

Mellon Tri-College Grant No. 8  
**Tri-College Collaborative Collection Management  
Program**

Fifth Annual Report, 2007

Submitted by the Grant Steering Committee

Amy McColl, Bob Kieft, Melissa Kramer, Eric Pumroy, Peggy Seiden,  
Elliott Shore

Compiled by

Amanda Watson, Christa Williford

## INTRODUCTION

This report summarizes the cooperative collections activities undertaken during the five years since the Mellon Foundation's 2002 grant to the Libraries of Bryn Mawr, Haverford, and Swarthmore Colleges. The Tri-College Libraries have received a succession of grants from the Foundation since 1998, all of them for encouraging collaborative efforts. The 2002 grant succeeded a planning grant for the study of library spaces and collections; the results of that grant were published by the Council on Library and Information Resources as Report 115, *Library Buildings and the Building of a Collaborative Research Collection for the Tri-Colleges*.

The grant proposal divided the project into four parts: collection management, acquisitions, staffing and communication, and digital image management. Initiatives undertaken in each of these areas had varied success, but in general the Tri-Colleges were able to demonstrate that intensive collaboration across all areas of collection development and management is possible, and that such collaboration can benefit our shared user community. We believe that we have no choice but to continue to find new and better ways to share library resources in order to preserve the high standards of teaching and scholarship upheld by our three institutions. We hope that our experiences will inform others, especially those in small liberal arts colleges like ours, about what to expect when implementing cooperative collection development projects, and that our discoveries about what worked best will help them make decisions about where to concentrate their efforts.

The joint collections projects we undertook resulted in several important achievements. We were able to recover some shelf space in our libraries by de-duplicating less-used materials, although not as much as initially hoped. We created new

administrative structures for cooperatively building collections in order to reduce duplication going forward; the joint plans we have implemented so far have resulted in significantly lower duplication rates than before. We have begun moving toward a common understanding of what core collections for the liberal arts college should be, and have worked to strike a balance between serving the immediate needs of local users and broadening the range of materials available to them. We established a cooperative preservation program for both print and digital materials, and we have developed new tools and established standards for the production and storage of visual resources. During this same period, we consolidated our efforts to improve ways of browsing our shared collection, aligned many of our user services policies, created a shared online gateway to research, and collaborated on electronic resource management. We also identified a number of areas for future growth, including jointly creating instructional screencasts, partnering on video streaming projects, and sharing cataloging expertise.

In addition to our summaries of these four aspects of collection development, we attach as appendices to this document the joint collection development policy statement we have authored during the course of the grant (Appendix 1), statistics relating to changes in spending and duplication rates resulting from our joint approval plan (Appendix 2), a chronology of Tri-College cooperation (Appendix 3), and a summary of the findings of interviews with all bibliographers and cooperative approval plan managers about their attitudes, experiences, and evolving work practices (Appendix 4).

## Section 1: Collection Management

### I. Collection alignment

The deduplication of older, little-used monographs was originally intended to be one of the major efforts of the project. During the project's first years, our consultant, Linda Bills, developed a database capable of identifying duplicate records in Tripod for books with low circulation. This database helped bibliographers choose which copies might be discarded and which should be retained as archival copies for the Tri-Colleges. During a small trial in Anthropology and a larger one in Economics, the database proved to be a useful tool for cooperative weeding. Across the three campuses, approximately 10,000 books were withdrawn from the collections as a result of the program, most in Economics.

Despite these initial successes, the overall costs of the deduplication program proved too high to be sustainable. The database was an efficient tool, but bibliographers still found that the process required a considerable amount of time first to explain the program to faculty, then to review the lists for obvious classics, titles in important series, or works that fell under the purview of departments not included in the pilot, particularly History. There was significant faculty resistance to the concept of weeding, principally at

Swarthmore, where bibliographers concluded that the small amount of space saved by deduplication was not worth the large expense in time and political good-will.

Although retroactive deduplication was suspended, the database and procedures are now in place, making it possible for us to re-institute cooperative weeding whenever we need to address pressing space needs. Now, when we weed our collections individually, we do so with an awareness of our consortial responsibilities. We have instituted a policy of notifying each other whenever one of us withdraws the last copy of a title from the system so that the other libraries have an opportunity to claim the book.

The cooperative weeding of journal back files has been more successful than the weeding of monographs. The libraries divided up the responsibility for maintaining a single hard-copy set of each of the JSTOR journals within the Tri-Colleges. Two of the libraries have now discarded the journals that they are not required to keep, and the third is about to do the same. To date, 7,397 volumes have been discarded through this program, with another 3500 being discarded this year. As faculty have become more accepting of online journals, particularly in the sciences, we see more opportunities for recovering library space through cooperative journal programs. All three libraries have agreed to participate in a project of the Pennsylvania Academic Library Consortium, Inc. (PALCI) to cooperate in the development of a shared print archive of the journals of scientific societies in cases where journal back files are available online. If this project proves successful, it is likely to be a model for developing a regional archive for journals in all fields.

The weeding of duplicate monographs is also likely to become easier as more monographs become available online and as our students and faculty become more accustomed to using them in the new format. Substantial numbers of out-of-copyright academic books are already available through Google Books and the Internet Archive; both of those collections are growing rapidly, and we are increasing our users' access to them through our linking server. More recent monographs are becoming available electronically through such vendors as ebrary and Ebook Library and through publisher programs like those of the Duke, MIT, and University of Pittsburgh Presses, groups of whose works are now linked through our catalog records. One of our faculty members' primary objections to cooperative collection development has arisen from the fear of losing a "browsable" collection--the fear that the experience of browsing through an online catalog is not the same as looking at a group of immediately available, well-chosen books on the shelf. We believe that online book collections hold the promise of providing a research-quality collection that is always available for browsing and discovery, thereby reducing the need for a large collection of books on site.

## II. Collection maintenance

An important component of any collections partnership is the ability of the partners to treat each other's materials as "trusted." If partner institutions are going to depend on access to a communal body of material, each must assure the others that the titles represented in catalog records are in fact accounted for and taken care of in ways that ensure their future availability. To make our collections

trustworthy, we have forged an agreement for collection management as part of our collection development policy [See Appendix 1]. This agreement aligns the Tri-College Libraries' circulation policies and user privileges. It also specifies responsibilities, standards, and procedures for collection maintenance.

Before setting up our agreement we conducted interviews with circulation and stacks managers at each main and branch library at the Tri-Colleges. These interviews showed that the procedure in greatest need of alignment was collection inventory. Haverford and Swarthmore had independently developed practices and conducted inventory on a regular basis. Bryn Mawr had not conducted an inventory in more than ten years. Bryn Mawr adopted a routine based upon the Haverford and Swarthmore procedures and began an exhaustive inventory. This inventory has improved estimates of the percentage of items deemed "correct on shelf" at Bryn Mawr to 94 percent. Given our knowledge of Haverford's and Swarthmore's experiences and the relatively low level of error found in the Bryn Mawr records, we have decided to schedule future circulation inventories on a five-year cycle.

Circulation staff have already seen that ongoing inventory has reduced problems at the service desk. The interviews, statistics, and practice with inventory during the course of the grant have informed the collection maintenance policy detailed in Part Two of Appendix 1. Also included in this document are procedures for deaccessioning, retaining last and archival copies, locating or replacing lost or missing items, housing materials, and conservation and preservation. Together with our public collection development policy statement, this agreement lays a firm foundation for collections cooperation in the future and could serve as a model for other consortia.

## Section 2: Collaborative Acquisition

### I. Joint approval plans

One of the major goals of the project was the development of an integrated Tri-College approval plan for acquiring newly-published academic monographs. By integrating our acquisitions, we believed we could significantly reduce the duplication of little-used academic monographs and thereby release money for broadening the range of books in the collections. This proved to be the case, as described in the Statistics section below.

We also saw the Tri-College approval plan as an opportunity to test how far our communities were prepared to go in thinking of our libraries as a single collection. We developed three approval plan models: one based on the assumption that it does not matter where most books sit in the collection, another on the assumption that it does matter and that the time bibliographers spend assigning books to locations is time well spent, and a third based on the assumption that it is most efficient to assign collecting duties for multiple campuses to one subject specialist.

To test the first hypothesis, we set up a system in which three lists of mainstream academic publishers are assigned to the three schools. Using publisher-by-output information provided by the vendor, the lists are designed so that each school receives approximately the same number of titles and spends approximately the same amount of money. For some of the publishers on these lists bibliographers receive notices of publication only (“slips”), while other publishers’ books are automatically shipped to pre-assigned schools. Publisher assignments are rotated among the schools each year. Since all bibliographers see the shipments and selections of their counterparts at the other two schools, they can order duplicate copies when necessary. We established this system for acquisitions in English Literature, Film Studies, Music, and Philosophy. After several years of this test, our faculty and students still seem satisfied with the quality of our new purchases and their locations within the consortium.

Our second approach, implemented for Political Science, is based on a division of books by subject area. New books in some specific subject areas are automatically directed to certain schools. For a very limited number of subject areas, titles are automatically duplicated in multiple libraries. All bibliographers are aware of what the other schools are acquiring and can consciously duplicate other titles when needed. Since only a small percentage of new Political Science books are shipped automatically, most are acquired as “slips,” which means that bibliographers make nearly every decision about purchases and duplications on a title-by-title basis.

Staffing changes led to the creation of a third collaborative approval plan for the subject of Religion. A single bibliographer uses this plan to select materials for both Haverford and Swarthmore libraries. He bases his decisions upon his knowledge of the strengths and interests of both programs gained through consulting with both sets of faculty. For this plan, no books are automatically shipped, so the bibliographer must review every title in the plan’s profile each week. This method works well for a subject area with a limited scope and relatively few new publications, but it would be more difficult to implement in broader curricular areas.

During the course of the grant our consortium made not one, but two changes in approval vendors. This caused some early frustration with setting up the online infrastructure required for our plans to run smoothly. In addition, there was some initial resistance from bibliographers to adopting the new approval plans. Despite these difficulties we can now say with confidence that all five plans have been successful. We have accomplished our goal of reducing duplication among the three Colleges in each subject area. Please see Appendix 2, “Approval Statistics,” for specifics on expenditures, duplication rates, and circulation trends.

Bibliographers participating in our joint plans make selections by casting “votes” for titles on a weekly basis. Acquisitions staff acting as plan managers resolve these votes at the end of each week and assign selected titles to locations, keeping numbers of new titles and costs as equal as possible across the consortium. Acquisitions staff have incorporated this procedure into their regular routine. As a result of the success of the Tri-College plans, the Bi-Colleges (Bryn Mawr and Haverford), which have shared a joint

approval plan since 1973, changed the process by which they do selection in the non-Tri-College subject areas to reflect the new “virtual” selection process employed for the Tri-College plans.

In 2007 the grant steering committee consulted with bibliographers about extending the Tri-College approval plan models to all subject areas. We are currently moving forward in some areas while putting off other areas indefinitely. For example, designing a satisfactory plan proved impossible for bibliographers in the area of Art History. Due to the fact that Bryn Mawr has a graduate program, and therefore increased demand and a vastly greater budget for these materials, it was difficult to find a way to distribute expenditures in an equitable fashion. In the sciences, we concluded that a joint approval plan was unnecessary, since a long history of cooperation on materials selection already informs the work of current science librarians. In addition, we decided not to develop joint programs at this time for Classics, for some of the performing and creative arts, for interdisciplinary fields whose materials find their way into disciplinary approval areas, and for subjects taught only on one campus.

We continue to work against some limitations in our vendor’s purchasing system. For instance, although we explored the possibility of having the system allocate selections to our three campuses automatically rather than using acquisitions staff time, the vendor was not able to implement the changes that would have made this possible. We planned to introduce joint purchasing practices in as many subject areas as possible before the end of the grant, but we found the time required to establish these was much longer than we had anticipated. In this regard, there is still much work to do. While we have created a mechanism for reducing duplication, we need to do more to analyze gaps in our joint collection and to cooperatively acquire a broader range of materials.

Our successes have garnered national attention and have prompted other consortia to emulate our practices. Tri-College staff spoke about our approval plan program at the Charleston Conference in 2005 and at the American Library Association annual meeting in 2007. We have consulted with consortia in Minnesota (Carleton and St. Olaf Colleges), Maine (Bowdoin, Bates, and Colby), and Connecticut (Connecticut College, Trinity, and Wesleyan). Staff are currently working on a *Guide to Online Approval Plans* for the Association for Library Collections and Technical Services Publication Committee. We are proud to have been trailblazers who have helped others to begin creating effective cooperative approval plans while at the same time accomplishing our own goals.

## II. Statistics

*For details see Appendix 2*

When we collected statistics during our planning grant, we found that the duplication rate between the Swarthmore-only approval plan and the Bi-College plan was approximately 80%. Our goal was to reduce this percentage significantly. In the pilot subject areas, we have reversed the proportion of duplicate to unique titles. Current statistics show that in our joint approval subjects we now duplicate only 18.3% of titles, while 81.7% of titles in these subjects are unique. In Music, our current duplication rate is

a mere 8.8%; in Religion, which has the highest duplication rate of all pilot subjects, it is 26.2%, still a remarkably reduced number from the rate of duplication in that subject before the Tri-College collecting program began.

