


FRANKLY  
green  
+ WEBB



# Online Scholarly Catalogues: Data and Insights from OSCI

MWXX  
April 2016



Frankly, Green + Webb

Photo by Anna Graham on Flickr  
@inmann @franklygw



## Rauschenberg Research Project



Robert Rauschenberg at work in his Lafayette Street studio, New York, 1968. Courtesy the Roy Lichtenstein Foundation; photo: Shunk-Kender; © the Roy Lichtenstein Foundation

The Rauschenberg Research Project provides free worldwide access to a wealth of scholarly research and documentation relating to artworks by Robert Rauschenberg in SFMOMA's permanent collection. The museum's holdings span the artist's career from 1949 to 1998 and include Combines, sculptures, paintings, photographs, and prints and other works on paper. A rich range of materials surrounds the featured works, including newly commissioned essays, numerous images, interview footage, artist's statements, conservation reports, and archival materials, which together provide new insights into the artist's work. These resources may be accessed through the orientation points below. The Rauschenberg Research Project was produced by SFMOMA under the auspices of the Getty Foundation's Online Scholarly Catalogue Initiative, with the support of the Robert Rauschenberg Foundation.

ISBN 978-0-918471-91-8



The Getty Foundation



Leadership support for the Rauschenberg Research Project is provided by The Getty Foundation. Generous support is provided by the Robert Rauschenberg Foundation.

### About the Project

[What's in This Catalogue?](#)

[Why Rauschenberg?](#)

[Citations and Downloads](#)

[Acknowledgments](#)

[More Links and Info](#)

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### Works in the Rauschenberg Research Project



## LIVING COLLECTIONS CATALOGUE

Each volume of the *Living Collections Catalogue* includes media-rich essays on broader themes as well as in-depth investigations of specific works of art. Featured works link to records in the Walker's collections database, where additional information about the artists and artworks is available. Implicit in the concept of a "living catalogue" is the dynamic nature of an online volume about the Walker's collections. Information in the database is updated as new research and presentations occur, while essays are versioned and citable with assurances of a permanent address to the information referenced.

[MORE](#)

# QUESTIONS

1. Reach

# QUESTIONS

1. Reach
2. Use

# QUESTIONS

1. Reach
2. Use
3. Impact of digital





# QUESTIONS

1. Reach
2. Use
3. Impact of digital
4. Audience perception



# QUESTIONS

1. Reach
2. Use
3. Impact of digital
4. Audience perception
5. Drivers and barriers to success

## What We Did

1. Online survey
2. Interviews with users and stakeholders
3. Usability testing
4. Google Analytics

## Good News

1. Reaching the scholarly audience

## Good News

1. Reaching the scholarly audience
2. Used for research and teaching



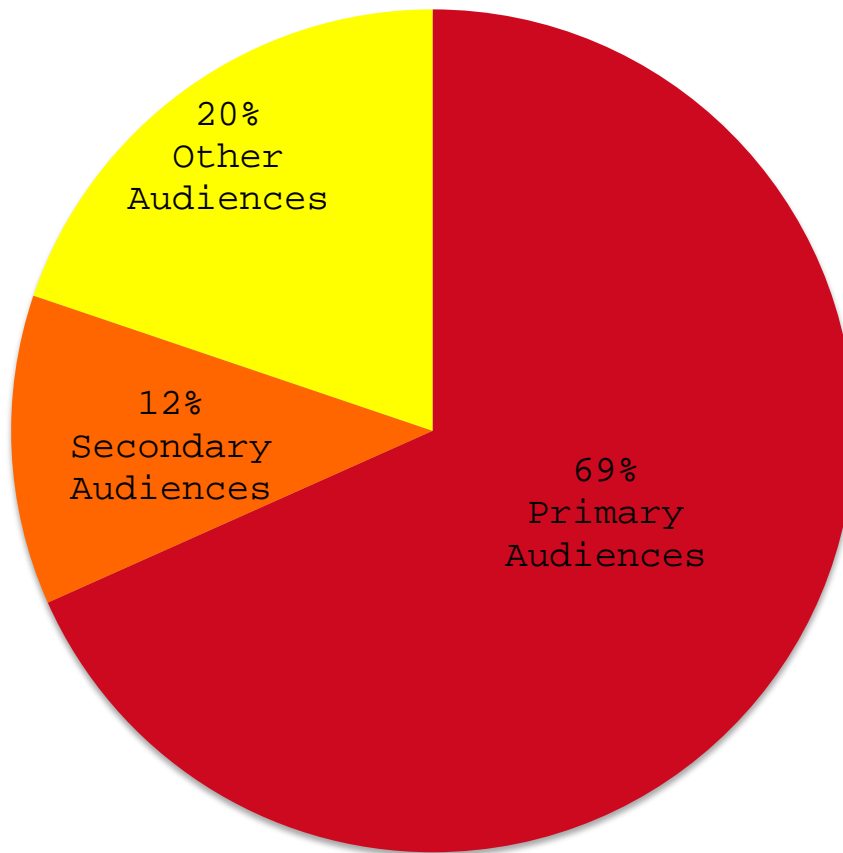
## Good News

1. Reaching the scholarly audience
2. Used for research and teaching
3. A trusted source

## Good News

1. Reaching the scholarly audience
2. Used for research and teaching
3. A trusted source
4. A new form

## Reaching the target audience of scholars



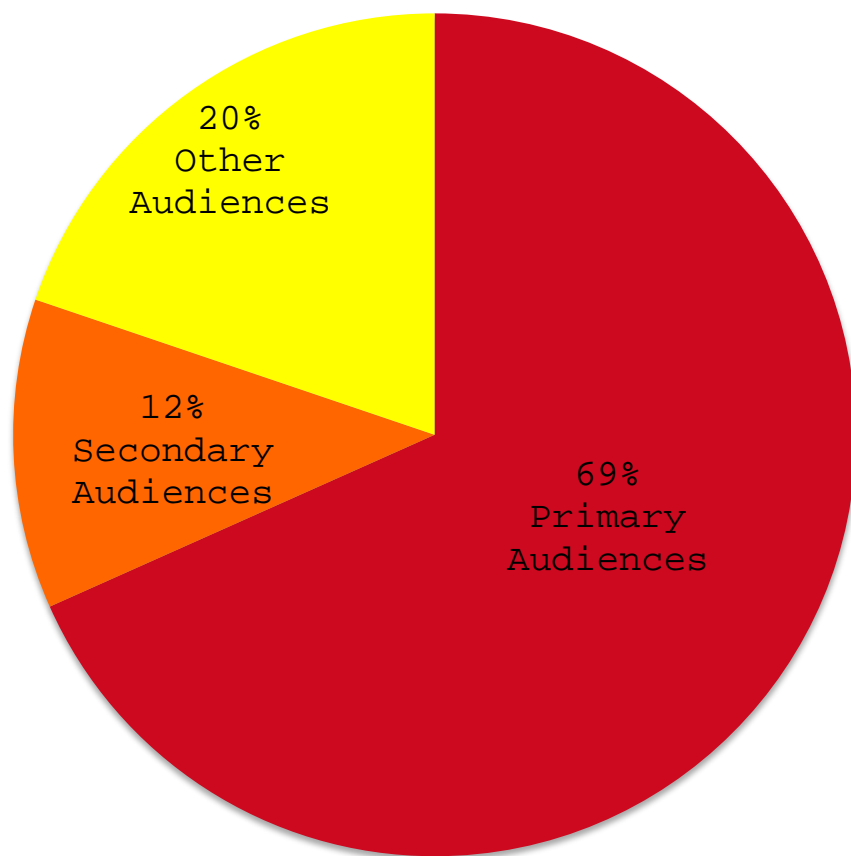
### 69% Primary Audiences

- 25% Graduate students
- 18% Professors
- 16% Curators
- 6% Indep scholars
- 4% Librarians

RRP - Q: What best describes you?

N=51

It's also reaching secondary and wider audiences



### 69% Primary Audiences

- 25% Graduate students
- 18% Professors
- 16% Curators
- 6% Indep scholars
- 4% Librarians

### 12% Secondary Audiences


- 10% Museum educators
- 2% Undergraduates

### 20% Other Audiences

- 10% Other
- 8% Personal interest
- 2% Digital Media/e-publishing

Q: What best describes you?

N=51




Greater and more diverse reach than  
a comparable print catalogue

**9,000 – 25,000**

Unique visitors in first 6 months






Greater and more diverse reach than  
a comparable print catalogue

**500**

Museum, university and  
library network domains  
from around the world



Greater and more diverse reach than  
a comparable print catalogue

**55%**

of traffic to Walker's *On  
Performativity* catalogue  
is from outside the US

How are users finding the online catalogues?



