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Historians in Broader Context:
Changing Faculty Attitudes and Practices
from the
Ithaka S+R Faculty Survey

Roger C. Schonfeld

Manager of Research, Ithaka S+R

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ITHAKA is a not-for-profit organization that helps the academic community use digital technologies to preserve the scholarly record and to advance research and teaching in sustainable ways.

We pursue this mission by providing innovative services that aid in the adoption of these technologies and that create lasting impact.

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Our Services



- **Ithaka S+R** is a research and consulting service that focuses on the transformation of scholarship and teaching in an online environment, with the goal of identifying the critical issues facing our community and acting as a catalyst for change.



- **JSTOR** is a research platform that enables discovery, access, and preservation of scholarly content.



PORTICO

- **Portico** is a digital preservation service for e-journals, e-books, and other scholarly e-content.

Sustainability of Digital Resources

- » [Sustaining Digital Resources: An On-the-Ground View of Projects Today](#)

The Role of the Library

- » [What to Withdraw: Print Collections Management in the Wake of Digitization](#)

Teaching and Learning with Technology

- » [Unlocking the Gates: How and Why Leading Universities Are Opening Up Access to Their Courses](#)

Scholarly Publishing

- » [University Publishing in a Digital Age](#)

Practices & Attitudes of Researchers, Teachers, and Students

- » [Ithaka S+R Faculty Survey 2009: Key Strategic Insights for Libraries, Publishers, and Societies](#)

In September of 2009, 35,184 surveys were mailed to academics at U.S. colleges and universities. We received 3,025 completed responses, for an 8.6% response rate.

- » Findings have consistency over time and can be used to build hypotheses but should not be interpreted conclusively

The sample contains faculty at U.S. higher education institutions

- » No graduate or undergraduate students
- » No international institutions or community colleges
- » Arts & sciences fields, education, law, engineering, and business, but no health sciences

Stratification of historians is based on 198 responses.

- 1. Discovery and the Evolving Role of the Library**
- 2. The Format Transition for Scholarly Works**
- 3. Journal Publishing Preferences**
- 4. The Scholarly Society**

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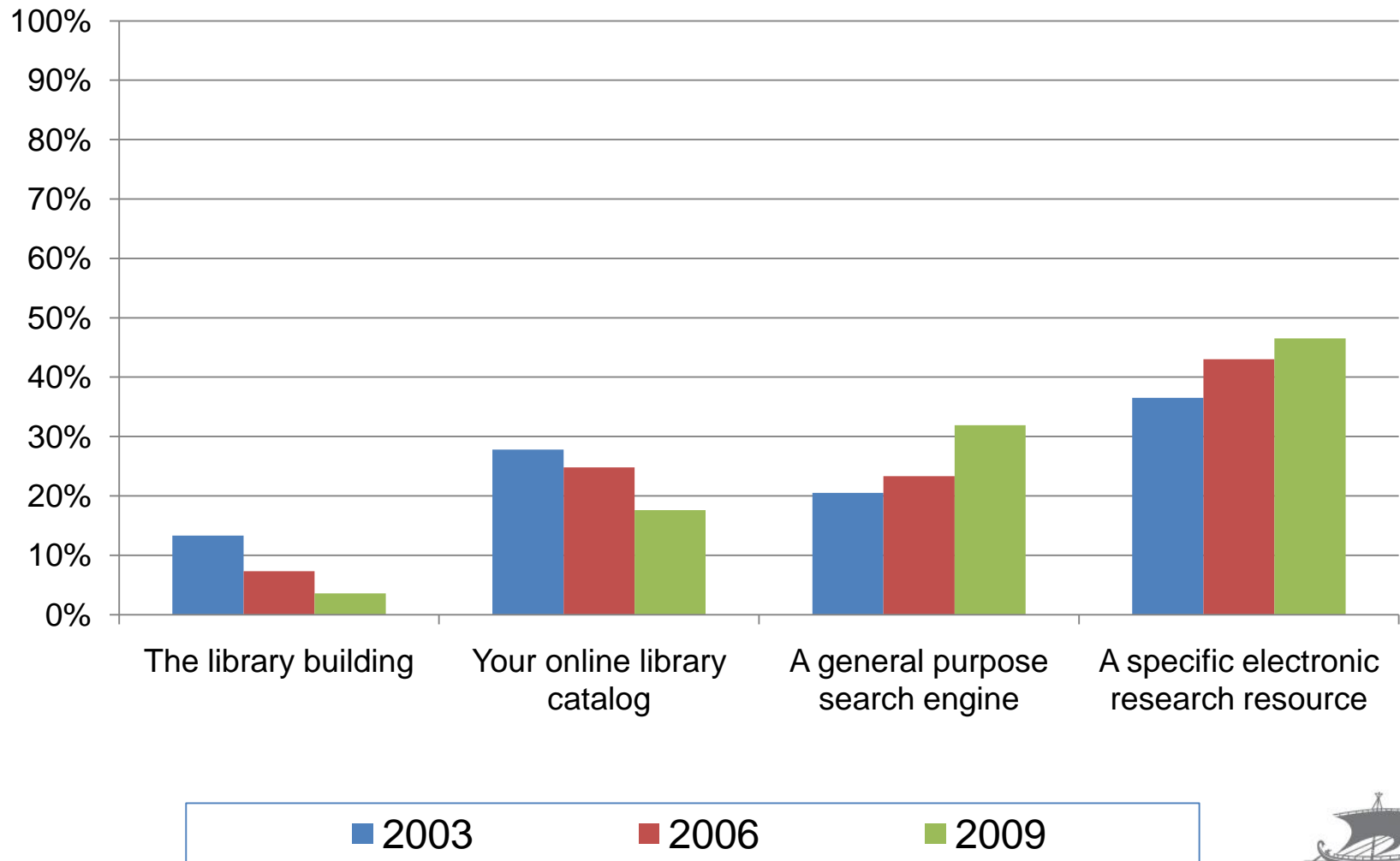
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Discovery and the Evolving Role of the Library

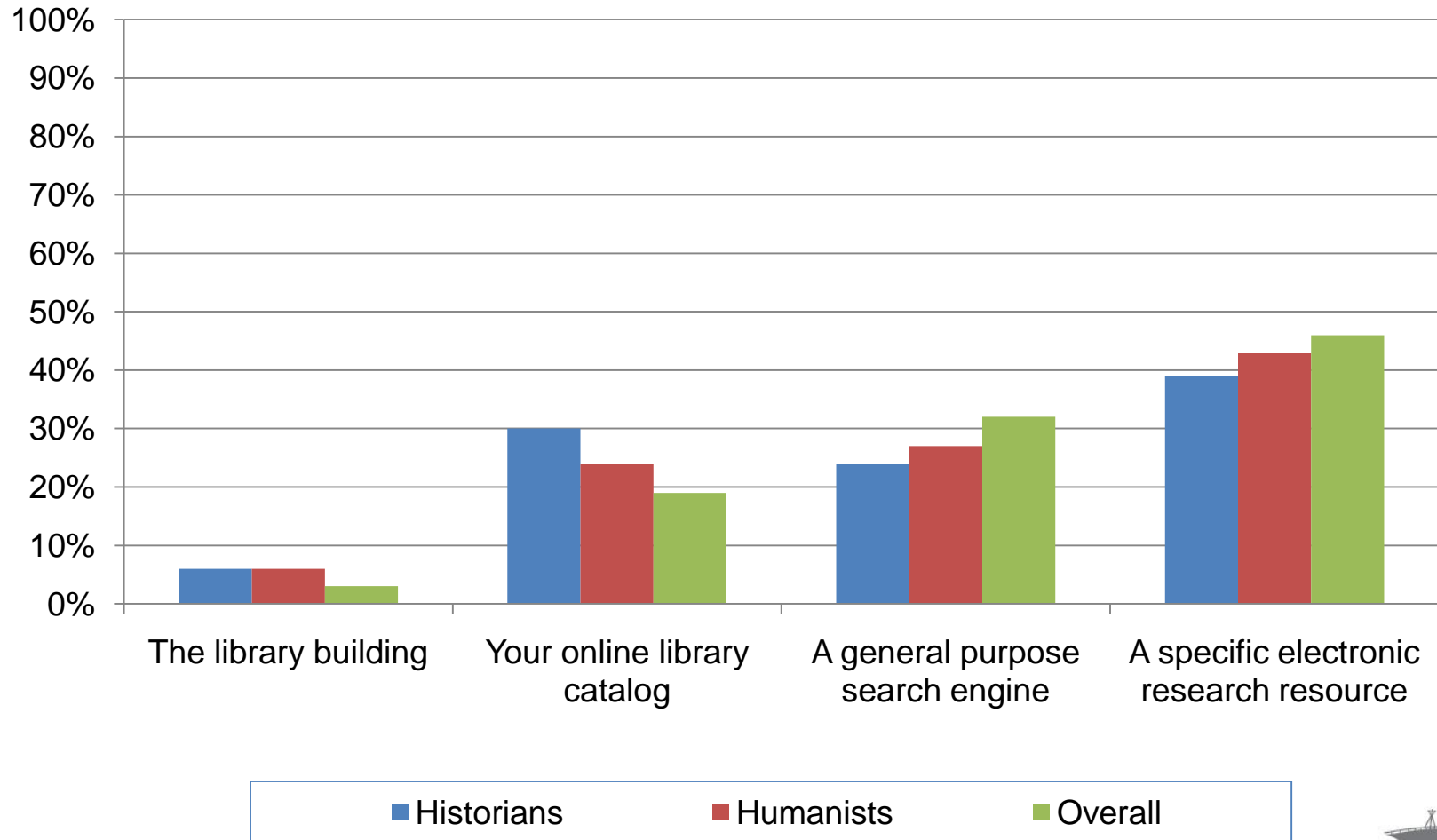
Typically, when YOU are conducting academic research, which of these four starting points do you use to begin locating information for your research?

