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North Carolina's 33 Federal Depositories have been weeding printed government documents at an increasing rate. This paper details an online survey of librarians in charge of federal documents in North Carolina libraries, designed to investigate some of the factors affecting weeding in government document collections. The respondents reported increases in weeding over the past two years, with additional increases expected over the next five years. Reasons for weeding include decreasing available space, decreasing budgets for government document employees, and decreasing reliance on printed materials.

Headings:

College and university libraries – Space problems

Depository libraries - Finance

Depository libraries – North Carolina

Discarding of books, periodicals, etc.

Government publications – Conservation and restoration

Surveys – Depository libraries

Surveys – Documents librarians

Surveys – Space problems of libraries

TRENDS IN LIBRARIES' RETENTION AND WEEDING OF GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS

by
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Approved by

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INTRODUCTION

The weeding of North Carolina's federal documents is a story that has not been told. Over a two-year period, institutions across the state have weeded as much as 900 boxes. In the 1990s, North Carolina libraries wishing to weed federal government documents from their collections often sent out five-page needs and offers lists of materials they wished to discard from the collection. In 2008 and 2009, individual institutions sometimes were sending 100-page lists.

North Carolina's 33 Federal Depositories have been weeding printed government documents at an increasing rate. Institutions across the country are investing time and money into efforts to reduce parts of their printed government document collections. Lack of space is an obvious likely culprit, but staffing issues and a shift to electronic resources also may be huge factors. This study examines what things are changing in libraries that are making it necessary to weed government documents at an increasing rate.

A few things are important to mention about the topic of weeding in depositories. Reducing a print collection is not a bad thing. Depositories *should* weed regularly, especially when they have extraordinary issues with space. Before 2007, some North Carolina libraries had not reviewed their collections in far too long. On which documents to discard, librarians thoughtfully consider things like community needs, patron characteristics,

usage patterns, and the availability of official substitutions. Weeding is most often necessary and appropriate for libraries' needs.

Discarding a document does not mean that the library is eliminating options for patrons. The FDLP is a redundant depository system. The regional depository will retain a copy of a document discarded by a depository. In addition, other states have the same system, leaving open the possibility for interlibrary loan. If a depository does indeed discard the document, it is quite likely that another library will acquire it from them. The process of weeding does not mean that documents end up without a home; it may just be a reassignment.

The questions that the study sets out to address are:

- What is happening to the available space for government document collections?
- What are the trends in the costs of maintaining government documents and staffing the collection?
- Are budgets sufficient for maintaining government documents and staffing the collection?
- What is happening with overall use of printed government information?
- Is the use of electronic resources for government information increasing?
- Are library costs of electronic resources and technology related to government information increasing?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Literature on the weeding of government documents addresses many facets of the state of libraries. Available or shrinking space is a common starting place for the need for weeding procedures. Library renovations necessitate weeding at many academic and public libraries. Weeding became necessary for this reason at the University of Toledo and Monmouth University. Due to weeding criteria in these cases, preservation practices are an important focal point of retention assessment. There is a changing expense structure for government information at places like Johns Hopkins University. The use of print in government information versus online sources is the subject of a study of citations at Mississippi State University and two online courses at Weber State University and the University of Utah. Several studies on government information available through electronic resources tell the story of the online alternative to print.

Mary Augusta Thomas (2000) discusses available space. Specifically, she discusses a change in library design as libraries acquire computers and digital products. Electronic resources have influenced the speed at which publishers issue print resources. Libraries continue to acquire print materials, but electronic resources cut into that budget. Libraries are embracing more document formats than before, resulting in space issues.

Thomas commences with a history lesson. Paper-centered libraries designed their layout around stacks. The stacks were rectangular and reading areas were often adjacent to the stacks. Catalog terminals presented the first computer invaders of library space. They often ended up wherever librarians could fit them. Next the card catalogs disap-

peared and computer labs sprouted. Computers are frequently positioned in many different areas of today's libraries. The question is what the next innovation will be and how librarians will implement it. Unlike in past decades, today's library designs are meant to be changeable and flexible.

Thomas presents two design models. The first is one of increased electronic access and low reliance on the print collection. When electronic access is the focal point, a constant expansion of physical space and budget becomes necessary to accommodate the technology. The second model is one of less electronic access and high reliance on the print collection. This model encourages patrons to use computers as a reference tool and spend less time on computers as they would have in the alternative model. Academic libraries in 2000 were more likely to use this second model, but the first model has become the popular way to plan a new library.

Thomas discusses the reference area's use of space as technologies change. Computing space, labs, and group study areas are common examples. As more and more electronic resources are introduced in the reference area, there is less space available for print collections. This results in prior parts of the reference print collection moving to the stacks for circulating use or being weeded from the library. Technology is one of the reasons why government document collections have faced a lack of designated space in recent years.

Alice Crosetto, Laura Kinner, and Lucy Duhon (2008) discuss physical space at the University of Toledo. During a renovation project, librarians assessed and performed weeding in the general reference and circulating collections (not only government docu-

ments). When assessing the reference collection, they based their retention decisions on the following criteria: currency of material, duplication of content, suitability for reference use, application to curricula, physical condition, and age. There are many things to consider during a weeding project, and the authors present an exemplary model for evaluating a reference collection. Their method also carries over to government document retention almost seamlessly.

Eleonora Dubicki (2008) discusses, from an example from her time at Monmouth University, how librarians can overcome the discomfort of weeding. Librarians avoid weeding due to “their desire to maintain the size of the collection, lack of time, lack of experience, and of course, the belief that a book may be needed sometime in the future” (Dubicki, 2008, p. 132). *All* library employees participated in the massive, two-year project to make room for collection space after the addition of an instructional lab, office space, and an information commons area.

Criteria for weeding included no circulation since 1983 (1993 for science), physical damage, and duplication. Exceptions included books in a series, valuable books, and books by important authors. Additional exceptions included books about African Americans, Native Americans, and women’s history. These criteria also fit very well with the criteria of the aforementioned weeding project at the University of Toledo.

William Sleeman (2002) discusses problems of physical condition and age with government information materials. He writes about the way to identify documents in need of preservation measures. In addition to an evaluation of physical condition and age, it is also necessary to evaluate how unique its content is and how important its content

will be for users in the future. There are many rare government materials in libraries, many of which are not in library catalogs. Also, there are common materials that will continue to be in demand. Sleeman's example is the Iran Contra hearings. These support the idea that libraries need available funds for the preservation of specific areas of government information.

J. B. McCraw (1999) discusses two outcome variables: (1) available funds for maintaining government documents and staffing a collection and (2) library costs of electronic resources and technology related to government information. McCraw was a government documents online researcher for *Congressional Quarterly* and *US News & World Report*. The article discusses the Government Printing Office's termination of some printed items. McCraw boldly states that "in the near future, all hard copy will be superseded by electronic information" (McCraw, 1999, p. 108).

McCraw's study deals with Johns Hopkins University in Maryland. At JHU, the 1998 materials budget already had 42% allocated to electronic products. McCraw's article deals with the landscape of 1999, and there is an acknowledgement that it will take at least a decade to shift away from print and microforms in government resources. The stance of the article is that computers will have to be pushed as the primary access point for the next generation of researchers to justify library costs for electronic technology related to government information. After all, the print alternative requires no expensive electronic devices.

For the article, McCraw interviewed the Head of Government Publications at JHU, Jim Gillispie. Gillispie justified electronic access to government information by

saying it can take a small institution and put it on the same level as a large one.

McCraw's criticism of this is that people will not be able to access the information properly without training, bibliographic control, finding aids, and appropriate technologies.

McCraw shares opinions based on experiences as a government information researcher. Government vocabulary is confusing, even to experts. Searching government websites is often counterintuitive, with users needing to know acronyms and scientific terminology. Training users to deal with government information is necessary. Small libraries, McCraw explains, will be at a disadvantage in assisting patrons because government documents are one more problematic, complicated electronic resource on the librarian's plate (in addition to complex commercial databases like LexisNexis, Dialog, et cetera).

McCraw then questioned government documents librarians in the most popular listserv, GovDocs-L. Responses on the biggest budgetary problems with electronic government resources included patron training, printer paper, toner, and hardware. Training came up most recurrently; with one participant comparing training to showing people in the early 1900s how to operate automobiles. Another participant brought up remote access to government information. Libraries provide this, but then have to provide support for patrons who have difficulty navigating the resources.

Some government information that is available online may not stay available. Valerie D. Glenn (2007) discusses electronic resources and government information. She talks about the danger of online government information disappearing forever. If there were a printed version, there would be no danger. There are, however, an increasing

number of purely web-published documents. The CyberCemetery at the University of North Texas has archived documents of federal agencies that no longer exist. The UCLA Online Campaign Literature Archive has archived campaign literature related to the Los Angeles area. The California Digital Library has collected online material that involves political parties in the Middle East at Archive-It.org's Middle East Political Web. These projects serve to remind us that electronic access to government information may not be permanent. There is an ethereal nature to web-based publication, even when it is government-related.

