Collection Conditions in the Central Stacks

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How Does One Determine Need?

The Preservation Needs Survey

- General Examination of Needs:
  - Facilities Issues
  - Care & Handling Issues
  - Other Ignored or Neglected Areas

- Their purpose is generally to point out the things that you don’t see on a daily basis anymore – The “Duh” Factor.

- Michael Trinkley’s assessment is a prime example of this.
How Does One Determine Need?

Surveys & Assessments

- Condition Assessments & Surveys – designed to identify the physical conditions of a collection in a more specific nature.

- Action Surveys – expresses needs in terms of specific actions that will secure, replace, protect, or treat the items examined.

To Sample, or Not to Sample?
The Stacks Assessment

Why bother with the Stacks, aren’t they just a mess?
Why the Stacks?

The Stacks hold our largest most diverse collection, and we know relatively little about these items.

- How much of the collection is in air conditioned space?
- What is the overall shape of our collection?
- We know that there is a lot of brittle material, but how much more will there be?
- What other problems are there?

Finally, the Stacks, as we know them, are going to change. This is the last chance.
What We Knew....

Results of the 1989 Assessment:
- 37% of the collection was seriously deteriorated.
- 33.6% of the collection suffered from moderate deterioration.
- 29.4% suffered from no significant deterioration.

Project included the Central Stacks, not:
- Documents,
- Asian,
- Brittle Book Backlog,
- Microforms.

So, how do the Stacks stack up now?
Physical Size

79.23% of the collection (4,593,063) is of a standard size – between six and ten and a half inches in height.

- 2.82% of the collection (163,507) is undersized.
- 15.9% (921,585) is oversized.
- 2.05% (118,914) is folio sized.
Place of Publication

- N. Amer.
- L. Amer.
- W. Europe
- E. Europe
- India
- Africa
- Asia
Binding Information

- 31.54% of the collection is in a publisher’s cloth binding
- 43.33% is in a library binding
- 12.05% is a paperback book
- 8.72% is pamphlet bound
- 1.28% is a complete leather binding
- 3.08% is in another binding or is unbound
Cover Damage

Cover Damage - One or More Types

- Insect
- Mold
- Repaired
- Stained
- Water Damage
- Red Rot
- Light Damaged
- Scratched
- Misshapen
- No Damage
Leaf Damage

- 10.77% of the collection suffers from some sort of marking (highlighting, underlining, defacement, etc.)
- 10.00% is stained
- 1.54% suffers from visible mold
- 8.72% has torn pages
- 3.08% suffers from identifiable insect damage
- 3.33% has obvious water damage
- Only 40.77% is undamaged
Paper Acidity

Only 9.74% of the Central Stacks Collection is non-acidic, that means that...

90.26% of the sampled material was printed on acidic paper.
35.64% of the collection is acidic and brittle. This equals a comprehensive replacement or reformatting need of 2,066,033 volumes.

54.62% of the collection is acidic and not brittle. This means that we have the potential for about 3,166,294 more brittle volumes coming if we, as the collection’s stewards, don’t do something about it.
Critical Embrittlement

Although 35.64% is technically brittle, only a portion of that is what one could characterize as being in relatively critical shape.

26.42% of the material sampled breaks on two or fewer double folds.

This equals about 1,531,554 volumes that have reached a level of potential non-functionality under regular use.
Shaping the Program

- Education and Outreach
- Collections Maintenance and Repair
- Environmental Concerns
- Administrative Developments
Education and Outreach

Problems:
- 11% of the collection has highlighting, etc. . . .
- Almost 75,000 books have binder or paper clips in them and almost 60,000 have Post-It Notes stuck in between pages.
- 1.2 million volumes are scratched and nearly 1 million are misshapen.

Needs:
- More employee and user education about care and handling.
- As things are returned, employees need to be more aware of damage.
Collections Maintenance and Repair

 Problems:
  * Damage due to poor care and handling
  * Overcrowding causing damage
  * Brittle books
  * Paperbacks

 Responses:
  * Brittle book replacement and reformatting.
  * Systematic deferred paperback binding is beginning.
Environmental Concerns

Problems:
- Insect problems.
- Light and water damage.
- The physical space is causing damage.
- The results of our poor environment are beginning to show in a big way….

Responses:
- Improving stewardship.
- Working with O&M to Improve facilities issues.
- Lobbying.