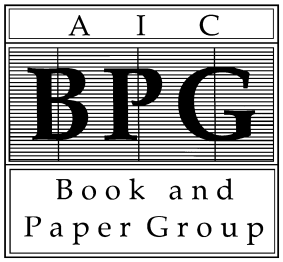

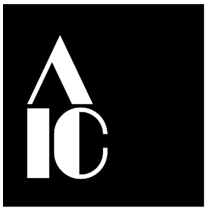

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WHITNEY BAKER

An Analysis of Training and Institutional Context on Book Conservation Practices in Research Libraries in 2007 and 2017

INTRODUCTION

In 2007, a survey was conducted among conservation practitioners, resulting in a published assessment of book conservation practices in research libraries in the US (Baker and Dube 2010). This research identified a "standard toolbox" of treatments for both general and special collections in the first decade of the 21st century, establishing a baseline for future comparison and providing a quantitative synopsis of how book conservation was practiced in research libraries at that time. A second publication correlated institutional context and training of conservation professionals with specific treatment practices (Dube and Baker 2010). This second work concluded that practitioners working in hybrid facilities—in which both general and special collections were treated— tended to use a hybrid treatment approach, straddling more traditionally general versus special collections treatment practices.

In 2017, the survey was repeated to determine if and how treatment practices had changed in a decade. For continuity, the new survey was almost identical to the 2007 version. The longitudinal research project has the following research goals: (1) to document standard treatments in research library book conservation, (2) to identify similarities and differences between special and general collections practices, (3) to determine whether demographic characteristics of conservation practitioners are associated with particular treatment practices, and (4) to determine how treatment practices have changed in a decade.

The first findings from the 2017 data were published in *Library Resources and Technical Services* (Baker 2019), focusing on how the standard toolboxes of treatments for general and special collections have changed in the period from 2007 to 2017. The survey findings suggest that frequently employed treatments for general collections changed relatively little, indicating that a standard toolbox of treatments exists for general collections treatment in US research libraries. However, in the special collections context, the survey data indicated that practices continued to evolve, with 10 treatments added to the "highly standard practice" list (indicating that 75% or more of respondents considered a treatment standard practice). These 10 treatments joined 8 treatments that were identified in 2007. As such, the data suggest that special collections practices are not as codified among practitioners.

In this publication, the 2017 survey data will be assessed to determine if and how demographic characteristics—size of library, type of conservation facility, type of conservation practitioner, and practitioner training—correlate with changes in treatment practices in the past decade.

DEVELOPMENTS IN LIBRARY CONSERVATION PRACTICES IN RESEARCH LIBRARIES, 2007 TO 2017

Several factors may have significantly influenced the resources and focus of conservation practitioners and laboratories since the first survey was conducted in 2007. First, the growth of digitization initiatives in research libraries has placed new demands on conservation over the past decade, significantly affecting the treatment approaches employed by conservation professionals and influencing staffing needs. Treatments required to support digitization typically focus on minimal stabilization prior to scanning. As noted by panelists in the 2008 Library Collections Conservation Discussion Group session, there has been a "shift from . . . treatments for handling and use in a reading room towards treatments concerned with the requirements of imaging systems" (Reidell and McCann 2008, 116).

In addition, as research libraries increasingly acquire similar general collections resources in the form of large digital collection subscriptions, special collections have become a more important means for libraries to differentiate themselves. Many research institutions have broadened their definition of "special collections" beyond rare books and manuscripts to include archival collections, international or area studies, and other topical or specialized collections that

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distinguish one library from another, often under the rubric of "distinctive collections." An increased institutional focus on distinctive collections may affect types of conservation practitioners hired to care for those materials and the treatments employed.

In the past decade, many conservation units have added staff trained in treatment of special collections materials, whereas staff additions to care for general collections have been relatively rare. Miller and Horan, in a review of position announcements for preservation professionals from 2004 to 2015, noted that "special collections conservation [is] more likely to remain present in job advertisements" versus a "de-emphasis on many aspects of treatment and care of circulating collections" (2017, 195–196). Miller and Horan found a marked reduction in positions advertising for circulating book repair treatment (from 41% to 11%), indicating that there have been fewer advertised positions focusing on the treatments more likely to be performed by technicians than by those performed by professionals with graduate degrees (2017, 190).

Another potential variable is the formal education of research library book conservators. In 2009, the University of Texas at Austin (UT Austin) conservation training program closed to incoming students. At the time, it was the only graduate-level training program specifically dedicated to training library and archives conservators in North America. As a result, the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation funded the development of book conservation training at the three American art conservation programs: Buffalo State, the State University of New York; Winterthur/University of Delaware; and New York University. The first students from these programs specializing in books graduated in 2013 (Patricia H. and Richard E. Garman Art Conservation Department 2019). It is possible that book conservation training practices have evolved as more training centers have developed.

SURVEY METHOD

To ensure consistency and to determine whether changes to the survey instrument were warranted, both the 2007 survey data and literature from the past decade were reviewed. Treatments that were deemed extremely low use in 2007 were not included in the 2017 survey if there were no new publications or references to them between 2007 and 2017. To maintain continuity for comparison with the 2007 data, these changes were only made after careful scrutiny. Nevertheless, three treatments that met the criteria were removed: (1) leather-covered box, (2) paperback stiffening, and (3) in-house use of Wei T'o deacidification spray.

In addition, a decade's worth of literature was examined to identify any new book treatment techniques for both general and special collections introduced in published form, through workshops, or via social media. Although most of the techniques identified in this search were more relevant to book arts than to conservation, a few new conservation techniques associated with minor paper treatment and textblock repair were well publicized: the use of remoistenable and solvent-set tissues in mending paper items, and toning Japanese paper for mends or fills. Since 2007, remoistenable and solvent-set mending tissues have been the topic of many publications and a series of hands-on workshops hosted by the AIC and the Guild of Book Workers. The toning of Japanese paper was perceived as a common practice in many laboratories that was inadvertently omitted from the 2007 survey.

To compare practices over time, the survey structure developed 10 years ago was reused, facilitated by Qualtrics software. The 2007 survey was evaluated and updated to ensure a more robust and representative response in the 2017 version. In 2007, the survey was distributed via a common weblink, and respondents were asked to answer once per treatment facility. In 2017, thanks to improvements in survey technology, individuals were invited to take the survey via personalized links, resulting in multiple responses per institution to more accurately capture treatment practices across the field. Furthermore, considering that large institutions often employ conservation professionals with diverse training experiences, greater participation could invite wider perspectives. To facilitate comparison to the 2007 data, in which almost all respondents were from institutions that were members of either the Association of Research Libraries or the Independent Research Libraries Association in the US, the 2017 survey was limited to respondents whose libraries were part of those organizations. Therefore, "type of library" was not a demographic factor considered in the 2017 analysis.

The survey instrument consisted of four sections: (1) audience definition and participation disclaimer, (2) demographic questionnaire, (3) treatment questionnaire(s), and (4) a request for voluntary follow-up. To ensure the survey's relevance to both general and special collections practitioners and to permit a comparison of practices, the questionnaires pertaining to general and to special collections treatment practices were identical, containing 54 treatments in seven categories that could be applied to bound materials in either a general or special collections setting: (1) protective enclosures, (2) binding reinforcements, (3) minor paper treatments and textblock repairs, (4) board reattachment methods, (5) rebinding styles, (6) binding repair techniques, and (7) advanced paper treatments performed on bound materials. Where treatment names were not sufficiently self-explanatory, definitions were supplied with the treatment. Respondents were asked to indicate how frequently each treatment was performed by selecting from a set of options: (1) standard practice, frequent; (2) standard practice, occasional; (3) anomalous use only; (4) never; and (5) not sure.