Expenditures were reasonably distributed. Swarthmore, which purchases titles in every pilot subject, spent the most, while Bryn Mawr, which does not buy in either Music or Religion, spent the least. Haverford purchases in every pilot subject area with the exception of Film.

It is still a bit early to see any sort of changing trend in circulation figures. However, we did find that 42.1% of all items added through the joint approval program have circulated at least once, and 17.5% have circulated two times or more.

### Section 3: Staffing structures and bibliographer communication

#### I. Goals and accomplishments

In the grant proposal, we listed several goals for structuring collection development:

- devising a joint collection development/management policy
- assigning bibliographic specialties to staff who would serve all Colleges
- working toward developing closely coordinated materials budgets
- creating communication structures with faculty and among librarians to solicit purchasing suggestions, inform the campus communities of new acquisitions, and create efficient means for making system-wide decisions about collection maintenance.

We met most of these goals, if not head on, then at least in part or potentially. Bibliographers spent most of their collaborative time this last year of the grant working with acquisitions staff to profile approval agreements for collection areas that do not yet have them (Anthropology/Sociology, Dance, Economics, Education, History, secondary works in Modern Languages, and Psychology). We held an all-bibliographer meeting in January 2006 that provided a good deal of the content for the fourth annual report. We held another bibliographer meeting to celebrate the conclusion of the grant on January 7, 2008. At that time we approved the working draft of a Tri-College Consortium Collection Development Statement (see Appendix 1) and discussed points to be made in this report as well as future directions for our collaboration on collections and related services.

During the course of 2007, the Heads of Collections sponsored lunch meetings for groups of bibliographers. The purpose of these meetings was less to talk about choosing materials than it was to help bibliographers stay informed of user needs, faculty research projects, and curricular changes. We will continue these informal lunch meetings in order to encourage ongoing communication that might not happen as readily as would be desirable given the geographic distance between campuses, the daily work demands on bibliographers, and the very limited potential for exchanging ideas through our online

selection tool. Our experiences during the grant suggest that "old fashioned" social networking plays a critical role in promoting consortial cooperation.

In the future, we plan to hold one seminar per year focused on large-scale issues affecting our collections and major trends in the disciplines our bibliographers cover. Possible topics include the relationship of special collections to general collections and ways of incorporating knowledge of collections into reference work and library instruction. Bibliographers will also continue to work together on the consortium "subject guides" (<http://trilogy.brynmawr.edu/guides/index.php>). The Heads of Collections will continue the work of the grant steering committee, holding monthly meetings to keep lines of communication open and to develop aspects of our joint collecting program.

Toward the end of 2007 and as a first step in qualitative assessment of the effects of the grant on the Consortium, Amanda Watson and Christa Williford conducted interviews with all bibliographers and acquisitions staff to discuss the following questions:

- how their daily collection development practices changed over the last seven years
- the place of collection development among their job's priorities
- their criteria for making selection decisions
- how they feel Tri-College collection development practices are working
- the effects of Tri-College collecting on their support of faculty and students
- reactions received from faculty and students on Tri-College collecting practices
- what they feel the next steps for Tri-College collection development should be

The findings of these interviews are described in detail in Appendix 4.

## II. Communication and joint selection structures

Our experience demonstrates, not unsurprisingly, that old habits and communication practices, or the lack of them, die hard. Agreement and trust are not always easy to build given the various temperaments, interests, responsibilities, and ambitions of bibliographers; this means that the personal side of collection development practice is critical to the progress of our cooperative work. We have found that fostering change in these areas is far more challenging than resolving all the technical and logistical problems that we initially faced when we set out to build a cooperative collecting program. Our bibliographers have distinctly different views of what should be in the collection and of how given items relate to the College and to faculty and student work. They make selection judgments based on different assumptions about immediate needs, present and future uses in the curriculum, or the importance of having titles that are simply "good books." These varied assumptions will not change overnight;

however, a more federated view of collections is slowly emerging and will develop over the years.

One of the concerns that has arisen with respect to relationships among bibliographers is that the electronic system we use to "vote" for dividing the books among the campuses severely limits opportunities for discussion about purchases and their assigned locations. Early in this project we decided that a face-to-face process for dividing approval books among the campuses would not work, but Bryn Mawr and Haverford bibliographers remember well their former weekly meetings for dividing shipments of books ordered through the Bi-College plans; these meetings often prompted useful discussions about collections and curricular changes. We now use an efficient web-based mechanism for selecting materials on approval, but use of that system has clearly not promoted a common understanding among all bibliographers. Our Heads of Collections are now focused on creating other venues for bibliographer communication, and we have reopened the question of face-to-face meetings for selecting and placing titles. In addition, we are looking for ways to address another unintended consequence of using the online system to "vote" on selections: a "collaboration paradox," that is, how our joint voting practices may be reducing the number of titles we purchase, especially the number of books that are expensive. To address this concern, we are looking closely at bibliographer voting patterns and how they have affected recent acquisitions.

In contrast to the web-based voting that facilitates much of the collecting in subjects for which we now have Tri-College plans, we have also explored the possibility of a single or joint bibliographer's selecting for all three libraries in a given discipline. We now have one bibliographer selecting in Religion and Photography for all campuses, the Religion arrangement having begun during the course of this grant when another bibliographer was on leave. The experiment turned into a longer-term arrangement, and all seem content that a single-bibliographer model works well for these areas. The bibliographer in question spends a good deal of time on the other campus that collects in Religion, talking with faculty, attending local meetings, and offering library instruction.

We have decided to use the single-bibliographer model *ad hoc* when someone with superior knowledge of a field and willingness to move among campuses is available. Large-scale sharing of bibliographic responsibility across campuses remains impractical for the reasons cited in our Planning Grant report and in our request for the current grant. We are coming to see, however, that it is equally possible to build a joint collection through forging agreements about collection development goals, policies, and practices among multiple bibliographers as it is to apply the expertise of one person to all three collections. Since we have overlapping curricula and small staffs, and since bibliographers are also responsible for reference and instructional services, it is desirable to have selectors with similar subject interests in each library. We believe it is best for us not to worry about overlap among selectors and instead to concentrate on how those selectors work together.

We did little with bibliographer development beyond what we had already been doing before the grant. We had set out to determine best practices, establish a mentoring program for less experienced subject specialists, and assess the need for and desirability of further professional development for them. To accomplish these purposes we had talked about conducting an ongoing collection development seminar that would bring together bibliographers to discuss their work. We found it difficult to establish a structure for this because of our different institutional traditions and the varying career experiences, subject knowledge, and learning patterns, not to mention that we did not take on any new bibliographers who stayed with us. That said, some of our goals for staff development were accomplished "organically" through our work on approval profiles and will be promoted by such other ongoing activities as the periodic lunches and annual symposium mentioned above.

We also discussed the desirability of having subject-specific seminars involving Tri-College faculty. Unfortunately, faculty schedules and changes in library staff militated against making occasions for these meetings during the period of the grant. As we have come to know our different programs better, we have seen that our faculties are to varying degrees locally minded; they tend not to confederate in the ways that our project envisions librarians' doing. We are considering inviting faculty to join bibliographers in the lunches or the annual symposium in order to extend conversation about our shared collection beyond the local interactions that librarians have with individual faculty or departments.

In spite of our not taking a systematic approach to outreach to the Tri-College community, we are providing indirect ways for students and faculty to discover and use our collective resources. We continue to work together to develop a collective web presence around our library management system, Tripod. While walk-up reference service, bibliographic instruction classes, and scheduled face-to-face consultations will continue to be an important part of our work, providing online guidance that is "just in time, just enough, and just for me" will become increasingly important as users look first to the Web for study, teaching, and research. In addition to directing our patrons to subject experts, we now provide dynamically-created "subject guides" that have been jointly compiled by our bibliographers on our shared research gateway:

<http://trilogy.brynmawr.edu/guides/index.php>

Our Tri-College Libraries Systems Coordinator built the tool through which we create these guides. In addition to general subject information, we use the same collaborative tool to construct individualized web pages for helping classes with their current assignments. Because all of these resources are linked together, they provide another means through which bibliographers can learn about one another's work. Finally, we are now providing information about current consortial acquisitions via RSS; this information appears on the Tripod and Library home pages and can also be fed to academic department and individual home pages.

## Section 4: Digital Image Collection Development and Management

One goal of the grant was to explore the digitization of materials from our collections. Two types were proposed: 1) slide collections at Bryn Mawr and Swarthmore (Haverford does not maintain a slide collection, but relies on the collection at Bryn Mawr); and 2) monographs whose fragility is such that all physical copies need to be removed from general circulation. We met our first goal with the grant-funded digitization of slides from Swarthmore and Bryn Mawr, in years one and two, respectively; we achieved our second goal through the implementation of the RichCAT experiment. In addition, we used grant money to license images related to Tri-College courses which are not adequately supported by ARTstor or local collections.

During years two and three we implemented and used MDID as our image management system while ARTstor continued to build its repository of images. The MDID system was decommissioned in year three, and in year four EmBARK and Web Kiosk were put in its place as a joint catalog and discovery tool for all images used in the Tri-Colleges. Having this single repository (now called Tripix) for all curricular images allows for the efficient sharing of files and metadata among Visual Resources staff and ultimately among faculty and students.

ARTstor continues to be an important repository and presentation medium for faculty using digital images. The Tri-Colleges add materials to ARTstor on a semi-annual schedule and faculty are able to use the Offline Image Viewer for the display of ARTstor, local collection, and personal collection content. All images that are created for use between ARTstor uploads are accessible through the Tripix repository. By licensing ARTstor as a consortium we have negotiated the ability to share image groups created at one campus with all members of the Tri-College community. We have decided to seek, whenever feasible, Tri-College access when we purchase or lease commercial images in the future. A Tri-College Digital Images Collection and Access Policy is nearing completion.

Digital Images produced in our Special Collections continue to be added to Triptych, the Tri-Colleges' instance of CONTENTdm. In the past year the Libraries looked seriously at moving our CONTENTdm collections to a statewide digital library supported by AccessPA. Issues such as lack of technical control and the loss of development possibilities led us to conclude that for now we are better off remaining "on our own." New document and image collections are added each year. Currently, plans are underway among Tri-College staff to design a new interface for Triptych better suited to the size and variety of our collections.

Communication among the three schools as well as between Visual Resources and Special Collections staff has increased dramatically over the past few years. Visual Resources staff have been involved in helping to define standards for those involved in Special Collections digitization and a few Special Collections image sets have been added to both Tripix and Triptych. While our two models continue to serve distinct purposes (one for local curricular support, the other for archiving and research), we

expect that the boundary between these collection groups will continue to blur and that we will eventually need to offer greater connections between the two environments.

## Section 5: Future directions

The Web and Web searching have repositioned the horizon of possibility for libraries. Mass digitization projects for printed publications, the digitization of special collections materials, and the digital delivery of materials demonstrate plainly that today's library is not about ways to house books and videos but about the ways in which people interact with texts, images, and sounds. In planning for the future of our collections and related services, therefore, the Tri-College Libraries assume that in the next ten to twenty years:

- mass digitization projects will mature into a universal online library
- equipment and software for reading electronic texts will improve significantly and be widely accepted
- the development of devices for reading and using library collections will cause a shift away from analog forms of publication; under most circumstances people will prefer a digital version of a text and will not immediately print it to paper to use it
- publishers, libraries, and mass digitizers will develop commercial and legal arrangements that will allow access to the universal online library for so-called "orphaned works" and copyrighted materials, and a system of micro-payments or subscriptions will allow libraries that do not own texts to have access to them
- libraries will form regional and national consortia for archiving materials; both print and electronic collections will be distributed across a network of academic libraries and other repositories.

We believe that in response to these changes, our libraries should:

- develop the infrastructure needed to collect, manage, and produce electronic texts
- partner with other organizations rather than build our own storage and access mechanisms for electronic materials
- promote regional and national repository schemes for legacy and new print collections and clarify how our role in a network of collections goes beyond the immediate needs of the local curriculum
- deploy search and discovery mechanisms for users that acknowledge their preference for working in the network of universal sources as opposed to the local collection
- commit funds to cooperative mass digitization programs such as the Sloan Foundation grant to PALINET
- publish our unique and unusual materials to the Web
- establish and apply best practices for archiving and publishing campus work.