Newkirk Barnes (2006) discusses the overall use of printed government information. It is a citation analysis of 275 of Mississippi State University's 2000-2004 dissertations. Many citation analyses have looked at the use of government sources through the years, but newer ones like this one by Barnes shed light on the impact of electronic access to printed government document use.

Barnes lays out the methodology of the study very clearly. The results show usage from seven different colleges within MSU and how things changed within the five years. Agriculture and Life Sciences showed 84 print sources versus 48 web sources. Arts and Sciences showed 221 print versus only 31 web. Education showed 77 print versus 66 web. Engineering showed 79 print versus 21 web. The College of Forest Resources showed 51 print versus only seven web. The total was 522 print versus 182 web with no substantial web increases in the five-year span. In fact overall government publication citations decreased over the span, despite the growing number of resources on the Internet.

Barnes gives many possible explanations for the results and they are very thoughtful. Doctoral students may not have cited electronic resources because they felt they would not have persistent links. Education students frequently used the web format, but many of them are a part of a distance education program. Still, the implication is that students are not citing web resources from the United States Government to their full potential.

Amy Brunvand and Tatiana Pashkova-Balkenhol (2008) discuss the use of electronic resources for government information. They open with another citation analysis literature review, this time including many disciplines from 1994-2005.

The study asked students in an online information literacy course at Weber State University and an online communications course at the University of Utah to write an annotated bibliography for a self-selected research question. Each student picked one reference tool, one book, two articles, and two websites. The results of the study showed elements of 194 bibliographies from 2003-2006. Ten percent of all sources were government sources, and 84.5 percent of these were federal government sources. They most often used basic search engines to find the government sources, as they detailed their search methods in the assignment. They usually classified their government information sources as websites or, using the more general category, reference tools. Government sources were most often used for topics that concerned physical or mental health.

Brunvand and Pashkova-Balkenhol then discuss the implications of the study as related to undergraduate library instruction. There is a barrier to using government resources in electronic formats. Undergraduates do not see them as the ultimate authority

and they have trouble knowing how to fit them into research. Because these were online correspondence classes, there is an indication that there have been missed training opportunities for undergraduates and their use of government resources is not what it should be.

John Carol Bertot and Paul T. Jaeger (2008) discuss library costs of electronic resources and technology related to government information. The authors recommend information and service needs assessment on behalf of the government. They recommend that the government look into what technologies citizens need and prefer. They recommend that the government assess information and technology literacy. They don't end there; they also recommend usability, functionality, accessibility, and satisfaction assessment.

Bertot and Jaeger are concerned that government information online has a lack of quality control and a lack of assessment to measure service quality. The argument is that it will cost more to correct e-government mistakes later, so funds should go into studying the citizens' needs now. For example, government employees failed to respond properly after Hurricane Katrina, partially due to difficulty accessing and using e-government. If government employees have trouble, just imagine library patrons...

Literature indicates that library space is changing. Libraries have added group study areas, computer labs, media labs, classrooms, et cetera. Technology and space assignment are influencing government documents collections. When librarians assess materials for weeding, the focus is on duplication of content, application to curricula, physical condition, and age. With government information, it can be especially important to

assess the uniqueness of the content and how important content will be to users in the future. The landscape for government information budgets at libraries has changed. Libraries spend more funds on electronic access to this information than ever before, often leaving government documents librarians to deal with the expenses associated with printer costs, hardware, and added training of patrons and staff. Patron training is highly important, as patrons demonstrated that they were reluctant to cite electronic resources on dissertations from 2000-2004. A similar study found the same sort of results in undergraduate bibliographies from 2003-2006. In more recent studies, researchers look at the nature of the information online and find that the governments' presentation of information may be a significant part of the problem.

METHODOLOGY

There are 33 Federal Depository Libraries in North Carolina; 32 are selective and one is regional. The 32 selective ones must offer any document they wish to discard to the regional, which is the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. The selective libraries include academic, state, and public library collections. Academic libraries include both public and private institutions. Several of the academic and state libraries are law libraries. Each of the 33 librarians in charge of federal document collections was eligible to take the survey. Each of these librarians received two email invitations with a link to the survey (see Appendix A and Appendix B for the invitations). The invitations speci-

fied that the survey was anonymous. A consent form preceded the actual survey (see Appendix C).

The survey polled, at most, one librarian per depository. The intention behind this was to get one official story for each depository. If two employees from a depository took the survey, they may have contradicted each other or made results disproportionate. In those cases where an institution had two separate depositories, both librarians received an email invitation.

The following are the 33 Federal Depository Libraries in North Carolina that may have been represented by survey data:

Appalachian State University Belk Library
Barton College Library
Campbell University Libraries
Catawba College CLB Library
Davidson College Library
Davidson County Public Library System
Duke University Law Library
Duke University Libraries
East Carolina University Libraries
Elon University Belk Library
Elon University Law Library
Fayetteville State University Library
Forsyth County Public Library
Gardner-Webb University Library
North Carolina A&T University
North Carolina Central University Law Library
North Carolina Central University Libraries
North Carolina State University Libraries
North Carolina Supreme Court Library
North Carolina Wesleyan College Library
St. Andrews Presbyterian College Library
State Library of North Carolina

The Public Library of Charlotte & Mecklenberg County
UNC Asheville Ramsey Library
UNC Charlotte Library
UNC Greensboro Libraries
UNC Pembroke Livermore Library
UNC Wilmington Randall Library
UNC-Chapel Hill Law Library
UNC-Chapel Hill Libraries
Wake Forest University Libraries
Wake Forest University Professional Center Library
Western Carolina University Hunter Library

The survey was administered with Qualtrics survey software and contained 24 questions (see Appendix D). There was a combination of closed questions with three options and open questions that asked participants to type in a text box. No questions asked for an institution or library name. The questions were not meant to steer toward a specific problem. They were instead meant to analyze what problems libraries had in common. Qualitative data from the text box responses is where specific and anecdotal data enters the study. In the following section, there is a mixture of quantitative data in graphs and qualitative data in provocative quotes.

Specifically, the survey questions covered several broad categories: *available space, budgets, preservation, collection size, usage, and weeding*. The first three questions addressed available space. Questions 4-6 addressed budgets for employees, and questions 7-11 addressed preservation costs and funding for preservation. No specific budget questions were asked; instead trend analysis questions were asked with respect to funding. Librarians in charge of depository materials are generally knowledgeable about budgets, so their answers take the place of an independent analysis of library budgets. Question 12 was a question about the size of the print collection, which was especially

useful for looking at the responses from the larger collections. Questions 13-14 addressed usage of print documents, while 15-16 addressed usage of documents electronically. The usage questions drew upon librarians' experience with reference questions rather than circulation data, since librarians tend to remember reference questions very well. Questions 17-19 dealt with expenses and budgets for electronic resources and technology. Questions 20-23 addressed weeding from 2007-2009 and 2009-2014. The final question asked for additional comments.

RESULTS

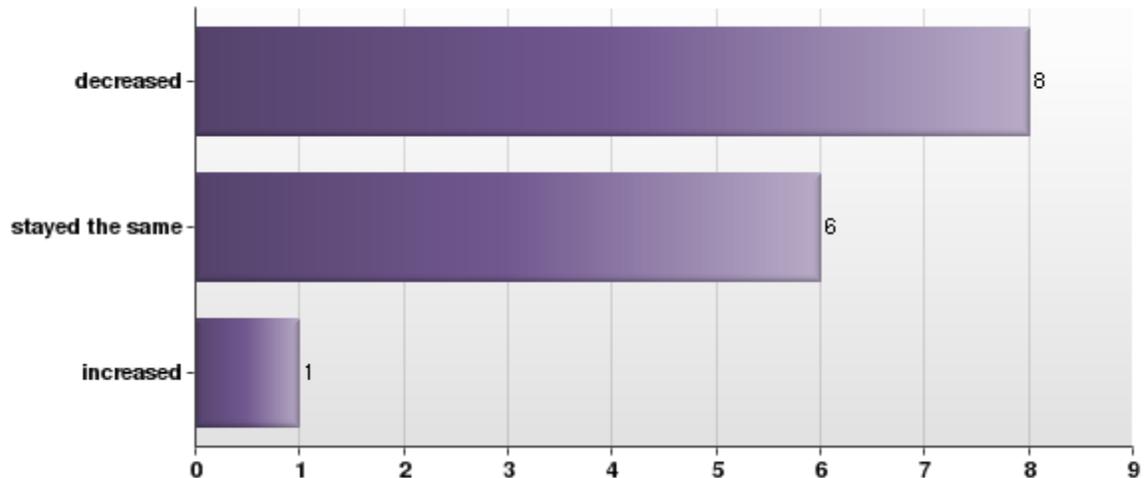
The survey software collected the results from nineteen survey responses. With respect to the 33 invitations, the response rate for the survey was 57.6 percent. The most responses for any question were fifteen.