The appendix presents a list of treatments included in the survey. For the complete survey and treatment definitions, refer to Baker (2019).

The survey design enabled respondents to provide treatment information—as appropriate to their responsibilities—for only general collections treatment, only special collections treatment, or both. Individuals with treatment responsibility for one type of collection—general collections *or* special collections—were asked to complete one page of identical treatment questions, whereas respondents with treatment responsibility for both general collections and special collections received two pages of questions, one for each type. An analysis of the potential errors associated with the survey is provided in the previous report on the 2017 data (Baker 2019, 89–90).

Respondents		Treatment Cases		
Type	No.	Special Collections	General Collections	Total
Hybrid practitioners	57	57	57	114
Special collections only	51	51	—	51
General collections only	14	—	14	14
Total	**122**	**108**	**71**	**179**

Fig. 1. Respondents' demographic characteristics and number of treatment cases, 2017

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS

Of the 212 invited respondents, 122 individuals from US research libraries fully completed the survey, resulting in a 58% response rate—a large increase from 2007's estimated response rate of 29%. The survey sample was relatively diverse with respect to collected demographic characteristics: respondents were almost evenly matched between those holding positions with hybrid treatment responsibilities involving both special and general collections (57 respondents [47%]) and those working only with special collections (51 respondents [42%]). Only 11% of respondents worked solely with general collections. The 122 respondents provided a total of 179 "treatment cases" because the 57 hybrid respondents were asked to complete two treatment questionnaires, one for each type of collection, whereas the remaining 65 respondents completed one questionnaire each (fig. 1).

Size of Library

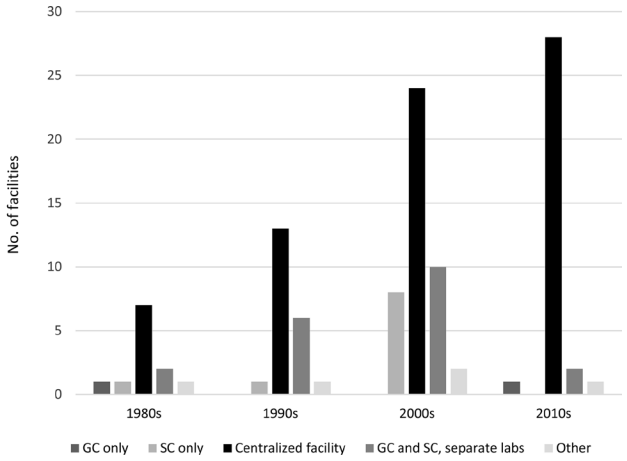
In 2007, respondents were distributed relatively evenly among large libraries with more than five million volumes, mid-size libraries with two to five million volumes, and smaller libraries with fewer than two million volumes. In contrast, in 2017, many more of the respondents worked for large research libraries than was the case in 2007: 57% of respondents worked in institutions with more than five million volumes compared with 29% in 2007. This may be a function of allowing multiple responses from the same institution and may not adequately reflect shifts in hiring practices (fig. 2).

Some relationships were identified between the size of the library and the type of practitioner (i.e., hybrid, special collections only, or general collections only). In the special collections context, nearly two-thirds (64%) of the special collections–only practitioners were from libraries with more than

		2007		2017	
Question	Response	No.	%	No.	%
Size of institution	Fewer than 2 million volumes	24	33	17	14
	2–3 million volumes	28	38[a]	10	8
	3–5 million volumes			26	21
	More than 5 million volumes	21	29	69	57
Type of conservation/repair facility	Special collections only	2	3	11	9
	General collections only	7	10	2	2
	Centralized/hybrid facility	48	66	77	63
	Separate facilities	15	21	27	22
	Other	1	1	5	4
Year facility built or last renovated	2010s	N/A	N/A	32	30
	2000s	32	44	44	40
	1990s	16	22	21	19
	1980s	10	14	12	11
	Pre-1980s	10	14	N/A	N/A
	Other	5	7	N/A	N/A

[a]The 2007 survey had only three categories for institution size, with the middle category encompassing "2–5 million volumes."

Fig. 2. Respondents' institutions, 2007 versus 2017



GC, general collections; SC, special collections.

Fig. 3. Facility type versus decade built or renovated

five million volumes, whereas none were from libraries with fewer than two million volumes. Conversely, in the general collections context, the opposite trend was observed: nearly half (47%) of general collections–only practitioners were from smaller libraries with fewer than two million volumes. As for the hybrid practitioners, nearly half (46%) were associated with mid-size libraries with two to five million volumes.

Type of Conservation Facility

The 2007 data indicated a trend, when comparing respondents' facility types and their most recent renovation dates, of a preponderance of centralized, or hybrid, facilities, in which both general and special collections were treated. The 2017 data presented a strong continuation of that trend, as two-thirds of respondents worked in a library with a centralized, or hybrid, conservation facility (see fig. 2). Thirty percent of respondents worked in a facility that was built or renovated since 2010, with an additional 40% in a facility built or renovated in the 2000s (fig. 3).

Respondents' Training

With respect to the respondents' training, 51% of individuals had a graduate degree in library or information science, 45% had a graduate degree in conservation, 32% had served a conservation apprenticeship, and 18% had attended a bookbinding program with a conservation component (fig. 4). Multiple responses were allowed for this question.

A comparison of the respondents' formal training with the types of collections served (i.e., special collections and/or general collections) revealed some trends. Professionals working only with general collections and "hybrids" working with both general and special collections were more likely to have had training in library science than other types of training.

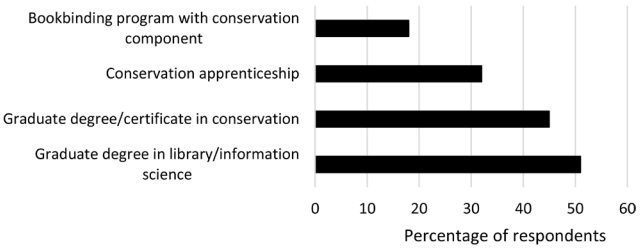
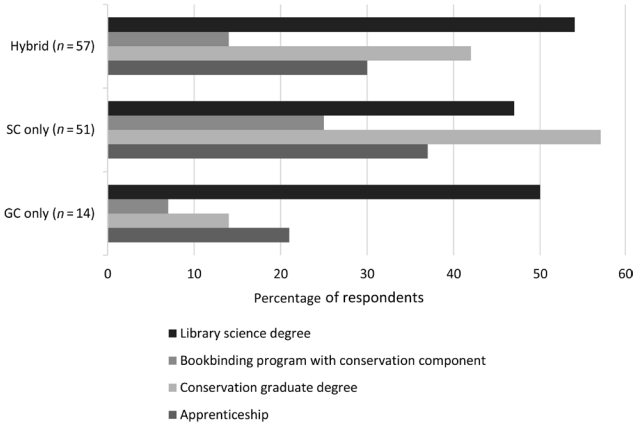


Fig. 4. Percentage of respondents with various types of formal conservation training (n = 122). Multiple responses were allowed.

In fact, for all three categories of conservation professionals, including individuals working only with special collections, the percentage of individuals with library or information science degrees was around 50% (fig. 5).