We will continue our collaborative approach to collection building as we prepare for and adapt to these changes and their impact on the future of collection development. Our grant project has set us on the path in the short and intermediate terms to take up the general strategies and questions listed immediately below. The numbered subsections that follow outline plans specific to the four areas of our grant, but in general terms we aim to:

1. Continue to develop resource-sharing and cooperative collection development mechanisms with PALCI and other partnerships. In the short term, we will join PALCI in an experiment to create a distributed regional archive of printed journals now held in trusted e-repositories;
2. Participate in PALCI/PALINET discussions on centralized collective storage of print materials;
3. Contribute funds and texts to the OCA mass digitization project that will be organized by PALINET in 2008-2010 under grant from the Sloan Foundation;
4. Develop a new strategy for saving space in our stacks; in addition to removing as many unnecessarily duplicated older materials as we can, we will consider whether adding more digital collections is a better way of "saving space" than putting effort into weeding print monographs;
5. Decide what we mean by creating a "diverse collection" once we have joint approval plans in place for all areas of the curriculum where they are practical;
6. Address the ironic situation posed by buying e-resources: with e-resources we gain more flexible and convenient access, but their licensing terms limit our ability to share them in the way we share our print collections;
7. Perform collection analysis to see what previously published works we do not have and might want;
8. Add more e-monographs to the catalog and study readers' responses to them;
9. Redo surveys and focus groups from our Planning Grant using the 2001/2 data as a baseline from which to track changes in user perceptions of our collaborative collections work—in particular explore how users' sense of convenience is working for or against us in our collection efforts;
10. Consider conducting a longitudinal study of senior thesis bibliographies to demonstrate any effects of shared collections on the scope of student research;
11. Study interlibrary loan transactions to see what they reveal about changing use patterns;
12. Continue to improve our catalog interface and its links to other collections and research databases;
13. Discuss whether we should assemble a complete collection of works on a subject in one library location as opposed to distributing the collection on a subject over the three libraries

#### 5.1 Goals for collection management

1. Pursue opportunities for further weeding where resistance is lowest, starting with the PALCI scientific journal project;
2. Re-visit the question of weeding older, little-used monographs as the availability and usability of e-books improves;

3. Continue ongoing collection maintenance routines we have established under the grant in order to ensure the trustworthiness of our records.

#### 5.2 Goals for acquisitions

1. Explore the idea of collaborating on firm ordering;
2. Jointly acquire e-books and more e-resources;
3. Train bibliographers to use our Collection Analysis tool;
4. Add more subject areas to the cooperative collecting program, including Sociology, Anthropology, Dance, Economics, Education, Psychology, History, Modern Languages, and secondary literature for Spanish, French, German, and Chinese;
5. Establish a routine for creating not-bought lists and circulating them among Tri-College bibliographers, in order to facilitate broadening our collections;
6. Work toward streamlining the processes used for virtual selection as much as possible in order to save the time of bibliographers and acquisitions staff members;
7. Set up mechanisms to review circulation statistics for jointly collected works, in order to see what impact our collaborative efforts have had on borrowing patterns;
8. Explore the possibility of more closely coordinating our materials budgets.

#### 5.3 Goals for staffing and communications

1. Further improve consortial communication about curricula, research, and collections through regular meetings of the Heads of Collections, bibliographer lunches, and an annual collections symposium;
2. Look for ways to reintroduce more synchronous communication into the approval selection process;
3. Continue to explore staffing structures as positions become vacant, considering using the single-bibliographer model as appropriate.

#### 5.4 Goals for Digital Imaging

1. Grow our collections for teaching and research;
2. Jointly purchase digital image collections when feasible;
3. Explore ways to connect users to free online image resources related to our collections.

#### 5.5 Plans for disseminating what we have learned and for learning more from others

1. With the kind permission of the Foundation and in association with CLIR, use remaining grant funds to sponsor a national workshop on current and future trends in collaborative collections work in liberal arts college libraries, tentatively scheduled for October 2008;
2. Publish an elaborated version of this report as a "bookend" to the report CLIR published in 2003 from our Planning Grant, *Library Buildings and the Building of a Collaborative Research Collection for the Tri-Colleges* (Report 115).

## Section 6: CONCLUSION

Peggy Johnson and others have identified "3 components of successful cooperation" (*Fundamentals of Collection Development & Management* 2004, 237).

- shared intellectual access
- shared physical access
- coordinated collection development and management

Although these elements can stand separately, and although the first two are present in all resource-sharing cooperatives, they make most sense as a triad. We are fortunate in the Tri-Colleges to have a relatively long history of sharing a catalog and library materials. We are geographically close, have relatively small student bodies and faculties, and are similar in mission and campus constituencies. These similarities suggested as long ago as 1940 [Appendix 3] that cooperative collection development was a possibility for us.

Based on the history of cooperation among our Libraries, the Colleges established the Consortium in 1986 in order to create a joint online library catalog (LMS) at a time when integrated library systems offered new opportunities for record keeping, sharing information about holdings, and flexible catalog searching. Our current collections project is predicated on this joint LMS and is undergirded by our institutions' support of other intercollegiate programs, such as cooperation on academic programs and inter-campus student registration.

There are multiple aspects of collaborative collections work, namely,

- sustaining awareness of partner collections,
- cooperating to maintain awareness of what exists to be collected,
- sharing selection decisions,
- jointly considering formats and types of materials,
- accessioning and cataloging,
- sharing access tools for searching, discovery, and browsing,
- compatible circulation and delivery policies,
- consolidating housing, conservation and preservation efforts,
- collaborating on collection management decisions,
- sharing bibliographer expertise, and
- sharing staff for managing collection processes.

No consortium need address all of these aspects, or all of them from the outset of a collaborative collections project. In our many decades of institutional collaboration, evolving conditions have created opportunities for us to take a step-by-step approach to cooperation, building a strong foundation for continuing to share resources in the interests of our users.

Our current grant project focused on the following question: Can the libraries jointly treat their general collections in a way that will:

1. defer the day when the Colleges have to build on- or off-campus storage space, and
2. do so in a way that would create much-needed space for new materials and for other curriculum support functions,
3. while continuing to add materials to make our collections even more diverse and research worthy.

Thus far the answer seems to be, "Not quite yet." In saying that, we do not so much capitulate to frustration of our purposes as we recognize a truth "universally acknowledged," namely, that the impulse of libraries to cooperate is countered by well-documented impulses to maintain independence and self-sufficiency, even to compete. As the history of libraries in the United States consistently demonstrates, the desire to cooperate on collections encounters such barriers as "organizational complexities" and "financial disincentives" (Burgett, Haar, and Phillips, *Collaborative Collection Development: A Practical Guide for Your Library*, Chapter 2). Costs in staff time for planning and maintaining the collaboration loom large against the backdrop of manifold local activities, and the "sacrifice of autonomy" (Burgett et al 23) in building individual collections and the consequent need to come to terms with and depend on others is hard for many staff.

Our Consortium is just as susceptible to these contrary impulses as any other. We will continue to negotiate our way toward cooperation for the foreseeable future. At the same time, we feel we have arrived at a point where pride in what we do locally for users, pride in amassing local collections, and a place-based sense of each of our libraries are blending into a federated or networked view of collections and services. We are three Colleges with different institutional cultures, budgets, and overall wealth, and our libraries have different organizational structures, practices, and traditions, but out of these differences we are creating better access through cooperation on collections and on tools for discovering and using them.

After five years, we can point to successes, most notably that our bibliographers are working together on core collections, not on marginal or specialized selection areas. We have reduced unnecessary duplication, become more aware of one another's collections and curricula, and established more regular communication patterns. We now have few inconsistencies in our circulation policies, and we are taking a collective approach to collection maintenance. We are building an increasingly unified electronic collection. Despite the slow pace of change and the challenges that we need still to address, we will keep pursuing the goals announced for the grant. Fundamental changes in our information seeking culture and the technological and economic changes associated with it demand that we continue in this direction. Having first cemented an approach to collaboration through joint technology projects, we now have a solid model for cooperative development and maintenance of collections, a working climate that values creative innovation, and access to a larger professional work group than would otherwise be the case for three small library staffs.

We know that college library collections and services will change radically in the next ten to twenty years. Numerous factors will transform what we collect and what we do for our communities, including improved search technologies, large scale digitization, the rise of electronic texts, the development of regional and national repositories for print, and the reconfiguration of library spaces to accommodate new work styles and ways of interacting with materials. Our locally oriented practices will give way to a networked approach to materials discovery and access. We see our consortial program, including cooperative collection development, as preparing our Colleges for this evolution.

Although this report summarizes the experience we in the Tri-Colleges have gained with collaborative collection development, it also looks forward to continuing the work that Foundation funding has begun. We are especially looking forward to reflecting on our own projects in the context of other consortial collections partnerships at the workshop that our remaining grant funds will allow us to sponsor in October. After that event, we will send a final report to the Foundation that will synthesize our experiences with what we will have learned about the current state of collection development among liberal arts colleges.

## Appendix 1: Tri-College Collections Policy

### Part 1: Public Statement

The Tri-College Libraries work closely together to build and maintain a rich collection that serves the needs of students and faculty at all three Colleges. Because of the unified catalogue, Tripod, and the speed with which books can be delivered among the three campuses, the Tri-College Libraries are able to combine their resources to build a single collection and jointly engage in regional collections partnerships that will increasingly address the research as well as curricular demands of students and faculty.

The Tri-College Library consortium also benefits our communities by presenting a unified negotiating position with vendors/developers of electronic resources; by managing our collections and library spaces more efficiently; and by sharing the knowledge and expertise of a larger group of colleagues than would normally be available at a small college.

To attain the goal of building a research collection to support the work of all of our faculty and students, the Tri-College Libraries have adopted the following practices:

- The Libraries will minimize the unnecessary duplication of monographs and other easily-shared resources, in order to release funds to purchase materials that would not otherwise be bought. Nonetheless, duplication is not only appropriate, but is strongly encouraged for books that are put on reserve, heavily used in courses, or needed as reference materials. The Libraries retain unique titles even if they are unused or out of scope for the current curriculum.
- The Libraries acquire most academic press books issued in the United States as they are published through a series of approval plans operated by one of the major book vendors. The major plans involve all three Libraries, which makes it possible for the books to be divided equitably across the Tri-Colleges in subject areas where there is interest on more than one campus.
- When purchasing electronic resources, the Libraries prefer to acquire access for all of the Tri-Colleges. Tri-College-wide access is not always possible, though, because of differences in budgets and academic interests.
- Because of the ease of access to electronic collections, the Libraries are making ever greater commitments to acquiring books, journals, reference materials, research collections, and indexes and abstracts in electronic form.
- The Libraries leverage the expertise of local bibliographers by maintaining strong daily communication links among them, holding regular meetings of the Heads of Collection Development, convening occasional bibliographer meetings to discuss specific areas of the collection, and holding an annual collections symposium.

## Part II: Internal Policies and Procedures

### A. Materials Collected

The Libraries strive to purchase materials in the format that is most convenient for users while at the same time offering the greatest longevity and reliability of access. Given their increasing commitment to electronic resources and users' preference for working in the online information environment, the Libraries purchase or create discovery and evaluations aids such as indexable tables of contents, summaries, sample texts and images, book jacket art, etc. The Libraries also commit to contributing to, purchasing, or creating search, discovery, access, and repurposing tools that maximize awareness and utility of their collections.

#### 1. Monographs

##### a. Print monographs

The libraries purchase primarily English-language materials. The exceptions are for curricula in which foreign-language materials are important or for maintaining existing collections.

##### i. Duplication

Bibliographers consider whether a title is already owned or on order at the other two Libraries before buying a copy for their own. In general, the Libraries strive to have as many unique titles as possible in order to expand the scope of the collections. However, duplication is appropriate and even strongly encouraged for books that are put on reserve, heavily used in courses, or needed as reference materials.

In the matter of course reserves, bibliographers and reserve staff need strong communication links and internal procedures so that the bibliographers are aware when additional copies of a title are needed. Each school follows local policies with respect to online reserve materials and abides by its interpretation of copyright law and fair use practices.

Bibliographers also consider holdings in PALCI when considering the purchase of expensive, arcane, or materials marginal to the curricula.

##### ii. Last copies

When one of the Libraries is considering withdrawing the last copy in the consortium, they bring the title to the attention of their colleagues at the other Colleges, who will respond within five working days. No response in that time indicates agreement that the title can be withdrawn.

### iii. Joint approval plan

The Libraries have implemented or will soon implement joint approval plans for Anthropology/Sociology (including Dance), Economics, Education, English, Film/Theater, History, Music, Philosophy, Photography, Political Science, Psychology, Religion, and Spanish in order to assure a reasonable distribution of books and reduce the amount of unnecessary duplication.

Although not coordinated through an approval plan, programs for Art History and the sciences (Astronomy, Biology, Chemistry, Computer Science, Mathematics, Physics, and their interdisciplinary offshoots) are also in place, although these fields involve less in the way of joint purchasing than they do consultation and coordination among bibliographers. In the case of Art History, an extensive analysis of holdings shows that budget discrepancies, overlapping curricula, collection use patterns, the unavailability of some publishers for an approval plan, and local purchasing practices make coordination a more attractive approach than jointly planned purchasing. In the sciences, monographs represent a small percentage of the materials purchased, and the specificity of faculty needs, together with a long history of consultation among the librarians, suggest that the Libraries already enjoy the degree of collaboration we need.

