Integrated Shared Collections at Scale

Depository Library Council Meeting, March 2026

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Shared Print & NCSA

National Collection Service Areas (NCSA) group Federal depository libraries into four areas as a means of ensuring geographically dispersed permanent public access to Federal Government information products, sharing resources among depository libraries, and receiving services from GPO's Library Services and Content Management (LSCM).

https://fdlp.gov/about-the-fdlp/national-collection-service-areas

Shared Print

The collaborative effort of libraries, institutions, centers, and consortia to document, preserve and provide long-term widespread access to their print collections. Shared print work also aims to decrease duplication of titles across many collections, resulting in more manageable collection sizes for participating members. See also Wikipedia - Collective Collections.

https://sharedprint.org/best-practices/shared-print-glossary/#shared-print

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The Beginnings of Resource Sharing

Samuel Green, 1876

THE LENDING OF BOOKS TO ONE ANOTHER BY LIBRARIES.

WORCESTER, FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY,
Sept. 4, 1876.

To the Editor of the Library Journal:

It would add greatly to the usefulness of our reference libraries if an agreement should be made to lend books to each other for short periods of time. It happens not unfrequently that some book is called for by a reader, or that in looking up the answer to a question a librarian has occasion to use a book which he finds in the catalogue of another library, but which does not belong to his own collection. The book, very likely, is one that can be replaced if lost. But it would take time to get it through ordinary channels; it might be necessary to send abroad for a copy or to wait to pick up one, if the book is scarce. In such a case it would be a great convenience to be able to borrow a book for a few days.

The Boston Public Library allows students

https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=umn.31951p010233816&seq=39

Bunford Samuel, 1892

MUTUAL BOOK LENDING BETWEEN LIBRARIES.

RIDGWAY LIBRARY, PHILA.

SOME hesitation must be felt in developing a new idea. It may be an old one, and if not, it will be discounted for that reason. But why should not libraries enter into an agreement in virtue of which books may be furnished by any institution, a party to said agreement (of course under its own rules as to loaning books), upon request through another, for use within (or for loan by) the latter?

The advantages accruing to students (for the general or novel reader would scarcely extend its limits unduly) by such an arrangement need hardly be recapitulated, while any inherent impracticability is by no means so obvious. The institution making request guarantees safe return of book and at the same time protects itself by agreement with individual on whose behalf book is borrowed; and the latter pays cost of transmission, etc., and any charge that the requisitioned institution is accustomed to make for use of its books, or that may be otherwise agreed upon. Thus the facilities of students would be very greatly enlarged, while each institution would benefit in proportion to the demands made upon it.

Rarities, etc., could be reserved from the operation of the agreement. But it is not necessary here to go into a worked-out detail. I would ask any librarian to whom scheme may commend itself to communicate with writer.

BUNFORD SAMUEL.

[The lending of books between American libraries is not unexampled. Harvard College Library and the Boston Athenæum have often

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The Beginnings of Resource Sharing

Ernest C. Richardson, 1899

to other cities. But the best precedent of all is the municipal library in a large city. It is a central library with a number of branches. These branches contain the books often called for, but for less used books they depend on the central library, books being sent from one to another by express wagon, horse car, or messenger, as the case may be. It would be folly for every branch library to attempt to keep everything in stock. They depend therefore on a single library which lends to them the books that they do not keep in stock, and supplements their stock. Applying this to our problem, we note that a lending library of high class books supplementing the work of existing libraat hand in the libraries which are now designated government depositories.

The establishment of such a library would have many consequences important to the welfare of the United States. These would include at the very least; 1) the direct encouragement of scientific research, which is of prime importance for national progress in practical or in fine arts; 2) a large national economy in stopping unnecessary duplication of purchases; 3) improvement of existing libraries through removing the strain of competition and of effort to cover the whole ground

So practical and vital a matter in so practical a land will not wait long for its realization.

https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=mdp.39015036898461&seq=189

ReCAP's Early Vision

Library Advisory Group

Ms. Trainer reported briefly on the "agenda" that the member libraries are pursuing including work on collaborate collection development and deduping, the table of contents pilot, development of a virtual, joint, online catalog for all three institutions, inter-library-loan out of ReCAP rather than from campuses for ReCAP held materials, and the program for Modules 5, 6, and 7.