With regard to individuals working *only* with special collections in 2017, 57% had a graduate degree in conservation and 47% had a graduate degree in library science. More than one-third (37%) had served a formal conservation apprenticeship and one-fourth (25%) had attended a bookbinding program with a conservation track or component. The respondents working *only* with general collections, however, had relatively little formal training in conservation proper. The most typical way of gaining conservation training was by apprenticeship (21%).

Hybrid practitioners closely mirrored the training of special collections practitioners; in all cases but the possession of a library science degree, the percentage of respondents in each category is slightly lower than that of special collections–only individuals. Forty-two percent of hybrid respondents had earned a conservation graduate degree, and nearly one-third (30%) served an apprenticeship. Overall, the training patterns of practitioners working only on special collections was quite similar to those of hybrid practitioners. In contrast, the training of general collections practitioners was quite different, and rates of formal training were significantly lower (see fig. 5).



GC, general collections; SC, special collections.

Fig. 5. Type of practitioner versus formal training types, 2017

SURVEY RESULTS

The collected data pertaining to treatment practices were compiled and graphed, comparing general collections and special collections practices. Each treatment was classified—once for general collections and again for special collections—as either standard practice, moderate use, or low use. A treatment was designated "standard practice" when it was reported as "standard practice, frequent" or "standard practice, occasional" by 50% or more of the respondents. Treatments reported as standard practice by 25% to 49% of conservation units were designated "moderate use," whereas the remaining treatments—those considered standard practice by fewer than 25% of units—were designated "low use." Figure 6 shows the overall 2017 data for both general and special collections.

The data were examined for trends in treatment practices across all collected elements of demographic information. For each treatment, the percentage of respondents from various demographic groups who reported the treatment as standard practice was calculated for both special and general collections, and the figures for various demographic groups were compared. In addition, the data in each section were compared with the conclusions from the 2007 data. The following section details the similarities and differences in practices associated with four demographic variables:

- Size of library
- Type of conservation facility (whether special collections, general collections, or both)
- Type of practitioner (whether special collections, general collections, or both)
- Practitioner training

Size of Library

When comparing treatment practices between larger and small libraries, the separating line of three million volumes was selected. Overall, the data indicate that size is a greater factor in determining treatment practice in the special collections context than in the general collections context.

Size of Library: Special Collections

In the special collections context, the data indicate a potentially lessening relationship since 2007 between the size of a respondent's institution and its reported treatment practices. All but 3 of the 54 treatments studied were found to be more common to larger libraries (with three or more million volumes), the exceptions being encapsulation and joint tacketing. (One treatment, Japanese paper mending, was employed at an equal rate.) With respect to the percentage of respondents reporting techniques as standard practice, the average differential ($\triangle$) between larger libraries and smaller libraries for all 55 treatments was 14 percentage points. This number is smaller than in 2007, when it was 18 percentage points, indicating that perhaps size of library is less of a factor in treatment practice than it was a decade earlier.

Nine (17%) of the 54 treatments studied displayed a significant differential ($\triangle \geq 25$ percentage points) with respect to the percentage of respondents reporting them as standard practice, all of which were more common to larger libraries. Three of these treatments were repeated from 2007: heat-set-tissue mending, dyeing cloth with acrylics, and tape/adhesive/stain removal using solvents—all of which were more common in larger libraries. In 2007, there were 16 treatments that displayed large differentials in rates of employment compared with 9 treatments in 2017, again indicating that in 2017, size of library may be less of a factor in influencing treatment practices than it was in 2007 (fig. 7).

Size of Library: General Collections

The relationship between treatment practices and the size of the library collection is not as strong in the general collections context as was observed in the special collections context. In 2017, 57% of treatments were more common to smaller libraries (fewer than three million volumes) than larger libraries (more than three million volumes), so practices were fairly evenly divided, indicating that perhaps size of library is not a particularly strong indicator of treatment practice in the general collections context. With respect to the percentage of respondents reporting techniques as standard practice, the average differential between larger libraries and smaller libraries for all 54 treatments was 14 percentage points. This number is a little larger than it was in 2007, when the average differential was 10 percentage points. Identically to 2007, just 5 (9%) of the treatments displayed a significant differential ($\triangle \geq 25$ percentage points) with respect to the percentage of respondents reporting them as standard practice, 4 of which were more common to larger libraries. (The exception was cloth-covered box constructed in-house.) Only one of these five treatments—stapled pamphlet binding—was a repeat from 2007 (fig. 8).

Although the treatments with large differentials were more common to larger libraries, in fact smaller libraries employed treatments in five of the treatment categories at higher rates (31 treatments overall): binding reinforcements, board reattachments, rebinding, binding repairs, and advanced paper treatments. Larger libraries more frequently employed treatments in the categories of protective enclosures and minor paper repairs. These findings may indicate that general collections materials may be paid more individual attention in smaller libraries, whereas in larger libraries the treatments employed on general collections are not very invasive or time consuming.