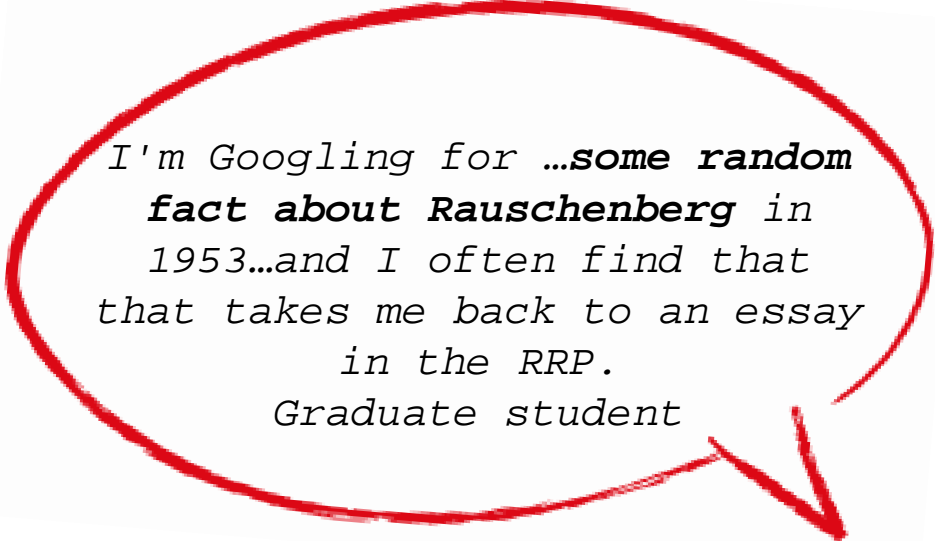
Google is the key to  
discoverability

**45%**

Traffic referred by  
Google

# Google is the key to the discoverability of the catalogues

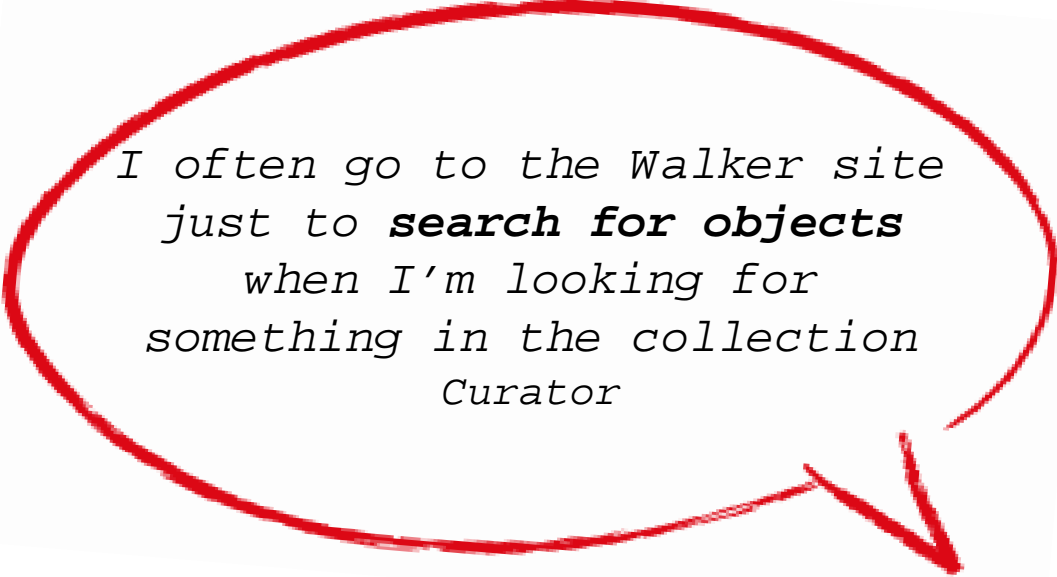
1. General research
2. Narrow searches



*I'm Googling for ...**some random fact about Rauschenberg** in 1953...and I often find that that takes me back to an essay in the RRP.  
Graduate student*



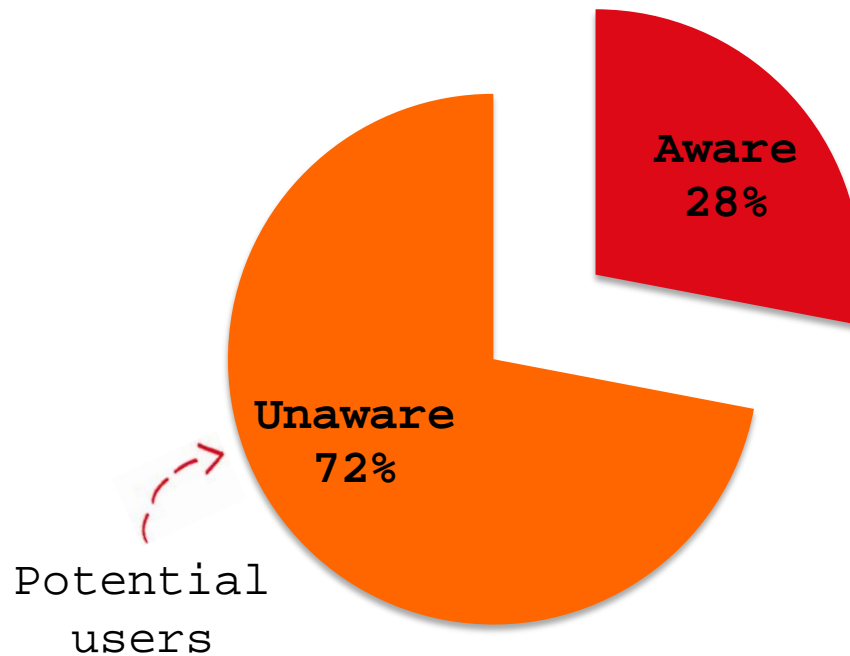
But the museum website is also key  
to discoverability



*I often go to the Walker site  
just to **search for objects**  
when I'm looking for  
something in the collection  
Curator*

# Potential for expanding reach

## Awareness of Living Collections Catalogue





Where do scholars expect to find  
online catalogues?

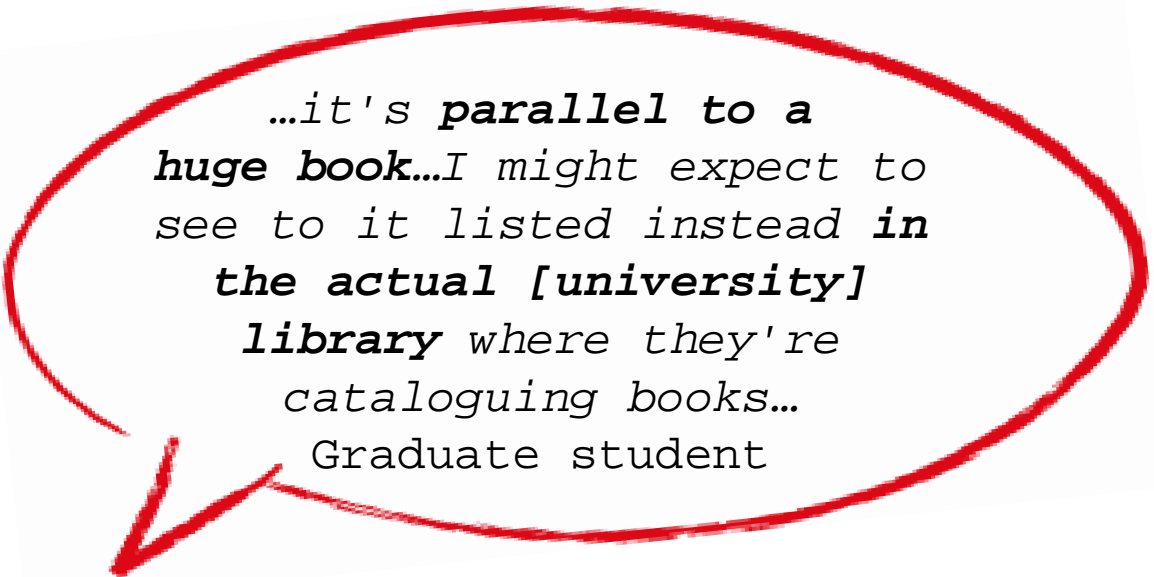
Where do scholars expect to find  
online catalogues?

...in academic databases?



Where do scholars expect to find  
the catalogues?

