Conservation Documentation in Research Libraries

Making the Link with MARC Data

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Conservation professionals are ethically bound to produce and preserve conservation documentation. The research described in this paper investigates conservation documentation methods and practice in academic research libraries. The author conducted a literature review and developed and implemented a survey to both record current conservation documentation practices and to assess the potential use of the MARC 21 field 583 (Action Note) for recording, accessing, and preserving conservation documentation. Bound materials, in particular special collection materials, are the primary focus of the survey. The survey and follow-up interview responses support integrating conservation documentation into the MARC 21 field 583. Methods of doing so are presented and discussed.

Conservation documentation preserves data of enduring value to library activities in addition to the fundamental roles of conservation and preservation. This concomitant value extends beyond safeguarding physical materials and facilitating access to supporting the understanding and interpretation of cultural materials. Too often, methods and systems of recording and managing conservation documentation can isolate and restrict access. Paper files, local databases, or locally managed electronic documents and image files hinder access because such systems require mediation. The present research examines the problem of access to conservation documentation in research libraries and the potential for utilizing the MARC record to facilitate wider access.

Data recorded in conservation documentation informs decisions about storage, use (including exhibition), and future conservation actions. The creation and management of conservation documentation are mandated in professional ethical codes and guidelines for practice defined by regional conservation professional organizations.[1] With the widespread acceptance and use of digital formats for recording conservation documentation, the ability to link this data with other collection data is now possible. Unfortunately, too often the management tools currently in use isolate the data from those stakeholders outside of the conservation and preservation specialties. When electing to use local data management tools such as paper records, stand-alone databases, or external hard drives for image files, conservators assume sole responsibility for managing, preserving, and providing access to the data—a complex and long-term responsibility.

Special collections units are under increased pressure to meet demands for

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access to materials from on-site and remote users. Exhibition programs and digitization efforts for primary resources are increasing, as is use by undergraduate students. A 2010 OCLC report emphasized the need for research libraries to develop policies that further facilitate access and interlibrary loan of rare and unique materials.[2] Readily accessible conservation documentation could streamline access requests by providing the current data on physical condition needed to determine suitability for exhibition or loan.

While data pertaining to such preservation actions as preservation reformatting a digital video file is always recorded and preserved in the object's metadata, conservation documentation cannot be easily integrated within an object or its housing. This is especially problematic with rare books that, unlike many archival collections, do not have independent housing that can accommodate written or printed reports. By integrating conservation data into the bibliographic description, the full value of the information can be realized through nonmediated access. For book collections, in particular rare book collections, integrating conservation documentation into existing bibliographic records would permit all the primary stakeholders (conservators, rare book librarians, and the administrators of preservation and special collection departments) unmediated access to this important data.

The author developed and implemented a survey and held follow-up interviews with a subset of respondents to record current conservation documentation practices and assess the potential use of the MARC 21 field 583 (Action Note) for recording, accessing, and preserving conservation documentation. Specifically, the survey goals were to document the following: the prevalence of conservation documentation, the use of conservation documentation, and the media used to record conservation documentations (including the MARC 21 field 583). The research also aimed to investigate perceptions about the value of conservation documentation, encoding conservation data into the MARC 21 field 583, and public access to conservation documentation.

Conservation Documentation

Conservation documentation is the permanent record constructed to describe the conservation activities of examination, quantitative and qualitative testing, and treatment. In addition to written descriptions of activities, conservation documentation always includes any samples and images taken during examination, testing, and treatment. In the United States, the American Institute for Conservation of Artistic and Historic Works (AIC) Code of Ethics and Guidelines for Practice Article VII directs conservation professionals to create and preserve conservation documentation, stating, "The conservation professional shall document examination, scientific investigation, and treatment by creating permanent records and reports."[3]

The purpose of conservation documentation can be summarized: establish condition of the artifact; support the care of cultural property; increase understanding of aesthetic, conceptual, and physical characteristics; and assist in the development of professional knowledge and understanding. Each component of conservation documentation is clearly defined in the commentary to the AIC Code of Ethics. The commentary section "Special Practices," which deals with documentation, addresses exemptions from the minimum and recommended standard practices.[4] This section is germane to conservation within a research library because it includes "minor remedial treatments" and "mass treatments," both of which are common in library and archives conservation.

The dissemination of conservation documentation to the owners and custodians of cultural materials and the preservation of that documentation is an obligation of conservation professionals as specified in the AIC Code of Ethics and Guidelines for Practice.[5] Conservation professionals working in institutions such as academic research libraries are advised in the Commentaries to the AIC Code of Ethics and Guidelines for Practice to work with archivists and record managers to develop policies and practices for the organization and permanent retention of conservation documentation. Such documentation should be part of the institutional archives.[6]

Literature Review

The author examined the conservation, preservation, museum studies, and library science literature to ascertain current practices and trends in the management and use of conservation documentation. The transition to digital formats for conservation documentation is a dominant subject in the recent literature. Literature reviewed on conservation documentation in research libraries focuses more on the practical application of documentation management.

The conservation community has adopted a very cautious approach to using digital conservation documentation formats. Only in 2008 did the AIC publish a guide for digital photography use in conservation documentation.[7] The guide provides recommendations to assist conservators using digital photography as part of their conservation documentation process. The minimum accepted practice allows for the use of electronic documentation provided an established long-term preservation plan is in place.[8] This plan should include at least two copies of the documentation in different locations, regular monitoring, migration, and conversion when needed to ensure preservation.

With the acceptance and widespread use of digital

conservation documentation, cultural institutions (in particular museums) have been grappling with the issues of data management and access. The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation sponsored meetings in New York (2006) and London (2007) and funded projects to investigate the complexities of managing conservation documentation in digital formats. Both meetings were recorded and edited transcriptions of the meetings were published by the Mellon Foundation.[9] During the meetings, representatives from participating institutions described their use of digital formats for conservation documentation and institutional priorities on data management and access. While the participants embraced digital documentation systems, they disagreed and expressed concern about access to conservation documentation, especially legacy documentation (i.e., documentation that precedes digital documentation). Summaries of the meeting were published in the *Getty Conservation Newsletter* (2006) and *Studies in Conservation* (2007).[10]

Meeting participants raised concerns about possible misinterpretation of raw conservation data.[11] Some institutions proposed mediated access, while others (in particular museums based in the United Kingdom) supported full access to conservation information with the caveat that disclaimers be included to guide interpretation. For example, the general disclaimer from the British Museums' collection database states,

> The information in the records is made available in its entirety. Only prices paid, personal addresses and the names of some individual Museum staff have been withheld. The database is an inventory of the Museum's collection and aims to record what is known about it. It is primarily designed to support curatorial and research work, and much of the text is specialised in nature and terminology.[12]