Available Space

Three questions address the available space for government documents. The first asked participants whether space for government documents in their library was shrinking, staying the same, or growing (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Available Space

Since the beginning of 2007, do you think your library's available space for government documents has:



This indicates that 53% (8 of 15) of respondents felt that available space for government documents decreased from 2007-2009. Almost as many (6 of 15, 40%) felt that space had remained the same. This means that more government information librarians have lost available space than maintained a constant amount of available space. Only one respondent reported an increase in space and this was apparently a library that actually invested in increasing space for documents.

Figure 1 gives only a small glimpse of what may be happening to available space. The follow-up question asked: **what do you think is causing this?** This is an open-ended question that had 13 responses. One response summed up why space concerns may not be a concern at some libraries:

“We have expanded space for other needs, and we have worked to move our holdings to electronic formats and print that will be used.”

Many other responses, however, indicated severe problems with space. Notice in the following what types of library spaces are taking the place of government document areas. It is not just the intrusion of the circulating collection that pushes government documents out of their homes:

“Our library was renovated in 2007 and several features were added: an information commons, a teaching lab, offices for staff and study rooms for patrons. No additional space was added so that meant we had less space for our collections. We have had to weed all collections.”

“We are having an increasing need for other types of spaces (group study, more archival space) and increased emphasis on digital format. This is causing space for all print collections (which aren't unique) to be decreased.”

“Increased online access. Drop-off in use of physical collection. More pressing needs for use of space (e. g. , need for collaborative learning spaces, learning commons, increased need for computing space).”

“Decreased items in paper format with increase in electronic formats. My library has grave space issues.”

“The library is running out of space for the regular collection and for the documents collection. The Library is about 35 years old and running out of space...”

Two respondents brought up a potentially negative relationship between the administration and the government documents collection. These responses make one think that government documents librarians are finding themselves in an uncomfortable position:

“Partly it's just that the collection grows and the space doesn't grow to match the space needs. Partly it's that the library administration doesn't place a high value

on gov docs and so when things get crowded, the gov docs collection has the lowest priority in claiming space.”

“Admin doesn't place a high value on depository materials.”

The previous questions addressed the trend of the collection's available space shrinking or growing. There is an important underlying question that the next question addressed: **is your library's space for government documents sufficient?** This does not address a trend, but instead a subjective judgment by the participant. Twelve of fifteen respondents indicated yes:

“For about the next 3-5 yrs.”

“As it is now, yes but it's getting more and more crowded.”

“Yes. The print collection has been weeded in favor of digital formats and has been decreasing in size.”

“Yes, unless we shift to more paper documents”

“Yes, but we have a fairly small collection, and we have changed holdings to electronic formats where possible.”

“Yes as we transition to electronic docs we'll continue to get less print.”

Three respondents indicated that there was not sufficient space in their libraries:

“No. We currently have some gov. documents in our archives area and some in an area badly needed for books for the general circulating collection.”

“The library's space overall is insufficient. Government Documents are not our focus.”

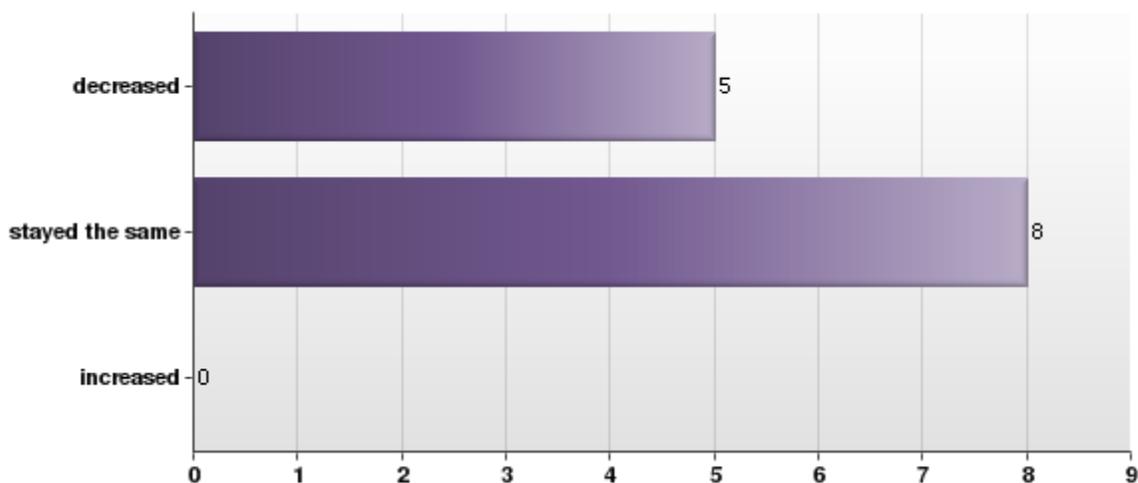
There are several important points about available space that these answers indicate. Librarians in the study, more often than not, have noticed that available space for government documents in their libraries is decreasing. Often this is not simply because library shelf space is running out, but because learning commons, group study, computing space, labs, et cetera are getting space that previously went to government documents. These are administrative decisions, and this explains why librarians bring up their administrations when asked about space issues.

Budgets

An initial question related to budget issues deals with the amount of money each library has for government document employees. Respondents chose whether the budget for employees was shrinking, staying the same, or growing (see Figure 2).

Figure 2: Budget for Employees

Since the beginning of 2007, do you think your library's budget for employees that deal with government documents has:



Thirty-eight percent (5 of 13) of respondents indicated a decrease in the budget for employees, while the remaining 62% indicated that the budget has not changed. A follow-up question asked: **what do you think is causing this?**

Of the eleven responses to the follow-up, two directly blamed the economy. The economic climate in North Carolina certainly is not unique in 2009. One respondent discussed the state of North Carolina and 2008-2009 repercussions from the State Legislature:

“State Budget caused assistant position freezing.”

One respondent addressed the library administration:

“The library administration (including the department head) see other areas as having a greater need for staff positions that were previously assigned to gov docs.”

On the other hand, one respondent may have helped justify actions by the library administration:

“Decreased use. Lesser priority for library. Increased access to online information - less need to receive, handle, process, and catalog physical items.”

While the previous questions addressed trends with the budget for employees, the next follow-up addressed whether the funds were sufficient. It asked participants: **is the budget for employees sufficient?** A clear *yes* was a common answer, but 6 of the 14 respondents thought the answer was *no*:

“No. Critical maintenance on the collection is not getting done because of too few staff.”

“No. More funds would help us manage the collection.”

“Librarians receive adequate compensation. Library staff don't.”

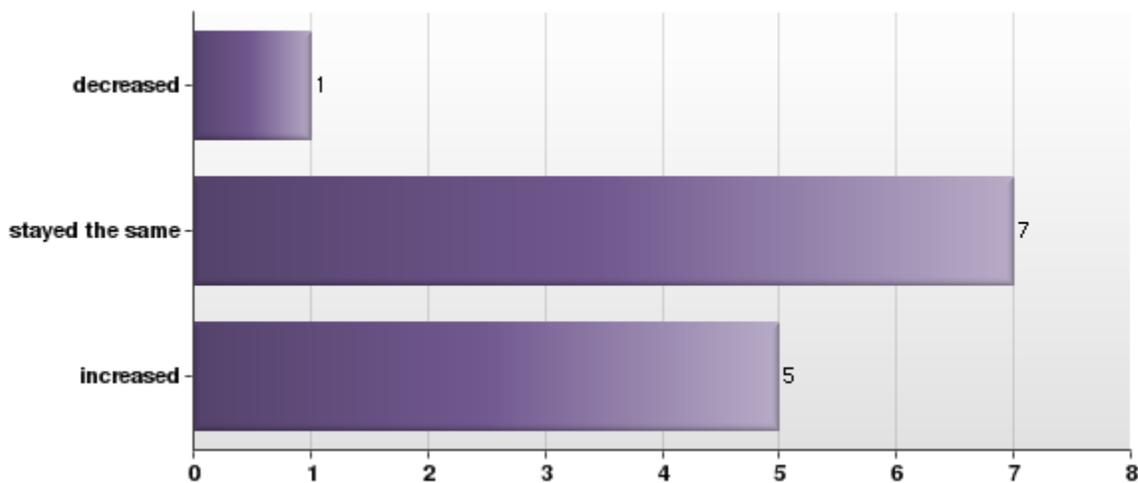
No respondents indicated an increase in the budget for employees and several discussed a decreasing budget. When there are fewer dollars for employees, collection maintenance can suffer. These budget questions provided a glimpse into whether there are

fewer employees staffing the collection in 2009 than in previous years. It seems that in some libraries, there are indeed fewer employees than in 2007.