- » The library building
- » Your online library catalog
- » A general purpose search engine on the World Wide Web such as Google or Yahoo
- » A specific electronic research resource / computer database

Library access roles are perceived as declining

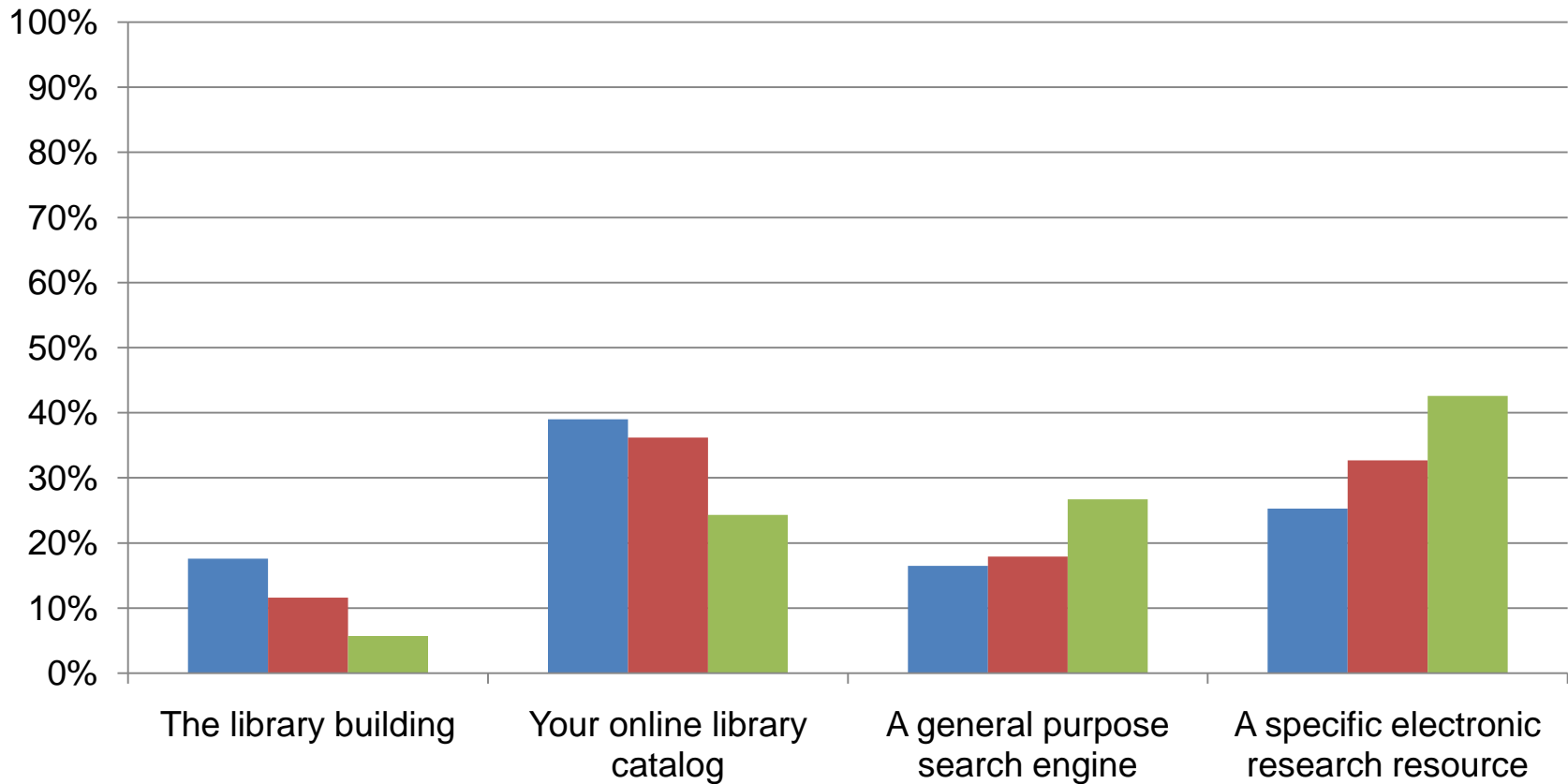


Starting point: historians and humanists



Local gateways are declining for humanists

Starting point for research *in the humanities*, over time



■ 2003

■ 2006

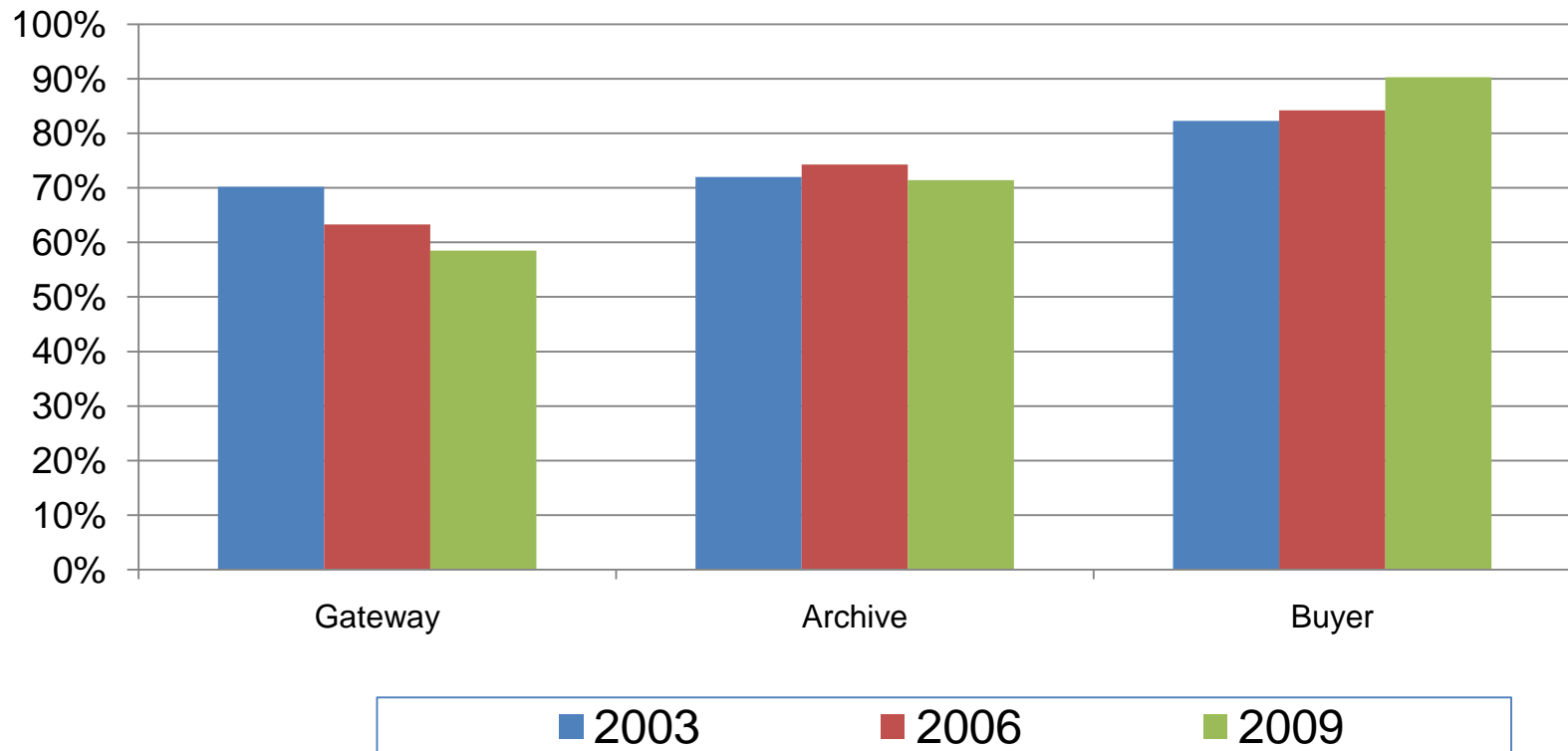
■ 2009

“How important is it to you that your college or university library provides each of the functions below?”