...at the library



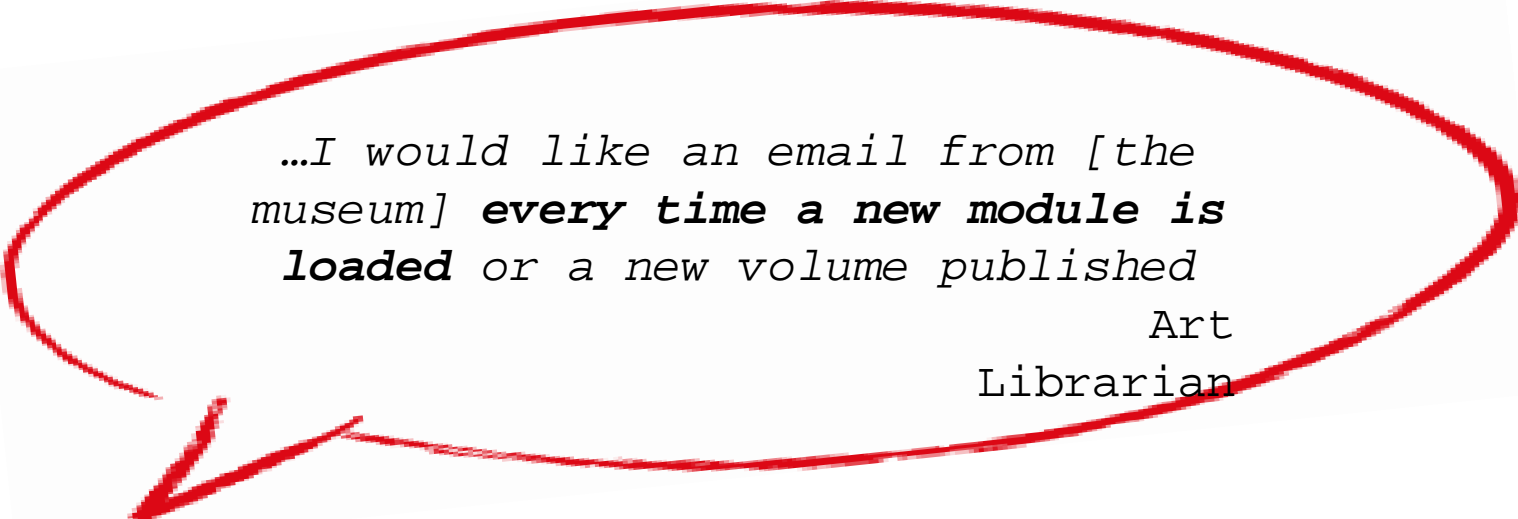
*...it's **parallel to a  
huge book...**I might expect to  
see to it listed instead **in  
the actual [university]  
library** where they're  
cataloguing books...  
Graduate student*





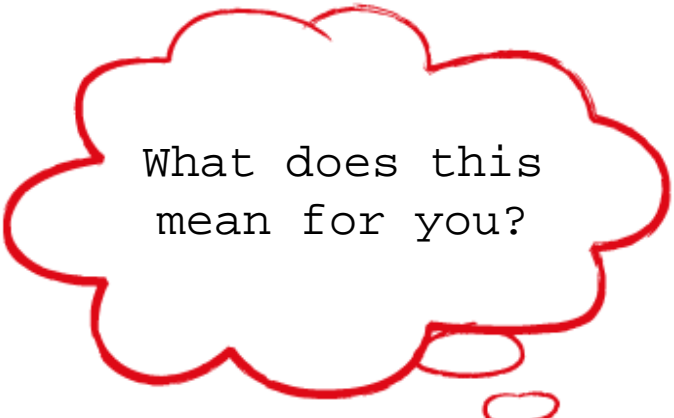
But...there's **no  
standardized  
process** for  
adding digital  
publications to  
library  
catalogues

# A need for an ongoing communications program



*...I would like an email from [the  
museum] **every time a new module is  
loaded** or a new volume published*

Art  
Librarian

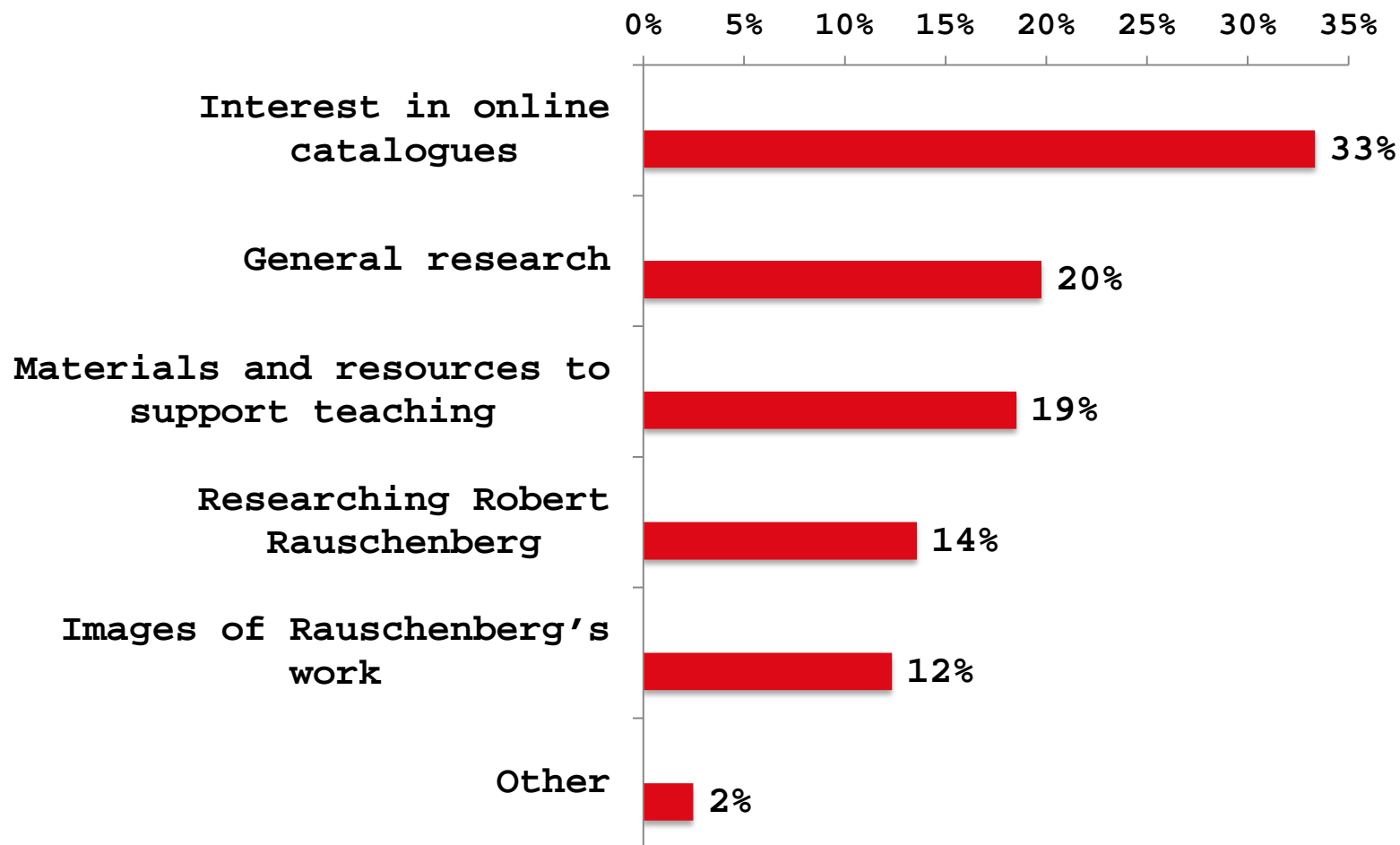


What does this  
mean for you?

- SEO is critical to the findability
- Get an ISBN number
- Art librarians are a target audience
- Generating awareness and traffic requires an ongoing communications program
- Promoting online publications may be a new museum role

How are the catalogues being used?

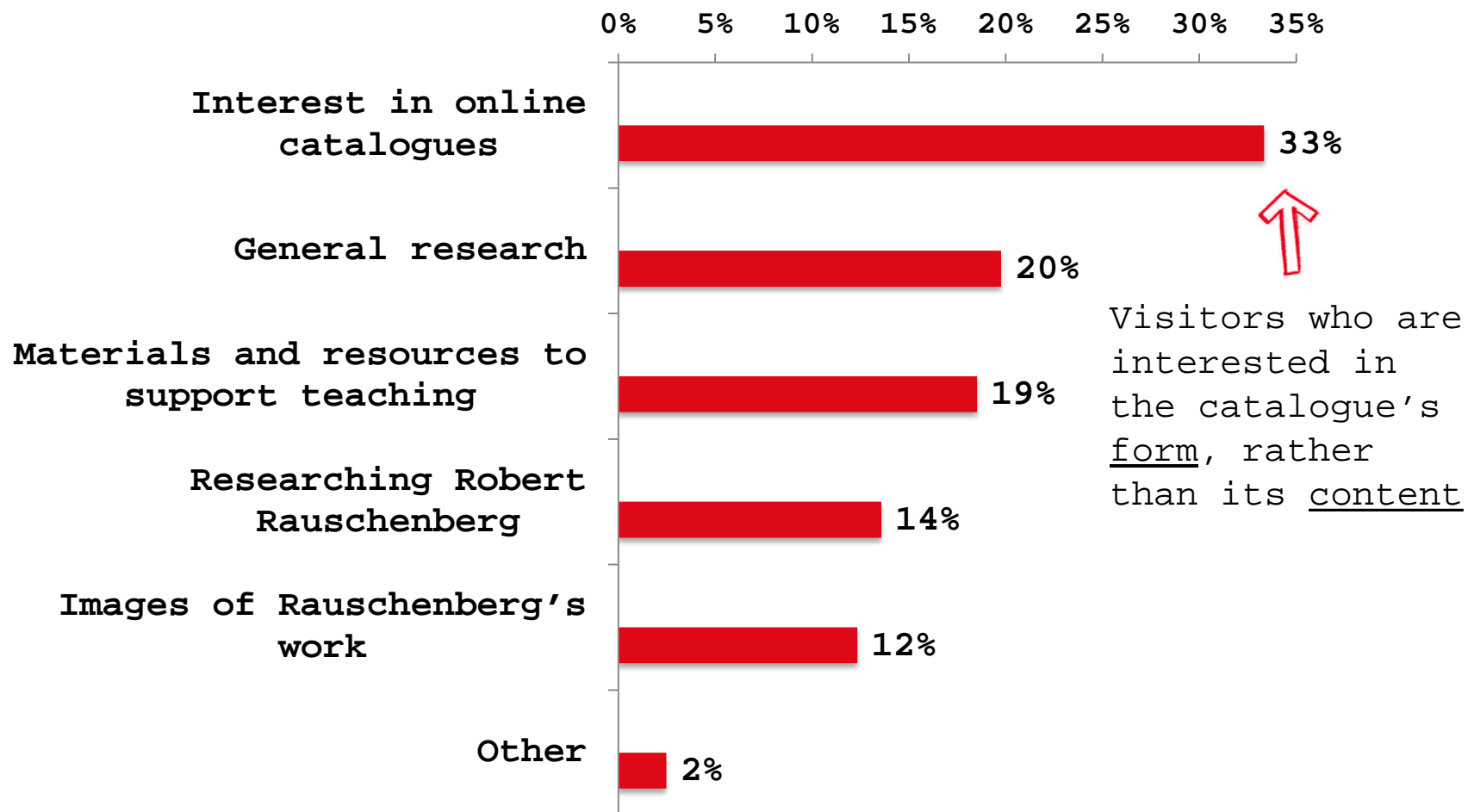
## How are the catalogues being used?