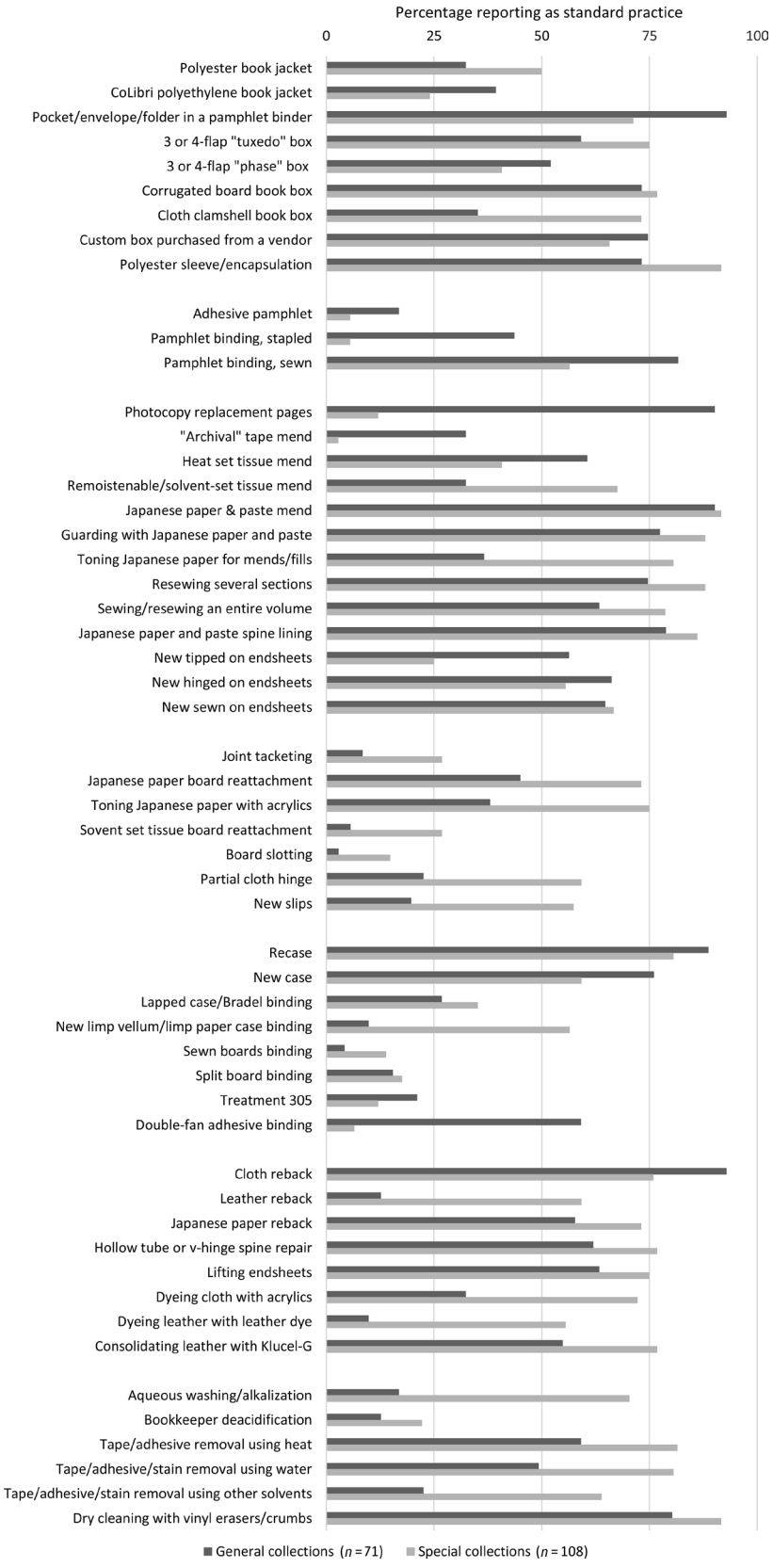


Fig. 6. Treatment practices employed for general and special collections, 2017

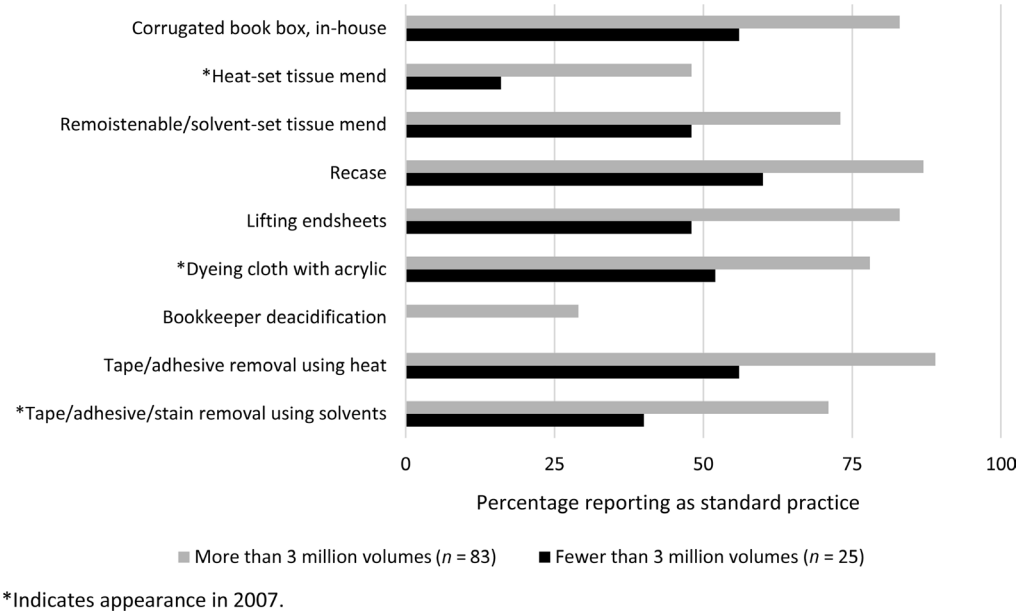


Fig. 7. Special collections treatments with significant variance in practice (≥25 percentage points) by size of library, 2017

Overall, the treatment practices in general collections show that although the gap between larger and smaller libraries has widened slightly, this trend is not well defined and little change has been observed in this category in the past decade. However, the number of respondents for general collections has declined, making conclusions about the data less confident. When pairing this fact with the data, size of library is not a particularly strong influencer on general collections treatment practices.

Type of Conservation Facility

The treatment practices of respondents from centralized, or hybrid, facilities were compared with those from facilities dedicated solely or separately to special or general collections. Significant overlap between this characteristic (type of facility) and the category below (type of practitioner) was identified: of the 57 hybrid practitioners responding to the survey, most (95%) worked in a centralized/hybrid facility. Similarly, of the 77 respondents

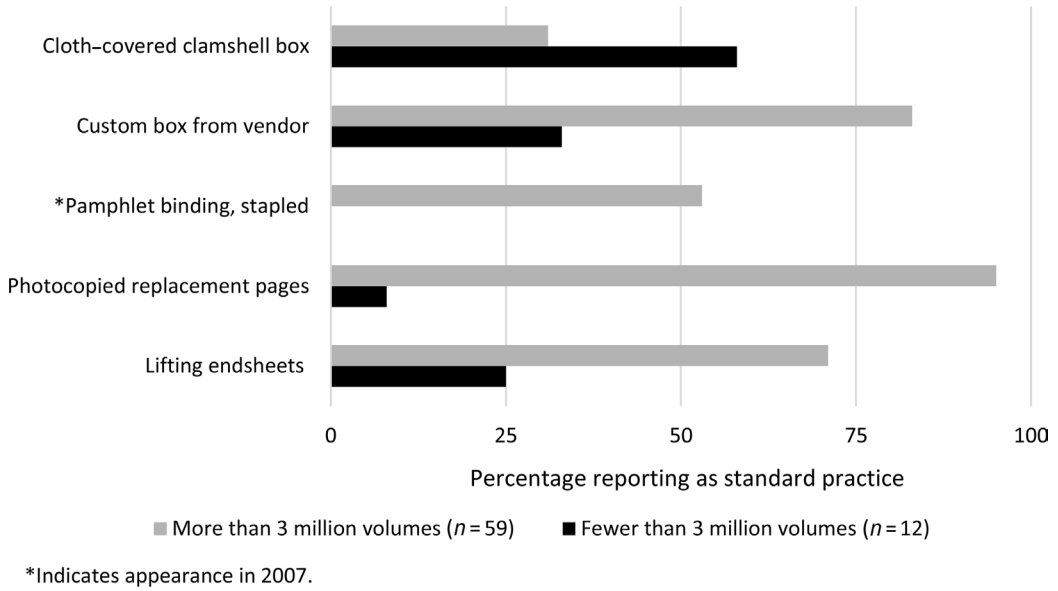


Fig. 8. General collections treatments with significant variance in practice (≥25 percentage points) by size of library, 2017

from a hybrid facility, most (74%) reported hybrid responsibilities.

Type of Conservation Facility: Special Collections

The data indicate that practitioners in hybrid facilities were more likely to consider treatments standard practice than were their counterparts in facilities dedicated only to treatment of special collections: 45 of the 54 special collections treatments (83%) were more common to hybrid facilities than to special collections–only facilities. All treatment categories were more common to hybrid facilities, except for board reattachments, which were more popular with facilities focusing only on special collections. In 2007, in contrast, 73% of treatments were more common to facilities in which only special collections were treated, so preferences are reversed. The average differential for all 54 treatments was 10 percentage points (vs. the almost identical 11 points in 2007), with just 4 treatments displaying a differential of at least 25 percentage points, all of which fell into the category of protective enclosures and were more common to hybrid facilities (fig. 9). None was a repeat from 2007. Furthermore, when the category of protective enclosures is removed from consideration, the average differential between special collections and hybrid facilities is just 7 points, indicating that overall, special collections and hybrid laboratories are performing similar treatments at a similar rate. The data suggest that the practices of special collections–only and hybrid laboratories have become more similar in a decade.