- » Gateway: “The library is a starting point or “gateway” for locating information for my research”
- » Archive: “The library is a repository of resources – in other words, it archives, preserves, and keeps track of resources”
- » Buyer: “The library pays for resources I need, from academic journals to books to electronic databases”

Roles of the library

Percent of faculty rating these roles of the library as very important

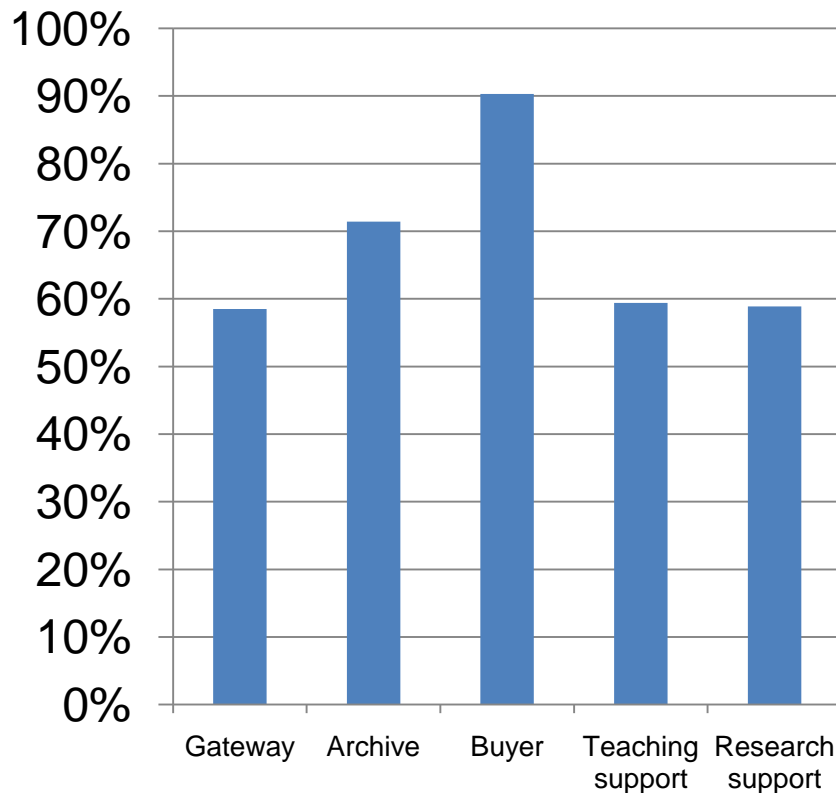


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- » Buyer: “The library pays for resources I need, from academic journals to books to electronic databases”
- » Teaching support: “The library supports and facilitates my teaching activities”
- » Research support: “The library provides active support that helps to increase the productivity of my research and scholarship”

Library roles, overall

Percent of faculty rating these roles of the library as very important



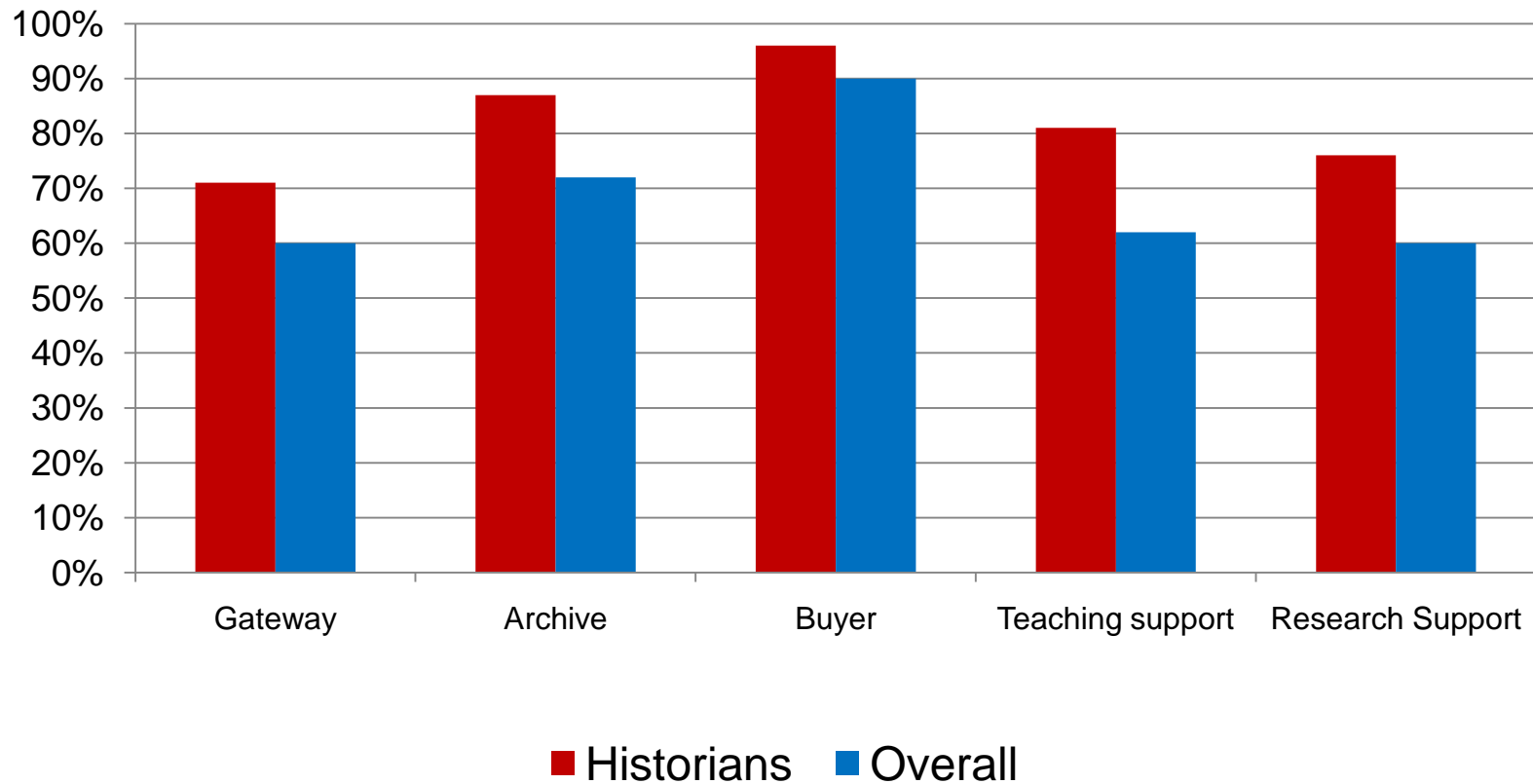
Research and teaching support roles do not challenge the library's role as a buyer in importance to faculty

Over time, we will be better able to evaluate if these roles are growing or declining in importance

Both teaching and research support are substantially less valued in the sciences

Library roles, historians vs. overall

Percent of faculty rating these roles of the library as very important



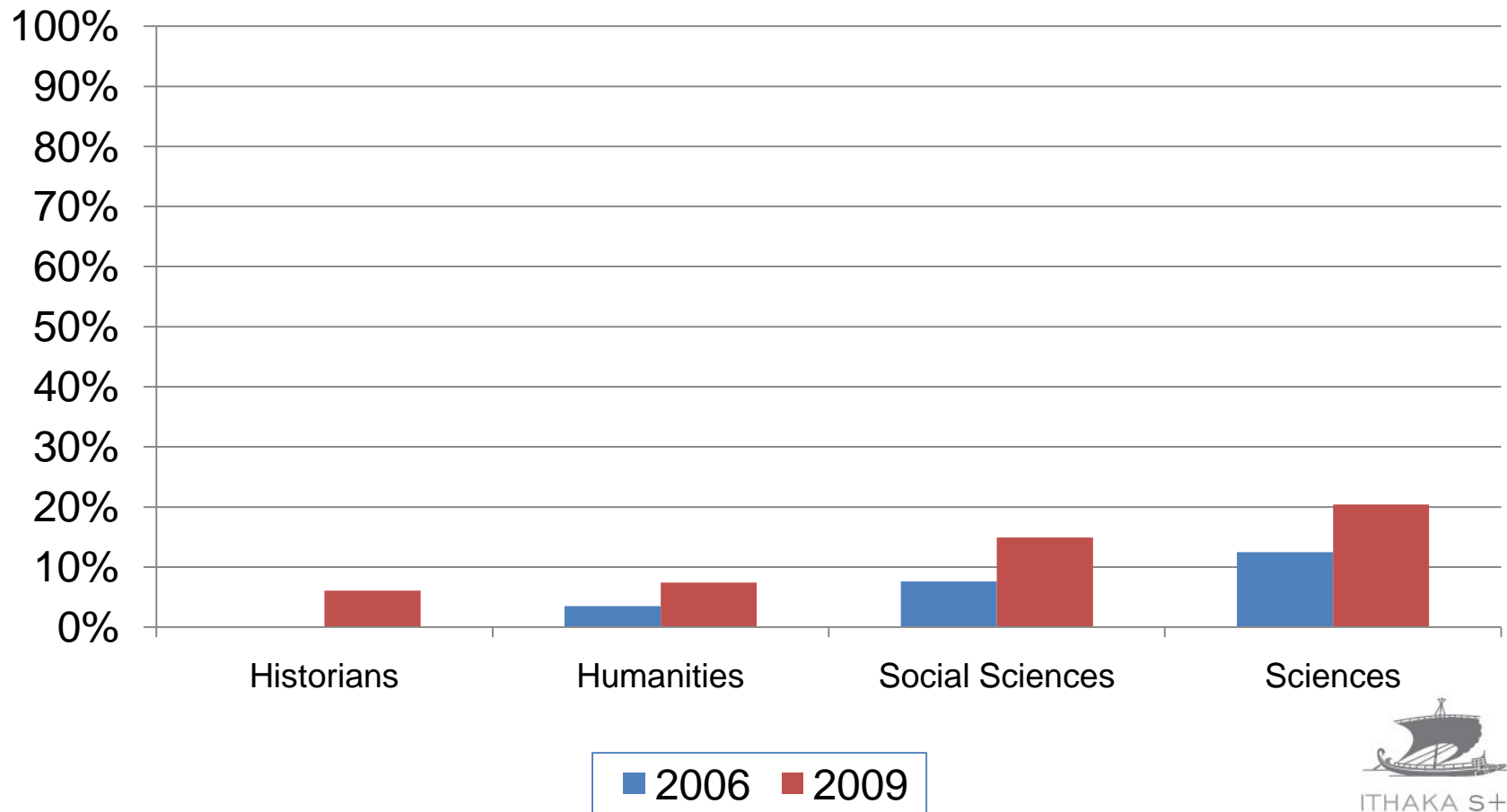
Strongly worded statement:

“Because faculty have easy access to academic content online, the role librarians play at this institution is becoming much less important”

Perception of dependency on their library for research they conduct

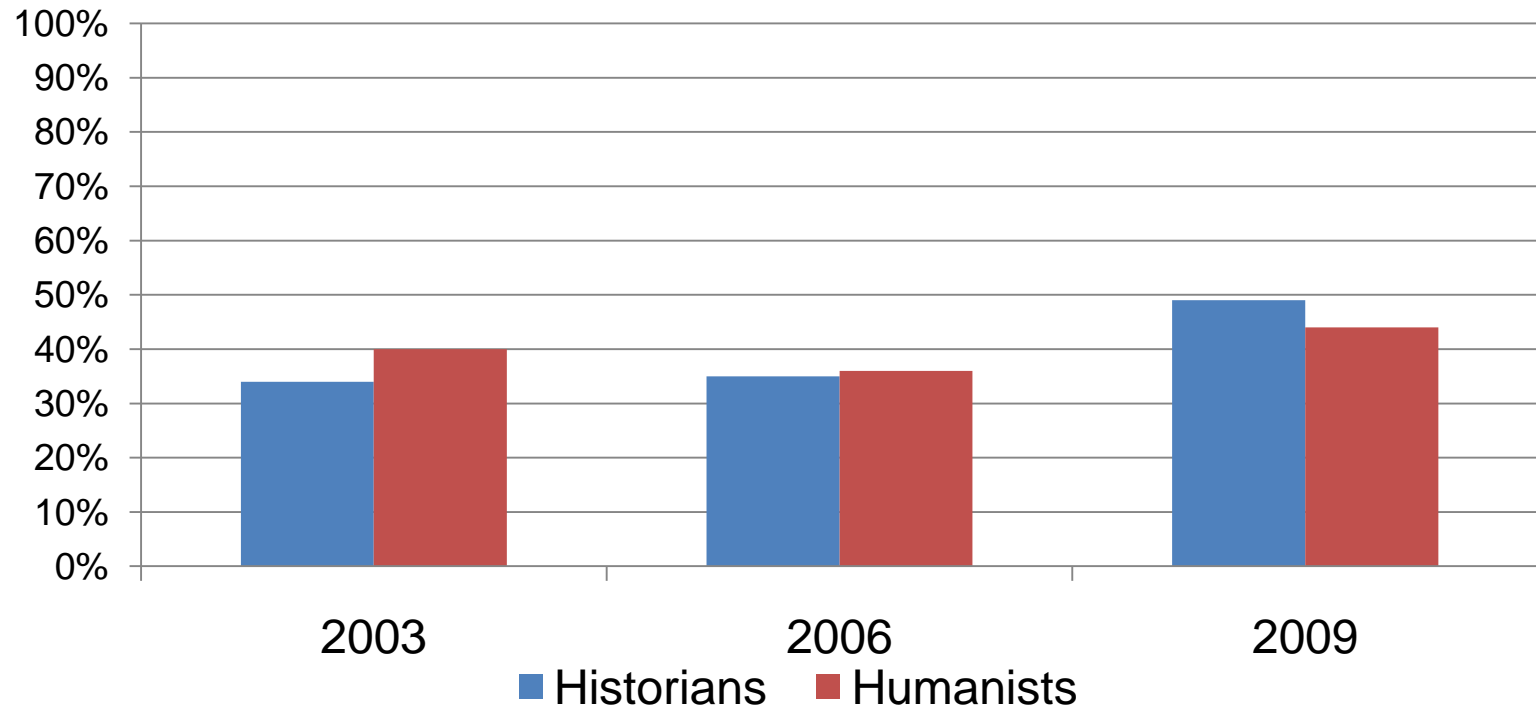
Increasing perceived irrelevance of librarians...

Percent agreeing strongly with the statement: "Because faculty have easy access to academic content online, the role librarians play at this institution is becoming much less important"



...Coupled with growing dependence on the library

Percent of faculty members indicating they are very dependent on their library for research they conduct



Increasing use of network-level resources for discovery

The library's purchasing role is uniformly most highly valued

The perceived value of the library gateway role has declined

Mixed valuation of the teaching and research support roles

- » Higher levels of perceived value in the humanities than in other fields

Small minority (apparently growing) views the librarian as less relevant even while feeling more dependent on the library

Ultimately, humanists including historians seem to be on the same trajectory as scientists, though ultimate outcomes are unclear

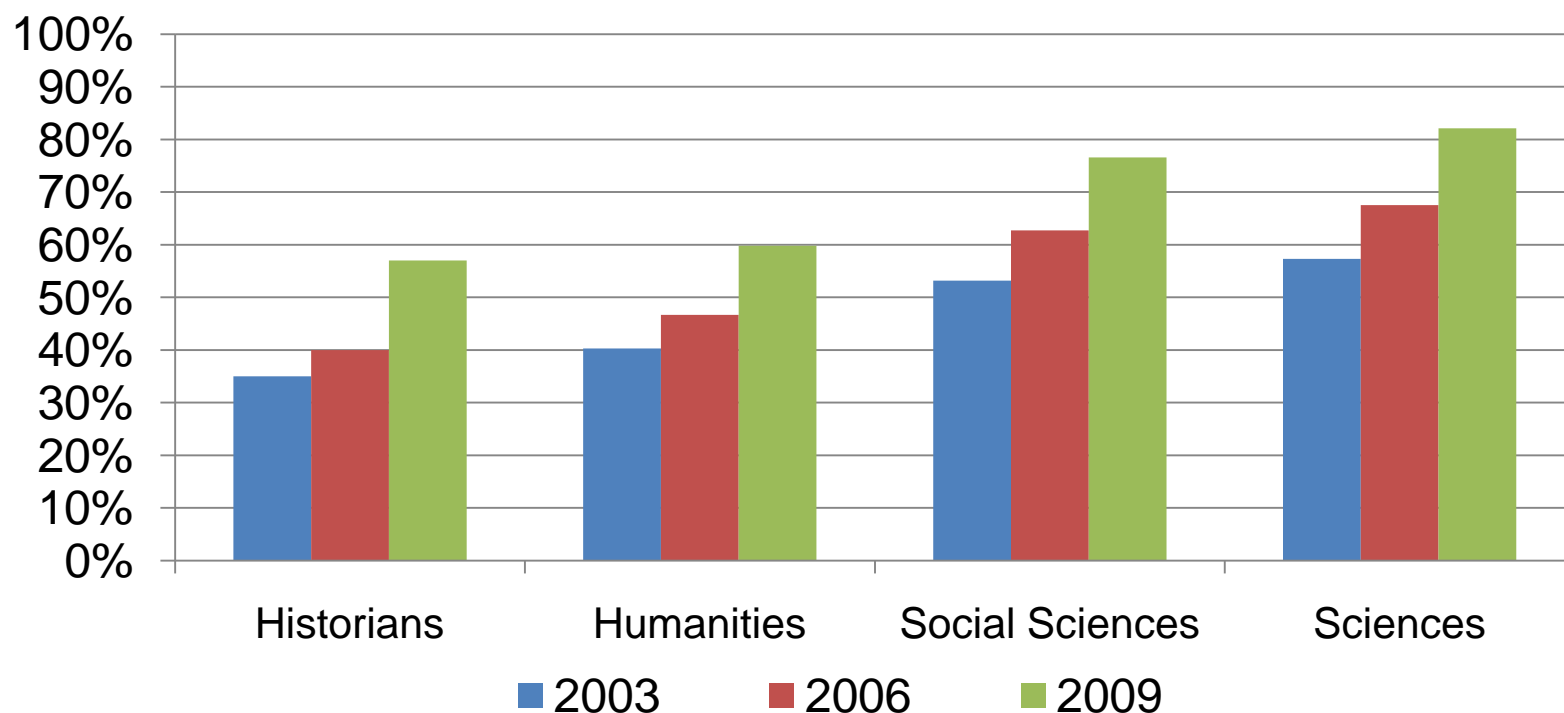
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The Format Transition for Scholarly Works