Q: What were your reasons for visiting/using the Rauschenberg Research Project online? (Please select all that apply)

N=81

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Q: What were your reasons for visiting/using the Rauschenberg Research Project online? (Please select all that apply)

N=81

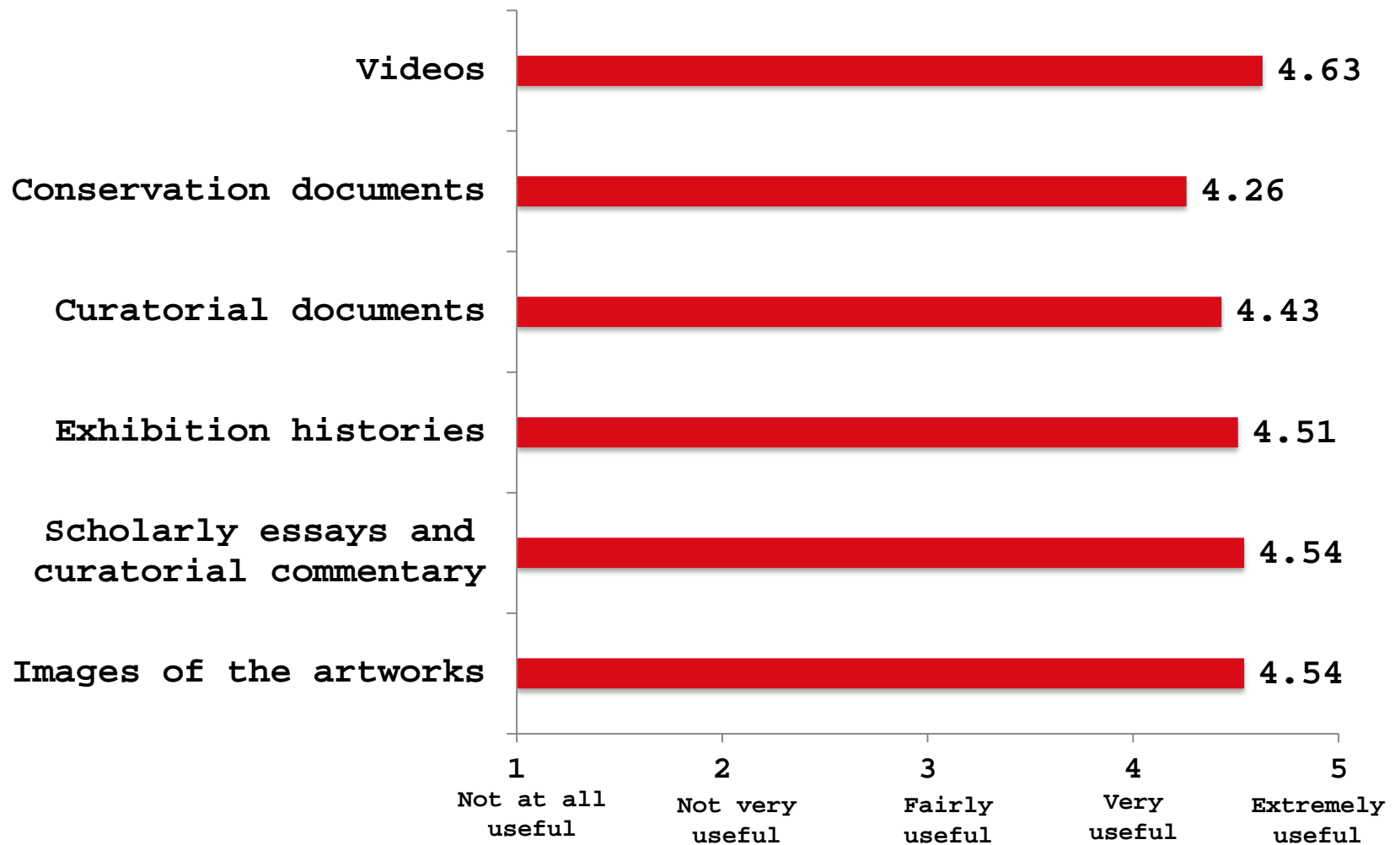
Deep engagement

**15%**

Of RRP visitors have made  
more than

**> 9 visits**

## Scholars rate catalogue content very highly



Q: "How do you rate the content of the Rauschenberg Research Project on a scale of 1-5 where 1 is not at all useful and 5 is extremely useful?"

N=35



Praise for usefulness, quality,  
depth and breadth of catalogue  
content

**98%**

of the primary audience said they  
were likely to use the RRP for any  
future research on Rauschenberg

# A deeper level of access to museum information

## ► Ownership, Exhibition, and Publication Histories

## ▼ Marks and Inscriptions

Recto: None

Verso: Upper left corner brace bears multiple measurements, arrows, and markings in pencil; upper right corner brace, inscription in pencil: "RAUSCHENBERG 61 FULTON ST. NYC" (additional pencil inscription: "TOP" with "[up arrow]" crossed out; another inscription in pencil is crossed out and illegible); lower left corner brace, inscription in pencil: "TOP" (inscription upside down); lower right corner brace, inscription in pencil: "RAUSCHENBERG 61 FULTON ST. NYC" (inscription upside down); additional pencil

### Related to This Artwork

#### Highlights



#### Essay

[Untitled \[glossy black painting\]](#)

By Caitlin Haskell



#### Conservation Document

[Conservation treatment report relating to Robert Rauschenberg's Untitled \[glossy black painting\]](#)....

#### Research Materials

[View](#)

[Views of This Artwork \(11\)](#)

[Commentary + Interviews \(0\)](#)

[Museum Files \(4\)](#)

#### Multimedia

##### Videos

[Conservation video relating to Robert Rauschenberg's Untitled \[glossy black painting\], 2012](#)

[PLAY](#)

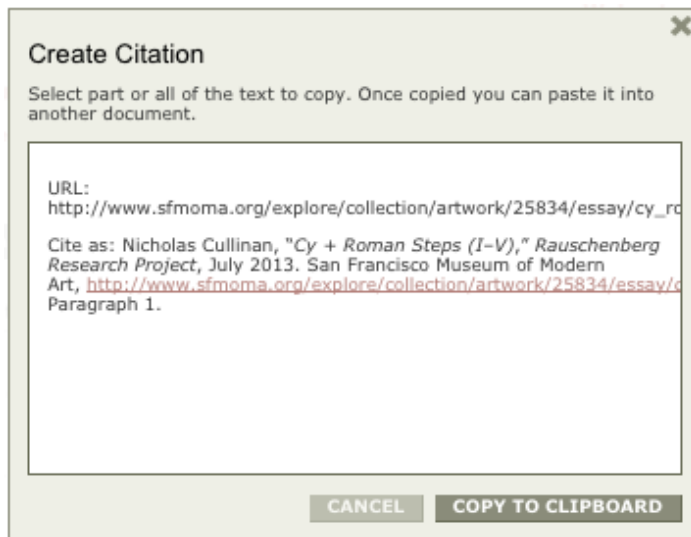
#### Views of the Artwork [View all \(11\)](#)



# Features for the academic audience

1. Citation tools

2. Downloadability



Create Citation

Select part or all of the text to copy. Once copied you can paste it into another document.

URL:  
[http://www.sfmoma.org/explore/collection/artwork/25834/essay/cy\\_ro](http://www.sfmoma.org/explore/collection/artwork/25834/essay/cy_ro)

Cite as: Nicholas Cullinan, "Cy + Roman Steps (I-V)," *Rauschenberg Research Project*, July 2013. San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, <http://www.sfmoma.org/explore/collection/artwork/25834/essay/c>  
Paragraph 1.