ReCAP Board Minutes, December 2003

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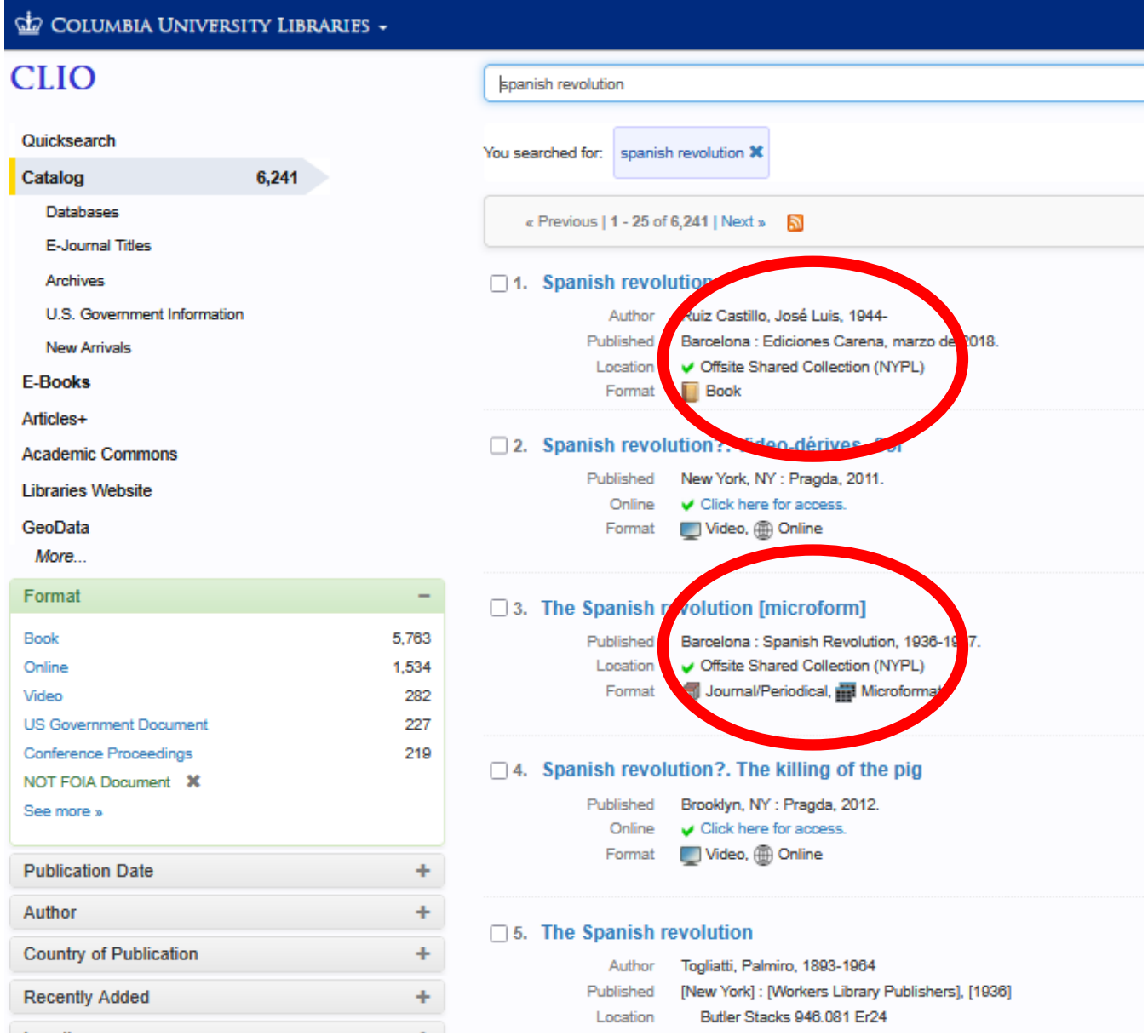
ReCAP's Vision Realized