The participants in the meetings sponsored by the Mellon Foundation discussed the problem of integrating conservation documentation into collection management systems in museums.[13] Participants expressed concern about the difficulty in accessing conservation data relevant to curatorial and research activities and a desire to have information easily accessible within the museum. Some museums, including the British Museum, have developed their own collection management systems that incorporate conservation data. Other solutions discussed at the meetings included developing crosswalks between collection management systems and conservation documentation systems and creating new conservation modules. During the 2006 meeting, a participant from the Philadelphia Museum of Art reported that attempts to develop standard modules for conservation documentation for the most popular collections management system, TMS: The Museum System (www.gallerysystems.com/collection-management), have failed because, in the vendor's opinion, "there was no way a group of conservators would agree."[14]

An outcome of the Mellon-sponsored meetings is the open-source application design and development project ConservationSpace (www.conservationspace.org/Home.html), also funded by the Mellon Foundation. The software being developed is intended to address the conservation community's need for a shared solution to managing documentation. The design phase of the collaborative project began in 2009 with community design meetings. These design meetings informed the planning phase of the project, which is to be completed in 2012. The planning phase is a collaborative effort of eight institutional partners, all museums with the exception of Yale University Libraries, to develop the functional and technical requirements for the application. The final phase of the project (the build phase) will develop the application to be tested by the partners before distribution. The success of the ConservationSpace application will be contingent on the ability of the developers to integrate the complex and varied requirements and the model for application distribution and support.

The earlier literature concerning book conservation in research libraries rarely references conservation documentation. In *Conservation of Library Materials*, published in 1971, Cunha discusses the examination and recording information on "any work on important books (or paper)."[15] In *Library Conservation: Preservation in Perspective*, the editors reprinted the AIC Codes of Ethics, which include a section on documentation.[16] Banks provides four resources under the heading of documentation systems in his 1981 selected bibliography on conservation in research libraries.[17] Two of these publications are short pieces by Buck in *Museum News* that define the documentation process and selected terminology for art conservation.[18] The two other resources Banks lists are short reports on using standardized conservation documentation forms. The detailed documentation form described and reprinted by Hauser in 1974 was developed for fine art prints.[19] Hauser encourages adapting the form to suit other collection requirements. The form reprinted and described by Vaisey in 1978 that was developed by the Society of Archivists working group is flexible and can be used with a variety of library and archival materials.[20]

The omission of information about conservation documentation in most publications concerning preservation and conservation in libraries, such as Morrow's *Conservation Treatment Procedures* and Kyle's *Library Materials Preservation Manual*, is not surprising because the emphasis of these publications was on implementing and managing general collection conservation activities, which are usually perceived as not requiring conservation documentation.[21] According to Appelbaum, in *Conservation Treatment Methodology*, books in circulating collections may have "no

cultural value and little realistic probability of acquiring any," and therefore they are not in the "province of conservators" unlike books with cultural, historical, or unique value.[22] A defining characteristic of general collection conservation is the use of standard treatment types according to Baker in her 2004 study on conservation in research libraries.[23] Baker differentiates special collection conservation as requiring an individual treatment process that would necessitate conservation documentation.

Merrill-Oldham and Schrock also define general collections conservation as not requiring item-level conservation documentation.[24] While acknowledging that many techniques and materials used in general collections conservation also are used in special collection conservation, they assert that the "principles of minimal intervention, single standard of treatment, and item-level documentation that underlies the treatment of artifacts, however, are not applied in treating general collections. Instead maximizing the life and usability of the text at a reasonable cost and within a reasonable time is the primary concern."[25] This distinction between general and special collection also is found, although not stated explicitly, in DePew's 1991 volume on library preservation.[26] The chapter "Binding and In-House Repair" contains no discussion of documentation, but does offer a disclaimer that the "techniques described here are not suitable for cleaning fragile paper or most works of art on paper"[27] In a subsequent chapter, DePew advises that conservators should provide a written report of examination with a treatment proposal before undertaking work, and written and photographic documentation upon completion of any conservation activities.

The author identified no studies documenting conservation documentation practices in research libraries and the subject was not addressed in Baker and Dube's 2010 comprehensive study of book conservation practices in research libraries, which focused instead on methods, techniques, and materials.[28] Practical methods for producing and managing conservation documentation in research libraries are proposed in the literature concerning special collections conservation. Stewart promotes the storage of conservation documentation with the object whenever possible and further suggests attaching a written description of the treatment or references to the location of the full documentation to treated objects.[29]

Other publications embrace digital technology and promote the use of databases to create and manage conservation documentation. Aleppo relates the history of conservation documentation at the National Archives of the United Kingdom and delineates the improved access to conservation documentation achieved through the use of a database first introduced in 1996.[30] The Association of Research Libraries (ARL) published a Systems and Procedures Exchange Center (SPEC) Kit in 1993 on the use of electronic management tools for preservation activities.[31] The kit promotes using databases and other applications to streamline workflows, improve handling procedures, and share data. The kit includes descriptions of databases created to manage conservation information. In 1995, Henry described applications used at Stanford University in a wide variety of conservation activities and promoted the development of systems that allow for sharing of conservation information.[32]

The use of the MARC record for conservation documentation was presented in a paper by Hinz and Gehnrich published in the 2006 *Book and Paper Group Annual*.[33] Hinz and Gehnrich promote the use of the MARC 21 field 583 in the bibliographic record as a practical method of managing conservation documentation. The authors attest to the ease of access to conservation documentation provided by the MARC 21 field 583 for curatorial as well as conservation staff, observing,

> To our knowledge, this field [MARC 21 field 583] is not widely used by conservators, though it is quite possibly the most appropriate database because it embeds the treatment history in the bibliographic data, transparently linking conservation and curatorial agendas by locating all collection information in the same database.[34]

No other case studies promoting use of the MARC 21 field 583 for conservation data was identified in the review of the literature.

Hinz and Gehnrich discuss the use of the MARC field 583 for conservation documentation at their institutions, the Hagley Museum and Library and the American Antiquarian Society.[35] They use the field as the sole record for conservation documentation. At the Hagley Museum and Library, the MARC 21 field 583 is used to document treatments, research past treatments, and to keep statistics on conservation activities. Use of the field at the American Antiquarian Society also includes recording conservation requests submitted by curatorial staff. To simplify entry, Hinz and Gehnrich define standard terminology and recommend periodically creating and retaining terminologies or treatment protocols through a library's acquisition and cataloging department. Treatment protocols are updated with changes in practice, but they also are maintained as a historical record of practices as recommended by Appelbaum, who refers to treatment protocols as a "laboratory master report."[36] The creation and retention of treatment protocols or laboratory master reports can be a substitute for a universal standard conservation terminology.

