bookstore not knowing a specific title to purchase, yet walk away with one or several books found as a result of serendipity.

For this project, we experimented with presenting books using bookstore-style display tables to showcase materials and by putting the book covers back on the books to attract the attention of readers. We also added several opportunities for engagement such as emoji assessment and a book log. We tested whether this method of design increases engagement and book circulation.

Full Selection Methodology

I used Alma analytics to identify book titles from the ASU Library that had the word "Collections," "Collecting," and "Memorabilia" in their title or subject. This generated [a list](#) of 184 titles. I then looked over this list and selected titles that best suited the theme of this collection. Lorrie McAllister, the Associate University Librarian for Collections, reviewed the list and made several helpful topic suggestions such as critical perspective

on collecting and the repatriation of indigenous materials. Joyce Martin, the Library's Curator for the Labriola National American Indian Data Center, also sent in 21 recommendations. After incorporating their input and researching lists such as Amazon Books, the final list came to 184 books, including 16 [new books](#) that needed to be ordered. Dan Rogers, Manager of Collections Operations, requested books owned by ASU and had them sent to Hayden library where the display would be. I examined the physical books and decided that sixteen were either redundant or irrelevant to our theme.

This selection process required Alma Analytics, feedback from other library staff, and a physical examination of the books. As such, the content that was ultimately chosen for the display consisted of a wide range of subjects relating to what people collect, the motives behind these behaviors, and the significance of collecting for different cultures.

Assessment Mechanisms

Circulation

Out of the 184 titles featured in this display, there were 14 check-outs:

- *Vinyl Junkies: Adventures in Record Collecting* by Brett Milano
- *Lock, Stock and Barrel: The Story of Collecting* by Douglas and Elizabeth Rigby
- *Hollywood Movie Posters, 1914-1990* by Miles D. Barton
- *Magnificent Obsessions: The Artist as Collector* by Lydia Yee
- *Loot: The Battle Over the Stolen Treasures of the Ancient World* by Sharon Waxman
- *Herbarium* by Robyn Stacey and Ashley Hay
- *The Art of the Disney Golden Books* by Charles Solomon
- *Ragwings and Heavy Iron: The Agony and the Ecstasy of Flying History's Greatest Warbirds* by Martin Caidin

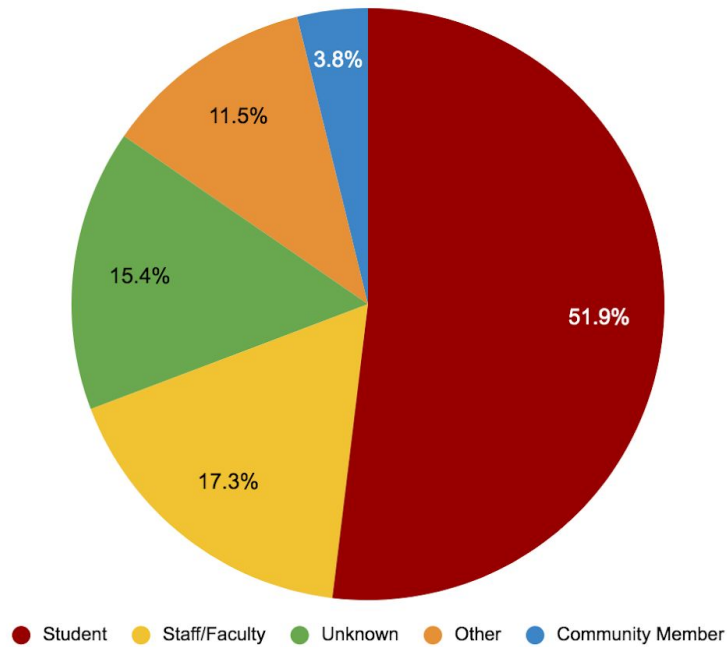
- *Frank Lloyd Wright and the Art of Japan: The Architect's Other Passion* by Julia Meech
- *Sneakers: The Complete Collectors' Guide* by Unorthodox Styles
 - Checked out twice
- *The Propaganda Front: Postcards from the Era of World Wars (The Leonard A. Lauder Postcard Archive)* by Anna Jozefacka, Lynda Klich, Juliana Kreinik, and Benjamin Weiss
- *Wheel of Supreme Bliss: Buddhist Statues and Ritual Objects from the Himalayas (The Cromme Collection)* by Jeong-hee Lee-Kalisch and Hans-Werner Klohe
- *How It All Began: The Story of Carl Jacobsen's Egyptian Collection, 1884-1925* by Mogens Schou Jørgensen and Neil Martin Stanford