The Libraries have agreed to the following exceptions to joint purchasing arrangements:

- The Libraries will depend on the discipline-based approval profiles and occasional generation of books-not-bought lists to ensure coverage of interdisciplinary curriculum areas: Africana/African-American/Black studies, Comparative Literature, East Asian/Asian Studies, Environmental Studies, Gender/Sexuality/Women's Studies, Hispanic/Latin American Studies, Neuro/Cognitive Sciences, and Peace & Conflict Studies. Swarthmore will produce these lists at six-month intervals and will divide the spreadsheet in two sections to make bibliographer review easier, one section for presses on the Libraries' list of publishers and the other for presses not on the list.
- Social Work, Geology, Growth and Structure of Cities, International Studies, Interpretation Theory, Mathematical Economics, and Bryn Mawr's graduate programs are related to other collection areas but are also single-campus programs. Tri-College interest in them will manifest itself in the "disciplinary" parts of the joint collecting program.
- Because they are single-campus programs, planning will ignore Architecture, Geology, Archaeology, Engineering, and Clinical Developmental Psychology, although they overlap in some cases with widely taught disciplinary areas.
- Because they are not library-intensive, the Libraries forego cooperative support for Creative Writing, Studio/Fine Arts, and theater performance as well as Chinese, Japanese, and Hebrew language curricula, purchasing materials as local needs suggest.
- As of 2007, the Libraries will not create joint plans in Classics, French, and German, but may do so in the future.

## b. Electronic monographs

Because users still find it inconvenient to read large amounts of text on-screen, the Libraries currently regard electronic monographic texts as more important for discovery and evaluation purposes than for reading and working on texts. As electronic reading devices improve, and as more and more texts are available in electronic form, the Libraries expect that users will come to prefer electronic texts. The Libraries are therefore purchasing current monographs in electronic form to experiment with their acceptance among our users, and to prepare for the day when the library will be almost fully electronic.

The Libraries also purchase collections of electronic texts as a way of building in-depth research collections that support faculty and student interests.

## 2. Journals and other periodicals

In general, the Libraries prefer online to print subscriptions because they offer easier access (from off-site, by multiple simultaneous users, etc.) as well as the potential for linking to other materials, greater ease and power of searching, and savings in shelf space. The Libraries jointly license as many titles as they can because, while print content is not hard to share, licensing restrictions inhibit sharing of electronic content.

The Libraries may maintain subscriptions to individual journals and periodicals, even when articles in them are also available through such aggregators as ProQuest or Lexis-Nexis. However, print journals may be cancelled in favor of e-journals that offer the same content in a trusted archival form.

With the continuing movement of journal publishing from print to electronic form, the Libraries are committed to ensuring their communities' continued access to the content of critical publications. Accordingly, the Libraries maintain one print copy of each journal which is subscribed to by more than one institution, and for which there is no adequate, secure electronic substitute. An adequate electronic copy is one that reproduces all of the content of a journal issue. A secure electronic journal is one that has arrangements with a trusted repository for the permanent archiving of its issues, such as through JSTOR or Portico. The Heads of Collection Development on the campuses will identify publishers and aggregators for which print copies are not necessary.

In the case of journal indexes, the Libraries keep print back runs of volumes not available electronically and are free to dispose of those years covered by electronic versions as they wish.

When a library proposes to withdraw the last copy of a journal (whether or not it is available electronically), it consults with the other libraries, and offers to transfer the volumes to another library that wants the title kept in the consortium.

## 3. Newspapers

The Libraries have agreed to divide responsibility for preserving the microfilm copies of major newspapers (Swarthmore keeps the *New York Times*, Haverford keeps the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, Bryn Mawr keeps the *Washington Post*).

#### 4. Microforms

In general, the Libraries prefer print or electronic text to microfilm.

#### 5. Government publications

Swarthmore is the official depository for United States Federal documents. Haverford and Bryn Mawr have responsibilities as sub-depositories for publications in certain areas. As the Government Publishing Office moves to publishing online, the Libraries will eliminate print selectively.

#### 6. Manuscripts and rare books

Each Library maintains special collections of manuscripts, rare books, and graphic materials to support teaching and research both on campus and for the scholarly community.

##### a. Manuscripts and rare books at Bryn Mawr

Bryn Mawr's Special Collections acquires rare books, manuscripts and graphic materials in support of the teaching and research interests of the College.

##### Rare books

Principal areas of interest are:

- 1) Women's History, including works of women writers, works on women's rights, and works about famous women. The emphasis is on European works written before 1900.
- 2) European encounters with Africa, Asia, and the Americas. The emphasis is on European colonial policy in Africa and India.
- 3) The rediscovery of classical antiquity in early modern Europe. The emphasis is on guides to classical art and architecture.
- 4) European cities, primarily before 1850.
- 5) The history of printing and book production, with a special interest in bookbinding.

Other areas of interest, although not ones in which we actively collect, are first and early editions of literary works, in most western European languages; early works on western European history, particularly England and France; and illustrated books. Books are acquired through purchase and donation. Books are purchased using endowed funds that may only be used for Special Collections acquisitions; no books are purchased using regular College appropriations. Books are accepted as gifts if they complement the strengths of the collection, are in good condition, and do not pose special handling problems.

## Manuscript collections

Because of space limitations, the library is cautious in accepting new manuscript collections. Our principal interest is in collecting the papers of important women writers, artists, scholars, and political leaders, with an emphasis on those with connections to Bryn Mawr College. In order to be accepted, the collections must offer the potential for significant scholarly use, which means, first, that the creator of the papers is either important in her own right or was associated with important people or events, and, second, that the papers contain significant historical information. In most cases, important collections will consist of correspondence, diaries, unpublished memoirs, and other writings not otherwise available. Except in special circumstances, manuscripts of printed books are not collected.

### b. Manuscripts and rare books at Haverford and Swarthmore

Haverford's Quaker Collection and Swarthmore's Friends Historical Library collaborate on acquiring documentation relating to Quakers, Quakerism, Quaker organizations, and the many social movements with which Quakers have been involved. Although it currently collects almost exclusively to enhance the Quaker Collection and the College Archives, Haverford's Special Collections also includes a collections of rare books, notably from the English Renaissance, photographs and prints, and autograph letters.

Swarthmore's Peace Collection collects non-governmental materials documenting efforts to promote non-violent social change, disarmament, and conflict resolution among people and nations.

McCabe Library's Rare Book Room houses rare books and journals, Swarthmore publications such as the *College Bulletin* and the *Phoenix*, and several unique special collections. The Library's goal for the Rare Book Room is to preserve and promote the use of these distinctive materials for research, scholarship, and enjoyment. Special collections which are actively acquired include the Book Arts and Private Press Collection, the W.H. Auden Collection, and the Seamus Heaney Collection.

### c. Digital special collections

As part of the Libraries' efforts to increase the capacity for research, they are acquiring major online collections of primary sources such as Early English Books Online, Eighteenth Century Collections Online, Evans Early American Imprints, the US Serials Set, Nineteenth-Century Newspapers, and American Broadside.

The Libraries cooperate on the creation of digital special collections with a commonly built CONTENTdm implementation. A consortial committee oversees its development, and each Library is free to develop its own collections.

## 7. Graphics

In general, when the Libraries purchase image collections, they purchase them to share with the other Libraries even though they are requested by only one Library. Art

bibliographers from each campus and Visual Resources staff at Bryn Mawr and Swarthmore work together to shape the collections using EmBARK, Web Kiosk, and ARTstor as database and delivery mechanisms. The Libraries are establishing a common fund for the purchase of images.

## 8. Audio and video recordings

The Libraries abide by their usual practices of duplicate purchasing with these formats, although they tend to duplicate videos more than books in order to meet demand for browsing and course use. The Libraries duplicate documentaries and more expensive items less often, but, again, do so more frequently than they would expensive books in order to compensate for the short loan period and to make them available for course reserve use. Online digital music services are made available Tri-Collegially as much as possible.

## 9. Reference works

As with journals, the Libraries prefer online to print publications. Where the Libraries have similar interests and programs, they try to maintain the same electronic resources and duplicate printed reference materials to meet these interests. In general, the Libraries prefer full-text resources to indexes.

## B. Collection Development Mechanisms

The Colleges budget individually for their Libraries. Because of different academic priorities and the size of their budget, the Libraries may not build collections at the same levels. Although the Colleges do not maintain joint budgets for collections, in some cases one will purchase a shared resource and will be reimbursed by the other two. Since collection development is the product of interactions between faculty and bibliographers, the Libraries encourage faculty requests.

### 1. All resources

Acquisitions staff in the Libraries share the administration of Tri-College approval plans, and cataloging staff jointly maintain the catalog. The Heads of Collection Development, the Management Group, and Heads of Technical Services oversee policy and systems planning for joint collecting efforts.

Bibliographers communicate weekly as they select approval plan materials. They routinely consider the holdings of the two other libraries when making decisions to purchase titles for their own library and alert colleagues to materials they think would be of interest to them. At occasional lunches sponsored by one of the Heads of Collection Development and at an annual seminar, bibliographers discuss changes in curricular and research interests and the effects of those changes on library collections. The Electronic Resources Group serves as the primary vehicle for discussion at the consortial level about the purchase of electronic resources. Bibliographers also discuss dividing up responsibilities for purchasing expensive printed works and videos.

The Libraries are investigating tools that will alert bibliographers about items that circulate frequently or have several holds so that they can consider buying additional copies. They are also developing workflows for reviewing lists of books borrowed through E-Z Borrow and ILL in order to gather clues about the adequacy of the collections.

The Libraries use their ERM, Verde, to collect statistics on e-resources use in order to inform decisions about retention.

## 2. Electronic resources

E-resources are an important component of the joint collections. Experience has shown that cooperative arrangements are almost always more economical than individual agreements would be; thus it is advantageous for the three libraries to work together in selecting, evaluating, and acquiring electronic resource subscriptions.

The Libraries have established two processes for the acquisition of e-resources: the trials process and the fast-track process. The trials process is valuable in that it allows the local community to test a resource and gather feedback about its usefulness. In some cases, a resource is already well-known to bibliographers (e.g., an electronic version of a reference book already owned) and in these cases it is acceptable or preferable to go directly to a purchase/subscription.

### a. Determining whether to trial an e-resource

When bibliographers learn of a new e-resource, they must evaluate whether the resource needs to be trialed according to the criteria below.

#### i. Why trial?

Any of the following is a valid reason for conducting a trial of a resource:

- Cost: if the estimated cost is significant.
- Content: if the content is not known, or bibliographers not sure how known content will translate to electronic format.
- Interface: if the interface is new or is unknown; also, if there are various interfaces to the same content.
- Consultation needed: if the Libraries would like faculty/student input before making a purchasing decision.

#### ii. Why not trial?

If none of these criteria is met, a trial may not be needed. (In addition, online reference books do not normally require a trial.) Once this determination is made, the bibliographer must communicate with the appropriate local and Tri-College personnel as outlined below.

### b. Trials process

### i. Regular

The bibliographer requesting a trial should email his/her local Electronic Resources Group (ERG) representative and Terry Heinrichs ([theinri1@swarthmore.edu](mailto:theinri1@swarthmore.edu)), the Trials Coordinator with the following information:

- The significance of trial timing: Can this wait until the next group of trials if new trials are already set to begin soon? Trials run during the fall, spring, and summer, and typically run for four weeks. Purchasing decisions are made in the January, May, and August ERG meetings.
- The bibliographer's opinion of the cost and usefulness of the resource: Ideally, the Libraries should trial only those titles that would be appropriate and feasible. This is not to rule out costly items, since purchases of expensive resources are sometimes possible if they are a one-time payment or they will be of benefit to many people.

When the trials are activated, Terry will tell ERG, and then the local ERG representative will inform the people on his/her campus. Trials are linked from the Trials Blog.

During the active trials period, bibliographers must take time to explore these resources, submit their opinions via the blog, and contact relevant faculty. This feedback is crucial to the decision-making process.

After purchasing decisions are made, the local ERG representative will inform the people on his/her campus.

### ii. Fast-track

E-resources that do not meet the trials criteria may be purchased directly without a trial. However, these purchases must go through the proper communication channels:

First, the bibliographer should contact their local colleagues and their peers at the other two Libraries to determine the level of interest in a product. The bibliographer's local ERG representatives should always be included in this communication.

If only a single school is interested in the product, the bibliographer should contact the following people (Bryn Mawr: Scott Silverman; Haverford: Marilyn Creamer; Swarthmore: Jackie Magagnosc) to arrange for a local trial and/or purchase.

If more than one institution is interested in a resource, the request for purchase will go directly to Scott Silverman ([ssilverm@brynmawr.edu](mailto:ssilverm@brynmawr.edu)). If the bibliographer(s) request a trial, Scott will forward that request on to Terry Heinrichs. If any one school wishes to establish a trial, that request will be honored.

### c. Non-ERG trials and approvals

While ERG strongly recommends that all trials go through the official ERG process, even in cases where the situation warrants fast-tracking, ERG asks that trials established outside of the official process be brought to the attention of the local ERG

representative and Trials Coordinator as soon as possible. In this way, ERG can assist in the management of the trial and perhaps bring all three Colleges on board.