While Hinz and Gehnrich state "there is no predetermined conservation terminology in MARC," the *Preservation & Digitization Actions: Terminology for the MARC 21 Field 583* (*PDA*) provides a set of instructions and a

standardized terminology that can be used for encoding conservation data.[37] *PDA* was developed in 2004 in a joint effort by the Research Libraries Group (RLG), ARL, and the Library of Congress. Before the publication of *PDA*, the *Standard Terminology for the MARC Actions Note Field* was only standard for encoding preservation data into MARC 21 field 583.[38] *Standard Terminology for the MARC Actions Note Field* was based on a list prepared in 1988 by the Preservation of Library Materials Section of the Resources and Technical Services Division of the American Library Association. The terminology is not formally part of the MARC 21 format documentation. *PDA* was developed to overcome perceived shortcomings in the *Standard Terminology for the MARC Actions Note Field*, especially the absence of terminology for digitization actions. In reference to *Standard Terminology for the MARC Actions Note Field*, the history section of the *PDA* states:

> With the passage of time however, the list of preservation terminology has become outdated and the inability to record digital reformatting and digital transformation actions has become a hindrance.[39]

PDA describes the attributes of the MARC 21 field 583, noting that the field is repeatable and can be used in both MARC holdings and bibliographic records. The document defines the use of a range of subfields. Of particular importance is the subfield $3 (Materials Specified). This subfield defines the part of an object described by a single bibliographic record to which the action in the MARC 21 field 583 pertains. This feature is particularly important for serials and multivolume monographs.

Recent interest in the MARC 21 field 583 for managing and sharing preservation data, especially in the context of cooperative preservation efforts, was evident at the 2011 American Library Association (ALA) Annual Conference. During the conference, the Association for Library Collections and Technical Services (ALCTS) Preservation and Reformatting Section (PARS) hosted a program titled "Have Metadata, Can Collaborate: Putting the MARC 21 583 Field to Use in Cooperative Preservation Efforts." The program objectives were to educate participants in the application of *PDA*, introduce the potential of recorded data to "facilitate cooperative work at the local, regional, and national levels," and to provide examples of local use.[40] The program presenters described the development and components of *PDA* and its application for encoding preservation data in MARC records. Presenters described the varied use of the MARC 21 field 583 for recording preservation and conservation actions, planned actions, and the potential uses of the field for recording survey data and linking directly to conservation databases and treatment images. In addition, a program presenter from the University of California Los Angeles reported on the potential for using the field for coordinating shared print repositories. Program presenters from the Schlesinger Library at Harvard University described the local modification of *PDA* and the use of macros to facilitate coding by noncatalogers.

Options for Using the MARC 21 Field 583

The author identified two models for recording conservation documentation data in the MARC 21 field 583 from Hinz and Gehnrich and *PDA*: the pointer model and the comprehensive model.[41] The pointer model uses the field to direct the users to richer information sources. The comprehensive model provides full description of conservation actions in the 583 field.

An example of a pointer MARC 21 field 583 record from *PDA* is

> 5831# $a conserved $b 04–074 $c 20041221 $z For treatment information, contact the Conservation Division $2pda $5 DLC.[42]

The subfield $b (Action Identified) is used in this example to cite a local database and file number that can be accessed by contacting the Conservation Division. Direct links to electronic records can be coded in the subfield $u (Uniform Resource Identifier) as in the following example

> 5831# $a conserved $b aaa0123 $c 2004 $u http://www.uflib.ufl.edu/pres/repro/db/ $2 pda $5 FU.[43]

The level of detail in a comprehensive model record can vary from the robust as in this example from the Hagley Museum and Library:

> 583##$3 copy 1 $a conserved $d june 2003 $i surface cleaned; disbound; paper washed; sized; methyl cellulose; mended; guarded; endsheets; sewn link stitch; spine lined; case binding $k hinz [44]

to the less detailed as in this example from *PDA*:

> 5830# $a conserved $c 2004 $x treatment included washing, deacidification, page and spine repairs $2 pda $5NIC.[45]

These examples demonstrate the flexibility of the MARC 21 field 583 for rendering recorded information public or private. In the MARC 21 field 583 initial indicators and selection of subfields determine whether the information should be displayed in a public interface. An initial indicator "0" defines the field as private, while "1" indicates the note

is not private. Subfield $x is a nonpublic note defined as "a note pertaining to an action on an item that is not displayed to the public" and subfield $z does the opposite; it functions as a public note.[46] Actual display of any field to library users is determined by the design of the public interface of the library's integrated library system (ILS).

The conservation data can be encoded into either the MARC 21 field 583 bibliographic record or the holdings record. A technical paper published on the use of the MARC 21 field 583 for cooperative collection management outlines the difficulties of using the bibliographic record for encoded preservation data and recommends use of the holdings record.[47] The difficulty of editing bibliographic records in existing workflows and the resulting complexity of bibliographic records with multiple institutions inputting data were cited as obstacles. The paper encourages use of the holdings records for both preservation data relating to collaborative collection development, and for preservation documentation in general. Access to the information would be locally determined by the ILS. In the larger library community the data could be shared using "Connexion and FirstSearch, as well as emerging WorldCat Local-related initiatives to improve LHR [Local Holdings Record] batchload capabilities."[48]

Research Method

The author designed a survey (see appendix) to capture data on current conservation documentation practices in academic research libraries and to explore the use of the MARC 21 field 583 for recording conservation documentation. The survey aimed to measure current and potential use of the MARC 21 field 583 for recording conservation data. The population surveyed consisted of the major stakeholders for creation and use of conservation documentation in academic research libraries: preservation, conservation, and special collections professional staff.

The author used the ARL 2006–7 preservation statistics (the last year these were collected) to identify a group of research libraries with established preservation programs.[49] Libraries without established preservation programs are not likely to engage in active conservation work or manage conservation documentation and were therefore excluded from the population. A library needed to employ a preservation administrator who dedicates a minimum of 50 percent of his or her time to preservation to qualify for inclusion in the population. To focus on academic research libraries, nonacademic ARL libraries were excluded from the population, thereby reducing the number of libraries in the population to 69.

To fully gauge the potential for using the MARC 21 field 583 for conservation documentation, the survey population included the professional staff in preservation, conservation, and special collections and rare books that might benefit the most from linking the conservation and bibliographic data. Archivists were excluded from the survey population because archival materials were out of the scope of the present research. Positions that indicated a nonprofessional role were excluded from the population. Job titles in the population suggested professional status and included head, director, administrator, librarian, chief, associate, conservator, and curator. The titles excluded from the population implied nonprofessional positions including assistant, specialist, and technician.

The author assembled a list of names and email addresses of 301 preservation, conservation, and special collections professionals using the library websites and reference services of the selected 69 ARL member academic libraries. After preliminary testing of the survey instrument by staff members at the author's institution and ARL nonacademic research libraries, the author submitted the survey instrument and project method to the New York University Committee on Activities Involving Human Subjects. The project was approved and granted exempt status by the committee on April 18, 2011. The author launched the survey (see appendix) to the full (301) population on May 23, 2011, using the compiled name and email data that were entered into the online survey software Qualtric. Reminder email messages were sent on June 14 and June 20, 2011, using the survey software to population members who had not completed the survey. The survey was closed on July 22, 2011. Seventy (44 percent) of the 159 responses were recorded on the first day of the survey. Responses on the dates of the reminders were greater than all other dates except the survey launch date. Thirty-three (21 percent) responses were recorded on the date of the first reminder, and 20 (13 percent) were recorded on the day of the second reminder.

