

3B—Civic and Democratic Engagement #1

Selection Bias in Collection Development: Un-leveling the Playing Field and Making Matters Worse

Wil Weston, San Diego State University, USA

The library literature argues that academic library collections reflect the same inequalities and imbalances that exist throughout the rest of academia, and it is therefore critically important for libraries to be more inclusive in representing a diversity of scholarship. However, these imbalances are not the result of just a few individual selection decisions; they are also the consequence of organizational, structural, and fiscal contexts. This paper explores how these broader organizational and fiscal restrictions have affected monographic selection, by examining the impact of the recession of the late 2000s on monographic acquisition at San Diego State University by surveying the subject areas and scholarship collected during that time period.