CANCEL COPY TO CLIPBOARD

[Recommended format for citation is] super super important...in terms of **training our students** in research and documentation  
Professor

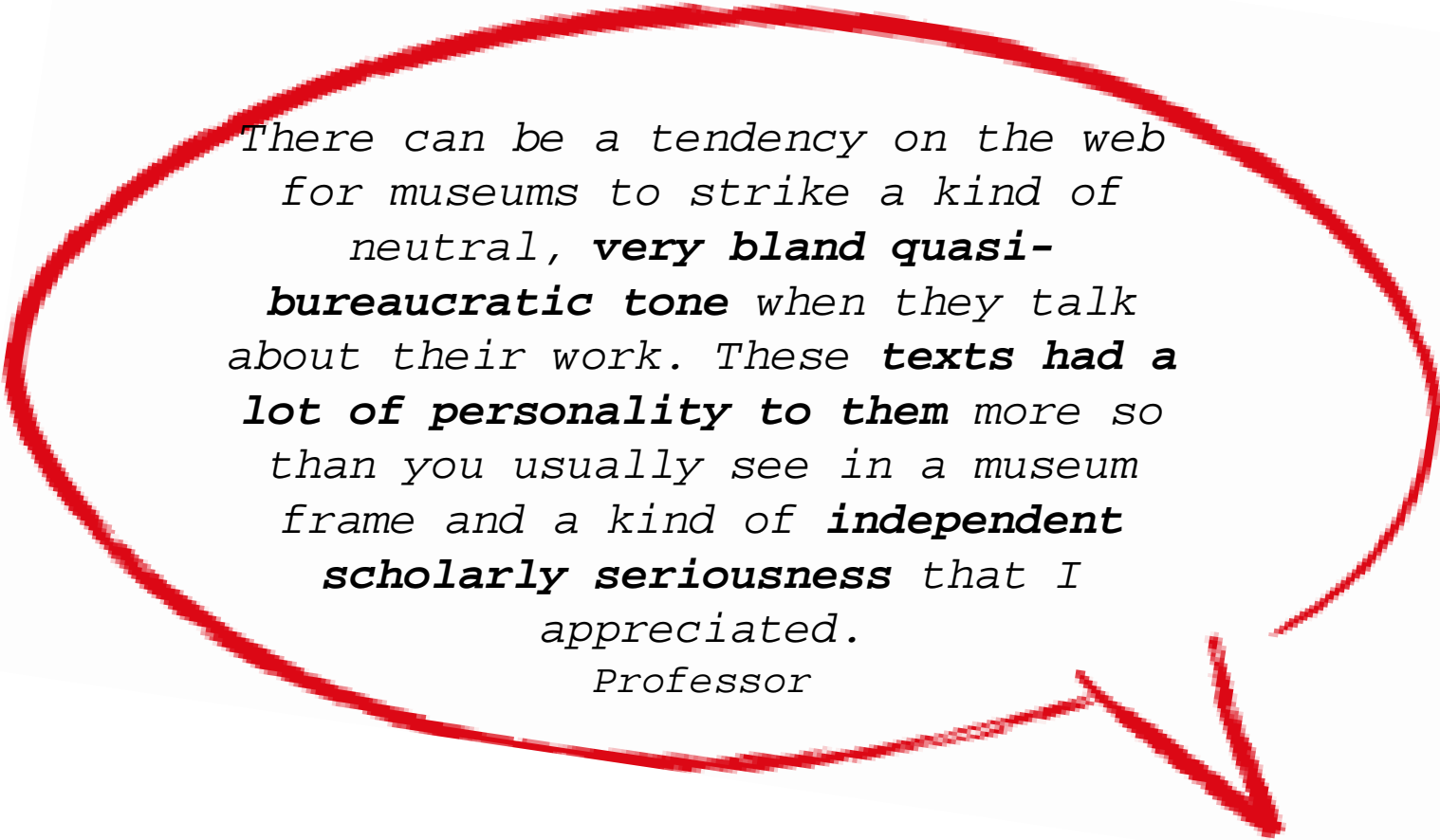
# Content + Downloadability = Value

## Downloads

-  [Artwork Image](#) (688k JPG)
-  [Artwork Essay](#) (5,090k PDF)
-  [Artwork Information](#) (84k PDF)
-  [All Downloads](#) (5,754k ZIP)

Allowing **scholars access to all of the "extras" is amazing**...curatorial and conservation documents, interviews, multiple views... personal photos, etc. Perhaps the most useful aspect...is ...that users can **download these resources** to their own computers.  
Independent scholar

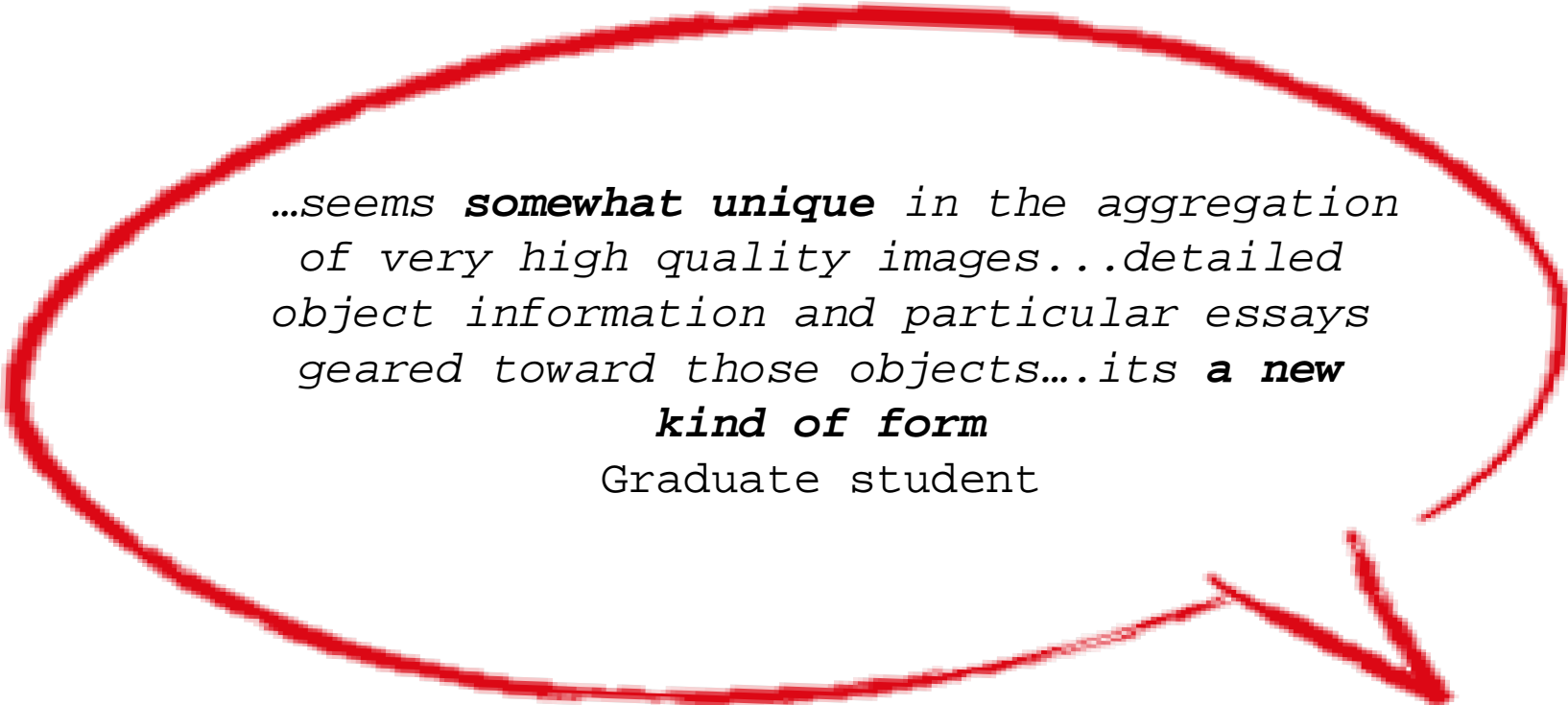
# Distinctive vision and voice



There can be a tendency on the web for museums to strike a kind of neutral, **very bland quasi-bureaucratic tone** when they talk about their work. These **texts had a lot of personality to them** more so than you usually see in a museum frame and a kind of **independent scholarly seriousness** that I appreciated.