Type of Conservation Facility: General Collections

Type of facility had a moderately strong impact on treatment practices in the general collections context, but somewhat less so than in 2007. Thirty-four of the 54 treatments (63%) were more common to hybrid facilities than to general collections–only facilities, and the average differential for all 55 treatments was 13 percentage points versus 17 points in 2007. Treatments in five categories were more commonly employed in hybrid facilities: protective enclosures, minor paper treatments, board reattachments, binding repairs, and advanced paper treatments. Binding reinforcements were more common in facilities serving only general collections, and treatments in the "rebinding styles" category were fairly evenly divided between the two types of facilities.

Seven of the 55 treatments displayed a significant differential ($\triangle \geq 25$ percentage points) in the general collections context, whereas there were 14 treatments with large differentials in 2007. Four of these treatments (cloth-covered clamshell box constructed in-house, "archival" tape mend, Japanese paper reback, and consolidating leather with Klucel-G) were more common in hybrid facilities, whereas 3 treatments with large differentials ([re]sewing entire volume, new sewn-on endsheets, and partial cloth hinge board reattachments) were more common in general collections–only facilities (fig. 10). Overall, treatment practices were more common at higher rates in hybrid facilities, but the differences in treatments—in terms of average differential in use and those with great discrepancies in treatment practice rates—are on the wane. This may indicate that type of facility is not as strong a predictor of practice as it was in 2007.

Type of Practitioner

In 2007, the data indicated that there were significant differences between the treatment practices of hybrid practitioners and their counterparts working solely with either special or general collections. When working with special collections,

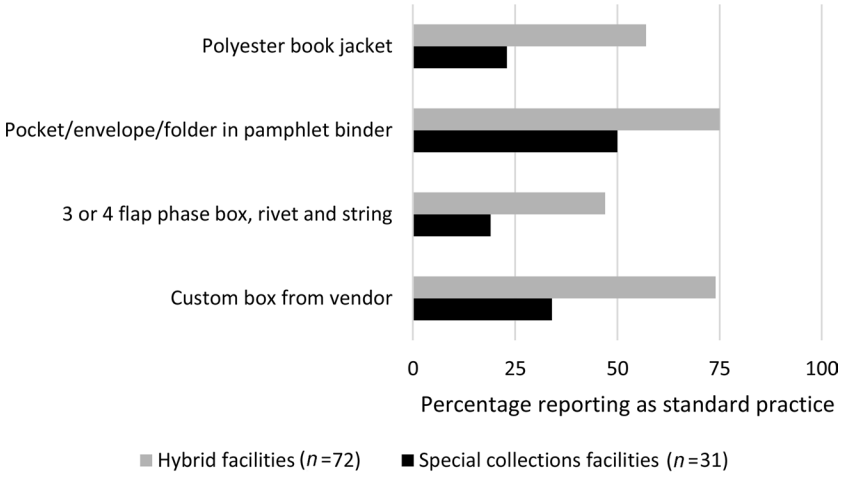


Fig. 9. Special collections treatments with significant variance in practice (≥25 percentage points) by type of facility, 2017

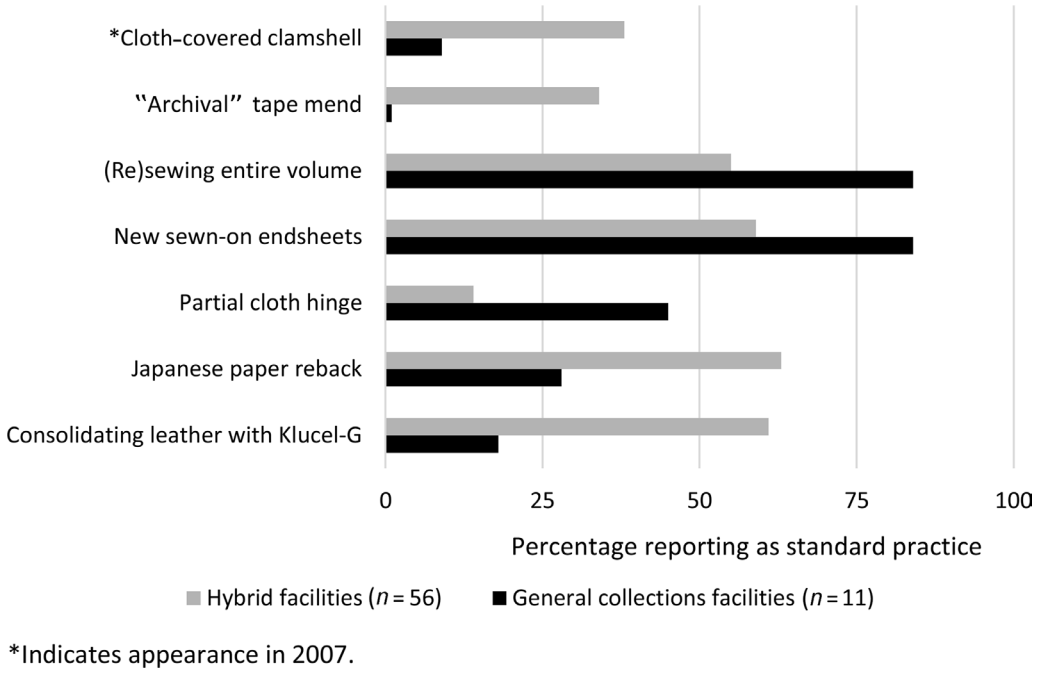


Fig. 10. General collections treatments with significant variance in practice (≥25 percentage points) by type of facility, 2017

hybrid practitioners tended to report fewer treatments, particularly more complex ones, as standard practice than did their special collections–only counterparts. Conversely, in the general collections context, hybrid practitioners tended to consider more treatments, including more complex ones, standard practice than their counterparts working solely with general collections. The 2017 findings confirm this trend, although the distinctions may be slightly less strong than in 2007.

Type of Practitioner: Special Collections

In the special collections context, practitioners working only with special collections were more likely to consider treatments, especially complex ones, standard practice than their hybrid counterparts. Thirty-eight of the 54 treatments (70%) were more common to special collections–only practitioners than to hybrid practitioners. In 2007, in contrast, the percentage of treatments favored by special collections practitioners was 89%, so the gap may be closing. Categories of treatments more common to special collections–only practitioners include minor paper treatments and textblock repairs, board reattachments, rebinding styles, binding repairs, and advanced paper treatments on bound volumes. The remaining two categories—protective enclosures and binding reinforcements—were favored by hybrid practitioners, but just barely.

The average differential for all 54 treatments was 12 percentage points compared with 16 points in 2007. Only 2 treatments displayed a differential of at least 25 percentage points, both of which were more common to special collections–only practitioners (fig. 11). In 2007, in contrast, there were 9 treatments with large differentials, all more common to special collections practitioners, none of which was repeated in 2017. The data indicate, therefore, that in the special collections context, whether or not a practitioner also works with general collections (in a hybrid position) is still a strong but lessening indicator of treatment practice than in 2007. The treatment practices of individuals working only on special collections and hybrid practitioners are more similar, although higher-end treatments are still favored at higher rates by special collections–only practitioners.