The survey was divided into three areas: demographics, conservation documentation practices, and the MARC 21 field 583. The demographic questions were constructed to confirm the survey population, designate groups by functional area (preservation, conservation, and special collections and rare books), and record education and managerial experience. These questions allowed for filtering responses by position type. This function is particularly important when ascertaining library practices. By filtering for the position (preservation administrator), the author was able to assume that the responses were from different libraries because libraries usually employ only one preservation administrator in contrast to positions such as conservator, preservation librarian, or special collection librarian. Data from preservation administrator responses were used to verify the sample data when applicable to library practices.

The questions concerning conservation documentation practices established the type and intensity of conservation

work at the survey participant's library as well as the current conservation documentation practices. If, while taking the survey, a respondent moved the cursor over the term conservation documentation, the software displayed the following definition taken from the AIC website: "The recording in a permanent format of information derived from conservation activities."[50] This definition was provided for those survey participants who might not be familiar with how the conservation profession defines conservation documentation. The initial multiple-choice answers (yes, no, don't know) to the conservation documentation questions were presented to measure both practices and awareness of practices. Additional questions querying current conservation documentation techniques list methods identified in the literature review.

To understand the current and potential use of the MARC 21 field 583, the participants were asked to report use of the field for all kinds of preservation data, including conservation documentation. Additional questions probed the type of data recorded (i.e., reformatting actions, conservation data) and the terminology used in the field. Participants who reported using the MARC 21 field 583 to record conservation data were asked if their library also maintains other systems for managing conservation data. Those respondents who reported that their library does not use the MARC 21 field 583 were asked to anticipate future use and their assessment of such potential use.

The final survey questions asked respondents if they were willing to participate in a follow-up interview. A number of survey participants initially agreed to participate in the follow-up interviews and were contacted via email. Twenty-five participants from 22 different libraries participated in follow-up interviews conducted in March and April 2012. These confidential and informal interviews investigated use and interest in encoding conservation data into the MARC 21 field 583 and preferred implementation methods. Additionally, the interviewees were asked about survey results regarding the perceived value of conservation documentation and issues regarding public access to conservation documentation.

Results and Discussion

Of the 301 surveys emailed, 131 respondents completed the survey in May, June, and July 2011. Ten respondents indicated that their positions were support staff and were subsequently removed, reducing the population to 291 and the responses to 121. Response rates for individual questions varied from the overall survey response rate of 42 percent because some questions were restricted based on previous answers and participants were allowed to bypass questions (except the initial consent question). The mean time for completing the survey was ten minutes.

Table 1. Institution Size

Holdings	Responses	%
Less than 2 million volumes	16	12.2
2–3 million volumes	23	17.6
3–5 million volumes	38	29.0
More than 5 million volumes	54	41.2
Total	131	100.0

Demographics

Institution size was reported in all the ARL library categories, with more respondents reporting from larger institutions (see table 1), which was not surprising considering the population parameters. Preservation/conservation was reported as their primary job function by 68 (52.3 percent) of the 130 respondents and 62 (47.7 percent) selected special collections/rare books. Survey participants who selected preservation/conservation further defined their positions as preservation administrator, conservator, or preservation librarian/archivist. Analysis of contact information volunteered by 17 (70.8 percent) of the 24 preservation administrator respondents confirmed that these 17 worked at different ARL member libraries. While the author cannot confirm that all preservation administrator respondents were employed at different libraries (7 respondents declined to provide contact information), the data from the preservation administrators can be used to indicate institutional practices with minimal risk of sample bias. All but 1 of the 39 respondents who selected conservator for job position participate in special collections conservation. Twenty-three (58.9 percent) of the 39 conservators respondents reported participating in general collections conservation. These results indicate that a meaningful proportion of the respondent conservators work is in both general and special collections conservation—the hybrid conservator described by Baker.[51]

Conservation Documentation Practices

The survey asked participants to rate how often general and special collection materials received conservation treatment. The responses, presented in table 2, suggest that almost all of the respondents' institutions have active conservation programs. Respondents reported the documentation of conservation treatments was more prevalent for special collections than general collections. Conservation documentation was reported by 82 (66.1 percent) of 124 respondents as usually produced for special collection conservation compared to only 9 (7.6 percent) of the 119 respondents answering the same question for general collection conservation (see table

Table 2. Frequency of Conservation Treatment

	Very Often		Quite Often		Sometimes		Rarely		Never		
Collection Type	**No.**	**%**	**No,**	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**Responses**
General collections	44	36.4	25	20.7	26	21.5	21	17.4	5	4.1	121
Special collections	57	44.2	39	30.2	27	20.9	5	3.9	1	0.8	129

Table 3. Generation of Conservation Documentation

	Almost Always		Regularly		Sometimes		Not Regularly		Almost Never		Don't Know	
Collection Type	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**
Special Collections All Responses (N = 124)	82	66.1	22	17.7	10	8.1	4	3.2	3	2.4	3	2.4
Special Collections Subset of Preservation Administrators (n = 20)	12	60.0	2	10.0	3	15.0	1	5.0	2	10.0	0	0.0
General Collections All Responses (N = 119)	9	7.6	19	16.0	16	13.4	11	9.2	37	31.1	27	22.7
General Collections Subset of Preservation Administrators (n = 18)	1	5.5	4	22.2	3	16.7	1	5.5	9	50.0	0	0.0

3). Twelve (60.0 percent) of the 20 preservation administrators who responded to the question reported conservation documentation is usually produced for special collection conservation. Only 1 of the 18 preservation administrators who answered the question regarding conservation documentation practice for general collections conservation reported that conservation documentation is usually generated for general collections.

Survey data, presented in table 3, indicates that conservation documentation is routinely produced for special collections. Only 3 (2.4 percent) of 124 respondents reported that conservation documentation is almost never produced for special collection materials. Three (2.4 percent) of the respondents also were not aware if conservation documentation is produced for special collections. Data from those respondents who identified themselves as preservation administrators show similar proportions across the group.

The survey respondents reported frequent use of conservation documentation (see table 4). Only 7 (5.9 percent) of the 119 respondents to the question about use of conservation documentation reported never using conservation documentation. Use of conservation documentation very often was reported by 37 (31.1 percent) of the respondents and 28 (23.5 percent) of respondents selected the frequency quite often. When comparing the job function and department subset responses, presented in table 4, preservation/conservation respondents reported greater frequency of using conservation documentation than the special collections/rare books respondents.

Both the full set of respondents and the preservation administrator subset reported paper records, databases, and electronic documents as the media used most frequently to manage conservation documentation (see table 5). In contrast, managing conservation data with MARC records was reported as always used by only 8 (7.0 percent) of the 114 respondents to this question, and 38 respondents (33.3 percent) reported that the MARC record was never used to manage conservation documentation. The preservation administrator respondents reported use of the MARC records at even lower rates. Only 1 of the 19 preservation administrator respondents reported always using the MARC record, and 10 (52.6 percent) reported that they never use the MARC record. Nine respondents reported that they use other media to manage documentation. Two of these other responses may indicate use of the MARC record ("item records attached to bib records" and "item record attached to MARC record"). The other media described to manage conservation documentation range from the technical "library's digital repository," "online catalog local notes field," and "digital photo documentation saved to a server and linked to treatment reports database" to the more traditional methods of "manuscript finding aids" and "stamps in book."

