

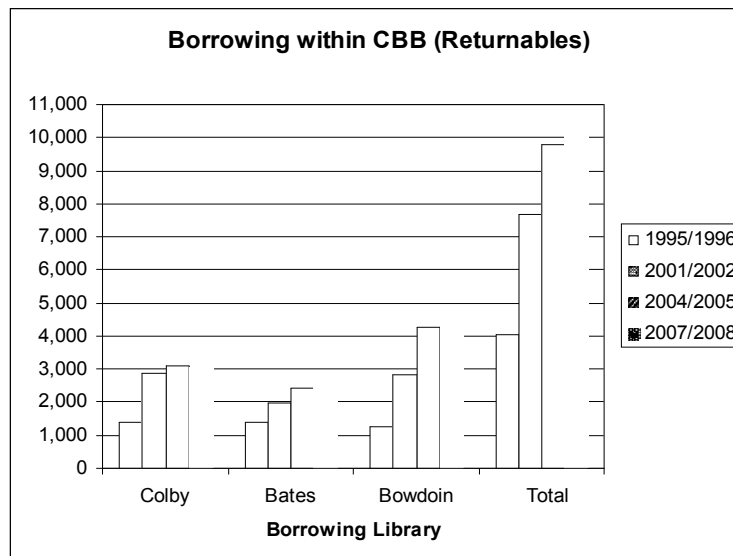
## Collaborative Collection Development in CBB Libraries – 2008 Summary

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CBB (Colby, Bates and Bowdoin) Libraries are building on a thirty-year history of cooperation to collaboratively build our library collections. We began reciprocal borrowing many years ago, collaborated in the acquisition of automated library systems (Innovative Interfaces, Inc.) in the late 1980s, and developed very robust interlibrary lending relationships based on traditional systems. We have been consulting with each other on coordination or joint purchase of electronic collections since 1998.

In 1997-98, with support from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, we developed and implemented technologies to provide direct patron-generated requesting of library materials for all CBB faculty, staff and students. Our strategy from the start was to share as broadly as possible our collections among the patrons of the three colleges, in order to build an acceptance of mutual dependence. We normalized borrowing rules, and, with very few exceptions, gave students, faculty and staff equal borrowing privileges at all three libraries. For example, faculty members may borrow books from any CBB library for a year. When Maine Info Net (a state-wide INN-Reach system) was introduced in 2001, our sharing model was migrated to this system which incorporated load balancing software and borrowing rules that allowed CBB to continue to operate its separate (and generous) lending practices.

We established a highly reliable, rapid and successful document delivery system. Effective delivery and our common lending period were key factors in building user confidence in CBB resource sharing systems. We use commercial carriers to provide expedited delivery, with an average turnaround time of two business days, including Saturday delivery. When CBB libraries joined with those at Williams, Wellesley and Northeastern to develop NExpress, a regional resource sharing system similar to Maine Info Net, we implemented the same borrowing rules we use in Maine Info Net. With these innovations, we have seen a steady increase in CBB borrowing of returnables.



With a planning grant from the Mellon Foundation in 2005, we began to explore intensively the opportunities to raise our level of collaboration in collection development. We purchased software tools to analyze and compare the three collections, and began to coordinate goal setting for collection development. Through a cooperative collection development grant from the Mellon Foundation we explored these ideas further, and in the spring of 2008 launched a joint approval plan with a general profile of support for the liberal arts. Shipments to each college rotate on a weekly schedule. Individual colleges are free to supplement with added copies. In the first three months of the plan we purchased about 3,000 volumes (about \$150,000 list price) divided equally among the three libraries. This effort is based on the belief that an overall reduction of unnecessary duplication among the three colleges is possible, thereby enabling us to provide support for more specialized subjects and to increase our global and international perspective in our collections. The plan covers all subject areas with the exception of art, where individual libraries' non-circulating collections are not at this time susceptible to easy sharing.

We have plans in the coming year (the final year of grant support) to analyze and extend collaboration to include standing orders, monographic series and other formats. With advances in the exchange of non-returnables (through NExpress or through the RAPID ILL system), we expect to be able to plan for greater interdependence in journal collections as well. We have also been willing to give up some measure of autonomy in order to support our faculty, and have been rewarded in the process. We are currently in vendor negotiation for a shared AquaBrowser system that will, among other things, allow our users to view the three separate CBB collections as one. We are positioned to continue this level of collaboration—indeed we do not see a time when CBB libraries will not be systematically dependent upon each other for collections support.

We are interested in exploring ideas of additional areas of collaboration with other consortia. Our faculty and students have come to expect us to find ways of extending their access to research materials, and our involvement in local, state and regional consortia is one of the key ways we plan to continue to do that.