Also relevant to the budget is the amount libraries spend for patrons' electronic access to government information. This could allocate enough funds for electronic access that weeding becomes more necessary. The question lumps together electronic resources and technology related to government information access and whether expenses are going down, staying the same, or increasing (see Figure 3).

Figure 3: Electronic Expenses

Since the beginning of 2007, do you think your library's expenses for electronic resources and technology related to government information have:



Only one respondent answered that expenses had decreased. Fifty-four percent (7 of 13) did not notice a change. Thirty-eight percent (5 of 13) acknowledged that expenses were increasing. Because this is an important component of library expense, responses to

why are important. The follow-up question asked: **what do you think is causing this?**

The one respondent that indicated expenses were decreasing stated:

“Other areas get more attention. Genealogy, young adult programming, other flashier databases.”

Among responses that indicated no change in expenses, librarians indicated that information was accessible for reasonable rates with no technological upgrades:

“No real changes in technology. PCs and software have not changed much. No new requirements. Most government information used by students, faculty, and community users is freely available without subscription costs.”

“We don't have the money or staff time at the moment to clean-up the catalog records that have an electronic entry point, which may need to be corrected, changed etc. So the expenses haven't been incurred.”

“Obtaining catalog records through Marcive. Reasonably priced and provides easy access.”

Among those who recognized an increase in expenses, respondents indicated the causes as more computers and higher costs from companies like LexisNexis:

“We have increased the number of computers for students in the library. All are networked, and we allow students to use them for whatever the need, so existing computers provide access if needed. Some of the increase relates to a one-time building addition and may not be continued in the future.”

“Need for additional computers so that more of our students could get to computers to access online information, including government online information.”

“LexisNexis digital.”

“Publishers' fees for service are skyrocketing.”

“We just joined the FDLP and now have costs associated with it.”

A second follow-up asked whether the budget has been adequate during the time period. The question asked: **has your library’s budget for electronic resources and technology related to government information been sufficient?** Seven answered *yes*. Only two answered *no*. One respondent was on the fence:

“Sufficient for demand? Yes, since it seems to be falling. Sufficient for really good, convenient research online? No.”

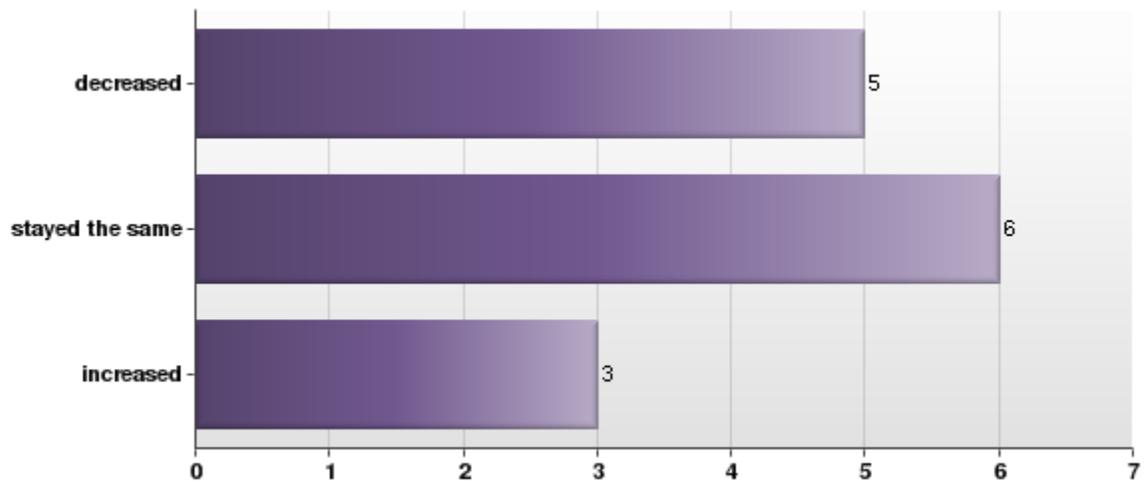
Data from the survey indicates that budgets for employees are either decreasing or staying the same and expenses for electronic resources and technology are either staying the same or increasing. This is putting strain on some budgets. Print collections are of a lesser focus when less money is allocated to maintain them.

Preservation

The unanticipated need to preserve government documents adds unexpected costs to library operations. When budgets cannot keep up, it can create a need to weed government materials that would need treatment at some point down the line. Many federal documents are loose-leaf, so this would seem to be an issue for the older collections. Figure 4 addresses the trends in preservation costs within libraries’ government documents collections.

Figure 4: Preservation Costs

Since the beginning of 2007, do you think the costs of preserving government documents in your library have:



Thirty-six percent (5 of 14) of respondents thought that the costs for preserving government documents in their library had decreased. Forty-three percent (6 of 14) felt that costs had stayed the same. Twenty-one percent (3 of 14) felt that costs had increased. A follow-up question asked: **what do you think is causing this?** The following responses explained a decreasing budget. The trend toward electronic formats came up in two of the answers:

“More emphasis on electronic formats.”

“More electronic; less print.”

An additional response dealt with the economy:

“Since the economy has gone down, so has our budget.”

The following responses indicated why preservation costs had remained the same.

The first makes a good point about escalating binding and reformatting costs:

“Increase in preservation costs - bindery, microfilm, etc.”

“While more and more gov docs are becoming electronic, some of the older hard-copy docs are disintegrating. Plus electronic docs have to be preserved by means of servers and IT support.”

“We still need to provide adequate (albeit less) space for the items of historical, lasting importance we have retained.”

The following explained their increased preservation costs in government documents. They describe two very different library expenses:

“We now need to preserve both tangible and intangible or electronic items. Server cost for the latter can be expensive.”

“Many older documents were not bar-coded, so we have had to spend time and money to identify these and catalog them.”

The following addressed the library administration, indicating that preservation is a low priority:

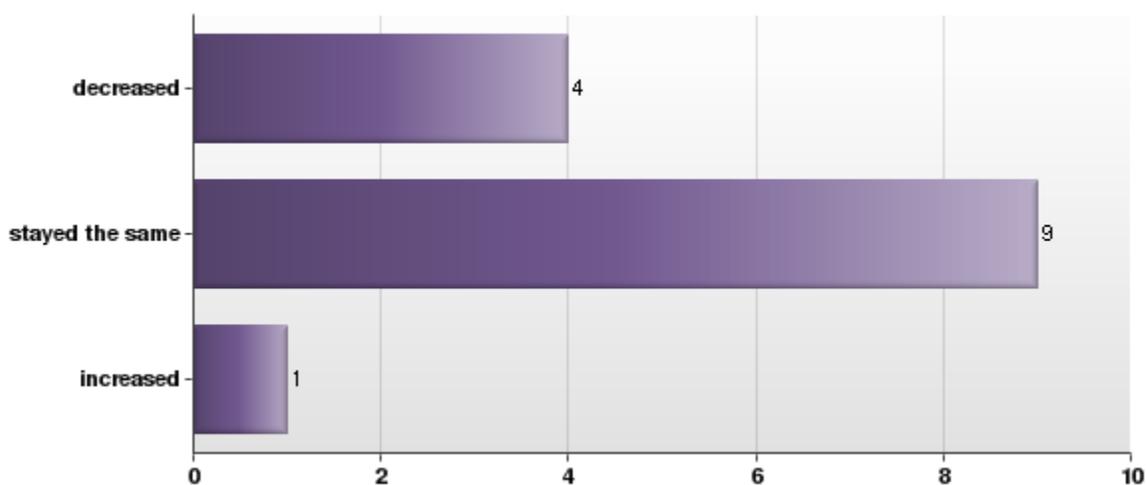
“Very few materials in the system justify preservation according to library director.”

The first two preservation questions were deliberately vague, but librarians made interesting statements about what parts of preservation are proving to be problematic costs. Costs that decreased were not an indication of a decreasing need for preservation, but rather a shift in focus.

With preservation costs having been addressed, it becomes necessary to contrast these with the budget for preserving government materials. The next question asks whether money for preserving government documents has decreased, stayed the same, or increased (see Figure 5).

Figure 5: Preservation Funding

Since the beginning of 2007, do you think your library's funding for preserving government documents has:



Twenty-nine percent (4 of 14) of respondents indicated the budget had decreased. Sixty-four percent (9 of 14) indicated that preservation money had remained the same. One indicated an increase, which was a new depository. A follow-up question asked: **what do you think is causing this?** The following indicated the reasons for decreasing available funds for preservation:

“The economy.”