Information from follow-up interviews on documentation practices for special collections indicated common use of locally managed databases, including File MakerPro and MSAccess, digital images, paper forms, and word-processed documents. Common practice for managing data in databases included printing reports and distributing these reports

Table 4. Use of Conservation Documentation

	Very Often		Quite Often		Sometimes		Rarely		Never	
Reported Uses	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**
All Responses (N = 119)	37	31.1	28	23.5	34	28.6	13	10.9	7	5.9
Subset: Preservation/Conservation (n = 61)	24	39.3	20	32.8	13	21.3	3	4.9	1	1.6
Subset: Special Collections/Rare Books (n = 58)	13	22.4	8	13.8	21	36.2	10	17.2	6	10.3

Table 5. Media Use for Managing Conservation Documentation

	Always		Usually		About Half the Time		Rarely		Never		Don't Know	
Media	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**
Paper Records All Responses (N = 121)	48	39.7	35	28.9	12	9.9	16	13.2	2	1.7	8	6.6
Subset of Preservation Administrators (n = 20)	4	20.0	9	45.0	2	10.0	5	25.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Database(s) All Responses (N = 117)	48	41.0	20	17.1	8	6.8	16	13.7	17	14.5	8	6.8
Subset of Preservation Administrators (n = 20)	4	20.0	4	20.0	3	15.0	5	25.0	4	20.0	0	0.0
Electronic documents saved to a server All Responses (N = 118)	39	33.1	29	24.6	4	3.4	17	14.4	16	13.6	13	11.0
Subset of Preservation Administrators (n = 20)	4	20.0	5	25.0	0	0.0	2	10.0	8	40.0	1	5.0
MARC Record All Responses (N = 114)	8	7.0	15	13.2	4	3.5	35	30.7	38	33.3	14	12.3
Subset of Preservation Administrators (n = 19)	1	5.3	2	10.5	0	0.0	6	31.6	10	52.6	0	0.0

and maintaining files locally. Printing other electronic files also was frequently reported. All but one interviewee reported responsibility for managing their own electronic records (including digital images), usually by saving the files to a server or to a portable storage device. Several participants eagerly anticipated depositing their electronic records into an institutional digital repository managed outside of the conservation or preservation department. Consistent with the practice advocated by Stewart, 2 interviewees described storing documentation with the conserved item.[52]

Two survey questions assessed the perceived value of conservation documentation and asked survey participants to rate its value for selected professional positions and library activities. The positions considered were archivist, conservation staff, and head/director of preservation, head/director of special collections, preservation librarians/archivist, rare book cataloger, and rare book librarian (see table 6). The activities evaluated were cataloging, collection development, interpretation, preservation planning, and reference (see table 6). Data strongly suggest that the respondents perceived conservation documentation as having substantial value for a range of positions and activities in their respective academic libraries.

Current Use of MARC 21 Field 583

Most survey respondents reported that the MARC 21 field 583 was rarely or never used for preservation and conservation data (see table 7). Only 5 (4.1 percent) of the 122 respondents reported that the MARC 21 field 583 was always used for recording preservation information and actions. Conservation actions were reported by only 5 (4.0 percent) of the 124 respondents as always recorded in the MARC 21 field 583. Awareness of encoding practices was indicated by "don't know" responses. Thirty-five (28.2 percent) of 124 respondents were not aware if their institutions used the MARC 21 field 583 for conservation data. Data from the preservation administrator subset were consistent with the full sample with the exception of "don't know" responses. Only 1 of the 20 preservation administrator respondents did not know if their institution recorded conservation data.

Table 6. Value of Conservation Documentation

Value of Conservation Documentation to Selected Positions											
	Very Important		Important		Neither Important or Unimportant		Unimportant		Not Important at All		
Positions	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	Responses
Archivists	22	19	63	54	20	17	12	10	0	0	117
Conservation Staff	94	77	23	19	2	2	1	1	1	1	121
Head/ Director of Preservation	75	64	29	25	9	8	3	2	1	1	117
Head/ Director of Special Collections	41	35	47	40	19	16	9	8	1	1	117
Preservation Librarians/ Archivists	51	44	50	43	12	10	4	3	0	0	117
Rare Book Catalogers	15	13	46	39	42	35	11	9	5	4	119
Rare Books Librarians	31	26	57	48	18	15	10	9	2	2	118
Value of Conservation Documentation for Selected Activities											
	Very Important		Important		Neither Important or Unimportant		Unimportant		Not Important at All		
Activities	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	Responses
Cataloging	15	12	44	36	40	33	16	13	6	5	121
Collection Development	12	10	39	33	47	40	17	14	4	3	119
Interpretation	32	27	48	41	25	21	10	8	3	3	118
Preservation Planning	52	43	56	47	8	7	2	2	1	1	119
Reference	17	14	35	30	43	36	18	15	6	5	119

Those respondents who reported use of the MARC 21 field 583 for preservation or conservation data were asked to select from a list all the preservation actions that are recorded by their institution in the MARC 21 field 583 (see table 8). The list of actions was developed using the *PDA*.[53] The 64 respondents to the question selected multiple actions, generating 167 responses. The actions most frequently selected were associated with reformatting (digitized, microfilmed, and preservation photocopy) followed by the action conserved. The responses from preservation administrators were similar with the exception that the action mass deacidification was selected more frequently than conserved. Information gathered during phone interviews also suggests low use of the MARC 21 field 583 for recording conservation data, with only 2 (8.0 percent) of the 25 phone interviewees reporting use of the field.

Respondents were offered an option to list actions not included in the survey question. Twelve respondents entered statements indicating that they were not aware of the specific actions recorded in the MARC 21 field 583 (i.e., "unsure," "don't know"). Two other responses, "work needed on an item is recorded for future projects" and "intended actions (reformat, conserve); negative decisions," indicated use of the MARC 21 field 583 to record planned conservation actions.