Professor

# And new types of scholarship



*...seems **somewhat unique** in the aggregation  
of very high quality images...detailed  
object information and particular essays  
geared toward those objects...its **a new  
kind of form***

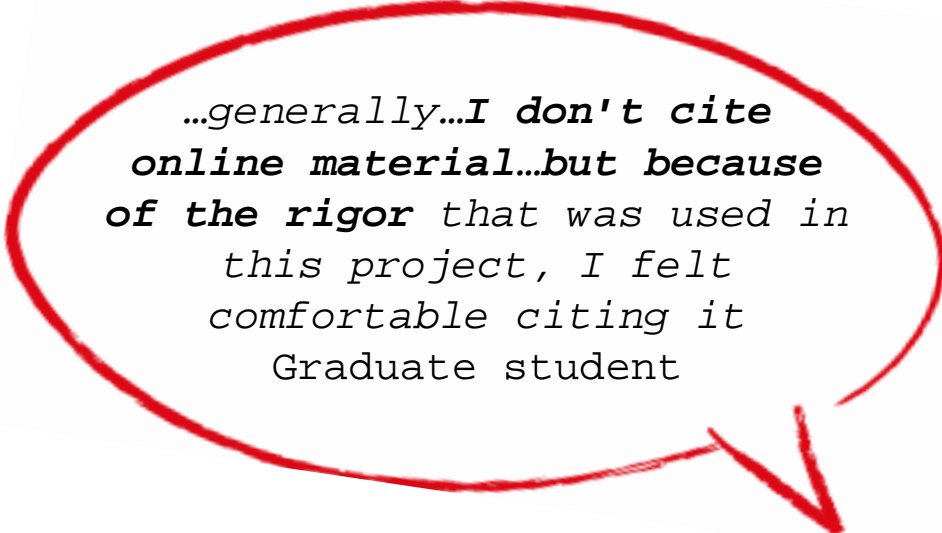
Graduate student



The audience trusted the catalogues as scholarly sources

30%

indicated that they were very likely or extremely likely **to cite the LCC** in future research or publications



*...generally...I don't cite online material...but because of the rigor that was used in this project, I felt comfortable citing it*  
Graduate student

The audience trusted the catalogues as scholarly sources

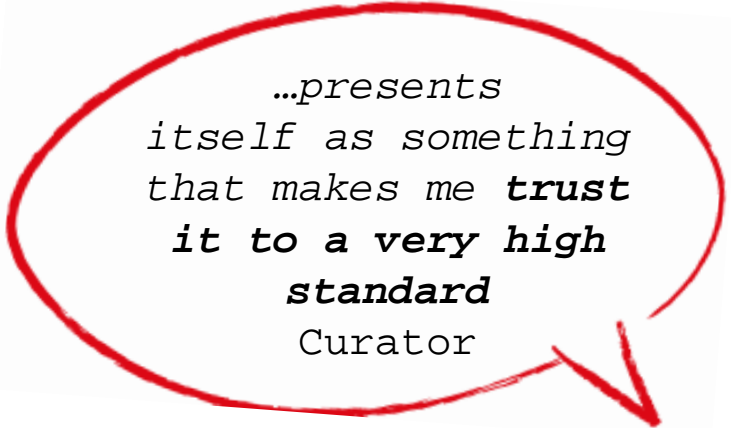
**85%**

of the primary audience that had  
used the LCC rated it as a very  
credible or extremely credible place  
**to have their own work published**



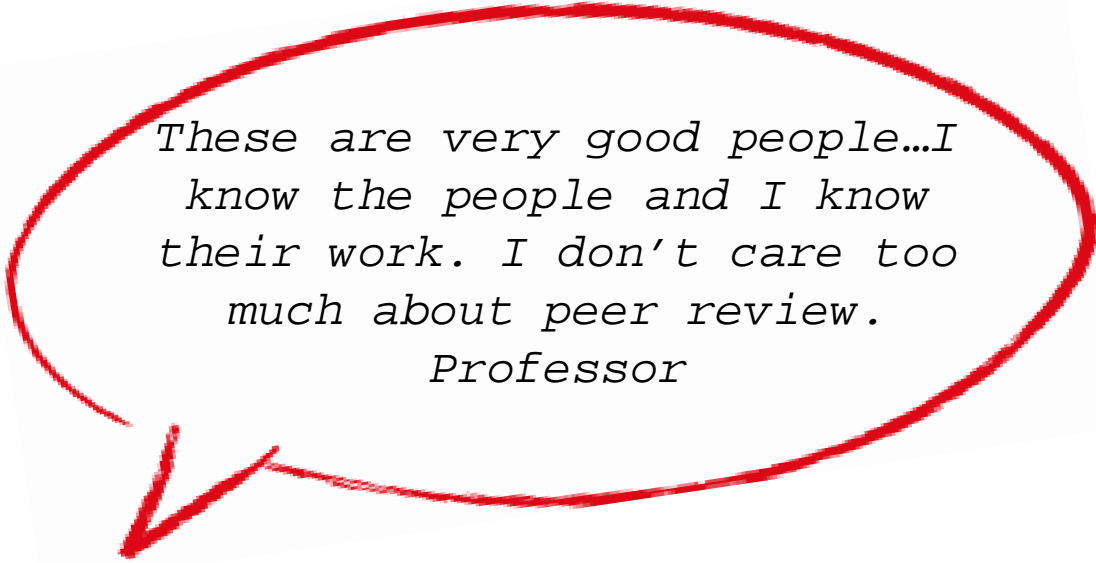
# Signifiers of academic authority

1. Institutional brand
2. Well-known contributors
3. Proper academic formatting and citations of scholarly essays



*...presents  
itself as something  
that makes me **trust**  
**it to a very high**  
**standard***  
Curator

Prestigious contributors matter  
more than peer review



*These are very good people...I  
know the people and I know  
their work. I don't care too  
much about peer review.  
Professor*

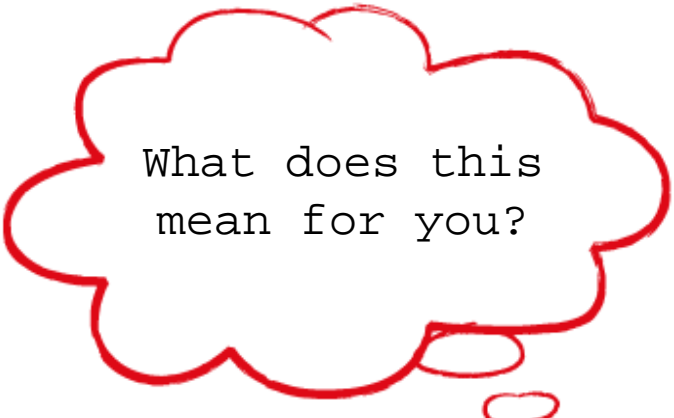
# The catalogues are having an impact on scholarship

*The [RRP] was a huge  
asset for my [Masters]  
paper...*

*Graduate student*

*I am writing my dissertation  
on the work of Allan Kaprow, and  
although **I wasn't planning to write  
about Mushroom**, I will, since the  
photographs and especially the letters  
[in On Performativity] enable me to  
deal with the happening in a nuanced,  
substantial way.*

*Graduate student*



What does this  
mean for you?

- Online catalogues need specialized functionality to meet the needs of a scholarly audience
- The features support working process and signify academic authority
- Online catalogues offer opportunities for innovation in content and form
- Invest your resources in securing well-known contributors