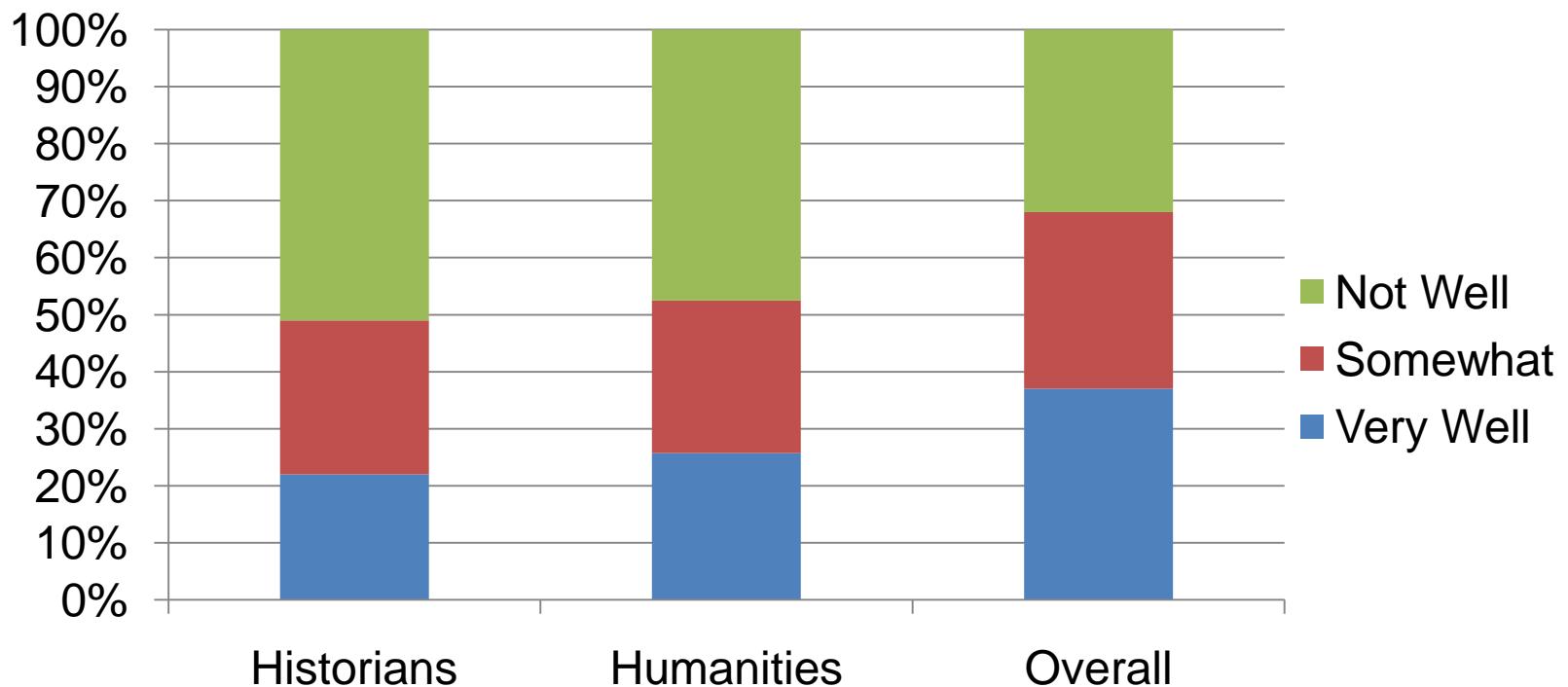
Journal current issues: Cancel print?

Strong agreement with the statement: “If my library cancelled the current issues of a print version of a journal but continued to make them available electronically, that would be fine with me.”



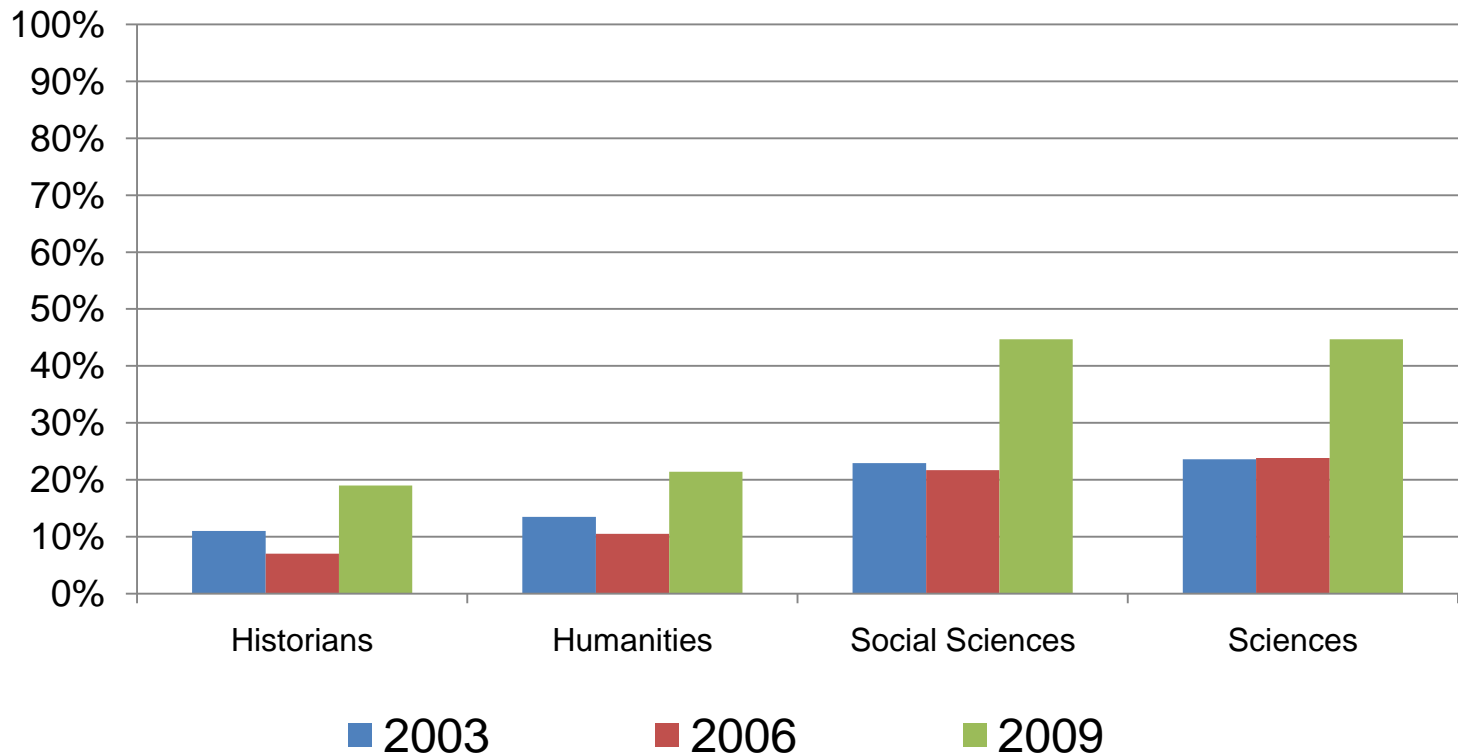
Does growing comfort with cancelling print yield comfort with ceasing print publishing?

Extent to which respondents agree in 2009 with the statement:
“I am completely comfortable with journals I use regularly ceasing print versions
and publishing in electronic-only form”



Journal backfile collections: Discard on digitization?

Strong agreement with the statement: “Assuming that electronic collections of journals are proven to work well and are readily accessible, I would be happy to see hard-copy collections discarded and replaced entirely by electronic collections.”



Respondents in all disciplinary groupings are comfortable with the replacement of print current issues with a digital version

- » Exceptions: fields such as art history and Asian Studies
- » Yet many journals, especially smaller, humanities, and overseas publications, are not yet available electronically, complicating library workflows

But faculty members have significantly less comfort seeing publication of print current issues cease entirely

- » Is this divergence functional, reputational, or sentimental?
- » How should libraries, societies, and other publishers respond?

Valuation of print journal collections is in steady decline

- » A strong subset of science and social science faculty members is *enthusiastic* about deaccessioning digitized backfiles.
- » Will humanists and historians come to support changing approaches to collections management?