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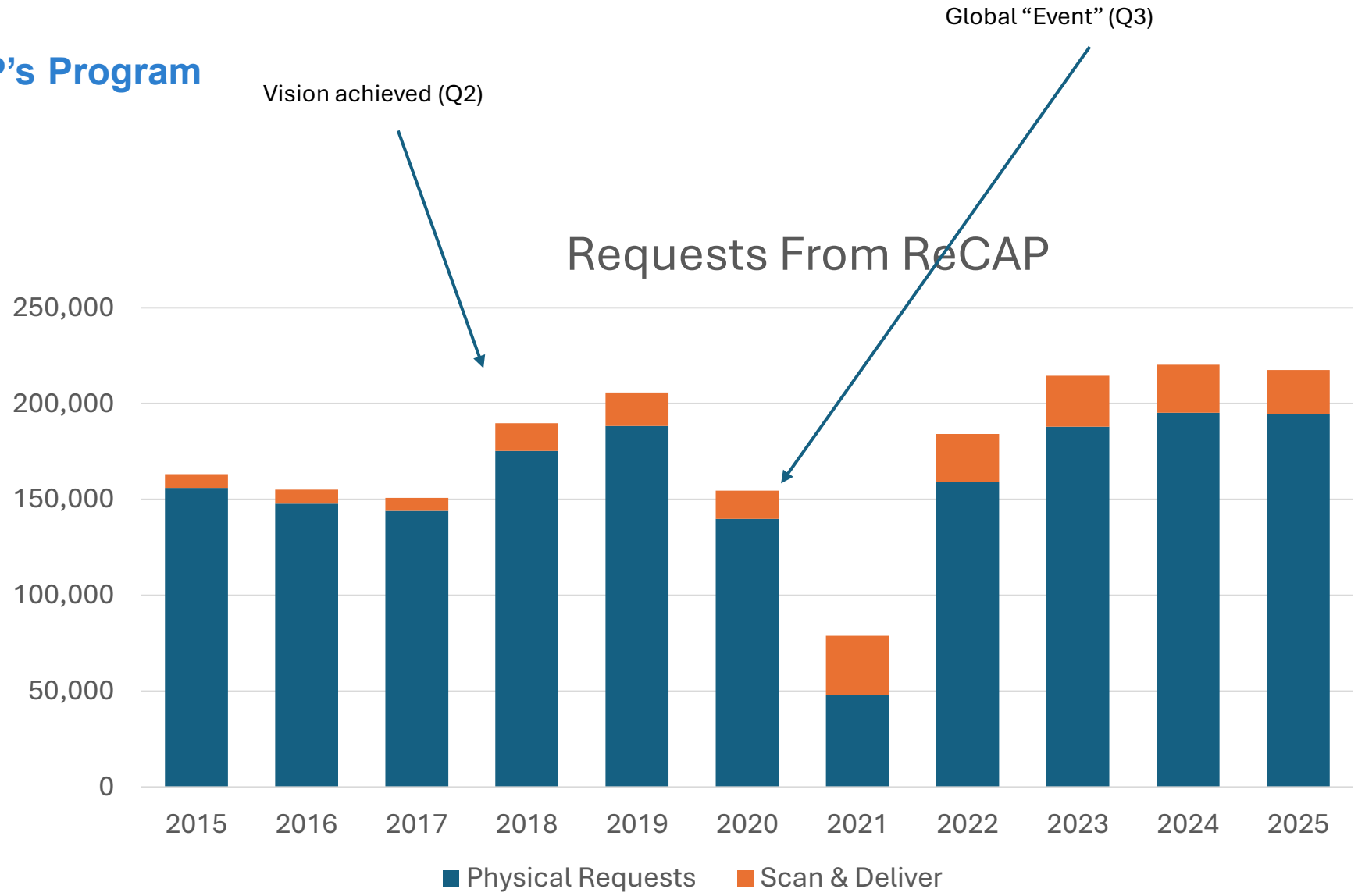
Items Available via ReCAP's Program (today)

Impact of ReCAP's Program



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Unintended Consequences

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Football_helmet

Everything Not Saved Will be Lost (C&RL, Nov. 2019)

Call to arms

Policy
- Issues complicating a commitment to preserve
- Decisions to retain or withdraw holdings
- Memoranda of understanding in shared print programs
- Record quality & accuracy

Variables
- Cataloging & validation
- Loss
- Current condition of materials
- Storage environment