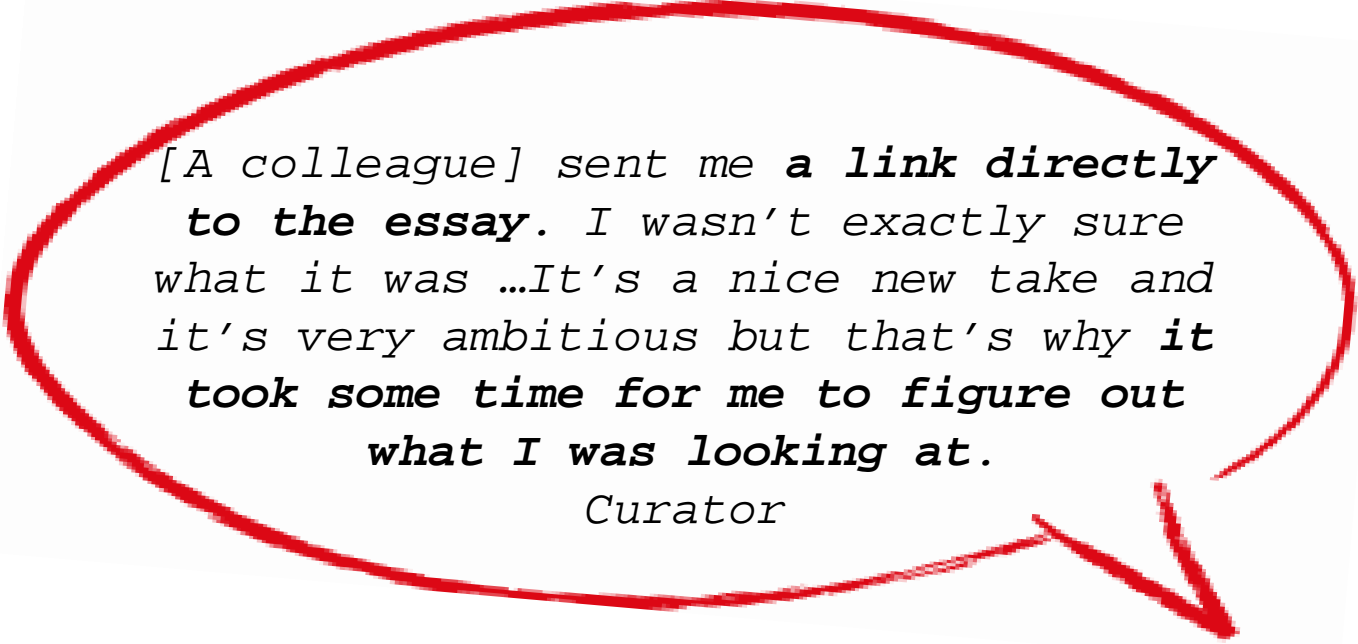
## Challenges

1. Usability
2. Structure and boundaries
3. Permanence
4. Status

Usability challenge: Most users  
don't land on the home page

# 75%

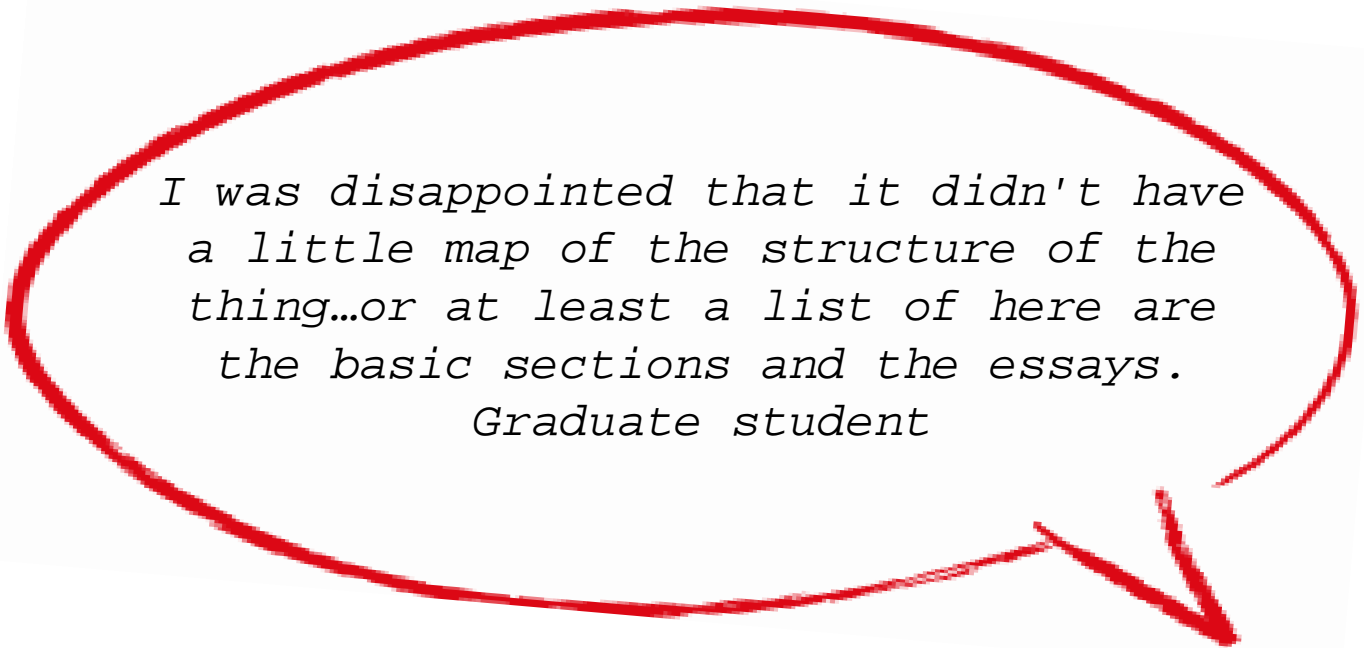
Enter through an essay



*[A colleague] sent me **a link directly to the essay**. I wasn't exactly sure what it was ...It's a nice new take and it's very ambitious but that's why **it took some time for me to figure out what I was looking at.***

Curator

Usability challenge: how do we communicate the scale of an online publication?



*I was disappointed that it didn't have a little map of the structure of the thing...or at least a list of here are the basic sections and the essays.*

*Graduate student*

## RAUSCHENBERG RESEARCH PROJECT



Robert Rauschenberg at work in his Lafayette Street studio, New York, 1968. Courtesy the Roy Lichtenstein Foundation; photo: Shunk-Kender; © the Roy Lichtenstein Foundation

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The Getty Foundation

Rauschenberg

**SFMOMA on the go**

VISIT | EXHIBITIONS + EVENTS | **EXPLORE MODERN ART** | ABOUT US | GET INVOLVED | OUR EXPANSION | SHOP

Overview | **Our Collection** | Multimedia | SFMOMA's Open Space | For Educators

Share | Printable | **SEARCH COLLECTION +**

About the Artwork | About the Artist | Works by the Artist | **Rauschenberg Research Project Home**

Overview | Essay | Research Materials

### Robert Rauschenberg

American (Port Arthur, Texas, 1925 - 2008, Captiva, Florida)

#### Collection

1954/1955  
Painting | oil, paper, fabric, wood, and metal on canvas

Now on view in the exhibition *Pop Artists from the Anderson Collection* at SFMOMA at Cantor Arts Center at Stanford University



View detail | Download

Robert Rauschenberg, *Collection*, 1954/1955; oil, paper, fabric, wood, and metal on canvas, 80 in. x 96 in. x 3 1/2 in. (203.2 cm x 243.84 cm x 8.89 cm); Collection SFMOMA, Gift of Harry W. and Mary Margaret Anderson; © Robert Rauschenberg Foundation / Licensed by

#### Related to This Artwork

##### Highlights

**Essay**  
[Collection](#)  
By Sarah Roberts

**Interview**  
[Robert Rauschenberg discusses Collection at SFMOMA, May 6, 1999](#)

**Archival Image**  
[Installation view of Robert Rauschenberg's Collection, Charles Egan Gallery, New York, 1954-1955](#)

##### Research Materials

[Views of This Artwork \(16\)](#)

[Commentary + Interviews \(7\)](#)

[Museum Files \(8\)](#)

##### Multimedia

###### Videos

[Robert Rauschenberg discusses Collection at SFMOMA, May 6, 1999](#)

PLAY +

[Robert Rauschenberg discusses his work](#)

PLAY +

[Video documenting SFMOMA conservation treatment of Robert Rauschenberg's Collection, 2012](#)

PLAY +

###### Audio

[Conserving Rauschenberg](#)

LISTEN +

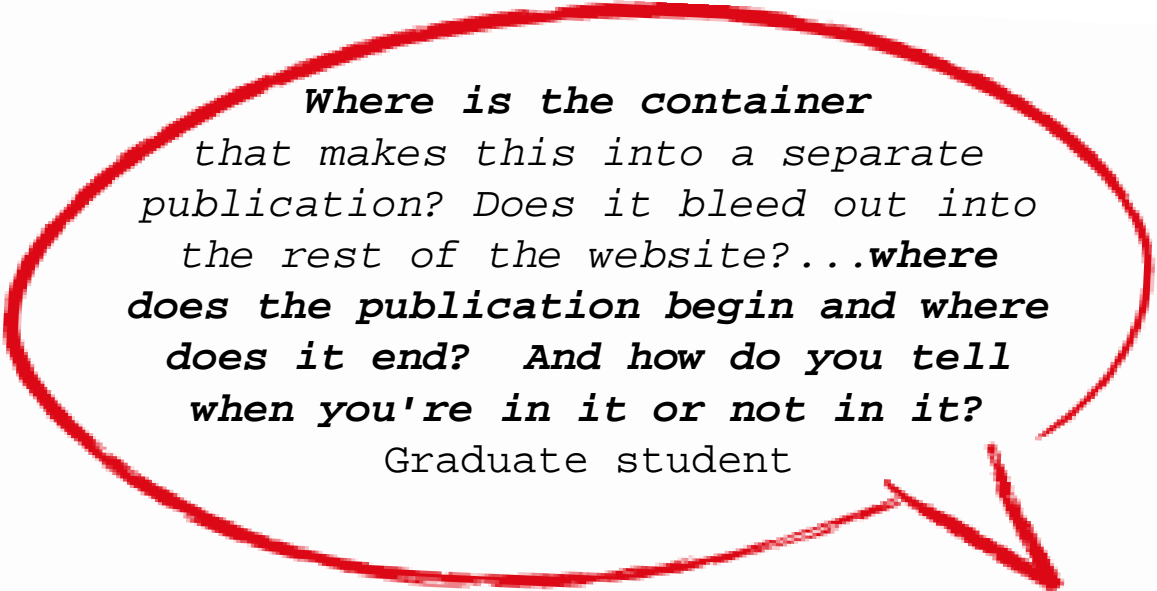
#### Related to This Artist

##### Selected Artworks

[View all](#)



Boundaries and structure: where does an online publication begin and end?



*Where is the container  
that makes this into a separate  
publication? Does it bleed out into  
the rest of the website?...**where**  
**does the publication begin and where**  
**does it end? And how do you tell**  
**when you're in it or not in it?***

Graduate student



## LIVING COLLECTIONS CATALOGUE

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[MORE](#)

Permanence: will this be here  
in 20 years?

Permanence: will this be here  
in 20 years?