Type of Practitioner: General Collections

In the general collections context, practices were quite similar between hybrid practitioners and general collections–only practitioners, with 23 treatments (43%) more likely to be standard practice for hybrid practitioners and 30 treatments (55%) for general collections–only practitioners. (One treatment—cloth reback—was employed at equal rates for hybrid and general collections practitioners.) Classes of treatments more common to general collections practitioners were binding reinforcements, minor paper treatments, and rebinding; hybrid practitioners overall reported higher usage of binding repairs and advanced paper treatments performed on bound volumes. Use of protective

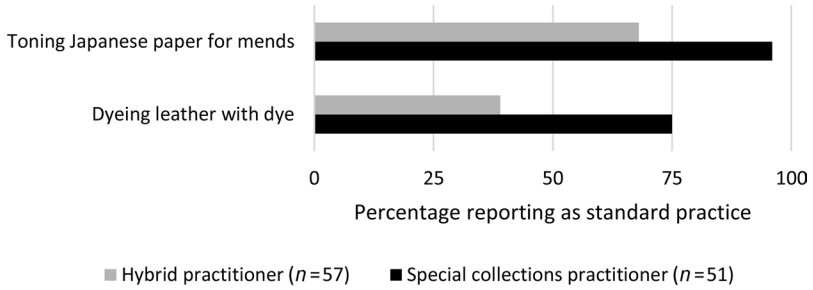


Fig. 11. Special collections treatments with significant variance in practice (≥25 percentage points) by type of practitioner, 2017

enclosures was highly popular for both types of practitioners; conversely, treatment usage rates were low overall for board reattachments in the general collections context. The average differential for all 54 treatments was 11 percentage points compared with 13 percentage points in 2007. Only 4 of the 54 treatments displayed a significant differential, all of which were more common to general collections–only practitioners than to hybrid practitioners (fig. 12). These findings are a switch from the 2007 data, in which all of the treatments with a large differential were more common to hybrid conservators. None of the treatments with big differentials is repeated among the 8 treatments that appeared in 2007.

In 2007, general collections data was considered a "moderately strong indicator of treatment practice, particularly with respect to more complex treatments" (Dube and Baker 2010, 150). It is still true that more complex treatments tend to be favored by hybrid practitioners, whereas the simpler treatments are more highly used by practitioners specializing in general collections.

Practitioner Training

The respondents identified where they were formally trained in conservation. The provided choices included (1) Columbia University, which later moved to UT Austin, a library and archives-focused program; (2) Cooperstown, which later became the art conservation program at Buffalo State, the State University of New York; (3) Winterthur Museum/University of Delaware art conservation program; (4) New York University/Institute for Fine Arts Art conservation program; (5) Camberwell College of Arts in Britain, which had a books and library materials conservation track; (6) West Dean College in Britain, with a book conservation track; (7) the conservation/restoration program at Sorbonne University in Paris; and (8) an "other" category for survey respondents to write in another formal training program.

Practitioner Training: General Collections

As noted in figure 13, the majority (58%) of respondents with conservation degrees attended the Columbia University/UT Austin program in the US. Most of the respondents with formal training from the British (UK) and American conservation programs reported that they worked in hybrid or special collections–only laboratories. When aggregating the responses from the three American art conservation programs (Buffalo, Winterthur/Delaware, and New York University), there were

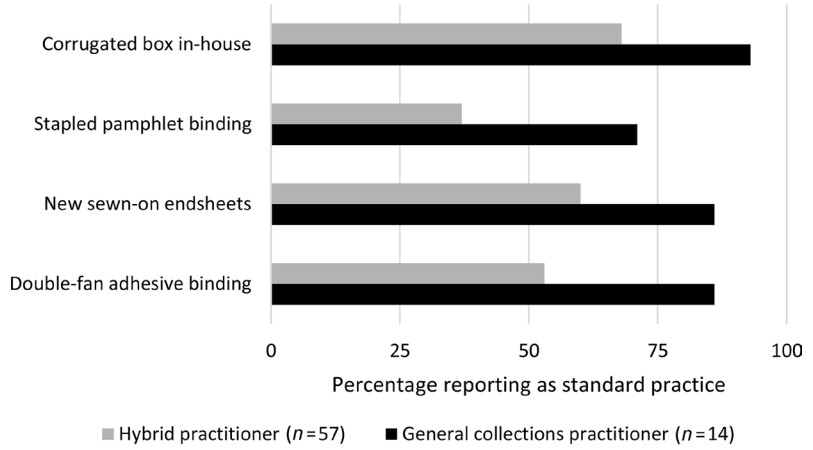


Fig. 12. General collections treatments with significant variance in practice (≥25 percentage points) by type of practitioner, 2017

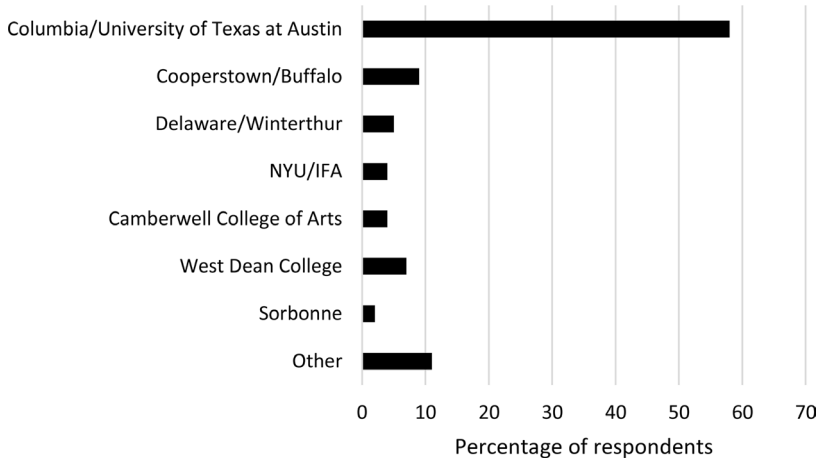


Fig. 13. Respondents' conservation training programs, 2017 (n = 122)

only three respondents who worked on general collections, joined by just four respondents among those who trained in the UK (Camberwell or West Dean). Because the sample sizes were so small, correlations could not be reached between training programs and general collections treatment practices.

Practitioner Training: Special Collections

In the special collections context, however, there was sufficient data to compare the responses from those who attended the Columbia/UT Austin library conservation training programs with the three US art conservation programs combined. This approach was justified because some training modules for book conservation students at those three programs have been taught jointly. In addition, data for the two UK conservation training programs were combined.

