

Advisory Council for the Research Libraries

3:30pm, November 2, 2016

Room 207, Stephen A. Schwarzman Building

Meeting Notes

Present: Tom Bender, Cathy Davidson, Duncan Faherty, Julia Foulkes, David Nasaw, Joan Scott, Jean Strouse, Annalyn Swan, Sally Webster

Apologies: Elizabeth Blackmar, Linda Colley, Farrah Griffin, Uday Mehta, Stephen Kotkin, Carla Peterson

NYPL Staff: Carolyn Broomhead, Denise Hibay, Bill Kelly

Bill Kelly welcomed the members, stating that the goal of this special ReCAP follow-up meeting was to hear from the group following the presentation at the regular meeting in September. He provided the following updates:

1. Librarians and administrators from the ReCAP institutions attended a colloquium on October 28, 2016 to discuss the future of library collaboration. Kelly reported being struck by the enthusiasm of the partners, who are excited about the possibilities for collaboration in building their collections further, allowed by the economies that ReCAP achieves.
2. The total number of items currently planned to be part of the shared collection numbers 10.2 million. Of the 5 million items NYPL stores at ReCAP, an estimated 4 million will be available as part of the shared collection. Each institution is trying to expand the number of items they are sharing because of both the common goal to expand access and the economic incentives. An early test of the amount of duplication between the partner's shared items indicated a duplication rate of less than 10%. As a reminder, the amount of duplication in the shared collection does not address internal duplication and each institution maintains its own accessioning and deaccessioning policies separate from ReCAP.

The Library has developed three active questions, circulated in advance, on which Kelly invited the group's input. The group was also invited to contribute their own questions in advance and at the meeting.

Question 1. Among the project partners, NYPL is the most conservative when it comes to lending serials. Columbia and Princeton allow serial volumes to be borrowed. Should we continue to adhere to the more conservative in-library use policy for all NYPL serials?

There were questions from the group relating to the need for a print archive of serials, the ready availability of these serials in digital form, possible damage through transportation, and the facility to recall an item in use by another patron. Denise Hibay confirmed that the Library does want to keep a print archive of serials and that we err on the side of conservatism on this point. She explained that NYPL is, for the most part, a one copy library whereas our partner libraries may have multiple copies of each item. This accounts for our more conservative approach. Before the materials were transported to ReCAP initially, they were stabilized (e.g. items were placed in protective enclosures or [phase boxes](#)) and items are transported in foam-lined bins, so the Library is confident about their safety and security. NYPL also participated in the NEH's Brittle Books Program, a nationwide strategy to preserve the

intellectual content of endangered brittle books, at the end of the last century. The microfilm copy provides a more stable service copy. Hibay also confirmed that shared collection books in use by one patron will be available for recall by another patron. This will be made possible through improvements to the [online research catalog](#) currently being undertaken by the Library. Kelly underscored the importance of this improved catalog interface, not just for the ReCAP project, but to serve our researchers better overall.

The group was interested to learn that up to 50 pages of any NYPL ReCAP item can be [scanned at no cost to the patron](#), and requested more information about how many physical and digital requests are filled each year. The group agreed though, that the Library should maintain a conservative approach and require that NYPL serial volumes in the shared collection be used on-site at partner libraries.

Question 2. Related to serials, the partners have discussed a potential project in subsequent phases to analyze long-runs of academic journals, especially in those cases where there are two or three copies of the same title, for de-duplication to find savings in shelving capacity. Would you support such an investigation into serial duplication across all disciplines, or are there specific areas that you would recommend above others, e.g., science but not humanities, etc.

Kelly explained that there is no current project on the table to analyze long-runs of academic journals, but that the Library wanted to invite input before any practical discussion of this began. The reality is that we are going to reach the limit of shelving and a space-saving step would involve limiting the duplication of academic journal serials between the partners. The group raised questions about how many copies of such journals the partners would keep, the overlap between these journals and the holdings in JSTOR, and the need to access the original physical item. Hibay explained that in some cases there was overlap with digital databases such as JSTOR, in addition to multiple physical copies between the partners. Initial feedback from the group indicated that access to the physical items was required for some projects, and that there could be a best practice set in terms of the number of physical sets needed for both access and preservation needs. The group invited the Library to investigate the holdings and bring further details about the specifics of duplicated long-runs of academic journals, the number of copies held, their digital availability and the recommendations of the partner collection management librarians.

Question 3. The current phase of the project is focused on the collections already held at ReCAP plus near-term transfers. One of the opportunities of the Shared Collection is for greater collaboration in prospective collecting, especially for lower-used foreign language materials. The goal with collaboration would be to reduce duplication in order to expand collecting. However, are there subject areas, genres or formats that we should continue duplicating among the partners, e.g., literary texts? In your experience, are there gaps in our current collecting?

Kelly reported that this discussion is also in very early stages, but that the advantage here would be that the partners would be able to purchase more collectively for the shared collection. The group expressed interest in hearing more as the conversation between the partner libraries develops. In terms of addressing gaps in the current NYPL research collection, the group suggested adding a line inviting public feedback about collection gaps to the current Rose Main Reading Room survey forms. Kelly agreed that the surveys would be a good way to capture this information.