### III. Managing the Collections

The success of a cooperatively built collection depends upon the ability of each Library to assure its partners that it has the books it says it has, can find a book quickly when it is called for by another library, and has maintained its collections in serviceable condition. In the context of their joint collection, the Libraries have agreed on lending, inventory, weeding, repair, and preservation practices. Bibliographers must be familiar with these common practices and their local variations in order to make judgments about the collections.

#### A. Security and shelving location

The default location for library materials is the main stacks. Bibliographers and acquisitions staff assign shelf locations for items either at the time of order, or upon receipt. The catalogers follow all documented local standards and procedures for processing, including security treatment. High-cost items, those requiring special care, or those that are unusual in terms of binding, condition, or size may receive a special location and/or extra security.

In the case of books that arrive with accompanying CDs, individual libraries may separate the book from the CD and keep the CD at the service desk or shelve it in its own location.

Books 33 cm or taller are shelved as folios in the general collection.

Published works on the arts are often shelved separately, either in a branch library (Carpenter at Bryn Mawr) or a separate wing (Philips at Haverford). Some books may be kept in limited circulation, folio, or double folio locations, while others may be kept in a locked area to increase their life expectancy. Titles that are not rare circulate, while others may be designated “limited circulation” or “non-circulating” depending on rarity and value.

Videos and DVDs are kept primarily in the library’s open stacks, with the exception of the Haverford music library. DVDs are shelved in individual cases which must be unlocked at the circulation desk. Videos or DVDs that are expensive, difficult to acquire, or frequently replaced may have limited circulation and/or must be accessed via a request to the circulation desk.

Patrons are asked not to re-shelve books in any library, but most stacks are open to the public.

#### B. Collection Maintenance

##### 1. Collection Maintenance Criteria

In all of their decisions regarding the repair or weeding of items already in the collections, bibliographers consider the following criteria. In most cases, a number of the criteria will inform any given judgment:

- Presence of other editions or copies of the same work at its home library.
- Relevance of the item to the current and foreseeable course offerings of the College.
- Request for the item by a member of the campus community or for course reserve.
- Availability at other Tri-College Libraries.
- Presence of other works on the same subject.
- Physical condition, in-print status, and the difficulty or cost of repair compared to the cost of a new copy.
- Scholarly publishing patterns in the discipline, i.e. "datedness" of the item and whether it has been superseded by subsequent publications.
- Circulation pattern. For example, if a book has not circulated more than once in the last 10 years, it might be a candidate for withdrawal.

## 2. Inventory

Periodic inventories of the stacks are taken using Tripod's inventory function. These inventories serve to improve the catalog's accuracy, to identify missing books, to keep the shelves in order, and to ensure the items themselves are labeled consistently and accurately. Each College conducts a complete collection inventory once over the course of five years. Inventory can incorporate weeding, and can be used to gather information for collection development. Inventory can also be used as a way to assess the condition of the collection, and to identify books needing mending.

Periodic revision of item locations and loan rules, moving and reorganizing sections of the stacks, and integrating collections previously housed in other buildings may temporarily reduce the need for inventory in a particular section of the library. All Libraries identify sections that need more attention than others due to high circulation and use, high turnover, and rapid growth. High-use sections may be shelf-read more often than others, particularly if it has been some time since they were inventoried. The libraries also print status-based lists, such as "new book shelf" or "in transit" and will have students and/or staff search for items they suspect are incorrectly marked. These lists are printed at least once a year.

Each library performing a formal collection inventory begins with a Tripod-generated shelf list. Students take lists to the stacks and verify some or all of the following according to criteria set by the individual library:

- Items on the list and on the shelf have matching titles, call numbers, barcodes
- Items on the list that say "available" are on the shelf and vice versa
- Items on the shelf are in call number order
- Items don't have a status other than "available" or "checked out"
- Items have spine labels, barcodes, pockets, book plates
- Items are in useable condition
- Items are relatively free of dust and debris, and are straight on the shelves

Students return problematic items and lists to staff. Students and/or staff fix some problems immediately, while others are referred to Technical Services. A general rule of thumb is that if the item is not in Tripod at all, or requires any editing of a bibliographic

record, the problem is referred to Technical Services. Circulation staff regularly fix item record discrepancies and may add second copy records to Tripod.

Routine inventory tends to reduce the number of problems encountered at a service desk. Though bibliographic record problems are the most time-consuming problems to fix, once a collection has been inventoried once or twice, the overall number of such problems sitting in the stacks is greatly reduced, and what remains is a manageable amount of routine clean-up.

### 3. Procedures for Lost and Missing Items

When a patron reports that an item is not on the shelf (NOS), it is either marked “missing” immediately, or it is searched on the spot before the status is changed. Missing books can sometimes be given immediate attention by a staff member or student who might be available to accompany the patron to the stacks. Otherwise, a student at the circulation desk will check the circulation area and Tripod, and can suggest alternatives to the patron. Information about the missing book is then recorded and it is searched 1-3 times, usually within a week, by a student or staff member. Items reported by patrons are given more immediate attention than those identified during inventory, and most are either located or marked missing within a week of the initial request. Patrons then receive a reply to their search request offering options such as EZ-Borrow if an item cannot be located.

Whether or not they are immediately marked “missing” in Tripod, items marked NOS on inventory lists are searched again one or more times before further action is taken. Often dated notes are included in the item record indicating that an item was missing during inventory.

Borrowers pay for items that they have lost or for long overdue items that they have been billed for at either the current in-print price or the average current price for a title in the field. These average prices are reviewed by Circulation staff at least every five years, in consultation with Acquisitions staff. All lost or long overdue items also carry a \$10 non-refundable billing fee for most patrons, and a \$15 processing fee. Bibliographers decide whether to replace the item or order a similar one.

Bibliographers are notified of lost and lost/paid items at least once a year, in the form of Tripod-generated lists, and/or on an ad-hoc basis. Bibliographers then choose to withdraw or replace lost items according to the criteria discussed above.

In branch libraries, bibliographer review may happen on an ongoing basis, or at greater frequency than in the main libraries. In the main libraries, bibliographer review may happen yearly, periodically, or in call number ranges as a result of a subject-specific review or other project. How much time goes by between when an item is declared missing or lost and when it is replaced or withdrawn depends on the bibliographer’s priorities, the popularity of the item, and how easy it is to replace. Generally it is wise, unless a patron needs an item right away, to let at least six months to a year pass before replacing a lost or lost/paid item. These items regularly make their way back to the library, especially within the first year of absence.

Rare and out-of-print materials may, depending on the library and/or collection, have a status of “missing” indefinitely because replacement is unlikely. Likewise, high-

circ items and anything specifically needed by a patron or for reserve will be replaced ahead of schedule.

#### 4. Procedures for Worn and Damaged Materials

Each library employs a combination of methods for dealing with materials that are damaged or in bad condition. They include:

- taping and tying books together on the spot
- minor in-house repairs
- sending books to a commercial bindery
- returning them to the stacks as-is
- replacing items still in print
- replacing items with newer editions or similar titles

These decisions are made by a combination of circulation staff, bibliographers and technical services staff to whom the items have been referred. As with lost items, action tends to be taken more quickly in branch libraries, where bibliographers and service desk staff are often one and the same. Some libraries may choose to employ inventory as a chance to collect items in bad condition, though most wait until an item is needed by a patron before taking similar action.

It would be impossible to mend, replace or review for withdrawal all books that need it. Haverford libraries send some books to an in-house bindery for repair, generally if damage is minor and easy to fix or the book is still valuable but not easily replaced. Carpenter library at Bryn Mawr sends 10 books a week to Haverford's bindery. Carpenter limits its shipment to 10 books a week; these books are found through various circulation and reference interactions. Many more damaged books currently go unrepaired.

Some libraries prioritize their mending efforts by drawing a distinction between monographs and journals. Since monographs are easier to replace, they may be dealt with promptly, while journals may be returned to the shelf for a later time. Other libraries only consider mending or replacing books that are falling apart and completely unusable, and/or those actively needed by a patron.

#### 5. Procedures for Handling Catalog Discrepancies

All libraries encounter items via inventory or other means that are not in Tripod. Many libraries do on-the-fly cataloging when a patron needs a book that is not in Tripod, and items are referred to cataloging for permanent records when returned. Some libraries find it helpful to identify books in the stacks that do not have barcodes, assuming that many of them are not in Tripod, and that dealing with them separately will help both inventory and subsequent patron interactions.

Circulation staff and/or students handle a variety of minor catalog problems including:

- Fixing location discrepancies
- Editing copy numbers

- Editing oversize notations
- Fixing typos
- Linking barcodes
- Adding second copies
- Adding items for which a bibliographic record already exists

Overall, circulation staff do what they know how to do, and send anything they're not sure of on to technical services. Anything involving a call number, a bib record, a spine label, or something that requires further analysis is almost always referred to cataloging.

## C. Conservation and preservation of materials

As stewards of the College's important capital investment in library resources, staff follow practices and adhere to standards recommended by the national library community for the conservation and preservation of library materials. The Libraries' conservation and preservation programs operate on a number of levels, including conducting routine housekeeping, maintaining climate control, and providing proper equipment and materials for the housing and use of collections.

Within the limits of its campus mission and in keeping with the goals outlined in this policy document, the Libraries give conservation and preservation treatment to items requiring such attention as the limitations of time and funds allow.

Library staff periodically dust the collections and clean audio/visual equipment. Libraries in the Tri-Colleges strive to provide a stable climate that meets current humidity and temperature standards for all materials throughout the year where possible. However, current facilities make this task difficult or impossible at many of our locations. Each Library works within its own institution to improve conditions for both materials and staff, and each Library takes responsibility for scheduling regular maintenance on temperature on climate control systems.

### 1. Generalities Regarding Conservation/Preservation Treatment

The Tri-College Libraries are not research libraries, so they do not engage in systematic, large-scale preservation treatment or reformatting. Decisions about preservation and conservation are made on a case-by-case basis.

Serials for which the Libraries keep physical backfiles and other select materials are sent to a commercial binder whose work meets Library Binding Institute standards for materials and binding techniques.

Whenever possible and when the goals outlined in this document suggest that it should do so, the Libraries purchase monographs on alkaline paper and other materials in formats that meet the current national preservation standards.

The Libraries accept gifts with a view to achieving collection development goals. Librarians inspect all gifts, preferably before receipt, for physical condition as well as suitability for collections. An assessment of physical condition is particularly important in cases where resources required to make damaged or deteriorated items usable might outweigh their significance to the collections.

The Libraries assume that all of their materials exist so that people can use them in the daily work of study and research. All measures to conserve or preserve library materials are taken with users' needs and convenience in mind.

Items receive treatment as they are encountered at the point of gift or purchase, as they circulate or are otherwise used by patrons, or as they come to staff attention in the course of stack maintenance. Resources do not at this time permit systematic, larger scale conservation efforts on its general collections. For special collections, however, the Libraries do engage in systematic projects of routine housekeeping and inspection and of rebinding, deacidification, and, largely with outside funding, preservation reformatting.

## 2. Preservation Reformatting

The Libraries undertake preservation reformatting almost exclusively in the case of materials of high research value. Microfilming is usually financed by grants to address a particular segment of the collection and is done by commercial organizations. Photocopying of deteriorated manuscript materials onto acid-free paper is usually done in-house as needed. The Libraries digitize materials in-house or using a commercial service for the purpose of making research-level materials more accessible to potential users and to save wear-and-tear on the originals.