Academic libraries are steadily reducing the local footprint of print journals also available digitally

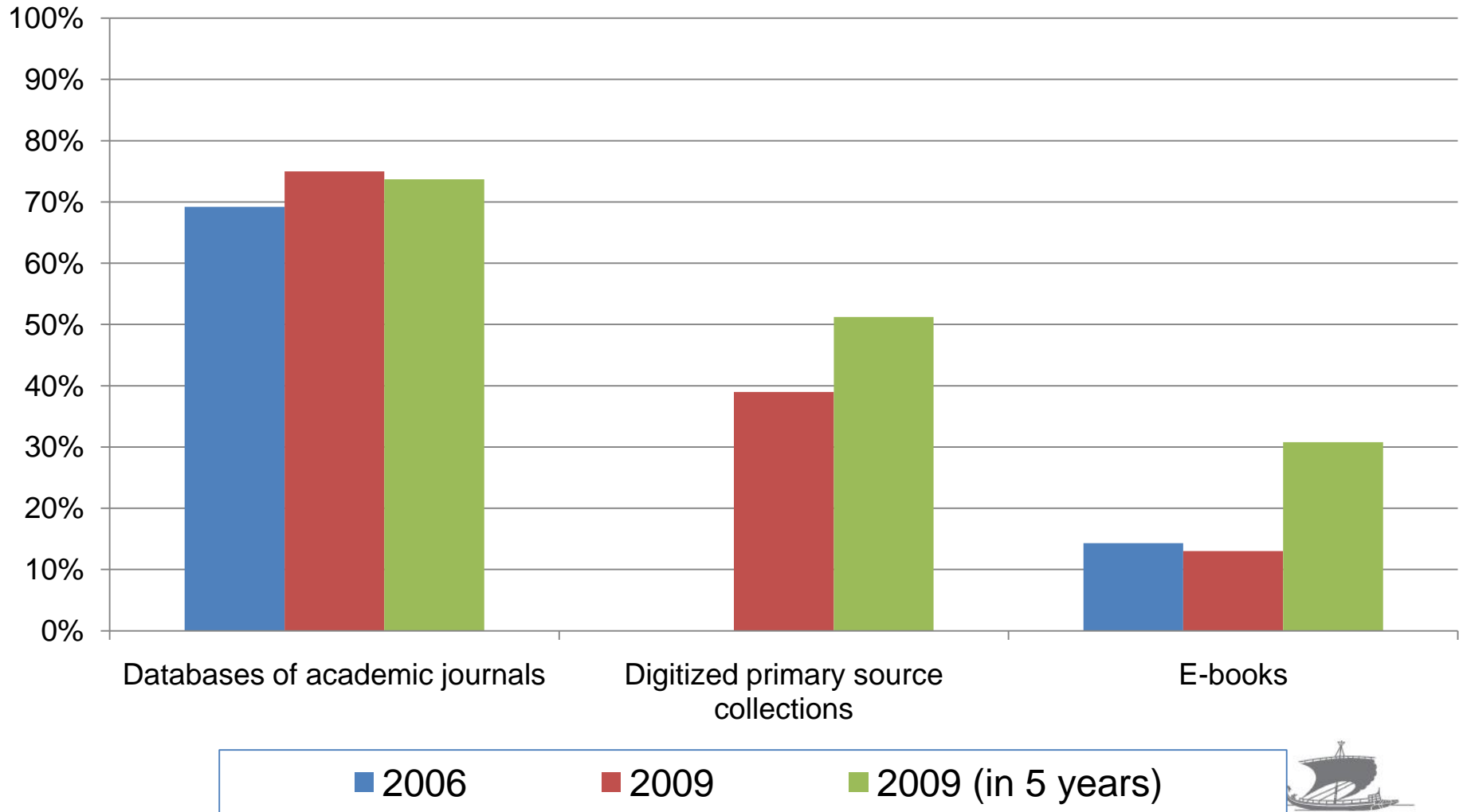
- » Can libraries build trust and support among faculty through a longer-term vision for the preservation of valuable content not locally but rather at the system level?
- » How can the library find efficient and sustainable models to ensure the preservation of print artifacts?

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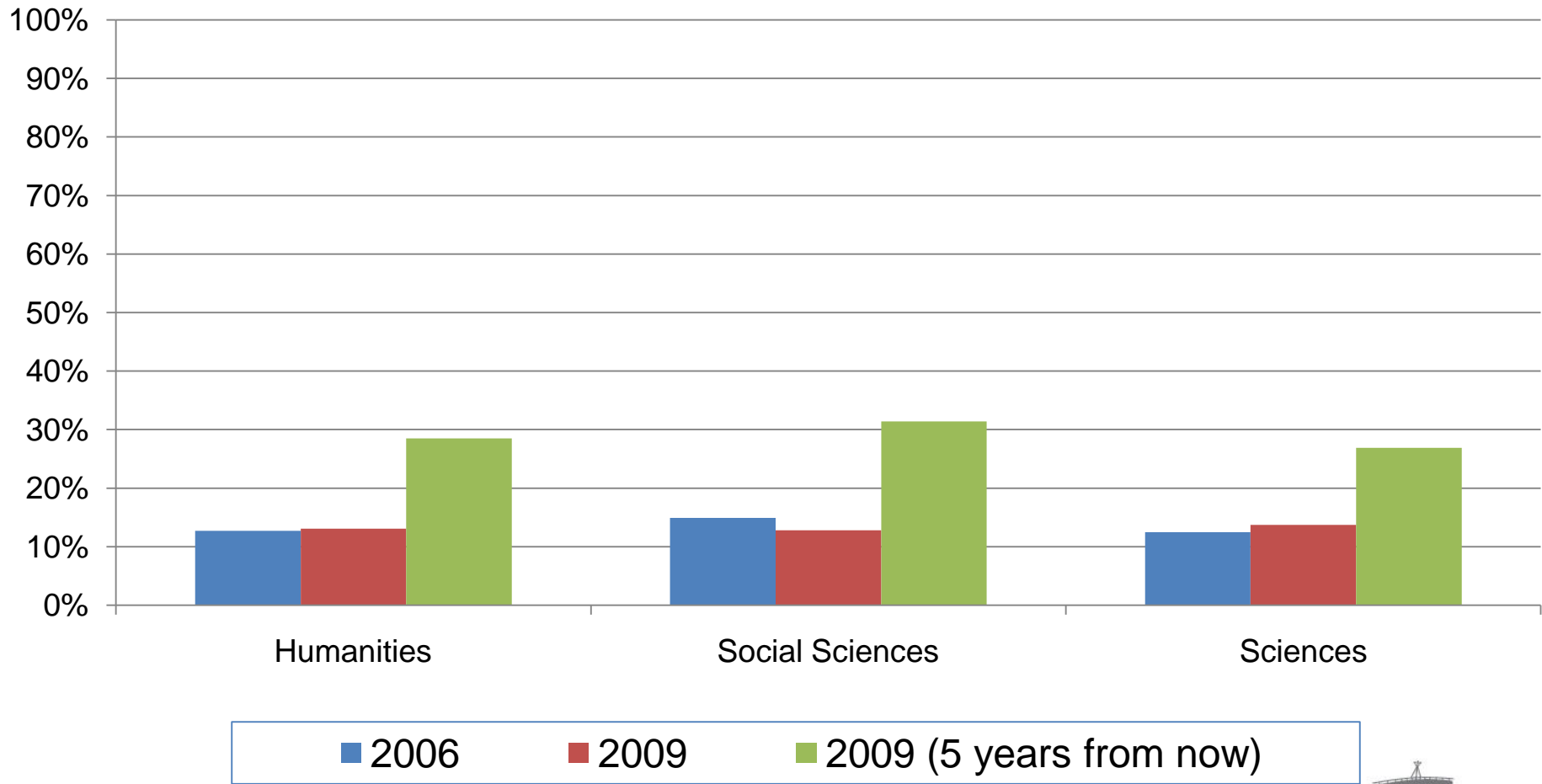
What about books?

Relative perceived importance of content types



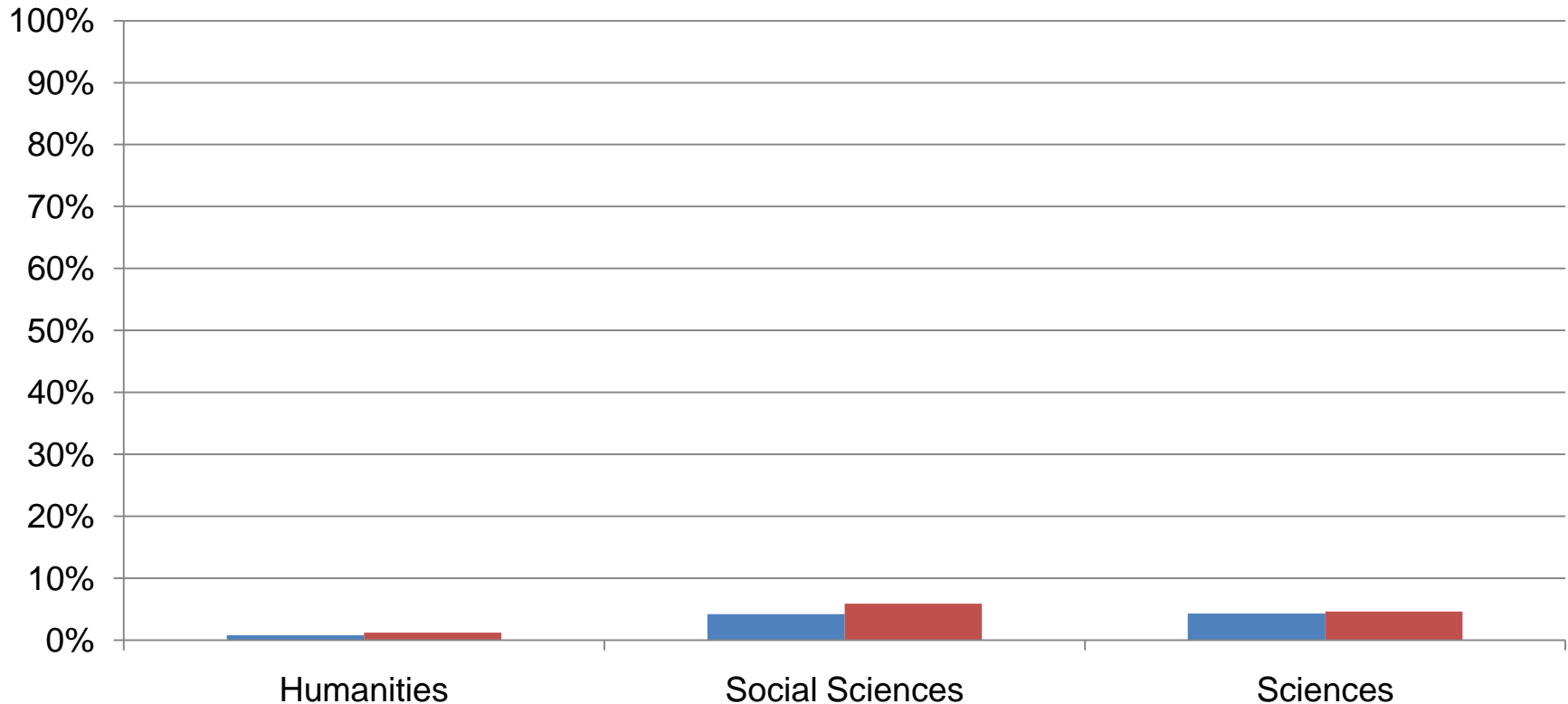
E-books of equal (non) importance across fields