The data indicated that the practices among American-trained conservators are quite similar, whether the respondent trained at the Columbia/UT Austin program or an art conservation program. This may not be surprising, as some of the book conservation instructors at the US art conservation programs trained or taught at Columbia/UT Austin and undoubtedly took practices and techniques with them. Only five treatments showed a variance in standard practice of 25 or more percentage points (all more common to UT Austin graduates): heat-set tissue mending, new hinged-on endsheets, new sewn-on endsheets, lifting endsheets to save original pastedowns, and aqueous washing/deacidification (fig. 14). Of those, the latter three were performed by more

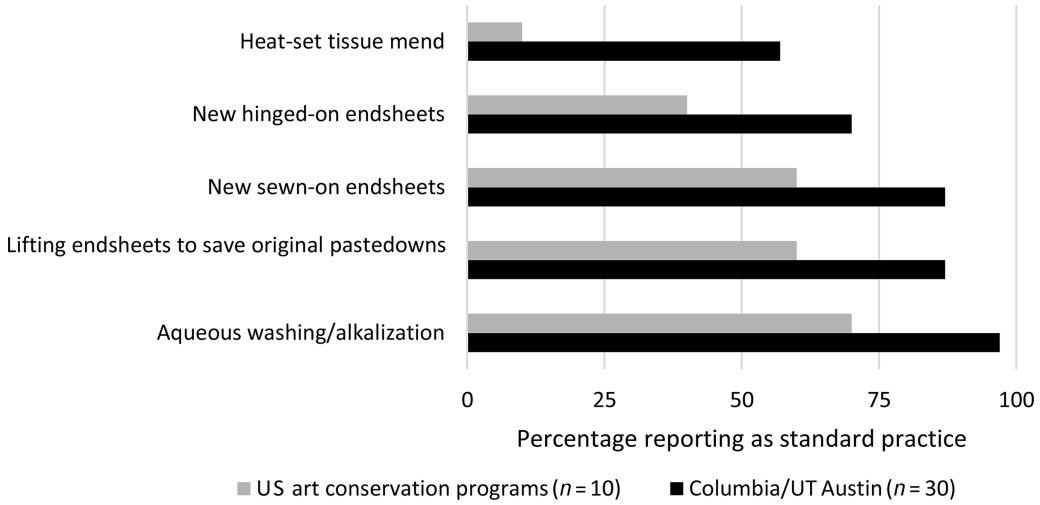


Fig. 14. Special collections treatments with significant variance in practice (≥25 percentage points) by respondents' conservation training, US art conservation versus Columbia/UT Austin programs, 2017

than 50% for both categories of practitioners. Heat-set tissue mending was the treatment with the greatest variance at a differential of 47 percentage points. Overall, the practices of US-trained practitioners were quite similar.

When comparing the Columbia/UT Austin graduates with those who graduated from UK conservation training programs, 16 treatments showed a variance of 25 or more percentage points, as displayed in figure 15. The data indicate that there are the fewest similarities between special collections treatment practices for the Columbia/UT Austin graduates and the practices of graduates from UK conservation training programs. In addition, the differentials in practice for those 16 treatments were consistently large, with the smallest being 20 percentage points (cloth-covered clamshell box). The "new case" treatment had a differential of 47 percentage points, in favor of Columbia/UT Austin graduates. Ten treatments were more common to graduates of UK training programs, including joint tacketing, board slotting, split board bindings, and double-fan adhesive binding. Overall, the practices of Columbia/UT Austin graduates and the UK-trained practitioners working in American research libraries were not highly similar (see fig. 15).

Eleven treatments had a variance of 25 or more percentage points when comparing the US art conservation programs and UK conservation programs. These treatments also all displayed large differentials of 30 points or higher, but this may partially be a function of relatively small sample sizes. All but four of the treatments were more common to the UK-trained conservators; exceptions were tuxedo box, Japanese paper board reattachment, new case, and consolidating leather with Klucel-G, all more common to US art conservation–trained practitioners (fig. 16).

Overall, the practices of individuals trained at the Columbia/UT Austin programs versus the three art

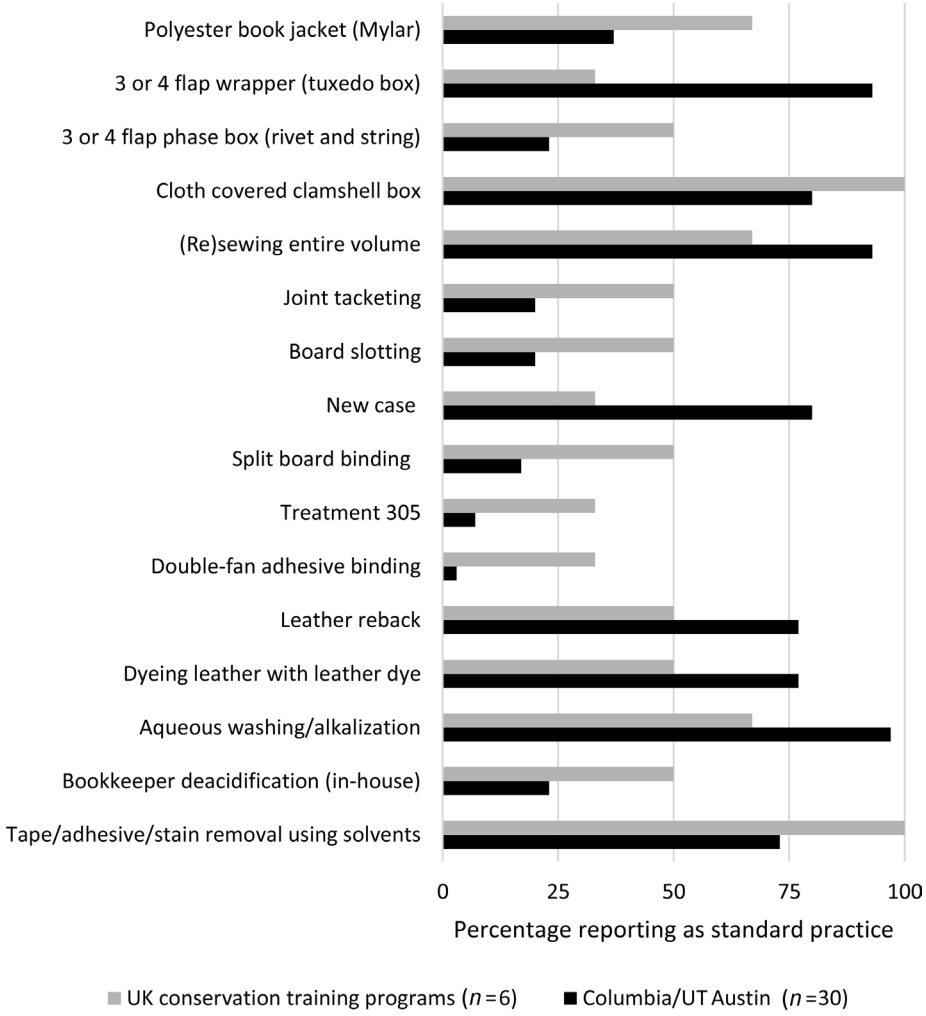


Fig. 15. Special collections treatments with significant variance in practice (≥25 percentage points) by respondents' conservation training, UK conservation versus Columbia/UT Austin programs, 2017