“Decreases in the library budget.”

“Less to preserve and maintain.”

Others addressed the matter despite no drop in the library budget, indicating no special priorities for government materials:

“No interest.”

“We spend very little on preservation.”

“We don't have much money for preservation.”

“There are other institutional priorities.”

“Our library preserves documents under the same philosophy as the regular collection, so if a book is returned after being circulated that's in bad shape, it gets sent to preservation for appropriate action. But that's the only time preservation action is taken. There's no separate budget for docs preservation.”

While the budgetary trends were addressed by these questions, the following question asked for a subjective judgment on the preservation budget for government documents. It asked: **is the funding for preservation and conservation sufficient?** Seven

of 13 respondents felt the answer was *yes*, but some added that this may change. Four said the funding was insufficient, including:

“Not really. We have had to be more selective in the items we send to the bindery and in the microforms that we purchase. We recycle some storage items from department to department. If they are no longer needed in one area they are recycled to a department, like gov docs. that can use them.”

The following addressed the issue and brought up an important question about the lack of use of government documents:

“Depends on your perspective. In comparison to the general collection, yes. In terms of preserving the docs we have on hand, no. There are many items that likely will fall apart under this benign neglect; but does it matter if no one ever uses them?”

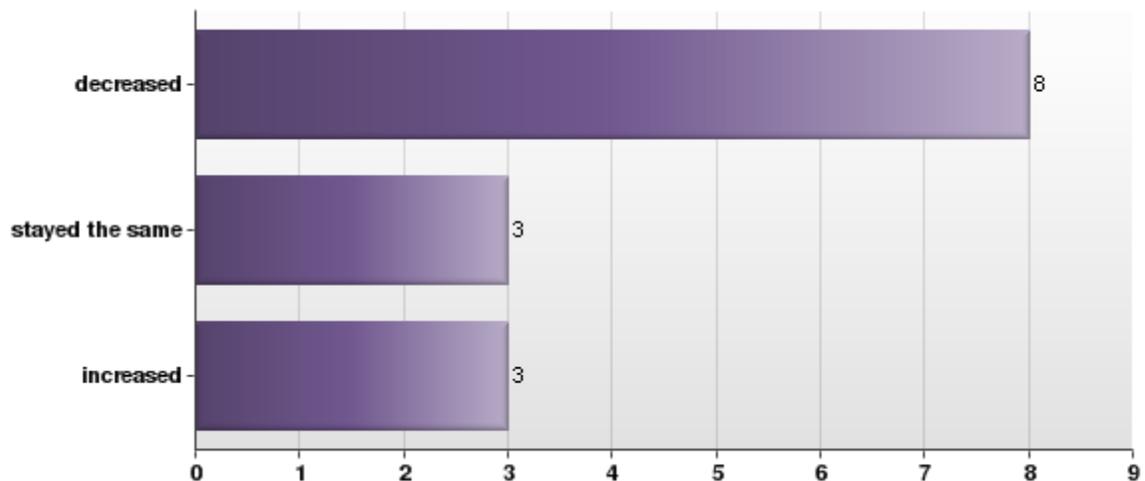
From these answers, we can conclude that the preservation budget does not always carry a huge weight. Still, respondents more often indicated a decrease in the preservation budgets for government documents than an increase.

Usage

The next question asks about the use of printed government documents. Respondents answered whether usage of printed materials has decreased, stayed the same, or increased (see Figure 6).

Figure 6: Usage of Print

Based on reference questions since the beginning of 2007, do you think your library's usage of government documents in print has:



Fifty-seven percent (8 of 14) responded that there was a decrease in the usage of print. Twenty-one percent (3 of 14) answered that the rate was the same. Twenty-one percent (3 of 14) indicated an increase in the use of print. A follow-up question asked: **what trends do you notice with print documents?** The following explained what was occurring in collections that had a decrease in use. Note that, despite no direct mention of electronic access in the question, all but one of the following respondents addresses electronic access:

“Not as many professors assign their students to do research with gov docs in print. Electronic resources (including web sites) have made many of the old assignments far easier.”

“Still used for historical research, but users seem to be finding more recent government publications online.”

“Lack of materials the general public is interested in public library setting, more full text available on internet.”

“Most of our patrons want the documents in electronic format, not print.”

“Students and staff are able to find many of the print documents our students ask for online, and that has been wonderful and very helpful.”

“We have deselected most agency publications.”

“Significant drop-off in usage by both faculty and staff and community members. Increased online access brings with it a new spirit of DIY (Do It Yourself) re-search. Users think they know how to do research and seem satisfied with their own unmediated efforts and results, so they require less from librarians.”

“People want electronic access.”

“Use of documents that not available electronically stayed the same.”

The following comments explained trends in collections with the same amount of use. The first indicates that patrons use print when there is no alternative. The second response indicates that print is less in demand.

“They use the ‘older’ print volumes, or print when there is no online. There are 1 or 2 exceptions. They use the Congressional Record, Census, print. Also the Statistical Abstract...”

“Students prefer electronic formats, and electronic access is much improved, so print are not used as much as they were in the past.”

The following comments explained trends in collections that had an increase in use of printed materials:

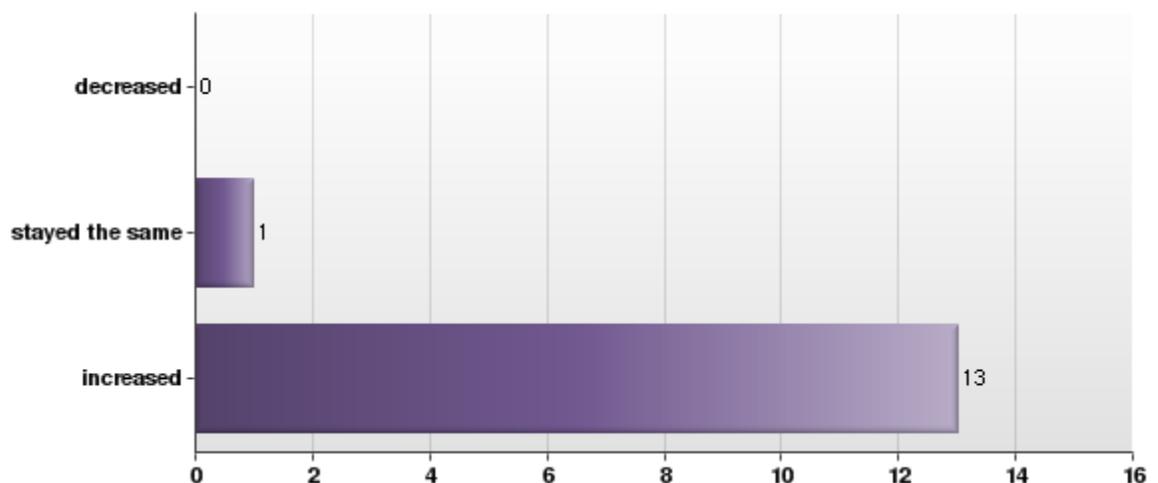
“We are putting more in the catalog, so there has been an increase in trackable usage. The main trend is that people aren't format specific, they just need government information. Whether it comes in print, digital, or microtext is irrelevant.”

“If available, patrons often want both formats - they don't see the p and e conversation as an either/or but a supplemental issue. Patrons are more often wanting both print and electronic, particularly for items that are more than 25 pages in length. And this is from undergraduates as well as older community members.”

The use of printed government materials contrasts with that of materials available electronically. The next survey question asked if the reference-related access of government information via electronic resources and technology has decreased, stayed the same, or increased at the participant's library (see Figure 7).

Figure 7: Usage Electronically

Based on reference questions since the beginning of 2007, do you think your library's usage of government information available through electronic resources and technology has:



Almost all (13 of 14) of the respondents indicated an increase in the accessing of government information through electronic resources and technology between 2007 and

2009. One indicated that there had been no change. The follow-up question asked: **what trends do you notice?** Indicating that there has been no change, the one respondent explained:

“This is a hard question. I think there's a lot more research being done through general databases and government web sites but our library can't afford to buy the big databases like LexisNexis' Congressional Record. So overall, I think the one counterbalances the other.”

The rest of respondents described the trends they had observed:

“More and more are interested in internet only.”

“Most of our patrons want the documents in electronic format, not print. We also have access to a much larger selection of documents in electronic format.”

“Students prefer electronic formats, and electronic access is much improved, so electronic documents are more often used than they were in the past.”

“The increase is based on the answer to the previous question and to the fact that we have several young librarians who are used to searching for most things online and that is where they look first to see whether the information has been made available online. They will check the print collection only if they don't find the information online.”