The items listed above consist of both new materials purchased for this collection and materials that already belonged to ASU Library. The last time any of these 13 items circulated was at least fourteen years ago; this means that the books were likely checked out because we chose to feature them.

Book Log

We set up a book log for individuals to record what they collect. They were also asked to write their affiliation (i.e. undergraduate student, faculty, other). A total of [49 responses](#) were recorded. We divided the affiliations into five categories. While the majority of responses were from students, the spreadsheet shows a wide range of backgrounds engaging with the collection. The 11.5% labeled “Other” consists of students from other universities, visitors not affiliated with ASU, Alumni, and those who did not specify.

Book Log Participants



The responses reflected a wide range of personal collections and tells us that our communities taking time to think about the project's theme.



Emoji Assessment Board

We invited students to rate the display by sticking an emoji sticker on a board that represents how they feel about the collection. We chose this form of assessment, because we thought it would be both fun and easy for students to participate. We interpreted the stickers based on a likert scale to gauge levels of interest:

☹️ 1 - Individual has a low level of engagement. They may dislike not being able to read the spine of the book. They may also dislike poetry.

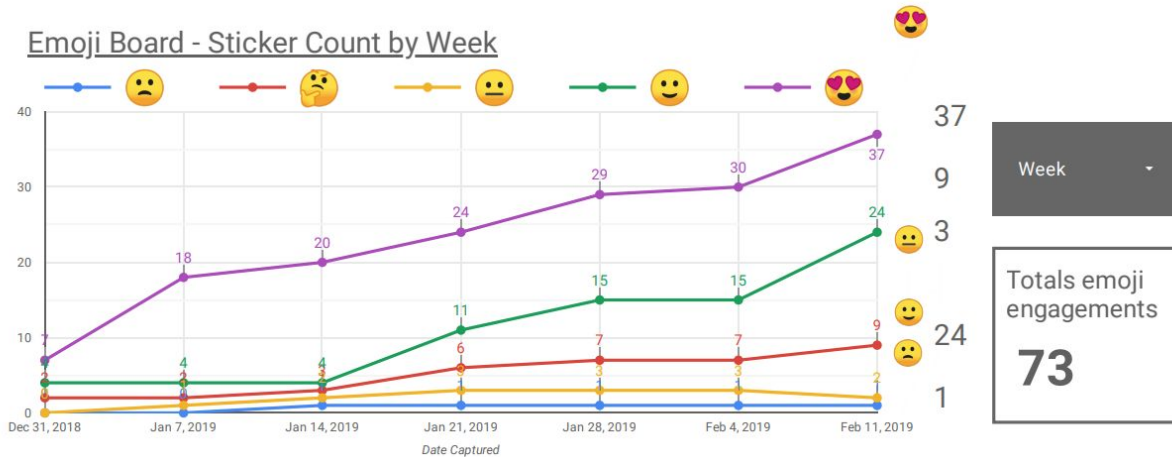
😐 2 - Individual is indifferent to the display. They might not like the display or care that it is there. This emoji could mean that

😬 3 - Individual is engaged to the point of thinking about contents of display. We interpret this as the display being either confusing or thought-provoking. It could cause students to think about the purpose of libraries and book collections.