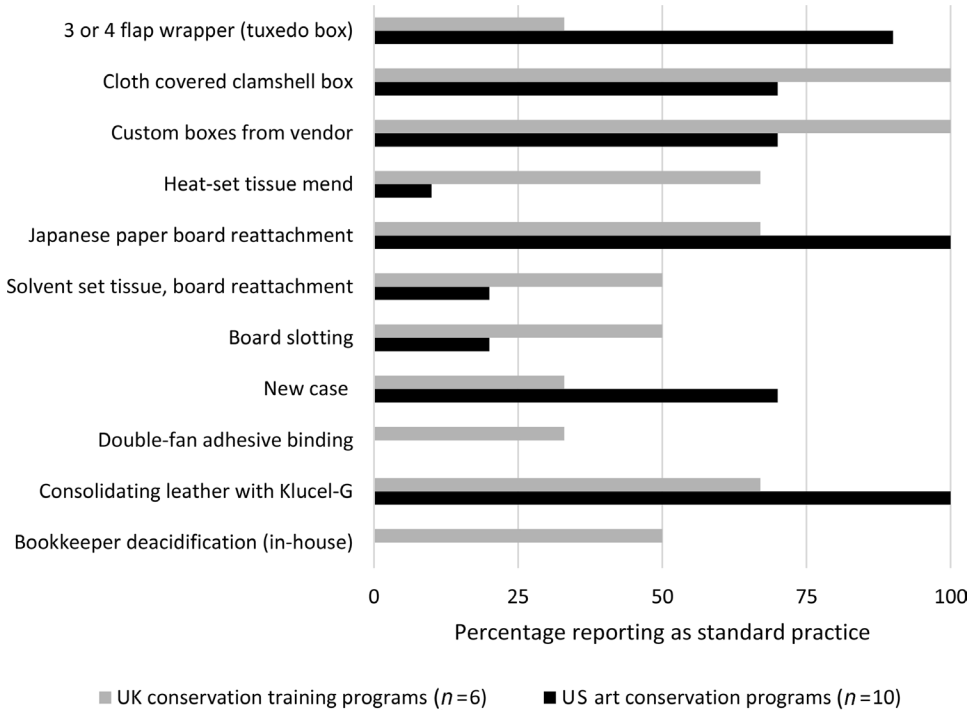


Fig. 16. Special collections treatments with significant variance in practice (≥25 percentage points) by respondents' conservation training, UK conservation versus US art conservation programs, 2017

conservation programs were the most similar, but admittedly there were also more datasets for those two types of practitioners, with higher confidence levels. More data from other training programs would lead to more conclusive results, but currently the practices of all practitioners trained in the US program are fairly similar. Still, at this point in time, most practitioners working in US research libraries with formal training were trained at the Columbia/UT Austin library and archives conservation programs. If this survey were repeated in another decade, as the numbers of art conservation–trained book conservators rise relative to the static or declining numbers of Columbia/UT Austin graduates, it will be interesting to see if the treatment data remain similar.

In 2007, the survey did not ask questions about specific training programs but rather just "informal" versus "formal" approaches, so it is not possible to compare the 2017 and 2007 data for this demographic variable. The analysis of the 2007 data noted that 93% of the treatments were more commonly reported as standard practice by formally trained practitioners than by respondents without formal treatment, with the conclusion that "in the special collections context, training is a strong indicator of treatment practice" (Dube and Baker 2010, 148). The 2017 data add to that analysis, indicating that where in the US one received formal training may not result in wildly different practices, but receiving training overseas may result in greater distinction in practice.

CONCLUSION

The results of this study indicate that the demographic characteristics of book conservation practitioners and their institutions—size of library, type of conservation facility and practitioner, and practitioner training—may be, to varying degrees, indicators of treatment practices. In analyzing the 2007 data, Dube and Baker concluded that the "practices of hybrid practitioners and hybrid facilities occupy a middle ground between those dedicated solely to special collections and those dedicated solely to general collections" (2010, 152). In 2017, this statement remained true, although hybrid practitioners have become more similar to those working only with special collections.

In comparing the results of the 2007 findings with the latest data, there were many more respondents in 2017 working with special collections materials than responded to the 2007 survey. This change could be a result of shifts in hiring practices, as Miller and Horan discovered, or it could be a function of allowing multiple responses per institution in 2017. There continue to be many individuals who are hybrids, working with both general and special collections materials. However, individuals working only with general collections have decreased significantly relative to the total respondent population, which is confirmed by hiring practices.

In addition, the trend of building or renovating a central laboratory space for both general and special collections treatment continued to rise, indicating that the work of conservation and repair departments is still valued by library administrators. In the special collections context, larger laboratories have greater standard toolboxes of treatments, whereas in the general collections context, size of library is less of a factor in treatment practices. Smaller libraries employed more time-intensive treatments at a higher rate, but overall size of library was not a major factor for general collections.

Centralized laboratories in which both special and general collections are treated reported more standard practices in the special collections context than special collections–only facilities, but overall, the practices of these two types of facilities became more similar in the past decade. Likewise, in the general collections context, 63% of treatments were more common to hybrid facilities, but the differentials in practice were small, so this variable is not a strong predictor for general collections treatment practice.

As noted earlier, the data continue to indicate that hybrid practitioners employ standard practices at a rate lower than special collections practitioners but higher than general collections ones. Hybrids continue to be at the center, as in 2007, straddling the practices of individuals dedicated solely to general or special collections. They are performing more advanced or complex treatments on general collections materials but fewer on special collections materials than individuals working only on those materials.

The 2017 data indicated that a graduate degree in conservation is more common for individuals working on special collections; hybrid practitioners are mirroring special collections–only individuals more in treatment practice than in 2007. The most common graduate degree overall, however, is in library or information science, not conservation. The data also indicate that where in the US a conservator trained is not a strong predictor of practice in the special collections context. However, there are significant differences between US-trained individuals and those who trained in the UK or elsewhere abroad. More data for overseas-trained practitioners working in US research libraries would strengthen the conclusions on how treatment practice is affected by training.

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APPENDIX: LIST OF TREATMENTS INCLUDED IN THE SURVEY

Protective Enclosures

(1) Polyester book jacket; (2) CoLibri polyethylene book jacket; (3) pocket, envelope, or 3- or 4-flap folder in a pamphlet binder; (4) 3- or 4-flap card stock book wrapper ("tuxedo" or variant style); (5) 3- or 4-flap "phase" box (rivet and string closure); (6) corrugated book box; (7) cloth-covered clamshell book box; (8) custom-sized book box purchased from a vendor; (9) polyester sleeves and/or encapsulation

Binding Reinforcements

(1) Pamphlet binding, adhesive attachment; (2) pamphlet binding, stapled; (3) pamphlet binding, sewn

Minor Paper Treatments And Textblock Repairs

(1) Creating/inserting photocopied replacement pages; (2) mending with "archival" tape; (3) mending with heat-set tissue; (4) mending with remoistenable/solvent-set tissue; (5) mending with Japanese paper and paste; (6) guarding sections with Japanese paper and paste; (7) toning Japanese paper for mends and/or fills; (8) resewing several sections; (9) (re) sewing an entire volume; (10) barrier spine lining of Japanese paper and paste; (11) new endsheets, tipped-on; (12) new endsheets, hinged onto the spine with Japanese paper; (13) new endsheets, sewn-on

Board Reattachment Methods

(1) Joint tacketing, (2) Japanese paper board reattachment, (3) toning Japanese paper with acrylics for board reattachment, (4) solvent-set tissue board reattachment, (5) board slotting, (6) partial cloth hinge, (7) new slips

Rebinding Styles

(1) Recase, (2) new case, (3) lapped case/Bradel binding, (4) new limp vellum and/or limp paper case, (5) sewn boards, (6) split boards, (7) Treatment 305, (8) double-fan adhesive

Binding Repair Techniques

(1) Cloth reback, (2) leather reback, (3) Japanese paper reback, (4) reattaching detached spine with hollow tube or v-hinge, (5) lifting endsheets to save original pastedowns, (6) dyeing cloth with acrylics for binding repairs, (7) dyeing leather with leather dye, (8) consolidating leather with Klucel-G

Advanced Paper Treatments Performed On Bound Volumes
(1) Aqueous washing/alkalization, (2) Bookkeeper deacidification spray in-house, (3) tape/adhesive removal using heat, (4) tape/adhesive/stain removal using water, (5) tape/adhesive/stain removal using other solvents, (6) dry-cleaning with vinyl erasers and/or vinyl eraser crumbs

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