“Patrons still don't always see that an item has an electronic entry point in our catalog record, but it only takes one time to show them what to look for and then they become more proficient at using the online format. Also, patrons are excited to have a choice of print and electronic. They are keenly interested in how to use the databases to find more material online.”

“More prevalent access to e-resources and Web-based information.”

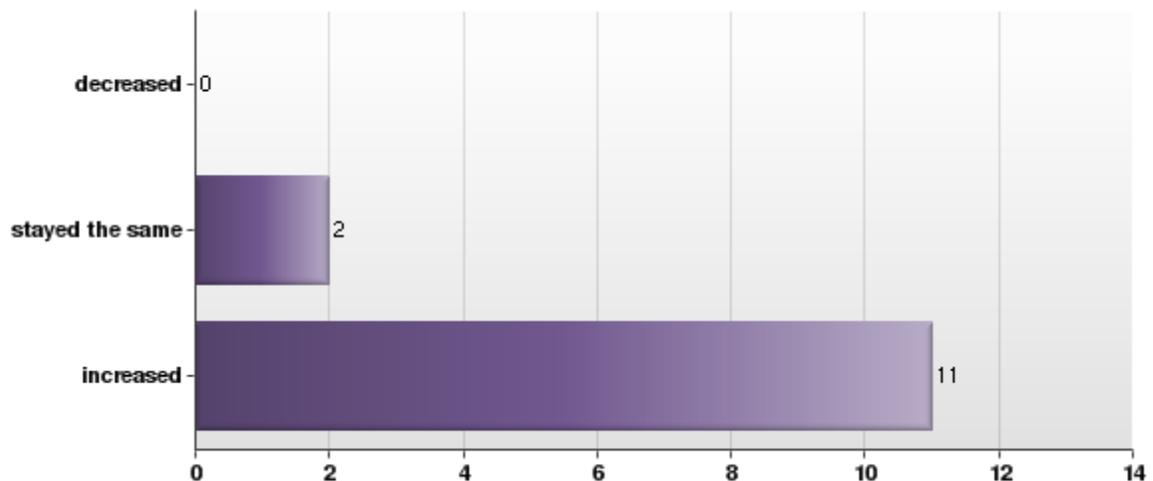
The results for usage questions point to the fact that electronic access is replacing print usage of government documents. The use of government information online is sprouting more than the use of its counterpart on the shelves in North Carolina's 33 depositories. From librarians' assessments, researchers prefer to find government information online, too. Online government information is in demand.

Weeding

The act of weeding is a central topic of the survey's research. It can be a huge part of a government document librarian's day-to-day work or it can be absent from library operations. Several questions asked directly about trends from 2007-2009 and into the future. The first asked about the rate of weeding in government documents and whether it has decreased, stayed the same, or increased (see Figure 8).

Figure 8: Weeding from 2007-2009

Since the beginning of 2007, do you think the rate at which your library has weeded government documents has:



The results from this question were very compelling. No respondents indicated a decrease in the weeding of government documents. Only 15% (2 of 13) indicated that the rate had remained the same. Eighty-five percent (11 of 13) indicated an increase in weeding. A follow-up question asked: **what do you think is causing this?** The answers actually are very similar to the answers to other questions in the survey, but some of the responses follow. Among the two who indicated that the rate of weeding was the same, both indicated that they were not able to weed. One depository was too new to weed and one was the regional depository, which could only discard duplicates and superseded materials. Among the rest of the libraries with increased weeding, most respondents discussed the need for space:

“We need the shelf space for the documents that we use and for the regular collection.”

“All libraries are affected by the economy. Space costs money. Our library decided it could no longer afford to store materials off-site and so we had to weed it all.”

“More and more available electronically. Space needed for other areas.”

“With the library addition, we evaluated our government documents, decided to eliminate microform documents that were not being used, and worked to weed holdings of all print periodicals. We are moving from paper to electronic journals - to save storage space.”

“Lack of shelving space/the ability to retrieve more information online/ the Substitution List for FDLP permanent full-text databases making more information available online that replace tangible versions.”

Two indicated that weeding was undertaken to discard old documents:

“We are finally weeding old print documents that are not within our collection parameters and that duplicate electronically available documents.”

“Older documents had not been weeded in a long time. We chose to use electronic forms instead of paper when available, and to catalog the paper documents we wanted to keep so older documents were weeded.”

Three librarians indicated other interesting reasons for weeding projects:

“Our print collection was not sufficiently weeded in the past. We recently finished a major weeding project.”

“Transition to electronic.”

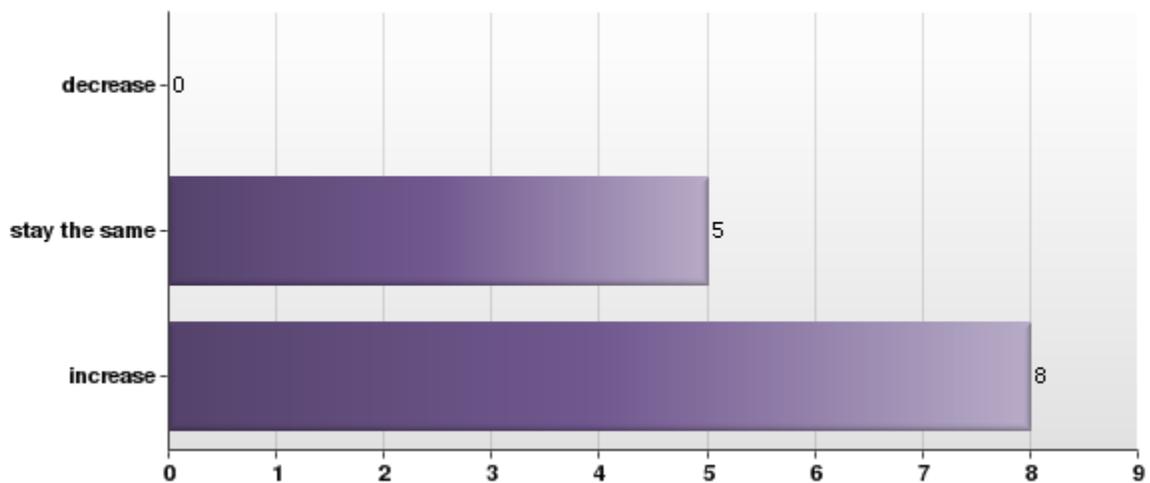
“New depository coordinator.”

The answers varied quite a bit on what brought about increased weeding from 2007-2009. Three items came up the most: (1) lack of space, (2) increase in electronic access, and (3) weeding was overdue. Will these be the reasons behind weeding projects over the next few years?

The next question asked participants to look to the future and make a prediction. The respondents were asked whether weeding would decrease, stay the same, or increase over the next five years (see Figure 9).

Figure 9: Weeding from 2009-2014

Over the next five years, do you think the rate at which your library weeds government documents will:



No respondents indicated that they saw the rate of weeding decreasing over the next five years. Thirty-eight percent (5 of 13) saw the rate staying the same. Sixty-two percent (8 of 13) saw the rate increasing over the next five years. A follow-up question

asked: **why?** Among those who indicated that the rate would stay the same were (1) a new depository that could not weed and (2) a regional depository. Among those who thought the weeding rate would remain constant, some had recently completed weeding projects:

“We completed a major weeding project last year. We will continue to weed print documents in a more consistent manner than we have in the past.”

“We did a major weeded job (cut approx. 40-50% of the physical collection) in 2008.”

“We have a continuous weeding plan that will examine each document with a critical eye towards relevancy and access in other formats.”

Those who thought there would be more weeding of government documents over the next five years commented:

“We need the space and there are more and more documents online.”

“If we retain our depository status at all, I've already been told the documents collection has to become smaller.”

“The depository collection has been a bit neglected for many years due to adequate shelf space and lack of interest on the part of prior coordinators. A full-scale collection review has not been conducted in at least a decade.”

“Space issues and lack of material seen as relevant by general public.”

“People just don't want to dig through print; the access points to those are limited.”

The thinking behind these predictions seems to be that times have changed and it is time to discard certain materials from the collection. In this case, the people making the

predictions are the ones who will have an increased workload. It would be easier in many cases for the librarians *not* to weed more over the next five years, but a lack of resources and a change in researchers' information seeking behavior is what is making it necessary to weed.

A final follow-up question received several responses. It simply asked for additional comments. This came directly after questions about weeding in the survey, so respondents tended to discuss weeding in their answers. All three of the following were from small libraries, as mentioned in each response:

"Small public libraries are constrained by many issues. I'm not permitted to catalog government documents or delete from catalog. Our opac does not hot link to electronic records. I do not have the enthusiasm I once had and in the 13 plus years, I do not feel there has been support for the program from directors or immediate supervisors."