Percent of faculty indicating that e-books are today (or will be in 5 years from now) very important to their research and teaching



A format transition for books is not foreseen

Strong agreement with “Within the next five years, the use of e-books will be so prevalent among faculty and students that it will not be necessary to maintain library collections of hard-copy book.”



Findings and Discussion: E-books

The perceived importance of e-books has not grown

Many respondents expect e-books to grow in importance over five years (and academic libraries expect to ramp up resources devoted to e-books significantly)

Still, faculty members do not believe that e-books are likely to replace print books.

Are e-books likely to replace or supplement print?

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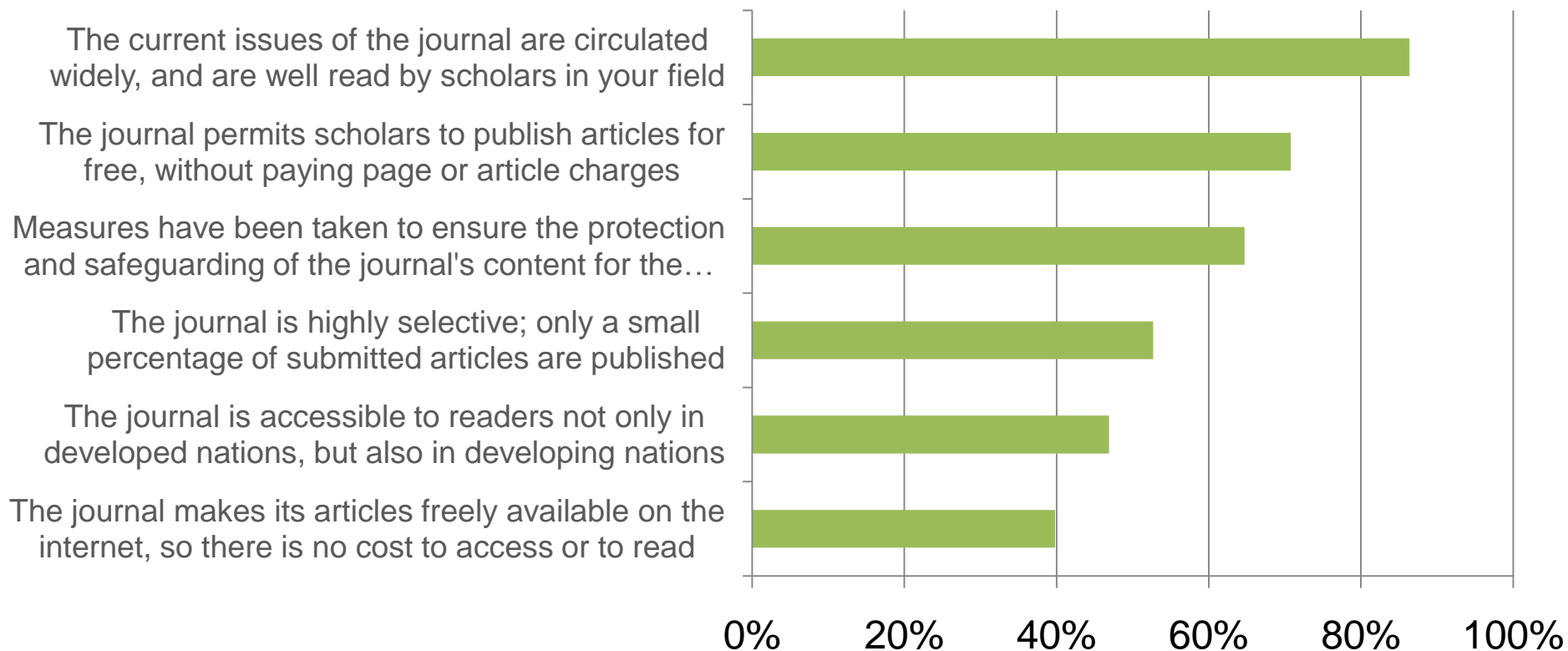
Journal Publishing Preferences

When it comes to influencing your decisions about journals in which to publish an article of yours, how important is each of the following characteristics of an academic journal?

- » The journal makes its articles freely available on the internet, so there is no cost to access or to read
- » The journal is accessible to readers not only in developed nations, but also in developing nations
- » The journal is highly selective; only a small percentage of submitted articles are published
- » Measures have been taken to ensure the protection and safeguarding of the journal's content for the long term
- » The journal permits scholars to publish articles for free, without paying page or article charges
- » The current issues of the journal are circulated widely, and are well read by scholars in your field

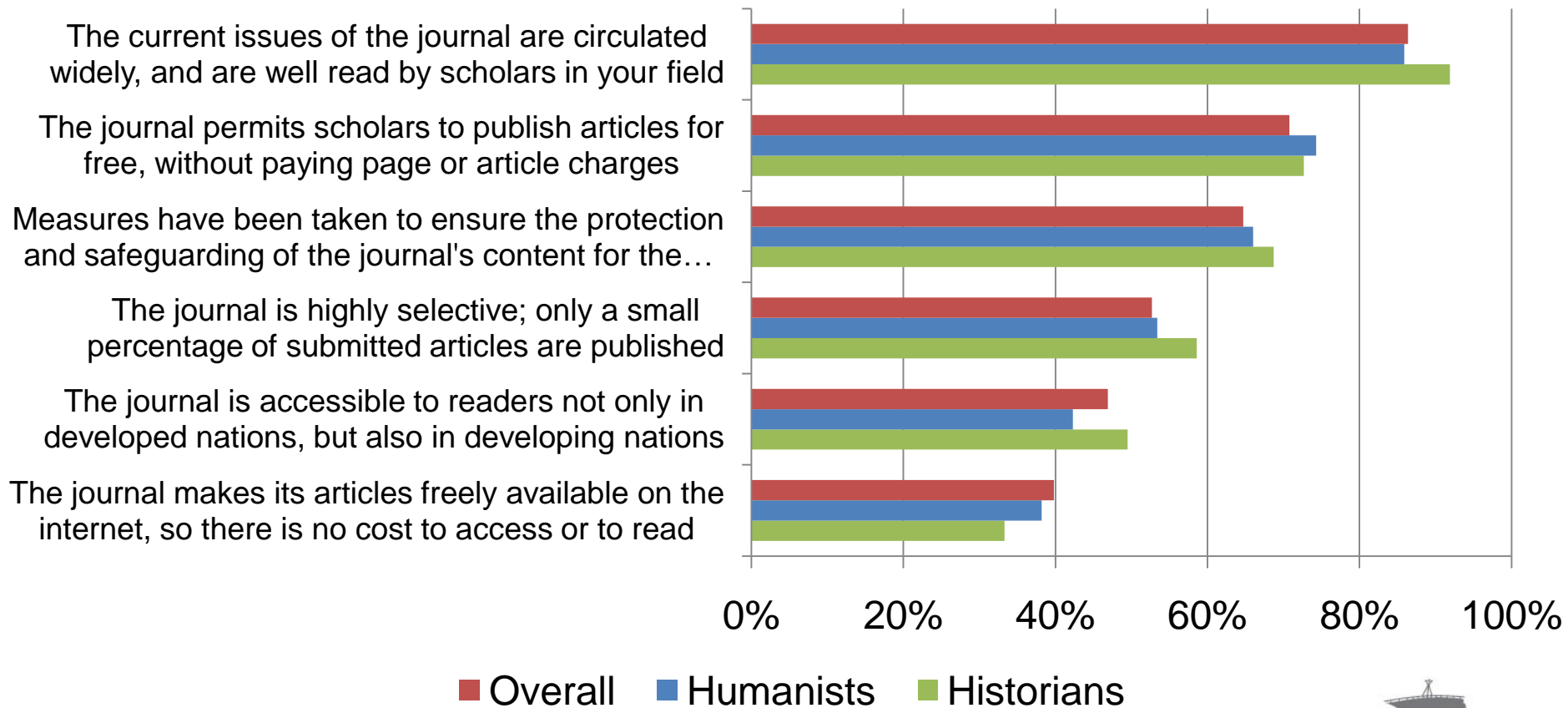
Journal publishing preferences, overall

Percent of faculty responding “very important” to “When it comes to influencing your decisions about journals in which to publish an article of yours, how important is each of the following characteristics?”