Respondents who indicated use of the MARC 21 field 583 were asked if any of the following were used for encoding preservation and conservation information:

- "Standard Terminology for the MARC 21 Action Note Fields"[54]
- *PDA*[55]
- Locally defined terminology
- None (free text)

If the respondent used locally defined terminology, he or she was asked to enter the other terminology used. Respondents were permitted to select multiple terminologies. Fifty-three respondents selected 64 terminologies indicating that some respondents' institutions use multiple terminologies. The most frequently selected was the "Standard Terminology for the MARC 21 Action Note Fields." The least frequently selected was *PDA*, which is surprising considering the terminology was designed for use in the MARC 21 field 583. *PDA* was selected only 8 times while "Standard Terminology for the MARC 21 Action Note Fields" was selected 18 times. Locally defined terminology and free text received 16 and 12 responses, respectively. The respondents who selected "Please enter other terminology used" did not offer additional terminology, but indicated

Table 7. Use of MARC 21 Field 583

Information Recorded	Always		Usually		About Half the Time		Rarely		Never		Don't know	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Preservation Data All Responses (N = 122)	5	4.1	7	5.7	7	5.7	31	25.4	33	27.0	39	32.0
Preservation DataSubset of Preservation Administrators (n = 20)	0	0.0	2	10.0	1	5.0	8	40.0	9	45.0	0	0.0
Conservation Data All Responses (N = 124)	5	4.0	7	5.6	3	2.4	31	25.0	43	34.7	35	28.2
Conservation Data Subset of Preservation Administrators (n = 20)	0	0.0	2	10.0	0	0.0	6	30.0	11	55.0	1	5.0

Table 8. Preservation Actions Recorded in MARC 21 Field 583 (N = 64)

Action	All Responses*	Preservation Administrator Subset
Conserved	19	2
Digitized	28	4
Housed	5	1
Mass De-Acidification	16	3
Microfilmed	22	5
Rebound	8	0
Repaired	11	0
Preservation Photocopy	24	5
Retained	1	1
Stabilized	1	0
Transfer to Optimal Storage	17	2
Other	15	2
Total	167	25

*Respondents could choose multiple actions.

they were not sure or did not know.

Fifty-nine (86.8 percent) of the 68 respondents who reported that their institutions used the MARC 21 field 583 for conservation data also indicated that their institutions maintain a separate system for conservation documentation. The responses from the preservation administrator subset were consistent with the larger group: 6 of the 8 preservation administrator respondents reported that their institutions maintain a separate system for conservation documentation in addition to recording information into the MARC record.

Respondents who indicated that their libraries used an additional separate system were asked to evaluate several reasons for doing so using a Likert scale (see table 9). Most respondents agreed with the statement "MARC record is too limited" as a reason for maintaining a separate system for conservation documentation. More respondents disagreed than agreed with the statement relating to concerns about public access to conservation documentation. While marginally more respondents agreed than disagreed with the statements "MARC record is too difficult to access" and "concerns about preservation of conservation information/documentation," half of the 48 responses were neutral.

In addition to evaluating the prepared statements, respondents were invited to enter other reasons for maintaining separate conservation documentation. Many responses emphasized the limitation of encoding conservation documentation in the MARC record, noting that the MARC 21 field 583 cannot cover all the details provided in paper treatment reports and its scope and function is limited. Other respondents stated that using this field was too time consuming and that internal coordination was difficult. Two respondents reported on legacy systems that have survived alongside MARC field 583. Other respondents did not offer reasons, but described how the MARC record related to other conservation documentation systems at their institutions.

Encoding Conservation Documentation into the MARC 21 Field 583

Use of a separate system for conservation documentation in addition to encoding conservation data into the MARC 21 field 583 implies the use of the pointer model for encoding rather than the comprehensive model. As reported above, 86.8 percent of the survey respondents who reported using the MARC record for encoding conservation data maintain an additional separate system for conservation documentation. The survey data suggest that respondents' institutions that use the MARC 21 field 583 infrequently use a comprehensive model for recording conservation data.

When both encoding models (pointer and comprehensive) were described to the phone interviewees, the pointer model was unanimously preferred over the comprehensive model for special collection conservation documentation.

Table 9. Reasons for Maintaining an Additional Conservation Documentation System

Statement	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neither Agree nor Disagree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree		Responses
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
MARC record is too limited	7	14.6	18	37.5	18	37.5	4	8.3	1	2.1	48
MARC record is too difficult to access	4	8.3	10	20.8	23	47.9	9	18.8	2	4.2	48
Concerns about public access to conservation documentation	1	2.0	8	16.3	24	49.0	13	26.5	3	6.1	49
Concerns about preservation of conservation information/ documentation	2	4.2	11	22.9	24	50.0	10	20.8	1	2.1	48

This preference for the pointer model was attributed by the interviewees to the rich descriptive nature of special collection conservation data that is captured before, during, and after conservation treatment and does not easily translate into a coded field. Interviewees expressed concern that, while using multiple fields is possible because the MARC 21 field 583 is repeatable, the record could quickly become cumbersome. One phone interviewee asserted that coding detailed information about special collections conservation into the MARC 21 field 583 was "exhausting to think about." A number of interviewees expressed the hope of implementing electronic linkage of the MARC 21 field 583 to their electronic documentation files including databases, images files, and reports produced from databases in PDF.

A common attribute of successful use of the MARC 21 field 583 for conservation or preservation data reported in phone interviews is that conservation or preservation conservation staff carries out encoding. These phone interviewees stated that having conservation or preservation staff encode the conservation data into the holding MARC 21 field 583 resulted in minimal impact on other departments' workflows. The interviewees reported that while editing privileges for bibliographic records is highly restrictive at their institutions, privileges for editing holdings records were easier to secure. One phone interviewee emphasized that the coding can be simplified by the use of macros, which are commonly used in cataloging to increase efficiency and accuracy. Other phone interviewees reported that implementation efforts to use the MARC 21 field 583 failed because of the difficulty in obtaining MARC editing privileges and pressures of workload in the cataloging departments.

Potential Use of MARC 21 Field 583

A final section of the survey was directed toward those respondents who reported that their institutions did not use the MARC 21 field 583 for recording conservation actions. These respondents were asked to evaluate six possible reasons why their libraries did not use the MARC 21 field 583 for conservation data (see table 10). The greatest frequency of responses was neutral for all statements except "Current documentation system is sufficient," with which 10 (34.5 percent) of 29 respondents agreed and 6 (20.7 percent) strongly agreed, and "Concern about public access to conservation information," with which 7 (26.9 percent) of 26 respondents disagreed and 4 (15.4 percent) strongly disagreed. Nine respondents provided other reasons that were associated with organizational difficulties, including

- "lack of coordination with our IT and cataloging departments to date";
- "involves a third unit to get the work done";
- "lack of interest by cataloging to implement";
- "simply have not been able to get it into the workflow";
- "it is not our policy";
- "perceived as unimportant to the work of the library";
- "we've not done it in the past";
- "rare book program is new"; and
- "have only had conservator on staff for 2 years."

One response that indicated the use of a conservation documentation system that can be accessed through the library's ILS system was "our institution can get some information through our circulation database." The remaining responses suggested a limited understanding of the MARC 21 field 583: "conservation data is item specific, not bib level specific, confusing to put in MARC record if you have more than one copy" and "we are moving to RDA."