## Appendix 2: Statistics on Approval Acquisitions

### I. Bibliographic Data and Overlap through Dec. 2007

Across all subject areas:

Total bib records with M8 items attached: 7,814

Held by B alone: 1,826 titles = 23.4%

Held by H alone: 2,167 titles = 27.7%

Held by S alone: 2,390 titles = 30.6%

Total number of unique titles: 6,383 = 81.7%

Unique book shipments: 1,977 titles = 31% of all unique titles

Unique slip orders: 4,406 titles = 69% of all unique titles

Duplicates:

Total duplicates: 1,337 titles = 17.1%

B & H: 159 titles = 2.0%

B & S: 507 titles = 6.5%

H & S: 672 titles = 8.6%

Triplicates:

94 titles = 1.2 %

Total number of duplicated and triplicated titles: 1,431 titles = 18.3%

Broken down into subjects:

Film (B & S only; publisher model)

Total Film titles: 698 titles

Total of unique titles: 541 titles = 77.5%

Book shipments: 144 titles = 26.6% of all unique titles

B: 77 titles

S: 67 titles

Slip orders: 397 titles = 73.4% of all unique titles

B: 250 titles

S: 147 titles

Total of duplicated Film titles: 149 titles = 21.3%

Duplicated through Tri-College approval (slip/slip; book/slip; or book/book): 89 titles

Duplicated through one approval and one firm order/gift: 60 titles

Total of triplicated Film titles: 8 titles = 1.1%

Total of duplicate/triplicate Film titles: 157 = 22.5%

Literature (all 3 colleges; H does not buy poetry; publisher model)

Total Literature titles: 3,045 titles

Total of unique titles: 2,538 titles = 83.3%

Book shipments: 1,268 titles = 50% of all unique titles

B: 414 titles

H: 403 titles

S: 451 titles

Slip orders: 1,270 titles = 50% of all unique titles

B: 393 titles

H: 433 titles

S: 444 titles

Total of duplicated Literature titles: 466 titles = 15.3%

Duplicated through Tri-College approval (slip/slip; book/slip; or book/book): 246 titles

Duplicated through one approval and one firm order/gift: 220 titles

Total of triplicated Literature titles: 41 titles = 1.3%

Total of duplicate/triplicate Literature titles: 507 titles = 16.7%

#### Music (H & S only; publisher model)

Total Music titles: 398 titles

Total of unique titles: 363 titles = 91.2%

Book shipments: 180 titles = 49.6%

H: 98 titles

S: 82 titles

Slip orders: 183 titles = 50.4%

H: 76 titles

S: 107 titles

Total of duplicated Music titles: 33 titles = 8.3%

Duplicated through Tri-College approval (slip/slip; book/slip; or book/book): 18 titles

Duplicated through one approval and one firm order/gift: 15 titles

Total of triplicated Music titles: 2 = .50%

Total of duplicate/triplicate Music titles: 35 = 8.8%

#### Philosophy (all 3 colleges; publisher model)

Total Philosophy titles: 380 titles

Total of unique titles: 284 titles = 74.7%

Book shipments: 168 titles = 59.2% of all unique titles

B: 59 titles

H: 60 titles

S: 49 titles

Slip orders: 116 titles = 40.8% of all unique titles

B: 40 titles  
H: 47 titles  
S: 29 titles

Total of duplicated Philosophy titles: 84 titles = 22.1%

Duplicated through Tri-College approval (slip/slip; book/slip; or book/book): 52 titles

Duplicated through one approval and one firm order/gift: 32 titles

Total of triplicated Philosophy titles: 12 titles = 3.2%

Total of duplicate/triplicate Philosophy titles: 96 titles = 25.3%

#### Political Science (all 3 colleges; subject model)

Total Political Science titles: 1,973 titles

Total of unique titles: 1,683 titles = 85.3%

Book shipments: 217 titles = 12.9% of all unique titles

B: 54 titles  
H: 84 titles  
S: 79 titles

Slip orders: 1,466 titles = 87.1% of all unique titles

B: 538 titles  
H: 482 titles  
S: 446 titles

Total of duplicated Political Science titles: 268 titles = 13.6%

Duplicated through Tri-College approval (slip/slip; book/slip; or book/book): 173 titles

Duplicated through one approval and one firm order/gift: 95 titles

Total of triplicated Political Science titles: 22 titles = 1.1%

Total of duplicate/triplicate Political Science titles: 290 titles = 14.7%

Religion (H & S only; single-bibliographer model; all slip plan)

Total Religion titles: 1,320 titles

Total of unique titles: 974 titles = 73.8%

Slip orders: 974 titles = 100% of all unique titles

B: 1 title

H: 484 titles

S: 489 titles

Total of duplicated Religion titles: 337 titles = 25.5%

Duplicated through Tri-College approval (slip/slip; book/slip; or book/book): 255 titles

Duplicated through one approval and one firm order/gift: 82 titles

Total of triplicated Religion titles: 9 titles = .7%

Total of duplicate/triplicate Religion titles: 346 titles = 26.2%

## II. Item Information through Dec. 2007

Total number of items added through pilot projects: 8,866

Number of items that have been on reserve overall: 123

Circulation statistics overall:

No circulations: 5,132 items = 57.9%

Unique: 3,875 (30 of these items are in Reference)  
Duplicates: 1,144 (51 of these items are in Reference)  
Triplicates: 113 (38 of these items are in Reference)

One circulation: 2,179 items = 24.6%

Unique: 1,547  
Duplicates: 592  
Triplicates: 40

Two circulations: 859 items = 9.7%

Unique: 588  
Duplicates: 252  
Triplicates: 19

Three circulations: 373 items = 4.2% (of these, 12 have been on reserve)

Unique: 248  
Duplicates: 116  
Triplicates: 9

More than 3 circulations: 323 items = 3.6% (of these, 34 have been on reserve)

Unique: 209  
Duplicates: 94  
Triplicates: 20

III. Order Statistics as of December 19, 2007

Bryn Mawr (no Music or Religion orders)

Total orders: 2,480 orders = \$92,298.95

Total Book orders: 904 orders = \$32,955.08

Total Slip orders: 1,576 = \$59,343.87

Film Book: 124 orders = \$3,721.62

Film Slip: 341 orders = \$10,572.58

Literature Book: 576 orders = \$21,992.49

Literature Slip: 486 orders = \$20,959.53

Philosophy Book: 78 orders = \$2,984.04

Philosophy Slip: 88 orders = \$3,203.14

Political Science Book: 126 orders = \$4,256.93

Political Science Slip: 661 orders = \$24,608.62

Haverford (no Film orders)

Total orders: 2,899 orders = \$127,243.29

Total Book orders: 836 orders = \$34,898.99

Total Slip orders: 2,063 orders = \$92,344.30

Literature Book: 525 orders = \$21,441.73

Literature Slip: 541 orders = \$27,618.68

Music Book: 115 orders = \$4,512.00

Music Slip: 87 orders = \$3,970.84

Philosophy Book: 76 orders = \$3,675.65

Philosophy Slip: 82 orders = \$3,251.12

Political Science Book: 120 orders = \$5,269.61

Political Science Slip: 566 orders = \$23,357.78

Religion Slip: 787 orders = \$34,145.88

Swarthmore (orders in every subject)

Total orders: 3,377 = \$141,049.42

Total Book orders: 945 orders = \$39,228.87

Total Slip orders: 2,432 orders = \$101,820.55

Film Book: 106 orders = \$3,475.81

Film Slip: 234 orders = \$8,870.85

Literature Book: 511 orders = \$22,051.34

Literature Slip: 704 orders = \$31,487.71

Music Book: 92 orders = \$4,121.44

Music Slip: 127 orders = \$6,509.36

Philosophy Book: 80 orders = \$3,351.99

Philosophy Slip: 38 orders = \$1,473.28

Political Science Book: 156 orders = \$6,228.29

Political Science Slip: 540 orders = \$19,255.24

Religion Slip: 789 orders = \$34,224.11

### Appendix 3: Timeline of Tri-College Library Collaboration

This timeline provides a summary of the Tri-College Libraries' collaborative efforts from 1931 to the present.

- 1931: Librarians of Bryn Mawr, Haverford, and Swarthmore are among the 13 invited by the University of Pennsylvania to discuss ways whereby "Philadelphia's great libraries could find it possible to cooperate more closely and systematically than at present."
- 1936: With Tri-College participation, the Union Library Catalog of the Philadelphia Metropolitan Area is organized. By 1940, it is one of 15 such local and regional union catalogs in the United States.
- 1936: The *Classified List of 4800 Serials, Currently Received in the Libraries of the University of Pennsylvania and of Bryn Mawr, Haverford, and Swarthmore Colleges* is published. It is never updated.
- By 1941: As a result of the Union Library Catalog project, Bryn Mawr acquires copies of main entry cards for all Haverford holdings. Bryn Mawr continues to file cards for new Haverford acquisitions until 1992.
- 1942: There is an unsuccessful attempt to unite the libraries of Bryn Mawr, Haverford, and Swarthmore Colleges under a single library director.
- 1945: Rudolf Gjelsness, Fremont Rider, and Henry B. Van Hoesen serve as consultants to the Tri-Colleges on the question of library cooperation. They recommend:
- a) triplicate union author catalog
  - b) daily pick up and delivery of library materials
  - c) informal, not formal, divisions of collection fields and no "self-denying ordinances" in the area of collection development
  - d) founding of a Joint Committee on Libraries
  - e) library conferences of faculty members to discuss collecting issues
  - f) joint decisions on certain expensive periodicals with a rotation system in which the titles would stay at each campus for a designated period
  - g) no merger in the short term of any acquisitions, cataloging, or binding functions.
- None of the recommendations in their report are implemented.
- 1947: Records of new Bryn Mawr acquisitions are filed in Haverford card catalog. Filing ends in 1991 with the installation of Tripod.
- 1949: Cards for books in Russian studies, the fruits of a Carnegie Foundation grant, are filed in the three card catalogs. This ends in 1971.
- 1952: Discussions are held on the possibility of a Tri-College deposit storage facility. No action ensues.

- 1950s: A station wagon provides weekly delivery of materials between the Bryn Mawr and Haverford Libraries.
- Late 1950s: There occurs occasional exchanges of publications and some shared purchases of expensive items between Bryn Mawr and Haverford. Bryn Mawr-Haverford (Bi-College) joint acquisitions continues into the 1960's, accelerating after 1969.
- 1963: The Tri-College Libraries create a central listing of their scientific and technical periodicals and serials.
- 1970s: The Bi-College Libraries use the "Blue Bus" student transportation vehicle to ship approval-plan books between Bryn Mawr and Haverford.
- 1971: Bryn Mawr and Haverford Libraries hold their first staff picnic.
- 1971: The Tri-College Libraries begin exchange of shelf list cards for music. The practice ends a few years later.
- 1970s: Bryn Mawr and Haverford apply for grant funding in support of a wide variety of cooperative projects. The Richard King Mellon Foundation funds a Bi-College joint approval plan. A follow up proposal in 1977 to the Kellogg Foundation for cooperative reconditioning and maintenance of stacks includes Swarthmore, but is not funded.
- 1972: Bryn Mawr and Haverford begin a joint approval plan using Baker & Taylor.
- 1975: The Tri-Colleges agree to minimize periodicals duplication. The Libraries decide to notify each other of cancellation and new subscription decisions.
- 1976: Bryn Mawr uses space in Haverford's Library attic for storage of materials, marking the start of a Tri-College repository for regional storage. The project stalls, with Bryn Mawr removing its materials from Haverford in 1986.
- Late 1970s: The Tri-College Libraries create a joint periodicals list.
- 1970s-1980s: The Tri-College Libraries discuss such matters as the formation of a periodicals bank, combining technical services operations, and coordinating audio-visual resources. No action ensues.
- 1984: Discussion begins on a Tri-College automated catalog and retrospective conversion project.
- 1985: The Pew Charitable Trust provides a \$1 million grant for retrospective conversion. Funds are also used for Tri-College automation planning and funding of a coordinator position.
- 1985: The Tri-College Libraries are among the 16 founders of the Philadelphia Area Consortium of Special Collections Libraries (PACSCL).
- 1986: The three Colleges begin their retrospective conversion project.

- 1986: The Tri-Colleges hire consultant Richard Boss, who advises the Libraries on budget, computer sites, system selection, and governance. His visit results in consensus that the library automation project should proceed.
- 1987: The Tri-College Libraries hire an automation coordinator. A steering committee to coordinate all aspects of the automation project is formed.
- 1987-1991: The Colleges decide to pursue joint fundraising for Tri-College library automation, resulting in successful grants from the Department of Education (\$174,000), Keck Foundation (\$450,000), Culpepper Foundation (\$300,000), and Bell of Pennsylvania (\$50,000).
- 1988: The Tri-College Consortium Agreement on Library Automation is drafted. It provides a framework on matters of Tri-College governance and division of costs.
- 1988: An RFP for an automated catalog is distributed to vendors.
- 1988: Innovative Interfaces is selected as automation vendor.
- 1990: Tripod becomes available to library staff. Troubleshooting begins.
- 1991: Tripod is released to the public. The Tri-College automated catalog, with nearly one million records, is accessible over the network. Delivery of materials among the three campuses begins.
- 1991: The automation steering committee ends its work. The governing board and various topical committees continue.
- 1992: The Tri-College Libraries outsource indexed heading verification and updates to a vendor, who is still used today.
- 1993: Tripod offers access to five major indexes. Four periodical indexes and one index to anthologies are available online, more than doubling the number of items available in Tripod.
- 1993/94: Tri-College communications is upgraded to a Switched Multimegabit Data Service (SMDS).
- 1994: An HTML interlibrary loan form is available to patrons via networked Macintosh computers.
- 1994: The index to the *Philadelphia Inquirer* is loaded on a local server for use by the Tri-College community.
- 1994: The Tri-College Libraries provide network access to nine databases in the SilverPlatter Electronic Reference Library. The Consortium names the system "Trilogy."
- 1995: OCLC First Search is added to the Bryn Mawr and Haverford Tripod Gateways.
- 1995: Project Muse journals are made available on the Web to the Tri-Colleges as part of the Oberlin Group cohort-libraries action.
- 1995: *Art Index* is added to the other Wilson offerings on the Tripod gateway.