The Goal
- How many copies should be kept

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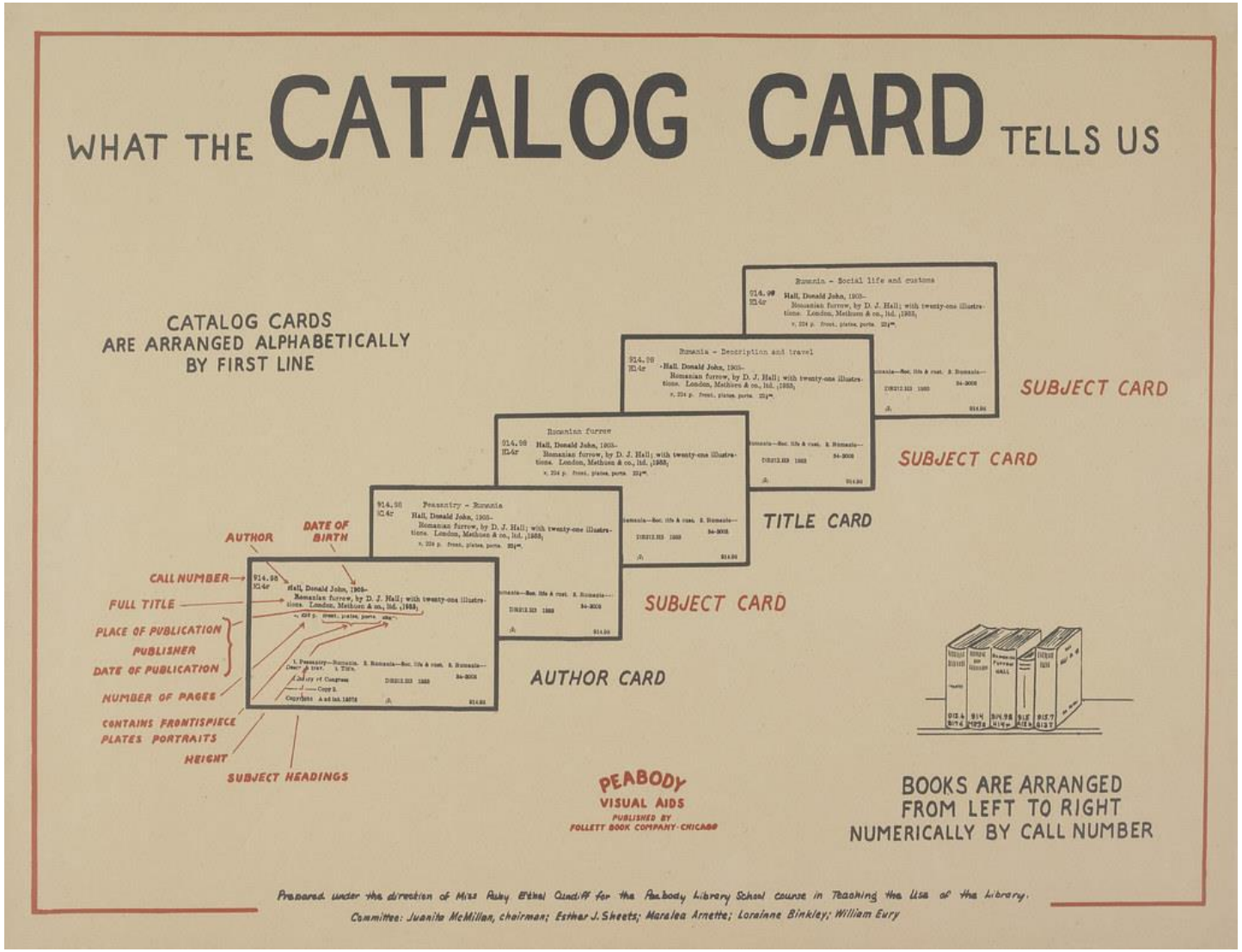
Variable 1: On-shelf probability

Draft value: 97% Stacks
100% Storage

Pub. Date	% Present
<1800	91.30%
1800-1810	94.74%
1811-1820	92.59%
1821-1830	98.13%
1831-1840	96.67%
1841-1850	95.75%
1851-1860	97.09%
1861-1870	97.35%
1871-1880	97.97%
1881-1890	97.34%
1891-1900	97.61%
1901-1910	96.94%
1911-1920	97.45%
1921-1930	97.70%
1931-1940	96.97%
1941-1950	96.92%
1951-1960	97.01%
1961-1970	97.07%
1971-1980	97.21%

Variable 2: Bibliographic inaccuracy

Draft value: 0.1% Stacks
0% Storage



https://www.flickr.com/photos/68103485@N05/6197933357

Assessing Bibliographic Inaccuracy as a Contributing Factor for Unintended Loss in Shared Print Monograph Programs (C&RL, Nov 2024)

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Variable 3: Annual loss rate