Toward the end of the survey, respondents were asked the extent to which they agreed with the statement "I believe that my institution should use the MARC 21 field 583 to record conservation information." Only 6 (5.5 percent) of the 108 respondents disagreed with the statement; 63 (58.3 percent) agreed; 39 (36.1 percent) neither agreed nor disagreed. When evaluated by work function, the results are consistent, implying strong interest in the use of the field. Enthusiasm for the potential of the MARC 21 field 583 to provide access to conservation documentation emerged as

Table 10. Reasons for Not Using the MARC 21 Field 583 to Record Conservation Data

	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neither Agree nor Disagree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree		
Statement	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**Responses**
MARC is too limited	2	7.4	3	11.1	14	51.9	5	18.5	3	11.1	27
Information in the MARC 21 Field 583 is too difficult to access	2	7.4	5	18.5	12	44.4	4	14.8	4	14.8	27
MARC records are too difficult to edit/use	2	7.7	6	23.1	10	38.5	6	23.1	2	7.7	26
Concerns about public access to conservation documentation	4	15.4	3	11.5	8	30.8	7	26.9	4	15.4	26
Current conservation documentation system is sufficient	6	20.7	10	34.5	6	20.7	3	10.3	4	13.8	29

a persistent theme in the follow-up interviews, especially in libraries where communication between departments is hindered by physical distance.

Conservation Planning and Use of MARC 21 Field 583

Another important use of the MARC 21 field 583 is for conservation planning. Phone interviewees described the use of the field by special collections curators and librarians to identify and prioritize materials in need of conservation assessment or treatment and to identify materials rejected for conservation treatment. This use of the MARC 21 field 583 for conservation planning is often in the context of digitization projects.

Several phone interviewees expressed enthusiasm for the potential of using the field for planning, especially for recording condition assessments. With many special collections adopting the use of barcodes, entering survey data directly in the MARC record presents an efficient data entry model compared to paper forms, spreadsheets, or databases. While some interview participants were confident in using the data in the field, others expressed concern with the process of data analysis and reporting. The potential use of the MARC 21 field 583 for condition surveys is an area for future research and testing.

Research Method Review

The author intentionally chose the survey implementation method to define a fixed sample and to avoid the drawbacks of web-distributed surveys, such as an undefined response rate. While the response rate was high at 42 percent, responses may not accurately represent the perspective of the entire population; however, it can suggest general trends in practices and perceptions. The survey was self-selecting, as invited participants chose to respond and therefore may have special interest in the subject, possibly introducing sample bias and some skewing of the results.

The recent practice in the preservation field of using web-distributed surveys that request only one response per library encourages coordinated responses. The present research seeks to understand individual perceptions. To encourage participation and reduce coordinated responses, the email messages inviting participation in this survey explicitly stated that multiple people from each selected library would be asked to take the survey individually. Despite this statement, communications from participants indicate that some individuals attempted to coordinate responses. While clarification was given to those individuals who communicated with the author, the extent to which responses were collaborative rather than individual is not known.

The survey population was derived from data presented in the most recently published ARL preservation statistics data that was four years old at the time of the survey and is no longer maintained by ARL. Therefore some possible institutions may have been missed. The population was limited to preservation, conservation, and rare books and special collections professionals. Archivists and catalogers were excluded. This omission was intentional to limit the population and focus on professionals working with nonarchival special collections. The exclusion of catalogers from the survey population, in particular rare book catalogers doing descriptive bibliography, proved to be a missed opportunity to better understand the potential value of conservation documentation to the work of cataloging.

The survey was designed to be flexible to encourage participation. One flexible design element allowed participants to bypass questions. The results indicate that participants occasionally did skip questions. Providing "don't know" and "does not apply" options consistently for all questions might have provided the same flexibility as allowing participants to skip questions.

Public Access to Conservation Documentation

At present, public access to conservation documentation is a complex and polarizing issue in the field of conservation. Two ideological camps, mediated and open access, were evident during the Mellon-sponsored meetings and in the phone interviews.[56] While both sides firmly believe that providing access to conservation documentation is an ethical responsibility, the type and form of the access is contentious. One interviewee who supports open access asserted that "information wants to be free," and other interviewees communicated with the author their belief that conservation professionals should pursue opportunities to share documentation without (or with minimal) mediation or interpretation. The British Museum's practice of presenting conservation documentation online through the museum's collections database is representative of the minimally mediated approach. The opposing viewpoint expressed in phone interviews focuses on possible legal and security risks associated with the release of technical data. Another concern raised in a phone interview is that conservation documentation can read like a manual for treatment and that nontrained individuals could damage cultural property by attempting to replicate treatment. This concern is understandable because every conservator can testify to having to mitigate damage caused by misguided attempts by nonprofessionals to treat objects.

While caution is understandable in a field charged with the care of cultural property, promotion of conservation is crucial for the continued development of the profession. Outreach, which was a theme of the 2012 AIC annual meeting, involves not only education, events, and promotion, but also sharing data and engaging with other library professionals and library users.[57] While some risk is associated with making treatment procedures publically available, one could argue that this risk is already present in the numerous conservation books, articles, and web resources currently available. Furthermore, simple disclaimers can caution readers and direct them to additional resources. For example the British Museum's website provides an example of such a disclaimer:

> Information in the reports held on this database needs to be read with care. The reports were originally produced for internal purposes only, and were generally produced to address very specific issues. Much of the text is therefore specialized in nature and terminology. It has not been possible to check every record prior to its release; therefore there may be mistakes and omissions. The Museum does not endorse any of the equipment or products recorded here and it should be noted that any information about product formulations or health and safety advice given may no longer be current.[58]

Baker's chapter on conservation treatment of nineteenth century papers advises, "Lay persons are strongly discouraged from carrying out conservation treatments. For advice or treatment, s/he should contact a professional conservator (http://www.conservation-us.org)."[59] A number of the conservators interviewed expressed the belief that a move toward more openness is inevitable and, as professionals, the conservation community needs to be willing to share data and overcome fears of judgment that might follow such disclosure.

Conclusion

Recording current conservation documentation practices in academic research libraries was a primary goal of the survey. Survey data confirmed that conservation documentation is routinely generated for special collections and is used regularly by preservation, conservation, and special collections professional staff. Conservation documentation was perceived by the survey respondents as having value outside of the functions of conservation and preservation. The media used to capture conservation documentation were varied and included paper forms, electronic word processing files, image files, databases, and to a lesser extent the MARC record. According to phone interviewees, the management of conservation documentation in either analog or digital form is the responsibility of the conservator with little or no assistance from other library departments and personnel, with the exception of data recorded in the MARC record. Conservation documentation systems described were developed to meet the needs of specific types of collections, workflows, and staff preferences. The systems described by 22 of 25 phone interviewees were closed systems that did not link to any other collection databases.

In promoting the practice of utilizing the MARC 21 field 583 for recording and managing conservation data, Hinz and Gehnrich raised the question of the desirability of integrating conservation documentation into the collection database.[60] In addition to recording conservation documentation practices, the present study also examined the perceived appropriateness and implications of using the MARC 21 field 583 for conservation documentation in academic research libraries. While use of the MARC 21 field 583 for conservation data in ARL academic libraries was reported as low by survey respondents and phone interviewees, interest in recording conservation data in the field was substantial. Using the field to indicate (or directly link to) more comprehensive conservation documentation was preferred for special collection conservation documentation. This preference

is understandable as linkage to descriptive data enhances the value of conservation documentation by bringing such data out of the isolation inherent in local systems. The open-source conservation documentation application currently under development, ConservationSpace, may facilitate this linkage and surmount obstacles presented by proprietary applications and existing workflows. The extent of access to conservation documentation remains controversial and will be determined by the willingness of individuals and institutions to set aside local concerns for the greater value inherent in the boarder exchange of information.

