



**Art Libraries Society of North America, 34th Annual Conference
Fairmont Banff Springs, Banff, Alberta, Canada, May 5-9, 2006**

**Workshop 5-A: Collection Development and Assessment Part A: Collection
Development Strategies
Friday, May 5, 2006, 9:00 a.m.-11:00 a.m.**

Workshop Questions

**Moderator: Kim Collins
Recorder: Jon Evans**

Section 1

Martha Ruddy for Deborah Ultan, University of Minnesota

Ms. Ruddy posed several questions to the group, which were used as jumping off points for discussion in break-out groups. The questions included:

What is working in your institution relating to collection development?
What is not working?
How can we impose some structure on this overwhelming area?

The break-out groups met and then had an individual report on the themes or topics touched on by their group:

Museum group (2 independent groups)

- Curatorial influence – squeaky wheels vs. unheard voices; trying to maintain balance under these conditions
- Staff recommendations outside the scope of collection development policy – encourage staff to utilize their departmental budgets, which often have line items for materials related to special projects.
- Conservation issues
- Strategies for managing this overwhelming process
- Exchange issues – an area of interest for many in the group, though there was insufficient time to fully address

Art & Design School group

- Balancing small budgets vs. approval plans
- Added value from vendors, such as slip plans; while valuable, they noted that these do not necessarily yield the lowest cost for materials

Academic group

- Focused on contemporary art serials and their ever-changing nature.

Other comments raised in discussion included:

General note that administrations are asking for more metrics data as a way to make budgetary decisions related to collections.

Some mentioned the value of ArtBibliographies Modern's alert feature, which one can set to send email notifications when new records are added featuring selected artists or topics.

Section 2

Sarah McCleskey, Hofstra University

Ms. McCleskey noted that one of the reasons that we don't weed is an emphasis on numbers. Specifically, she stated that accrediting bodies look at size of collections as a way to denote collection strength.

Additionally, she stated that fear of public backlash can also impede weeding progress. She suggested that in order to overcome this, one should inform stakeholders in advance. Further, she expressed that placing items on a shelf for faculty review before they are discarded can head off tensions, which others confirmed. In fact, several attendees noted that they do so and often faculty or other audiences rarely take the time to review materials.

Ms. McCleskey had attendees go through a hypothetical weeding project, based upon titles in the Hofstra University Libraries. She asked individuals to work in pairs to weed items. One attendee noted that audience is critical in defining how one collects and inquired as to whether we were weeding for our collections or Hofstra's. She responded that attendees should weed for their own collections. General consensus was reached on whether to weed most items, though audience clearly impacted decisions in every case.

One attendee inquired as to whether there were sources particularly good for the weeding of fine arts collections. Another attendee mentioned that there was a publication published by ARLIS/UK entitled *Standards for Stock Disposal*.