Draft value: 0.01% Stacks
0% Storage

https://pixabay.com/photos/seasons-4-seasons-four-seasons-5880236/

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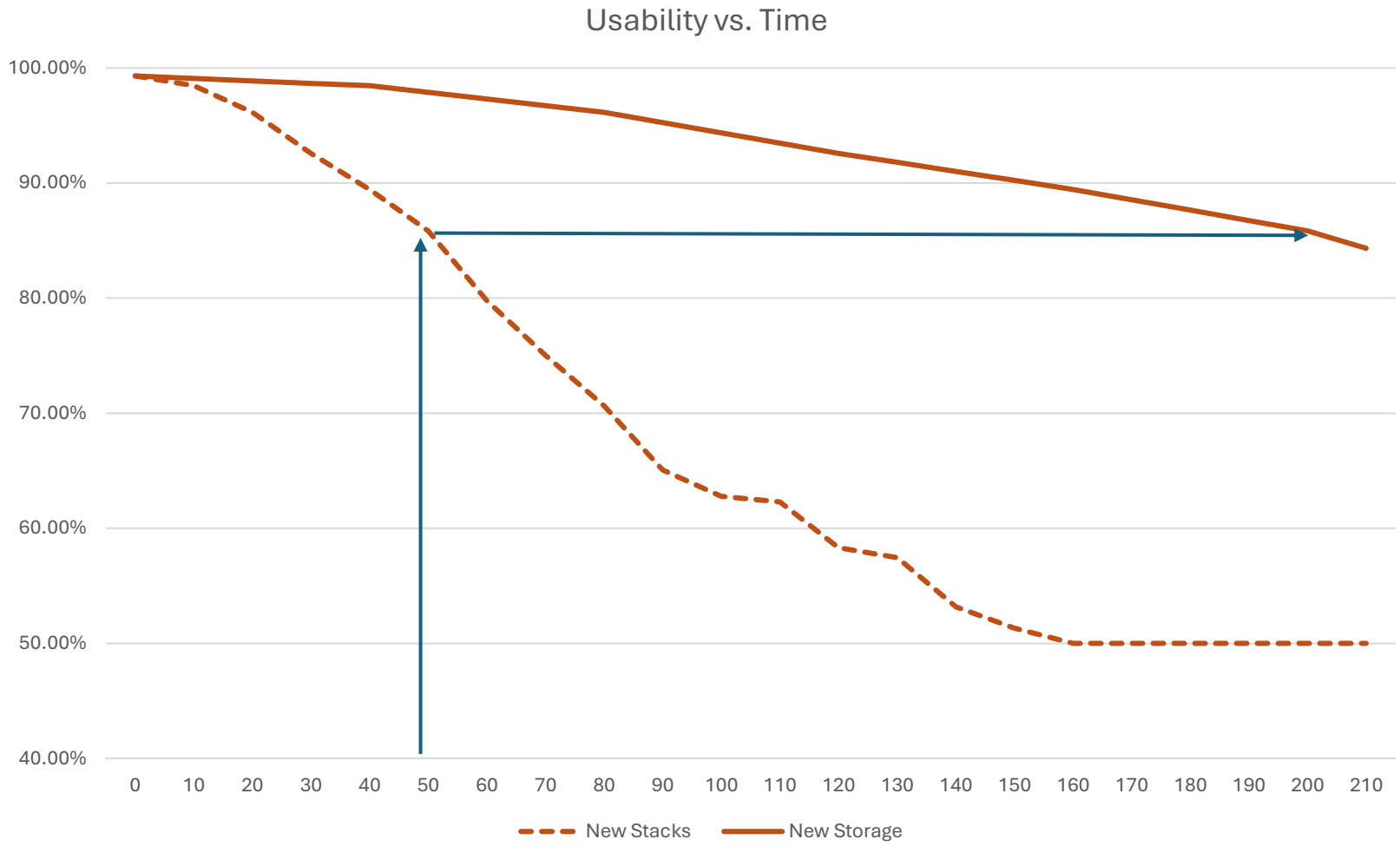
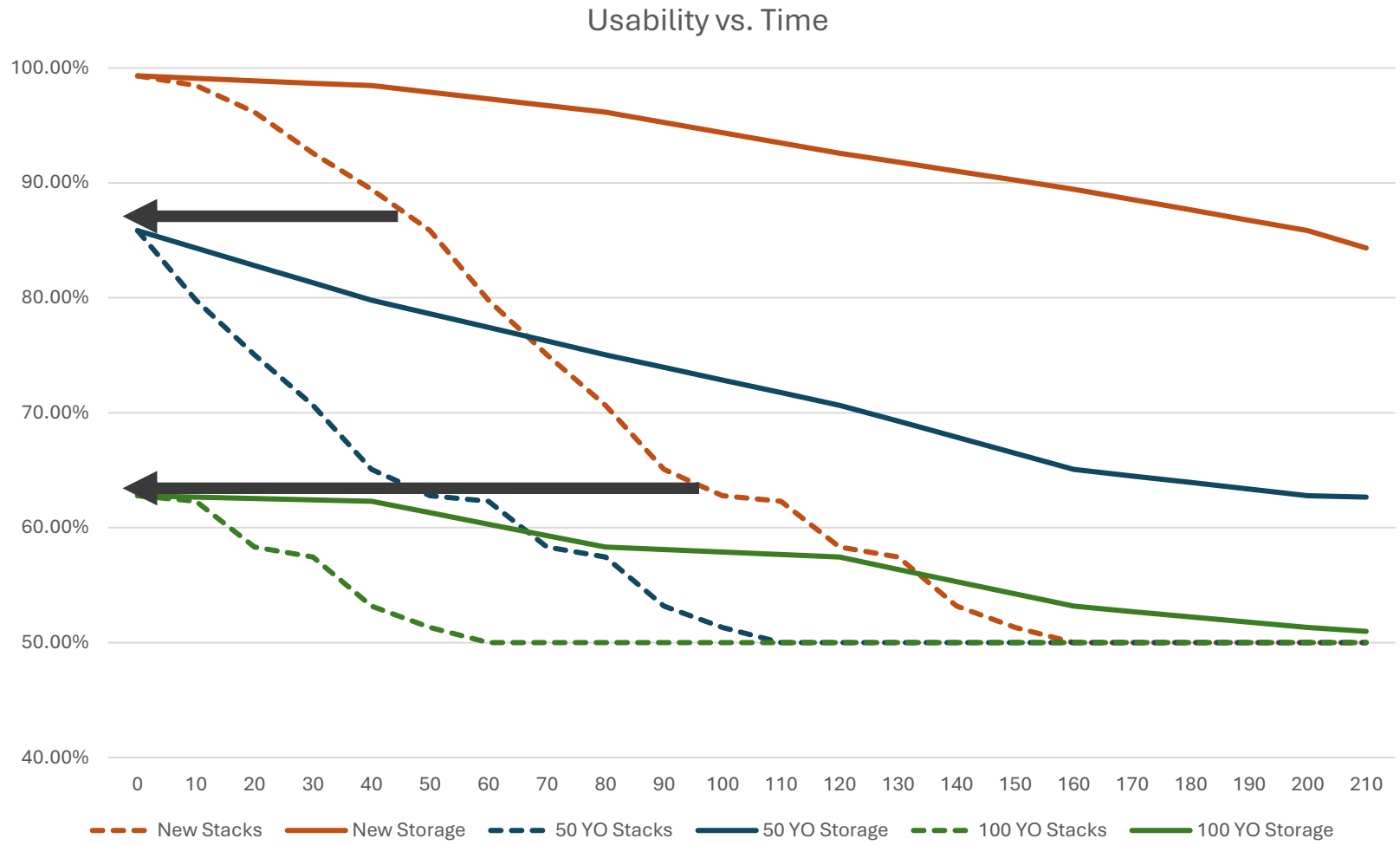
Variable 4: Physical Deterioration Over Time