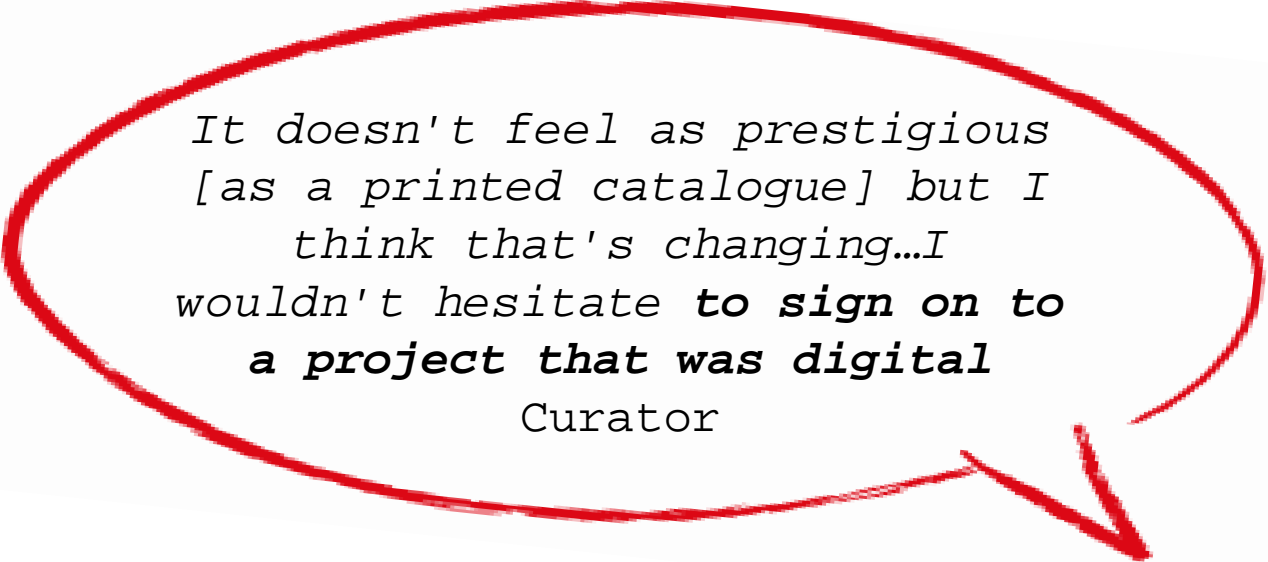
*20 years from now,  
will we be able to read this  
data? ...If it's in a library  
catalogue...will that URL be  
stable?*

*Graduate student*

*if you cite something  
there's **the possibility**  
**that it would disappear.**  
There's a lot of scholarly  
nervousness about that  
Graduate student*

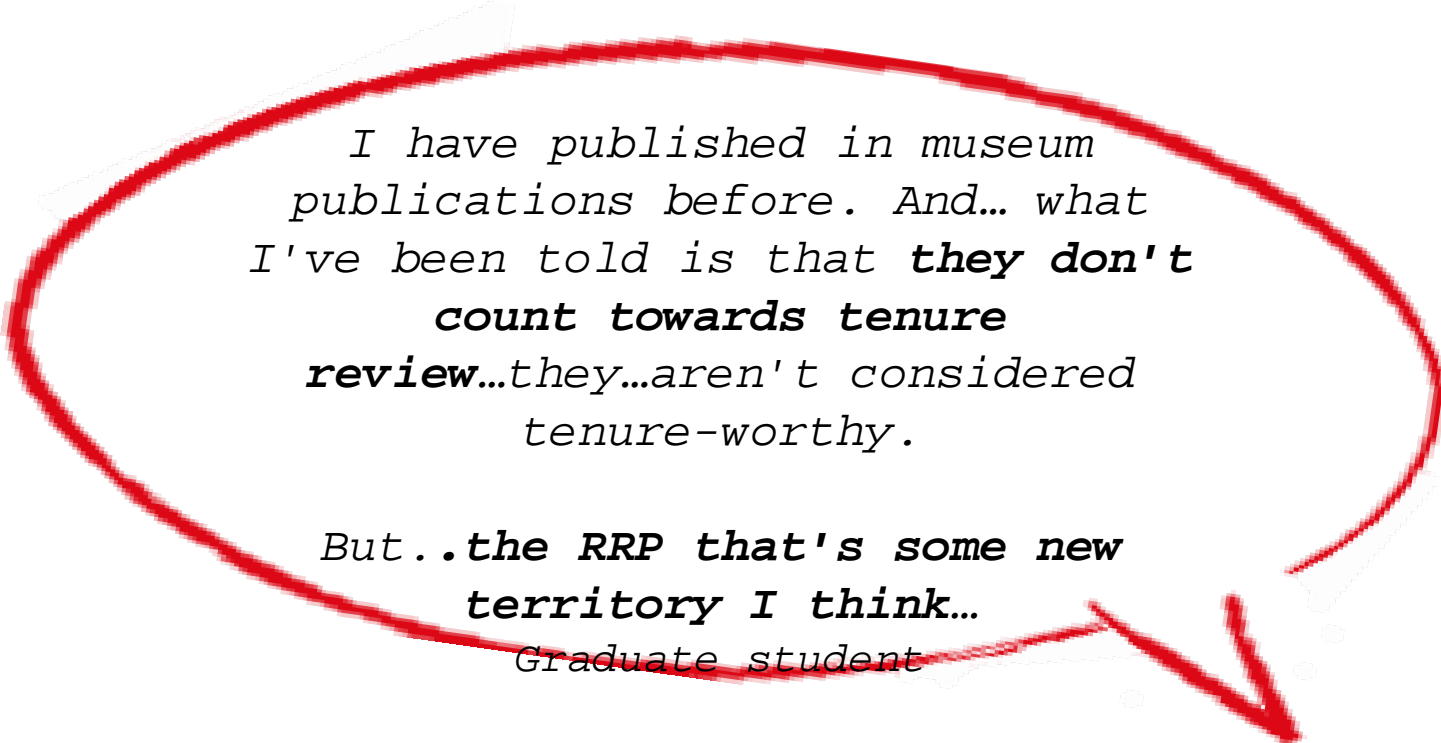
Status: what is the value of  
an online scholarly catalogue?

Status: what is the value of  
an online scholarly catalogue?




*It doesn't feel as prestigious  
[as a printed catalogue] but I  
think that's changing...I  
wouldn't hesitate **to sign on to  
a project that was digital**  
Curator*

Status: what is the value of  
an online scholarly catalogue?

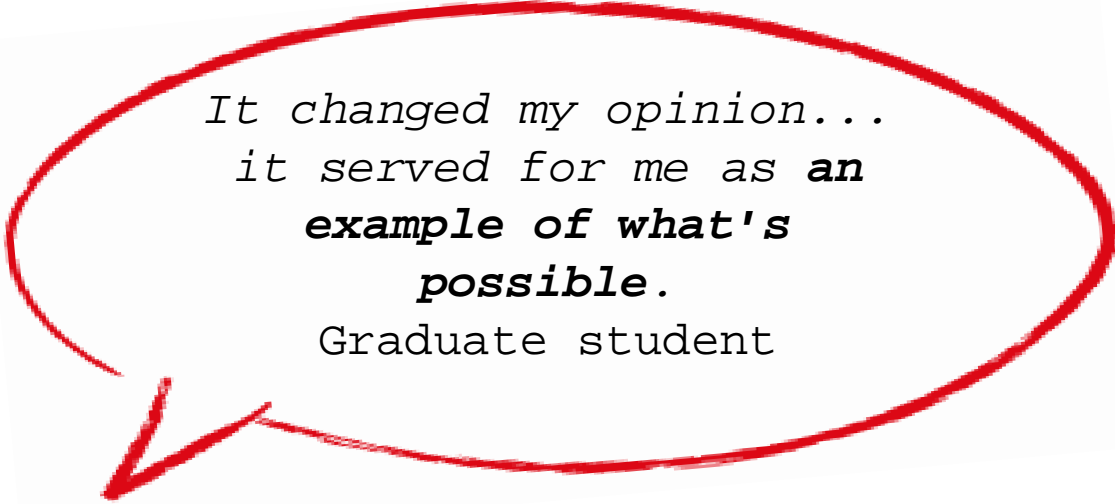


*I have published in museum  
publications before. And... what  
I've been told is that **they don't  
count towards tenure  
review...they...aren't** considered  
tenure-worthy.*

*But..**the RRP that's some new  
territory I think...**  
Graduate student*

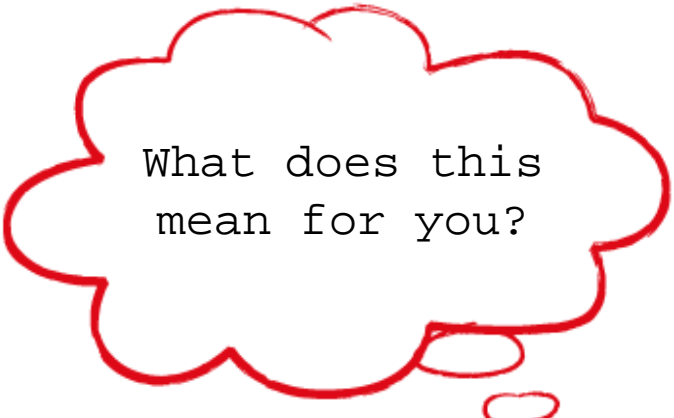


Status: what is the value of  
an online scholarly catalogue?



*It changed my opinion...  
it served for me as **an  
example of what's  
possible.**  
Graduate student*





What does this  
mean for you?

- Clear boundaries need to be balanced with findability
- Online catalogues need to be permanent, updatable and archival
- Perceptions of online catalogues are shaped by larger issues of status and publication record in the academic community



Images thanks to Flickr Commons:  
The hidden treasures of the Worlds  
Public Archives  
<http://www.flickr.com/commons>

e:  
[laura@franklygreenwebb.com](mailto:laura@franklygreenwebb.com)  
t:  
@lhmann