- 1995: The Tri-Colleges receive a \$15,000 grant from the Mellon Foundation to serve as an initial test site for JSTOR. Five journals in each history and economics are made available on the Web to the Tri-College community.
- 1996: The Tri-College Libraries are among the 35 founders of the Pennsylvania Academic Library Consortium, Inc. (PALCI).
- 1996: The Tri-Colleges subscribe to the *Encyclopedia Britannica* via the Web. *Anthropological Literature* is added to the Tripod Gateway.
- 1996/97: The Libraries adopt “WebPac,” Innovative Interfaces’ web interface to its OPAC. The Consortium purchases a Z39.50 server to provide Tripod-like access to other catalogs and databases.
- 1997: Access to OCLC is upgraded via Transport Layer Protocol (TLP), replacing dedicated OCLC workstations.
- 1997: Patrons are given the ability to place holds on items not located in their home library; the Tri-College van delivers these materials usually within a day to the requestor’s library.
- 1998: The Mellon Foundation grants \$850,000 (Mellon3) to the Tri-Colleges to advance cooperative instructional technology initiatives. The Libraries play vital roles, eventually using a portion of the grant funds to purchase Blackboard. The course management system is hosted at Swarthmore. Mellon3 concludes in 2003.
- 1999: Tri-College Libraries implement an electronic reserves system, which is retired in 2003 in favor of Blackboard’s more comprehensive functionality.
- 1999: With Mellon funds, the Tri-College Libraries contract with a vendor to provide electronic delivery of enhanced contents and summary data to Tripod bibliographic records, resulting in more access points in the catalog. Mellon funds pay for this service through 2001; the Libraries take responsibility for funding thereafter. To date, over 110,000 records in Tripod contain such data.
- 2000: Mellon awards the Tri-Colleges \$450,000 (Mellon5). Half of this award funds “Talking Towards a Techno-Pedagogy,” which brings together teams of faculty, students, librarians and technologists from the Tri-Colleges and seven peer institutions to redesign existing courses utilizing newly available information resources and technologies. The other half of the grant award advances Tri-College Libraries collaboration and funds database-driven web page creation and innovative web development, virtual reference services, a videoconferencing system, training of student workers and staff development, and purchase of the SFX linking system, which greatly facilitates user access to full-text online journals. Mellon5 concludes in 2004.
- 2000: A Tri-College librarians’ working group evaluates and selects a general “aggregated” database of journal and newspaper citations with full-text

content, inaugurating a planned process by which web-based electronic information resources are licensed consortially.

- 2000: Inter-campus, twice-a-day delivery of books and articles service begins.
- 2001: The Tri-College Libraries hire a new Systems Coordinator, a temporary Special Projects position, and a Mellon5-funded Web Developer.
- 2001: The Tri-Colleges license ScienceDirect, Elsevier's electronic journals subscription database. It is the most expensive information resource purchased to date.
- 2001: Mellon awards \$89,000 (Mellon7) for a comprehensive study of the Tri-College Libraries facilities and collections. Mellon7 concludes in 2003.
- 2002: Combining funding from a private grant to Haverford with Mellon5, the Tri-College special collections librarians begin work on Triptych, a digital objects repository system using ContentDM software.
- 2003: Following up on the facilities and collections study, Mellon awards \$450,000 (Mellon8) to further develop collaborative collection development and management, and to seed digitization of book content and pedagogically-useful images. Its work ends in 2007.
- 2003: The Tri-College Library Blog debuts.
- 2004: The Tri-Colleges pilot approval plans in English and Film Studies. Other pilot projects follow.
- 2004: The Council on Library and Information Resources (CLIR) awards the Tri-Colleges Libraries \$100,000 to "process redesign" the management of electronic information resources. Its work concludes in 2006 with a decision to purchase Verde, the electronic resource management systems from the Ex Libris Group.
- 2004: The Libraries institute a "last copy policy" for retention of at least one print run of JSTOR titles. The program is extended in the years that follow.
- 2005: The Libraries begin distributing to vendors their "Tri-College Library Consortium License Agreement for Electronic Resources."
- 2005: TriDid, the first sustained experiment in managing a central repository of Tri-College pedagogical images, comes online using the MDID open source system. It is hosted at Bryn Mawr. TriDid is replaced by EmbARK in 2007.
- 2005: The CLIR Process Redesign Steering Group convenes a symposium at Swarthmore with the nation's foremost electronic resources managers.
- 2005: Using RLG's ArchiveIt service, the Libraries begin archiving Quaker and College web sites.
- 2005/06: Celebrating 20 years since its decision to buy a joint library catalog, the Consortium hosts a panel of library leaders from three peer institutions in

fall 2005, and library and information technology leaders from major research institutions in spring 2006.

- 2006: After 32 years of working face-to-face on materials selection decisions, the Bryn Mawr-Haverford approval plan goes all virtual all the time.
- 2006: The Consortium signs a memorandum of agreement to serve as a test site for Variations3, a digital music library software system developed at Indiana University. The system is used to support the music programs at Haverford and Swarthmore.
- 2006: The Tri-College Libraries launch their DSpace instance with a collection of Haverford theses.
- 2006/07: The Libraries develop a plan to create Tri-College approval plans for all appropriate areas.
- 2007: The Libraries contract for MarcIt bibliographic records from the Ex Libris Group. The service leverages the SFX knowledge base, and significantly improves access to electronic resources via Tripod.

## **Appendix 4: Summary of Findings from Bibliographer and Acquisitions Staff Interviews, December 2007**

### *1. Introduction*

This document summarizes a series of interviews conducted in December 2007 with staff members at the Tri-College libraries. Interviewers Amanda Watson and Christa Williford spoke with all 18 bibliographers working at the Colleges and asked the following questions:

- 1) How have your daily collection development practices changed over the last seven years?
- 2) Where is collection development among your job's overall priorities?
- 3) What are your criteria for which kinds of materials must be local, which must be within the Tri-Colleges, and which are best left to ILL?
- 4) How do you feel the new Tri-College collection development practices are working? (communication, approval plans, divisions of responsibility, inventory, weeding, etc.)
- 5) Has Tri-College collecting affected how you support faculty and students? If so, how?
- 6) What kinds of feedback have you received from faculty and students on Tri-College collecting practices?
- 7) What do you think the next steps should be for Tri-College collection development?

The 18 bibliographers have collection development responsibilities in the humanities, sciences, and social sciences. Their fields of expertise include history, music, classics, the physical sciences, economics, art and art history, religion, languages, literature, sociology, anthropology, area studies, philosophy, and women's studies. Most of them have responsibilities for collecting in multiple fields, and most of them are in regular contact with faculty and students. The bibliographers also juggle collection development with a variety of other professional responsibilities, including reference service, instruction, outreach to academic departments, and running specialized libraries (particularly in music, the sciences, and special collections).

In addition to running the gamut of subject areas, they represent a range of collection development approaches. When asked about the place of collection development within their overall priorities, some ranked it near or at the top of the list, while others reported that it was the part of their jobs on which they spent the least amount of time. Another put it as a second highest priority; by contrast, a third bibliographer remarked that collection development was "necessarily at the bottom" of the priority list. One commented that "you can always make a decision about buying books next week," while other tasks often present more immediate time pressure. Several explained that while they spent relatively little time on collection development, they nonetheless considered it an important part of their jobs, particularly when it occurs in response to the needs of students and faculty members.

In addition to speaking with the 18 bibliographers, Watson and Williford conducted interviews with the three members of the Tri-College acquisitions departments who currently manage joint approval plans. They asked the plan managers similar questions about their daily workflow, their perceptions of the success of the program, and their ideas for what the next steps in Tri-College cooperation should be. They also asked whether the plan managers had observed any changes in the working practices, attitudes and behaviors of the bibliographers.

## *II. Summary of findings*

The staff members' general response to cooperative collecting for the Tri-College libraries was positive, with very few exceptions. One person remarked with pride, "I think it's really extraordinary what we've been able to accomplish." Given the variety of individuals in the group, however, it was not surprising to find that each one's understanding of the specific goals and benefits of joint collecting was somewhat different. Institutional cultures, relationships with partner bibliographers, the nature of different academic subjects, and different levels of experience with collaborative collection building seemed to be key factors in shaping people's perspectives. Some emphasized the value of the additional communication with partner bibliographers at the other institutions; others enjoyed feeling "freed up" to focus on broadening the collection in their subject areas. Still others saw cooperative collecting as a badly needed cost-saving measure. In this last group, a number were disillusioned: "I feel like I'm buying less, but apparently [I'm not]. I can't account for it."

### A. Points of Convergence

There were three significant points about which there was strong consensus. First, almost everyone agreed that the weeding projects undertaken during the course of the grant were not successful. One bibliographer summed up the frustration: "Weeding was a big failure: too politically charged, too time-consuming. Not worth continuing." An acquisitions specialist agreed, "Weeding was a lot of work for not that much shelf space." Many participants in this part of the grant project felt that they had not anticipated the amount of tension these projects would create with certain faculty. They also felt that they had underestimated the amount of time required to identify duplicate materials suitable for withdrawal and then to earn the faculty's trust to go ahead with plans to remove them. Despite this disappointment, a significant number of people still stressed the value of weeding, as well as the value of taking a cooperative approach to it: "If we're able to remove unnecessary duplicative materials to create space savings, why not? It seems like a really sensible project." Another agreed: "I would like to actually see weeding happen; I'd like to see how that would work and if it would really achieve anything." One bibliographer believed that weeding individual monographs had been the wrong approach, suggesting that weeding journals duplicated within the Tri-Colleges or in online subscriptions like JSTOR would be a better place to focus consortial energy.

There was a much more positive consensus about the value of the inventory initiative, even though not everyone had participated equally in this project. One bibliographer acknowledged, "We've been able to fix a lot of mistakes in Tripod [the online catalog] and have become more aware of what's missing and what's duplicated." Another offered, "The big surprise was we had all these things we didn't know we had ... we found hundreds of books on the shelf that were not in [the catalog] ... I think the best thing that came from Mellon was that inventory project." One librarian whose area had not yet been inventoried remarked, "I'm really looking forward to this." At the same time, for several of the librarians inventory has long been a habitual practice and so their attitudes toward it remained unchanged.

A third point that arose consistently was the need to move further with efforts to subscribe jointly to as many electronic resources as possible. Numerous people commented on the frustrations faculty and students have when they discover and wish to use an e-resource held by one institution and not another. Electronic journals and e-books were the biggest sources of this frustration. The growth in electronic collections is clearly challenging the three institutions to take the exact opposite approach to collection development than they are taking with print and analog materials. As one of the interviewees noted, while print journals can be sent between schools, in the case of electronic resources, "you can't stick it on the van and send it to the other library." While the consortial delivery system brings print to the user, individual electronic licenses force users to travel to obtain access. One bibliographer summed it up: "Even though I'm not sure it does make sense ... our patrons expect the same electronic access. So I think [we should] make the electronic journal and book collections as even across the board as possible ... People are becoming less and less patient, [even] incensed when they can't get an article ... Nobody plans ahead anymore — they need it *now*."

## B. Points of divergence

There were several notable points about which there was considerable diversity of opinion and experience. Many of these issues would reasonably be expected to affect the smooth operation of joint acquisitions projects, so further discussion and, if possible, resolution of them could help the Tri-Colleges strengthen their cooperative collection development program.

When asked about how their working habits had changed since the introduction of the online approval plans with YBP Library Services, bibliographers had a range of different responses. Some claimed that the convenience of having so much information about Tri-College acquisitions in one place freed up their time to focus on placing orders for more obscure titles. "I think the online method has allowed me more time for non-approval selecting," said one person. Others admitted that they reallocated the time they saved by using the online selection tools to other duties: "I spend far, far less time than I ever used to [on collection development]," said another. By contrast, others contended that the all-online approval plan required a larger time commitment than before. "It still takes more time to make the decision online than it would ... if the book was physically there," observed one selector. "I find I still have to look in all the places I used to look," said another, "[the approval plan] has just added another source of titles." Still others

stated that the amount of time they spend on collection development duties has not significantly changed in recent years: "the actual activity, that is, the way I go about reviewing materials, selecting them, I don't think has changed that much."

Bibliographers expressed a variety of opinions about how far the Tri-Colleges could go in expanding the joint approval program into other subject areas. While almost all interviewees supported the idea of expansion, a significant minority felt that it would not be useful to set up online approval plans for *every* subject in the Tri-College curricula. One bibliographer said, "I didn't feel that it was necessary [for my situation]." Another felt, "It's just not really going to be able to work; ... we've just got too many [differences in this area]." A third observed, "Maybe doing things the same old way with fairly good communication between librarians at the different colleges is just fine."

For others, comprehensive expansion across all areas was the clear way forward. "This is the way we're going," one person asserted. "It's not stopping. These aren't pilots anymore--this is done!" Another stressed that financial pressures will continue to mount so that "we will be forced to cooperate even more ... [we must employ] as many cost-saving measures as possible." While acknowledging the difficulties in resolving differences among budgets and curricula, one person asked, "Are there *really* subjects that we can't do Tri-Collegially? ... Why can't we try to figure out a way to do this? Because there is duplication now that's probably unnecessary."