"We are a small library, and our collection of documents is fairly small. We considered discontinuing our participation as a depository library about 3 years ago and decided that we could continue if we emphasized electronic documents and eliminated microfilm. Still, we have a backlog in processing now because we have just finished a major building project. We hope to get on an even keel this summer."

"It's possible that many small libraries like ours will not be able to build additions to their buildings and will have to utilize existing space as we've had to do. They will take advantage of the many electronic documents available to them and have smaller print collections. Weeding government documents may be done more often than we've done in the past when the documents were only available in print or microforms. Also, if a government document is available in print and available electronically many libraries will choose only the electronic version."

From responses on weeding questions, weeding has been on the increase and will often continue to increase. Many different reasons can be root causes, but an inevitable

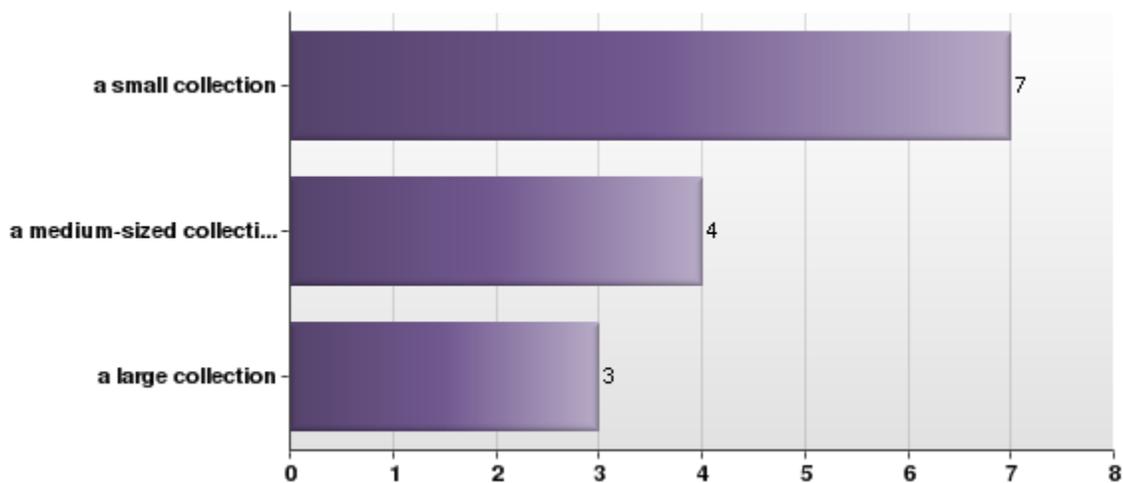
substitution by electronic access and a lack of shelf space tended to dominate the answers.

Size of Print Collection

There was one demographic question in the survey that served the purpose of allowing further analysis according to the size of each government document collection. This was there to account for the way a large weeding project in a large institution can be much more intense than a large project in a small institution.

Figure 10: Size of Print Collection

When compared to other North Carolina institutions you know of, would you characterize your library's collection of government documents in print as:



Fifty percent (7 of 14) of the respondents to this question indicated that their collection of government documents was small. Twenty-nine percent (4 of 14) indicated a medium-sized collection. The remaining 21% (3 of 14) indicated a large collection. This ratio of large to small collections is fairly consistent with the depositories of North Carolina. The large collections are small in number, but they carry a great deal of weight in weeding projects; one large weeding project in a large collection can have a significant impact on the availability of government documents in North Carolina.

DISCUSSION

Results from the survey brought some less publicized issues to the forefront. These dealt with the attitudes of library administration, the lower priority for government documents than other collections, the role of preservation, and the attitudes of patrons on their preferred formats. The role of the large collection is also a noteworthy discussion. Lastly, four limitations of the study are an important point.

Some responses were not anticipated. Several respondents voiced displeasure with their library administration. This showed up in multiple questions and from multiple respondents. It was not a trend from only one or two respondents. The weeding of government documents is closely related to how library administration feels about the government document collection. They may give librarians less budgetary support. They may give them less of an opportunity to maintain the collection than other departments. They may give them poor real estate and take their space at will. It would be interesting to ex-

plore attitudes and interactions between government document librarians and their library administrations more closely.

Librarians voiced the opinion that government documents are less important to keep than other materials when space runs out. While no questions in the survey asked for this type of prioritization, several respondents indicated this thought process independently. This again is an attitude that is related to the library administration and its views on the role of government documents in fulfilling the library's mission.

Preservation costs do not seem to be a major reason for weeding government documents, but binding and bar-coding older materials can be very time-consuming projects. Preservation is not a sole reason why libraries weed documents, but it could feasibly be part of why certain materials end up as part of a weeding project.

Electronic access is causing a drop in the use of printed materials. The increase in use via electronic access was evident for almost all respondents, while print use has usually decreased. An unexpected theme was that this shift was due to an overwhelming preference from library users. Some respondents said that patrons disliked having to go through government document collections and the mass of paper documents. The tone was often that it was a bother and that accessing material electronically was much more satisfying for everyone involved. Along that same line, reference librarians outside of government documents would probably voice their preference of electronic access over print even more.

Weeding has increased and will continue to increase. Respondents often indicated that there would be more weeding in the future than in the present. Even among respon-

dents who had increased weeding practices recently, the thinking was that the rate will increase as time passes. This is an important, though not unexpected, finding. The weeding from 2007-2009 has not been a dent, but rather an indication of things to come. Weeding not only has increased, but the rate will be higher around 2014 than any time since before 2007.

For large collections, there were only three respondents, but their answers are especially important. The following were trends among those three. Two of the three had a decrease in available space. All had an employee budget decrease. All said this employee budget was insufficient. Two of the three reported an increase in the use of electronic resources, and also reported an increase in expenses related to electronic resources and technology. Two of the three predicted there would be more weeding over the next five years.

Among the three size groups (small, medium, and large), the largest government document collections seem to have the most problems. These are important collections, because weeding projects are on a much larger scale. We can say at least three things about the largest collections. (1) Available space is an issue. (2) The budget for employees is a problem. (3) There will be many weeded documents in North Carolina's large collections over the coming years.

By the study's findings, larger collections report budgetary problems more consistently than small and medium-sized collections, so this will contribute to huge weeding projects from them in the next few years. With some of the huge projects from them that have occurred since 2007, the trend from the large institutions may not have continued at

the same rate if economic times were different. Budget shortfalls, however, are going to continue to make large weeding projects from those larger collections necessary. Respondents from those larger institutions indicated problems with money and space, so weeding will be a reality until the arrival of better economic times.

Several limitations arise from the methodology of the study. One is that the weeding decisions are not always the wishes of the librarian that answered the questions. A few respondents mentioned that they had different priorities than the library administration at their institution.

A second limitation was that questions about expenses associated with electronic resources and technology were not specific enough and would have benefitted from including a few examples in the text of the questions. Still, the respondents often used the opportunity provided by the open-ended questions to brainstorm and fully answer the questions regardless.

A third limitation was that the librarians in charge of the 2-3 most highly weeded collections in North Carolina may not have taken the survey. From the results, which included three collections self-described as large, it appears very likely that they did. The problem, however, is that those were especially important stories to hear and the email invitations could have shouted louder that their input was vital.

A fourth limitation is the lack of a true financial analysis. Other studies of libraries delve into budgetary dollars and cents, but the effort required to do that for 33 depositories was too great for the purposes of the study. Despite the respondents' excellent rundowns of budget cuts and rising costs, the general descriptions of budgetary trends did

not replace the need for a true accounting analysis. (The feasibility of such an analysis, given the different types of libraries, is another debate. Many of the institutions were private. It is unlikely that a full economic analysis would actually be possible anyway, because there is no standard accounting report on all of the outcome variables of the study.)

Library administrations are a focal point of librarians' responses on resources, retention, and weeding. Librarians mentioned the diminished importance of printed documents and did not cite preservation as a main reason for weeding. Weeding, for a variety of reasons, will continue to increase. Larger collections – with budget problems – are likely to begin more huge weeding undertakings. Several limitations were inherent in the methodology, but government documents librarians' responses appropriately captured the status of North Carolina Federal Depositories.

CONCLUSION

Eighty-five percent of libraries in the study had an increase in weeding from 2007-2009. Sixty-two percent of libraries predicted their weeding rate would increase from 2009-2014. Weeding is a huge trend and will become even bigger. The question is: what is leading libraries to weed government documents? Is it a sign that libraries lack resources or are otherwise unhealthy?

The answer, at least for North Carolina's Federal Depositories, is that they lack space and money. Also, the alternative of electronic access makes printed materials less

necessary. Having electronic resources for government information presents a problem though, because they and the technology associated with them are costing libraries an increasing amount of money. All these problems and more are leading library administrations to reevaluate their printed government document collections.