Historians are very similar to other scholars

Percent of faculty responding “very important” to “When it comes to influencing your decisions about journals in which to publish an article of yours, how important is each of the following characteristics?”



Effectively reaching an audience of *peers* is consistently the most broadly important factor in journal selection

Reaching a broader audience outside of peer scholars is generally seen as a lower priority

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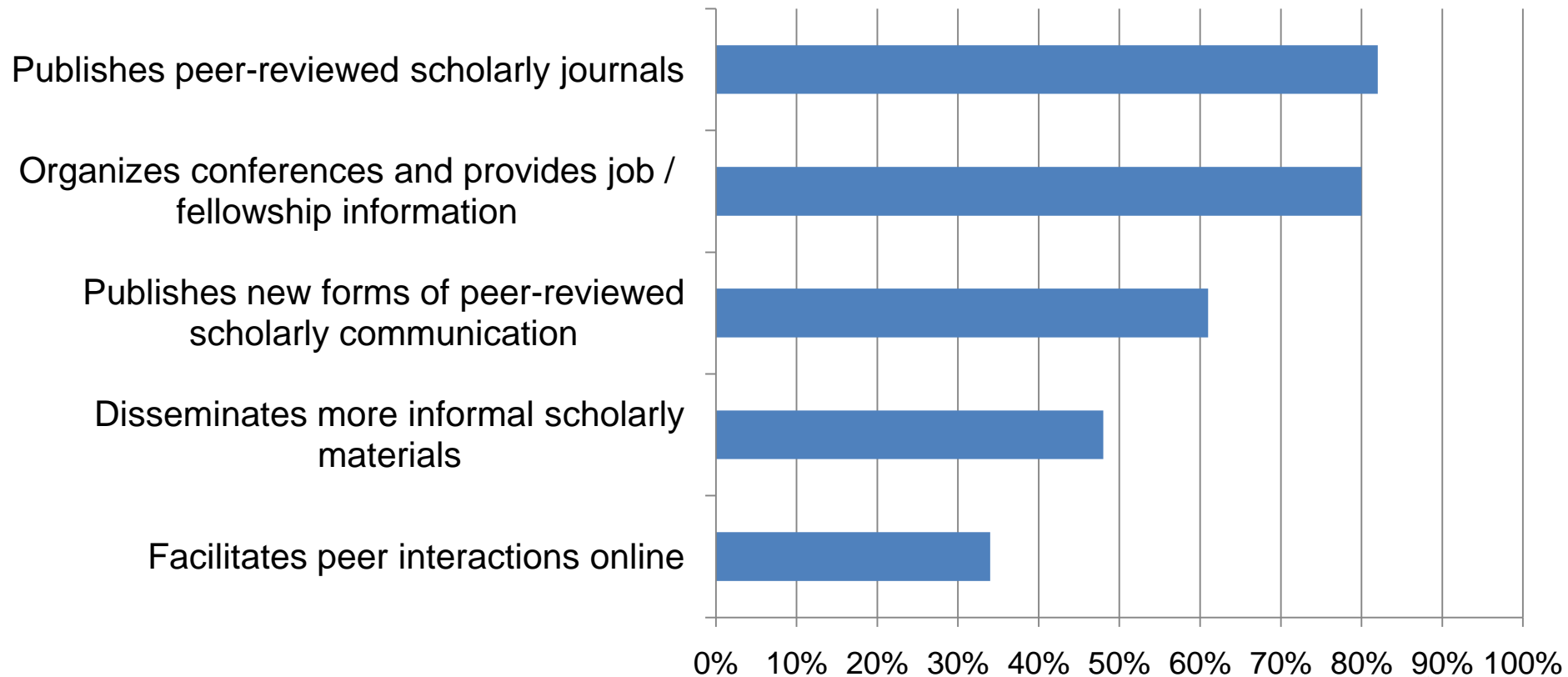
The Scholarly Society

How important to you is it that your scholarly society provides each of the functions below or serves in the capacity listed below?

- » Facilitates peer interactions online
- » Disseminates more informal scholarly materials
- » Publishes new forms of peer-reviewed scholarly communication
- » Organizes conferences and provides job / fellowship information
- » Publishes peer-reviewed scholarly journals

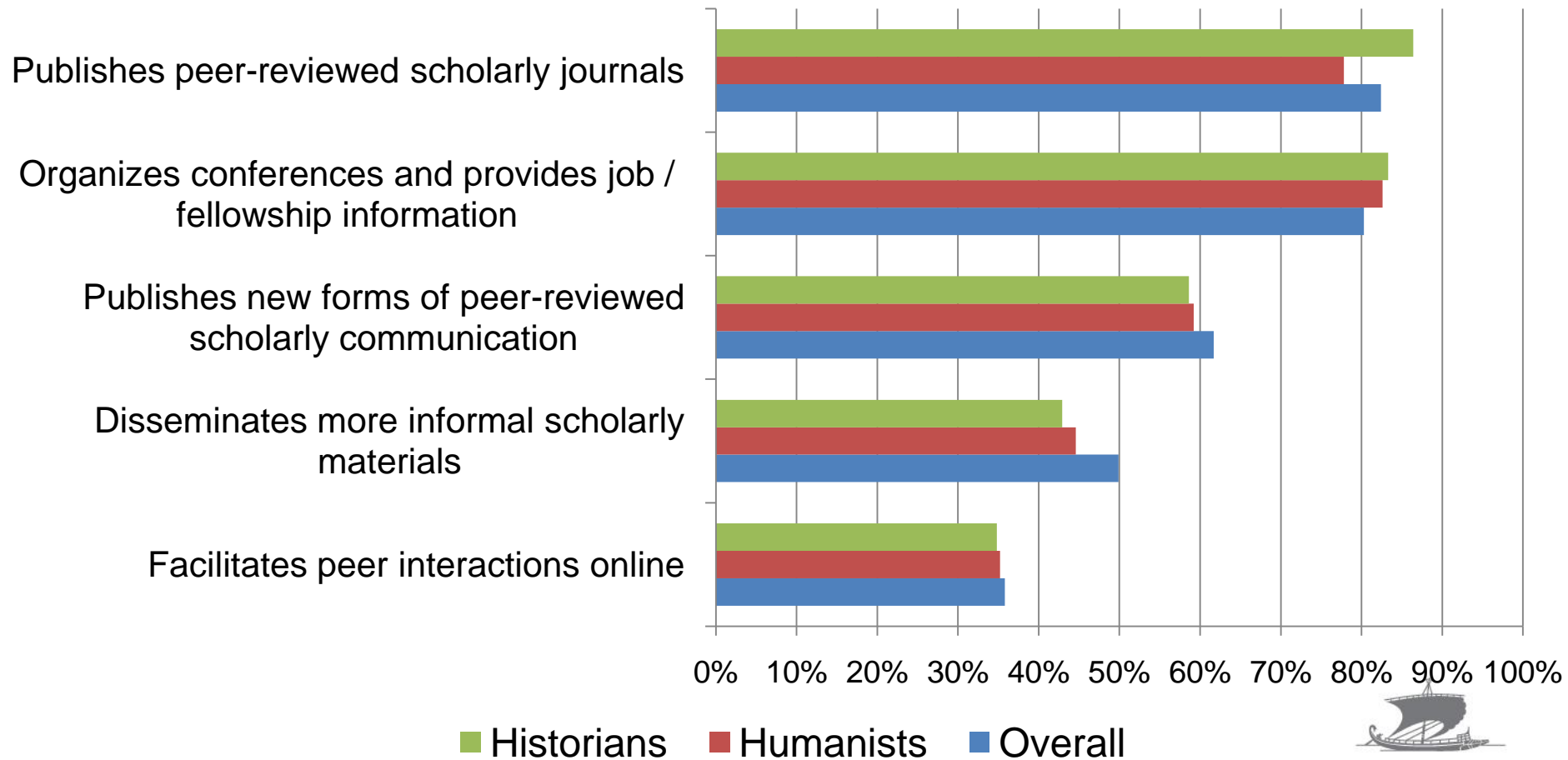
Respondents prioritize traditional roles of scholarly societies

Percent of faculty responding “very important” to “How important is it to you that your scholarly society provides each of the functions below or serves in the capacity listed below?”



Historians are very similar to other scholars

Percent of faculty responding “very important” to “How important is it to you that your scholarly society provides each of the functions below or serves in the capacity listed below?”



■ Historians ■ Humanists ■ Overall

The Role of the Scholarly Society

What roles will scholars value in their society going forward?

What is the role of the scholarly society in fostering informal communication among scholars in the online environment?

Will pressures on scholarly publishing and scholarly conferences lead to strategic change for societies?

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Thank you-

Roger C. Schonfeld

rca@ithaka.org

Twitter: @rschon