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Appendix. Survey Instrument

You have been invited to take part in a research study to learn more about conservation documentation in academic research libraries. This study will be conducted by Laura McCann. If you agree to be in this study, you will be asked to complete a survey. The survey will take 5 to 10 minutes to complete. There are no known risks associated with your participation in this research beyond those of everyday life. Although you will receive no direct benefits, this research may help the investigator better understand conservation documentation practices and uses of conservation documentation in academic research libraries. Confidentiality of your responses will be maintained by disassociating you and your institution's name from the research findings. Participation in this study is voluntary. You may refuse to participate or withdraw at any time without penalty. If there is anything about this study or your participation that is unclear or that you do not understand, or wish to report a research-related problem, you may contact Laura McCann at 212-998-2562, laura.mccann@nyu.edu, Barbara Goldsmith Preservation and Conservation Department, NYU Libraries, 70 Washington Square South, LL2-25, New York, NY 10012.

If you are interested in receiving a summary of the results of this research project, please provide your email address below.

Do you agree with the following statement: I am willing to participate in this research and I am at least eighteen years of age.
❍ Yes
❍ No

Institution size
❍ Less than 2 million volumes
❍ 2–3 million volumes
❍ 3–5 million volumes
❍ More than 5 million volumes

Job Title:

Which of the following best describes your position?
❍ Management
❍ Professional
❍ Support/Non-professional

How many staff in each of the following groups do you supervise?

	0	1	2–4	5–10	More than 10
Professional Staff					
Support Staff					
Student Assistants					

Which is the primary function and/or department you manage and/or participate in? (select one)
❍ Preservation/Conservation
❍ Special Collections/Rare Books

Please rate the amount of time you spend on the following activities:

	Less than 25%	26–50%	51–75%	76–100%
Special Collections Management				
Rare Books				
Cataloging				
Preservation				
Conservation				
Other:				

Which of the following best describes your position? (select one)
- ❍ Preservation Administrator
- ❍ Preservation Librarian/Archivist
- ❍ Conservator

Which functions do you manage and/or participate in? (select all that apply)
- ❍ General collection conservation
- ❍ Special collections conservation

Please rate how important the following experiences are to how you acquired your conservation knowledge and skills?

	Extremely Important	Very Important	Neither Important nor Unimportant	Very Unimportant	Not at all Important	Does not apply
Conservation apprenticeship						
Graduate degree in library/Information science with certificate in conservation						
Graduate degree in conservation						
Other graduate coursework						
On-the-job training or experience						
Workshops/training sessions						
Professional association meetings						
Self-study (books, on-line resources, etc)						
Other:						

Please rate how important the following experiences are to how you acquired your library/information science knowledge and skills?

	Very Important	Important	Neither Important nor Unimportant	Unimportant	Not at all Important	Does not apply
Graduate degree in library/information science						
Other graduate coursework						
On-the-job training or experience						
Workshops/training sessions						
Professional association meetings						
Self-study (books, on-line resources, etc . . .)						
Other:						

In your library, how often do the following receive conservation treatment?

	Very Often	Quite Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
General collection material					
Special collections materials					

Is conservation documentation generated for conserved general collection materials?

❍ Almost always
❍ Regularly
❍ Sometimes
❍ Not regularly
❍ Almost never
❍ Don't know

Is conservation documentation generated for conserved special collections materials?

❍ Almost always
❍ Regularly
❍ Sometimes
❍ Not regularly
❍ Almost never
❍ Don't know

How often does your institution use the following media to manage conservation documentation? (select and rate all that apply)

	Always	Usually	About half the time	Rarely	Never	Don't know
Paper Records						
Database(s)						
Electronic documents saved to a server						
MARC record						
Other: (please enter media type)						

Please rate how often you use conservation documentation.

❍ Very Often
❍ Quite Often
❍ Sometimes
❍ Rarely
❍ Never

Is conservation documentation included in your library's institutional archive?

❍ Almost Always
❍ Regularly
❍ Sometimes
❍ Not regularly
❍ Almost never
❍ Never

Do you work with archivists and/or record managers to develop sound policies for the permanent retention of conservation documentation?

❍ Yes
❍ No

Please rate the value of conservation documentation to the following positions?

	Very Important	Important	Neither Important or Unimportant	Unimportant	Not important at all
Archivists					
Conservation Staff					
Head/Director of Preservation					
Head/Director of Special Collections					
Preservation Librarians/Archivists					
Rare Books Catalogers					
Rare Books Librarians					

Please rate the value of conservation documentation to the following activities?

	Very Important	Important	Neither Important or Unimportant	Unimportant	Not important at all
Cataloging					
Collection Development					
Interpretation					
Preservation Planning					
Reference					

How often does your institution utilize the MARC 21 Field 583 for recording the following?

	Always	Usually	About half the time	Rarely	Never	Don't know
Preservation information and actions						
Conservation information and actions						

Which of the following completed preservation actions does your institution record in the MARC 21 Field 583? (select all that apply)

- ❍ Conserved
- ❍ Digitized
- ❍ Housed
- ❍ Mass de-acidified
- ❍ Microfilmed
- ❍ Rebound
- ❍ Repaired
- ❍ Preservation photocopy (Reproduced in print)
- ❍ Retained
- ❍ Stabilized
- ❍ Transfer to optimal storage (off-site storage)
- ❍ Other: (please enter preservation action below)

_____

Please select the terminology used in your library for encoding preservation (including conservation) information in the MARC 21 Field 583? (select all that apply)

- ❍ Standard Terminology for the MARC 21 Action Note Fields
- ❍ Preservation & Digitization Actions (PDA:Terminology)
- ❍ Locally defined terminology
- ❍ None (Free Text)
- ❍ Please enter other terminology used.

_____

Please evaluate the following possible reasons for why your library does not utilize the MARC 21 Field 583 to record conservation data.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
MARC is too limited					
Information in the MARC 21 Field 583 is too difficult to access					
MARC records are too difficult to edit/use					
Concern about public access to conservation information					
Current conservation documentation system is sufficient					
Other: (Please enter below.)					

Please rate the following statement: I believe that my institution should use the MARC 21 Field 583 to record conservation information.

- ❍ Strongly Agree
- ❍ Agree
- ❍ Neither Agree nor Disagree
- ❍ Disagree
- ❍ Strongly Disagree

Does your library maintain a separate system for conservation documentation in addition to recording information in the MARC records?

❍ Yes
❍ No

Please evaluate the reasons for maintaining a separate system for conservation documentation in addition to recording conservation information in MARC records.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
MARC record is too limited					
MARC record is too difficult to access					
Concerns about public access to conservation information					
Concerns about preservation of conservation information/documentation					
Other: (Please enter below.)					

Would you be willing to participate in a brief follow-up interview in a few months, if needed?

❍ Yes
❍ No

Thank you. Please provide your contact information. (Name, Email, Phone Number)