😊 4 - Individual is engaged and likes the display.

😍 5 - Individual is very engaged with display and likely to check out future library collections.

10 Compelling Ideas - Collecting Collections Numbers



Checkout Data Highlights			
# Items Loaned	# Loans compared to same months in the previous year	Percent Increase over last 6 months	Collection Users
14	0	396%	64% Undergraduate Students 36% Faculty and Staff

We took [weekly photos](#) of the emoji assessment board to study the change over time. Tammy Dang, responsible for the data analysis of our projects, created a data visualization to represent the varying levels of student engagement. There were a total of 73 [emojis](#) placed on the board over the two months, 37 (51%) of which were heart-eyes.

Collection Photos

Nine staff members submitted photos of their personal collections. We included these at the book display with a note inviting students to submit their own photos on instagram using the hashtag #ASUCollects. This added another visual element to the display.

- [Submitted Photos](#)

Reflection

Successes

- Victor Surovec, the program coordinator for the Makerspace, was excited to teach me how to use the 3D printers for this project. I was able to quickly create several models that represented what people collected. Some objects included Mickey Mouse, a Dodge Charger, Monopoly game pieces, and a butterfly. These show how people collect Disney memorabilia, cars, board games, and even insects. A complete list of the models created can be found [here](#).
- I also send out an email to all library staff describing the display and requesting their participation. Nine individuals submitted [photos of their personal collections](#) to be featured at the display in the Hayden '89 lobby. This email also led to many conversations between the project team and library staff interested in the Future of Print projects.
- Edward Weidle, the Operations Supervisor at Hayden Library, was helpful in identifying and setting up a display space conveniently located close to the entrance and elevators. During this experiment, we learned that this is a great location for displays due to the large number of foot traffic.
- Over 90 of the books were from our off-site high density storage location at ASU's Polytechnic campus. The retrieval process is different for HDC than other library locations. For this project, we were able to establish a workflow for pulling a large number of books from the high density storage facility.

Challenges

- We had a very specific display table in mind for this project and had a difficult time finding one within our price range. We contacted Barnes and Noble to ask about their furniture vendor and even considered custom-ordering a table. In the end, we were able to order several stackable cubes to put in the center of a study table to achieve our vision.
- Although we were able to creatively recreate a bookstore-like display, there were a few factors that prevented us from achieving the exact look we were aiming for. Aside from having custom-made retail furniture, bookstores typically present multiple copies of the same book. Every book also has some sort of book cover. We were able to request book covers for newly-purchased materials, but many of the older books that ASU Library already owned did not have covers.
- As the books were requested, they were sent to my desk at Hayden Library. The books were stored here for quite some time as well as checked out to my

personal account until we were ready to switch them over to a temporary display location. Since this project, we have set up a work order department to check books out to for future collections projects.

Discussion

Overall, this project had many different interactive elements to facilitate community participation and input. It was clear from the number of emoji stickers and personal responses on the book log that people were thinking about the display's theme and spending time exploring its contents. Throughout the two months, I rotated which books were facing out. These books tended to get checked out more than the others, telling us that students could be attracted to bookstore presentations more so than traditional library shelving methods. The location also contributed to the success of this project, because the Hayden lobby gets quite a bit of foot traffic and has not traditionally been a location for physical book stacks. The engagement at this book display signifies that this is a strategic space to place books in the future.

Using bookstore displays in library spaces is an appealing strategy for engaging users. We already have plans to replicate this presentation style on another display at the Noble Library and to install shelves for rotating collections in the Hayden Lobby.

Press

- [Library Channel](#)

Additional Documents

- [Notes to Staff](#)
 - A description of the Collecting Collections project for the staff at Hayden Library and a set of instructions to maintain the display
- [Communications Shared Google Doc](#)
 - A document describing everything that we needed from our Communication Unit (Signage, press, materials)