

RBMS COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT DISCUSSION GROUP
February 10, 2018
Sheraton Hotel, Denver
Minutes

The Collection Development Discussion Group met at 1:00, Saturday, February 10, at the Sheraton Hotel in Denver. Fourteen attendees joined co-conveners Jeffrey Marshall and Karla Nielsen.

During introductions, attendees were encouraged to mention any significant acquisitions in their libraries or collection development issues that had arisen. Among the issues that came up were the legal ramifications of archival collections relating to human remains; how to deal with medical history collections that may include items such as large runs of medical journals; and attempts to widen the conversation about an institution's collections beyond the "founding narrative," which may ignore its true diversity. Participants mentioned major efforts to arrange and/or digitize AV and oral history collections.

The main topic for discussion was collection files: how are we maintaining records of acquisitions? Several participants mentioned using ArchivesSpace or Archivist's Toolkit to maintain collection information. The question of what information should go into these databases came up, and one person pointed out the need to rely on paper files for information that could not easily be preserved in other formats. Paper files remain important for notes about collections as well as official documentation.

Some libraries add information about book donations in the MARC catalog record. However, this method has many limitations and is hard to do systematically. The issue of what acquisition information should be publicly accessible was also raised. One participant noted that she still relies on detailed accession records that were historically kept in bound volumes.

It became apparent that there is no system that accommodates both book and manuscript/archival collections very well.

The discussion then turned to promises we make, or are asked to make, in accepting donated collections. One participant mentioned the papers of a former congressman who presented a list of demands, including the desire to see the entire collection digitized. Duplicate books often present a dilemma in large donations; one participant spoke of beginning with a custody agreement rather than a completed gift procedure. Donors who have more general expectations that their gifts will receive public attention can sometimes be mollified with a modest exhibit of the materials.

Topics for future meetings were discussed. The co-conveners announced that they would both be rotating off after the June meeting in New Orleans, and invited attendees who might be interested in leading the discussion group to apply via the ACRL volunteer web page.

The meeting adjourned at 2:30.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeffrey D. Marshall
Karla Nielsen