Variable 4: Physical Deterioration Over Time



Chance That Trait Affects Randomly Pulled Samples

$$\left\{\text{Chance that entire sample exhibits trai}\right\} = x^{y}$$

X = trait rate

Y = number of items in sample

Chance That Trait Affects Randomly Pulled Samples

$$.03^{1}=.03$$

All items will have the same issue in:

3 instances of every 100 titles

Chance That Trait Affects Randomly Pulled Samples

$$.03^2 = .0009$$

All items will have the same issue in:

9 instances of every 10,000 titles

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Chance That Trait Affects Randomly Pulled Samples

$$.03^5 = .000000024$$

All items will have the same issue in:

2.4 instances of every 100 mil titles

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Combining Variables

ME!

(probably of neither being 6’ nor having blue eyes)

$$P = P1 * P2$$

$$1.5\% = 15\% * 10\ \%$$

$$76.5\% = (1 - 15\%) * (1 - 10\%)$$

P = Probability of not being 6’ and not having blue eyes

P1 = Probability of not being 6’ (15%)

P2 = Probability of not having blue eyes (10%)

Probability one item is usable

$$p_{iT} = \alpha \cdot (1 - \beta) \cdot [(1 - \gamma)^T] \, u_{iT}$$

p_{iT} = the probability that any given copy of type i exists and is usable at time

α = on-shelf probability;

β = bibliographic inaccuracy rate;

γ = annual loss rate;

T = retention horizon.

u_{iT} = probability that any given copy of a book of type i is usable at time T

Probability that at least one item in group is usable

$$P1 = (1 - [(1 - p_{1T})^{n_1}] \cdot [(1 - p_{2T})^{n_2}] \cdots [(1 - p_{NT})^{n_N}])$$

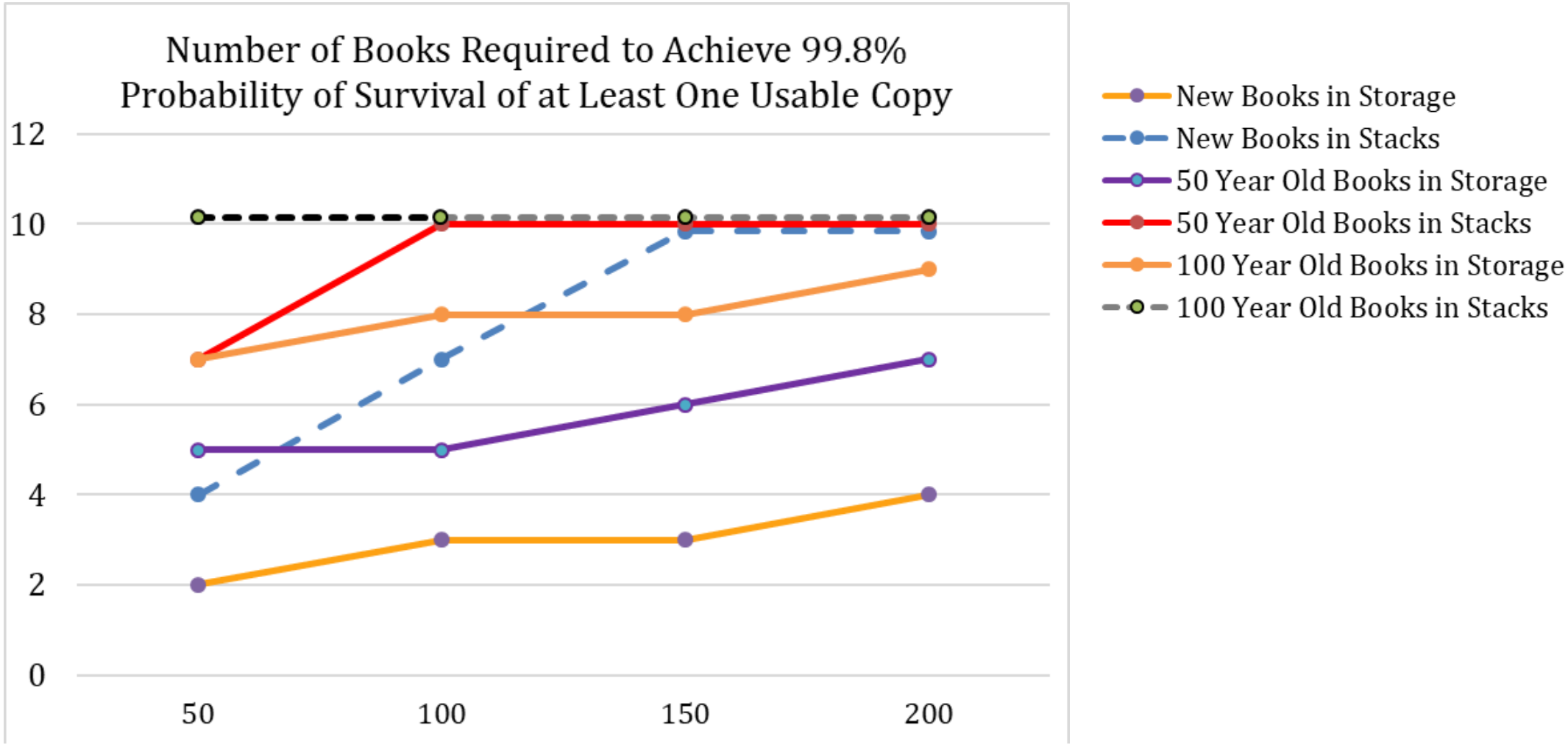
P1 = probability that at least one usable copy remains at the end of a specified time horizon

n_i = number of copies of type i;

