

RE: UT-Austin Library Crisis

Nalini Singh

Sent: Saturday, April 07, 2018 3:49 PM**To:** Nalini Singh

On Mar 16, 2018, at 1:54 PM, Johns, Ann C <acjohns@AUSTIN.UTEXAS.EDU> wrote:

Dear colleagues,

Please forgive this blanket email, but we feel it is justified in light of the extraordinary circumstances.

To our knowledge, the decision to remove an entire physical library from the campus of a Research 1 institution without any consultation of faculty or students is unprecedented in recent American history. Yet this is exactly what has happened at the University of Texas at Austin. The stacks from the third and fourth floors of the Fine Arts Library are gone. The additional decision by the Dean of Fine Arts to remove the remaining fifth floor of stacks (an additional 85,000 volumes, and close to 200,000 items total) is being vigorously challenged, but already the 75,000 print volumes and roughly 100,000 disks from the other floors have been permanently removed into storage facilities. Tens of thousands (including all but five journals, the majority of them undigitized) appear to have been conveyed to the Joint Library Facility (JLF) in College Station, about 100 miles east of Austin. The ownership status of these items is unclear; the facility website indicates that the JLF's holdings become jointly owned by Texas A&M University, and that spare copies are "deduplicated." Vice Provost and Director of Libraries Lorraine Haricombe disputes any claims that the books and journals have gone into joint ownership, and she asserts that no items from UT-Austin are being destroyed. However, further investigation has shown that they go to UT Surplus, which distributes them to charity or to Better World Books, where they are put up for sale.

The Fine Arts Library affair is exploding like a bomb among the faculty and students of College of Fine Arts, who have nevertheless been working diligently for almost a year to mitigate the damage. The affair was roundly condemned at the College Art Association meeting earlier this month in Los Angeles and several articles about it have been published in the local, national, and international press. In three days, a public petition has garnered 2,500 signatures.

We would encourage you to get informed about our situation at UT-Austin and spread the word widely among your colleagues and students.

Also, there is a movement afoot called Save UT Libraries and a petition. Please sign the petition and, if you're so inclined, leave a comment. Our resistance movement has many tools at its disposal, but **one of the most powerful is the testimony of our colleagues around the world.**

<https://saveutlibraries.com>

https://www.change.org/p/douglas-dempster-save-the-university-of-texas-austin-fine-arts-library?recruiter=110123770&utm_source=share_petition&utm_medium=facebook&utm_campaign=share_for_starters_page

Please share this message widely. Thanks for your time and consideration.

Rabun Taylor, Professor, Department of Classics, University of Texas at Austin
Ann Johns, Distinguished Senior Lecturer, Dept. of Art and Art History, UT-Austin
Stephennie Mulder, Associate Professor, Dept. of Art and Art History, UT-Austin