Duplication was another topic about which there was a variety of opinion. There were some who seemed to feel that duplication of book orders should be extremely rare. One of them remarked, "Unless we can really decrease duplication there aren't going to be meaningful dollars liberated ... monographic duplication: there is not a high payoff for it." "I think duplication is silly," said another, "I rarely say [my school] must have a title." "I'm almost always saying, 'Great, one copy in the Tri-Colleges is enough,'" observed a third bibliographer.

Others cited a variety of types of materials which they felt it was justifiable to duplicate. Among these were specific faculty requests, "primary sources," those "of high value to [our] faculty," those "on a subject that is a relatively new curricular interest that [our library doesn't] have a collection for," those that "will have high circulation," those "in [curricular] areas where there is a big overlap," those on "a topic that I know from recent experience is something that multiple students are interested in," and those "where the prestige of the writer was so high that we would want to say we had it." "There will be certain authors that I feel no self-respecting ... library should be without," asserted one bibliographer. "I believe we should have all major modern works in translation," said another. Indicating that lowering duplication rates were a challenge, one person observed, "We've been talking about de-duplication for a long time. It has been a long process ... an ongoing concern. [It's] not as easy as you would think."

Perhaps complicating the differences of opinion over when duplication is acceptable, bibliographers reported significantly different levels of faculty involvement with their collection development work. One bibliographer who reported having minimal input from faculty said that it was simply too "time consuming" and "frustrating" to find out what faculty need. Another who reported receiving few suggestions stated that the faculty "seem to be generally happy" with what the institution acquired without offering their input. For one person, the lack of contact was a new development directly related to the transition from a paper to an online system: "I used to spend a lot of time going

through [publishers' catalogs] and the paper slips, distributing them to faculty, soliciting a lot of ... feedback ... now with the electronic slips I don't really distribute them the way I did in the past at all. As far as letting them know what's coming down the pike I don't really do that anymore. With the paper slips it was really easy. But now to have to break off a subject area and send it to them--that seems like more trouble than it's worth."

Others talked a great deal about faculty contact and about receiving both positive and negative feedback about Tri-College collection development. "The feedback has been really positive," said one bibliographer, "I think some of it is because of the way it has been sold in bibliographic instruction." Many mentioned that both faculty and students enjoyed the convenience of requesting a title from another school: "Five years ago ... our faculty weren't interested [in books in the other two collections] ... [Now] they've really gotten attuned to Tripod ... how you can just request a book and it comes." Negative feedback mentioned in the interviews usually involved electronic resources held at other schools or about faculty's perceptions of the quality of their institution's collection in comparison with the others. "The only stuff I hear [from faculty] is the same stuff I've heard for ... years," said one bibliographer, "[the other schools] have better collections. And that's specific faculty and I think they would never be happy. I don't think that reflects reality, because I hear that some [of the other schools'] professors think the same thing about [us]."

A final significant point of divergence involved the approaches taken to the Tri-College "all slip" approval plans. While admitting that examining all titles individually was time-consuming, a number of people contended that this approach was an unfortunate necessity given the vagaries of publication and the shifting needs of seminar-based instruction at the three colleges. These people thought the likelihood of purchasing unneeded books was too great to risk auto-shipments. Others, however, saw "all slip" approval as a ridiculous waste: "I have been unlucky enough to have to go through some meetings for cooperative collection development ... Since I'm not ... familiar with the process, I'm not quite sure I can wrap my head around what actually happened, but it seemed to me kind of insane what did happen ... that there would be no books shipped--that we would all look at the slips ... I didn't understand why we would do a cooperative project and instead of reducing our load we would be actually increasing [it]." In another person's words, this method "takes the 'approval' out of 'approval plan'." Interestingly, on the acquisitions side there seemed to be no strong preference for how a plan was organized: "I never had a problem with either way of doing it, but bibliographers had problems with it and that's why it's gone in these two directions ... I wonder if that is ever going to need to be resolved, and I wonder if it can."

### The Importance of Communication

By far the strongest theme to emerge from all the interviews was the importance of solid inter-institutional communication to the success of a cooperative collection development program. When asked about suggestions for improvement of Tri-College cooperation, one person responded without hesitation, "The biggest thing is better communication."

For bibliographers at Bryn Mawr and Haverford, who had grown accustomed to making decisions about the location of newly arrived titles in face-to-face meetings, switching to the less personal and asynchronous online voting system was difficult. One bibliographer remembered, "Everyone was part of decision-making and was satisfied at the end. [The current] situation doesn't afford this at all." Swarthmore bibliographers had no such basis of comparison and so were less inclined to be nostalgic. Nevertheless, it was apparent from all the interviews that the online voting process did not always go smoothly. One selector acknowledged, "I tend to be kind of obsessive about doing my collection development. I think I do often beat [the other two schools' bibliographers] to the punch ... they're probably like &%#@! ... they probably will say they hate me or something." Another said, "I try to do my slips when they first become available ... it's not bad to be first. There are advantages to being last, but there are also advantages to being first."

Some bibliographers expressed dissatisfaction with a system that allowed their selecting partners to strategically cast votes either early or late in the weekly cycle in ways that limited the chances of getting a "good" title for their local collection, or that forced them to duplicate a title. "I'm worried, frankly, that we're going to end up with something that's going to operate more like an NFL draft," said one bibliographer, "where people are going to try to get the best stuff for their local collection." Another person observed, "If you go to a birthday party and there's a cake there and everybody cuts pieces that are all the same size and then somebody comes in and just grabs all the biggest pieces ... people didn't expect that to happen and all of a sudden they didn't get any books ... These elements of competition and psychology ... are very interesting ... [online] people act differently than they would if they were in the same room together doing the same thing." "If we had a little more tracking of when someone went in and upped your vote," suggested one person, "I think that could be really useful ... I wish it were a little more transparent."

Some bibliographers clearly felt that they duplicated titles a lot less than their peers, and that some of the duplication that continued to happen was unnecessary. "This has really depressed me," lamented one person, "I originally thought that there would be more of a significant recoup. It seems to me that [some schools] are more into this than others."

By contrast, a number of individuals reported no communication difficulties whatsoever: "For my subject areas there's been like zero controversy. We've pretty much agreed on everything." Another said, "I feel very comfortable ... It's happening all the time that we're on the same page." A third observed, "As long as the three of us get along, I think it's okay."

### **“Costs” of online cooperation**

Several bibliographers mentioned drawbacks of migrating to an all-online selection process. Clearly no one was longing to return to handling stacks of paper slips. However, as noted above, one bibliographer did point out that electronic slips made it less convenient to communicate with faculty about new publications. Most who expressed frustrations about cooperative collecting online talked about the asynchronous voting method, which, to them, seemed to encourage competition rather than

collaboration. "We don't have equal information about what we want when we go into GOBI. Issues of timing make it seem like not a level playing field," said one bibliographer. A few others feared that they had access to too little information about a book to make the right decision about whether to purchase it and where it should be. One said, "It ... takes more time to make the decision online than it would if the book was physically here."

A number of people mentioned price among their criteria for selecting new materials. "I'm much more sensitive to the costs of books [than I used to be]," said one bibliographer, "particularly given that our empirical evidence, locally, shows that a very small percentage of books actually circulate." In the joint approval plan, bibliographers have less control over what they are spending than they did when they were making purchases independently. Some of the interviewees suggested that this lack of control over spending has made some people even more reluctant to select the more expensive publications.

Another person expressed a related anxiety about "shopping online" for the collection:

I feel like although ... the online approval is time saving ... a lot of times we buy things without really looking at reviews. ... We kind of buy a little bit more on impulse, which is not a bad thing but it can impact the budget ... I kind of have to hold myself back at some point because I'll see something good on approval then I'll think, 'Oh yeah!' and then I'll think, 'Well, wait a minute, do we really need that? How much money do I have left this year?' It does save us time but in a way you can just ... go mad with shopping. ... [The online interface] just kind of plants something in your head that you think, 'Oh, this would be so easy to buy.' And it's not necessarily something you would have purchased just sitting there with a paper catalog and flipping through it. I think it just kind of lends itself to overspending.

### *III. Next steps*

As noted above, the interviews included a question about what the bibliographers thought the next steps for cooperative collection development should be. This question was revisited at a meeting with all Tri-College bibliographers in January 2008. In the interviews and at this meeting, the bibliographers offered a diverse set of suggestions for next steps. Some of their ideas fell under the rubric of improvements to existing practices; other suggestions targeted specific new practices we might implement. A third set of suggestions covered areas to investigate or explore further.

#### **A. Improvements to existing practices**

Among the existing practices for which the bibliographers suggested improvements were the Tri-College approval plan and related tools. The general consensus supported expanding the plan into additional subject areas; "it's the way to go," as one interviewee commented. Despite the acknowledged problems, there was also

significant support for simplifying GOBI profiles, and also for arranging auto-shipments of important books from major publishers if possible. Other suggestions focused on ways to identify potential gaps in the collections, including examining more frequent and varied lists of books not purchased. One bibliographer mentioned that a collection analysis tool "would be totally useful"; as of the writing of this report, the libraries have begun using WorldCat Collection Analysis, but most bibliographers have not been trained to use it. On a related note, several interviewees supported the idea of more weeding projects, stressing their importance despite the overall consensus that the first round of weeding was not a success.

There were varied opinions about whether it would be practical for the libraries to expand the single-bibliographer model, currently in place for Religion. One interviewee argued that "we've got to extend the single-bibliographer model to more subject areas"; another expressed support for "more exploration" of this model. At the all-bibliographer meeting, several subject areas (such as Chemistry, Film, Medieval History, Education, Arabic, and Astronomy) were proposed as potential subjects for the single-bibliographer approach. However, some participants argued that extending the single-bibliographer model would create major time commitment issues for the bibliographers in question. Another pointed out that the work of selection is difficult to separate from that of reference and instruction, which more easily takes place locally. Having one bibliographer selecting all materials in a given subject area would pose problems for instruction and reference in those subjects at the other two colleges.

Not surprisingly, since so many bibliographers identified access to electronic resources as a problem with the current system, a number of them suggested that we subscribe jointly to more of these resources. Cooperative purchasing of digital images emerged as a related issue. Although the Tri-Colleges have been cooperating more and more on visual resources in recent years, one person insisted that the consortium must go further: "We're going to have to think about *buying* ... digital images [together]. Licensing is not the only way to go but we can't do it all copystand." Continued efforts to coordinate the production of images were mentioned by more than one person. One bibliographer said, "Scanning and images — I don't know that we have any real coordinated air-tight system of having a record of what we've scanned so that the next time a student wants an image they can find it on Tripix. I think we've got to really tighten up those procedures, and that seems like a great thing to be done Tri-Collegially."

## B. Ideas for new practices

Ideas for new practices also emerged from the interviews. One set of ideas centered on better ways for bibliographers to communicate with each other. Several interviewees suggested more regular face-to-face meetings; as one put it, "It always helps to meet with other people and see what [other bibliographers] are doing. Even if you just sit together over lunch. That is really useful. You can bounce ideas off each other." Accordingly, one of the suggestions that emerged from the January meeting was to institute tri-weekly bibliographer gatherings to make all location decisions for each subject face-to-face.

Not all of the communication-related suggestions involved in-person communication. At the January meeting, participants suggested sharing interlibrary loan

lists as well as not-bought lists, and generating additional not-bought lists for books over \$100. And one bibliographer suggested using a blog "to post descriptions of the subject areas, subdivisions of subject areas that we collect intensively, and describe the resources that we use." Another suggested more advance communication about upcoming exhibits and events on each campus, which might affect future user needs. Among the suggestions to come from the interviews was "a mechanism to share what we're doing in our reference collections."

Another theme in the ideas for new practices was that of greater cooperation in purchasing and ordering. Cooperative e-book purchasing was an issue raised by several people; others suggested more cooperation in both reference purchasing and firm ordering (which one interviewee singled out as "an area in which we haven't had much cooperation at all on.") Rotating certain costs, such as CRL membership and purchases from more expensive publishers, was also suggested. Several bibliographers proposed new forms of cooperative de-duplication, such as weeding journal collections to unite broken runs and de-duplicating certain overlapping items in special collections. In some areas of special collections, one noted, "we could move together a little more." Journal collections are "a big area that hasn't been dealt with," and "combining whatever we have in one spot makes a lot of sense" — in the words of two of the interviewees.

Other ideas involved closer scrutiny of the voting process (recording statistics on voting patterns; experimenting with hiding book prices to determine if price affects voting choices) and adding a statement about DVD collecting to the collection development policy.

### C. Areas to explore

Finally, a series of general ideas for further research and exploration developed out of the interviews and the bibliographer meeting. These ideas were focused more on the longer term than on immediate next steps. They fell into the following categories:

- Broadening cooperative efforts: investigating cooperative preservation, cooperating to broaden the collection (to include more foreign language material, for example), and expanding the current digital cooperation program into audio and streaming video.
- Educating our users: explaining costs, pro-actively demonstrating the value of our activities through joint outreach efforts.
- Exploring ways to make better use of GOBI.
- Opening lines of communication in areas outside approval plans.
- Documenting examples of good communication to improve our internal communications.