N = number of types;

p_{iT} = the probability that any given copy of type i exists and is usable at time

Number of copies needed



A Model to Determine Optimal Numbers of Monograph Copies for Preservation in Shared Print Collections (C&RL, Sept. 2023)

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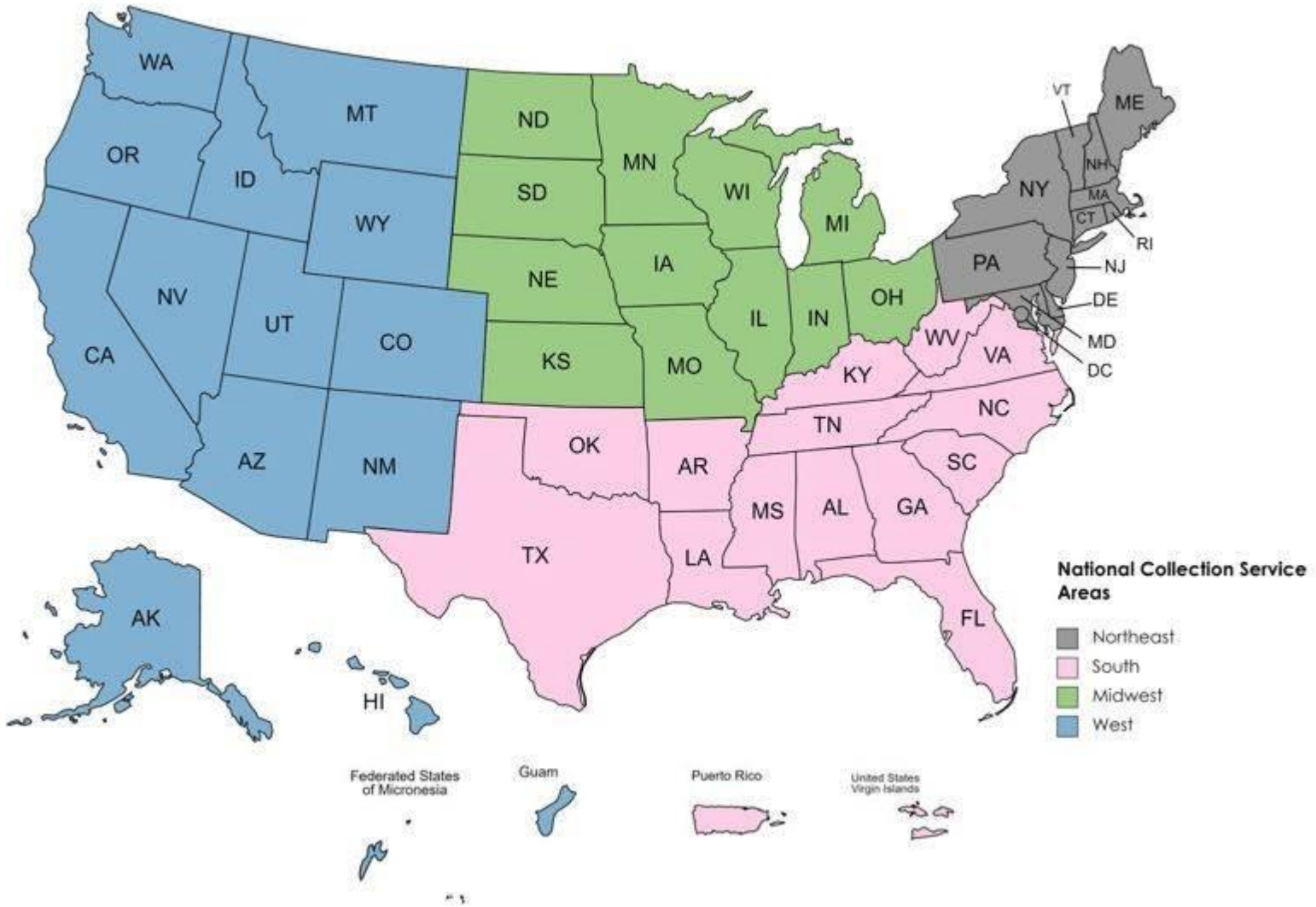
The Dream



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