For each large weeding project, there is a unique combination of reasons for the library to commit to discarding documents from the collection. This study addressed some common and logical reasons, most notably a lack of space and the substitution of information via electronic access.

The conclusion from a data-rich study like this should be constructive and useful for those who oversee collections. The initial intent was to close with several best practices recommendations for government documents librarians. The recommendations, in a time of economic cutbacks, instead are for library administrators. What follows are a few recommendations for library administrations:

- Libraries need to allocate more physical space to government documents during planning and prior to renovation. Many libraries, though otherwise well-planned, do not have enough space for their government document collections to grow.
- Libraries need to set aside more money for maintenance of their documents collections. This includes the budget for employees and, in some cases, preservation projects. One 20-hour employee can make a world of difference to even a large collection.
- If printed materials are not likely to be used and are available through electronic means, it may not be beneficial to keep them. Electronic access is taking over the search

for government information and librarians recognize this. Library directors should consult with government document librarians about their thoughts on this.

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APPENDIX A: EMAIL INVITATION

Subject line: Government Documents Research Study

17 March, 2009

Greetings,

My name is Matt Anderson, from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. I am conducting research into why North Carolina libraries weed government documents from their collections, in order to gain a better understanding of the types of resources needed to provide access to these collections. This study will contribute to my completion of my master's thesis, which will discuss whether North Carolina libraries are facing a lack of resources. I feel it will be a great way to let government documents librarians let their voices be heard. I hope you can take the survey.

Research Procedures: This study consists of an online survey that will be administered to individual participants through UNC Qualtrics software. You will be asked to provide answers to a series of questions related to government documents.

Time Required: Participation in this study will require around 30 minutes of your time.

Confidentiality: The results of this research will be presented in a UNC master's paper. No individually-identifiable responses will be presented in the final report of this study. All data will be stored in a secure location only accessible to the researcher. Data will be deleted at the conclusion of the research study.

Participation & Withdrawal: Your participation is entirely voluntary. You are free to choose not to participate. Should you choose to participate, you can withdraw at any time without consequences of any kind. However, once your responses have been submitted and recorded, you will not be able to withdraw from the study.

[link]

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,
Matt Anderson
UNC School of Information & Library Science
[email]
[phone]

APPENDIX B: EMAIL INVITATION FOLLOW-UP

Subject line: Government Documents Research Study

30 March, 2009

Greetings,

The survey request below was distributed via email two weeks ago. There has been a good response, but more responses would help establish statistical validity. If you are a government information librarian in North Carolina, your participation would be most welcome. The median time to take it has been just over 10 minutes. Thank you for your time.

My name is Matt Anderson, from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. I am conducting research into why North Carolina libraries weed government documents from their collections, in order to gain a better understanding of the types of resources needed to provide access to these collections. This study will contribute to my completion of my master's thesis, which will discuss whether North Carolina libraries are facing a lack of resources. I feel it will be a great way to let government documents librarians let their voices be heard. I hope you can take the survey.

Research Procedures: This study consists of an online survey that will be administered to individual participants through UNC Qualtrics software. You will be asked to provide answers to a series of questions related to government documents.

Time Required: Participation in this study will require around 30 minutes of your time.

Confidentiality: The results of this research will be presented in a UNC master's paper. No individually-identifiable responses will be presented in the final report of this study. All data will be stored in a secure location only accessible to the researcher. Data will be deleted at the conclusion of the research study.

Participation & Withdrawal: Your participation is entirely voluntary. You are free to choose not to participate. Should you choose to participate, you can withdraw at any time without consequences of any kind. However, once your responses have been submitted and recorded, you will not be able to withdraw from the study.

[link]

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,
Matt Anderson
UNC School of Information & Library Science
[email]
[phone]

APPENDIX C: CONSENT FORM

University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill
Consent to Participate in a Research Study
Adult Participants
Social Behavioral Form
IRB Study # 09-0464
Consent Form Version Date: 9 February 2009
Title of Study: Library Trends in the Retention of Government Documents
Principal Investigator: Matt Anderson
UNC-Chapel Hill Department: School of Information and Library Science
UNC-Chapel Hill Phone number: [phone]
Email Address: [email]
Faculty Advisor: Dr. Barbara Wildemuth, [email]
Study Contact telephone number: [phone]
Study Contact email: [email]

What are some general things you should know about research studies?

You are being asked to take part in a research study. To join the study is voluntary. You may refuse to join, or you may withdraw your consent to be in the study, for any reason, without penalty.

Research studies are designed to obtain new knowledge. This new information may help people in the future. You may not receive any direct benefit from being in the research study. There also may be risks to being in research studies.

Details about this study are discussed below. It is important that you understand this information so that you can make an informed choice about being in this research study.

You may print a copy of this form if you'd like to keep it. You should ask the researchers named above, or staff members who may assist them, any questions you have about this study at any time.

What is the purpose of this study?

The purpose of this research study is to learn why libraries are weeding materials from government document collections. You are being asked to be in the study because you

work with a collection of government documents.

How many people will take part in this study?

North Carolina librarians who are responsible for government document collections are being invited to participate in this study. If you decide to be in this study, you will be one of 30-35 people in this research study.

How long will your part in this study last?

It is expected that the survey will take around 30 minutes.

What will happen if you take part in the study?

You will be asked to respond to a series of questions on what factors influence your government document collection and whether issues with space or budgets are increasing or decreasing. There is no required follow-up to this survey. Your answers to these questions will be de-identified in the paper associated with the research study. Raw data will be stored in a secure hard drive for one year, and then will be destroyed.

What are the possible benefits from being in this study?

Research is designed to benefit society by gaining new knowledge. You may also expect to benefit by participating in this study by contributing to your profession.

What are the possible risks or discomforts involved from being in this study?

There are no known risks. There may be uncommon or previously unknown risks. You should report any problems to the researcher.

How will your privacy be protected?

Your answers will be available only to the principal investigator, Matt Anderson. Data will be on Matt's password-protected, private account at the University of North Carolina.

Participants *will not* be identified in any report or publication about this study.

Will you receive anything for being in this study?

You will not receive anything for taking part in this study.

Will it cost you anything to be in this study?

There will be no costs associated with being in the study, other than your time.

What if you are a UNC employee?

Taking part in this research is not a part of your University duties, and refusing will not

affect your job. You will not be offered or receive any special job-related consideration if you take part in this research.

What if you have questions about this study?

You have the right to ask, and have answered, any questions you may have about this research. If you have questions, or concerns, you should contact the researchers listed on the first page of this form.

What if you have questions about your rights as a research participant?

All research on human volunteers is reviewed by a committee that works to protect your rights and welfare. If you have questions or concerns about your rights as a research subject you may contact, anonymously if you wish, the Institutional Review Board at 919-966-3113 or by email to IRB_subjects@unc.edu.

Title of Study: Library Trends in the Retention of Government Documents

Principal Investigator: Matt Anderson

APPENDIX D: SURVEY QUESTIONS

1. Since the beginning of 2007, do you think your library's available space for government documents has:

_decreased

_stayed the same

_increased

2. What do you think is causing this?

3. Is your library's space for government documents sufficient?

4. Since the beginning of 2007, do you think your library's budget for employees that deal with government documents has:

_decreased

_stayed the same

_increased

5. What do you think is causing this?

6. Is the budget for employees sufficient?

7. Since the beginning of 2007, do you think the costs of preserving government documents in your library have:

_decreased

_stayed the same

_increased

8. What do you think is causing this?

9. Since the beginning of 2007, do you think your library's funding for preserving government documents has:

_decreased

_stayed the same

_increased

10. What do you think is causing this?

11. Is the funding for preservation and conservation sufficient?

12. When compared to other North Carolina institutions you know of, would you characterize your library's collection of government documents in print as:

_a small collection

_a medium-sized collection

_a large collection

13. Based on reference questions since the beginning of 2007, do you think your library's usage of government documents in print has:

_decreased

_stayed the same

_increased

14. What trends do you notice with print documents?

15. Based on reference questions since the beginning of 2007, do you think your library's usage of government information available through electronic resources and technology has:

_decreased

_stayed the same

_increased

16. What trends do you notice?

17. Since the beginning of 2007, do you think your library's expenses for electronic resources and technology related to government information have:

_decreased

_stayed the same

_increased

18. What do you think is causing this?

19. Has your library's budget for electronic resources and technology related to government information been sufficient?

20. Since the beginning of 2007, do you think the rate at which your library has weeded government documents has:

_decreased

_stayed the same

_increased

21. What do you think is causing this?

22. Over the next five years, do you think the rate at which your library weeds government documents will:

_decrease

_stay the same

_increase

23. Why?

24. Additional comments.