



ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEASTERN RESEARCH LIBRARIES

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Contact: John Burger, [jburger@aserl.org](mailto:jburger@aserl.org) or 404.592.4830

## ***ASERL Endorses Ithaka S+R's "What to Withdraw" Report***

ATLANTA—(January 7, 2010)—During its recent Membership Meeting, the Association of Southeastern Research Libraries (ASERL) endorsed the findings of "[What to Withdraw: Print Collections Management in the Wake of Digitization](#)", a report published by Ithaka S+R, the strategy and research arm of ITHAKA. Notably, the report recommends that libraries can safely consider withdrawing numerous copies of JSTOR-digitized journals from their collections and that they take a number of steps to increase the number of journal titles subject to withdrawal more broadly. ASERL believes these recommendations have the potential to alleviate space crunches in overcrowded university libraries across the country.

"Academic libraries are seeing more and different kinds of users than ever before," commented Deborah Jakubs, ASERL's Board President and Vice Provost for Library Affairs at Duke University. "Knowing that this important content will continue to be available from a variety of trusted repositories allows ASERL libraries great flexibility to determine optimal uses for their facilities, based on the needs of their local communities."

Co-authors Roger C. Schonfeld, manager of research, and Ross Housewright, analyst at Ithaka S+R, analyzed the rationales for retaining and preserving scholarly journals in print format, incorporating research conducted by Candace Yano, a professor of industrial engineering and operations research and in the Haas School of Business at UC Berkeley. They concluded that materials that are adequately digitized and preserved in digital form, contain few images, and are preserved in an appropriate number of print repositories, may be safely withdrawn from library collections without threatening their preservation.

JSTOR's digitization standards and formal partnerships with print repositories at the University of California and Harvard should provide the community with reasonable confidence that many of the JSTOR-digitized text-only journals are sufficiently well preserved such that library copies are not needed for preservation purposes and can be considered for withdrawal. Libraries will, of course, still need to consider any ongoing need for continuing access to print in consultation with their local communities and consortial partners.

"We have confirmed there is a safety net in place for this content should the original print versions ever be required for re-digitization," commented Schonfeld. "Libraries can safely consider deaccessioning a variety of journals that meet key criteria, which include many of the text-only JSTOR-digitized journals at this time."

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The authors believe many other print journals can likely be deaccessioned responsibly, but the data and accompanying analysis needed to confirm the preservation status of these journals is not yet widely available. Working with partners in the coming years, Ithaka S+R hopes to expand libraries' collections management options by analyzing the withdrawal potential of a far larger number of journals from a variety of sources beyond JSTOR.

“ASERL member libraries and others are exploring ways to share the effort of long-term archiving of print materials, while ensuring long-term availability of the content,” noted Jakubs. “The findings from the Ithaka S+R report represent an important step in developing such a network of storage systems for the future.”

### **About ASERL**

Founded in 1956, ASERL is the largest regional academic library cooperative in the country. ASERL operates numerous projects designed to foster a high standard of library excellence through inter-institutional resource sharing and other collaborative efforts. By working together, ASERL members continue to provide and maintain top quality resources and services for the students, faculty, and citizens of their respective communities. More information about ASERL can be found at [www.aserl.org](http://www.aserl.org).

### **About Ithaka S+R**

Ithaka S+R ([www.ithaka.org/ithaka-s-r](http://www.ithaka.org/ithaka-s-r)) is the strategy and research arm of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization dedicated to helping the academic community use digital technologies to preserve the scholarly record and to advance research and teaching in sustainable ways. The Ithaka S+R team supports innovation in higher education by working with initiatives and organizations to develop sustainable business models and by conducting research and analysis on the impact of digital media on the academic community as a whole. Insights from these efforts are shared broadly, with more than a dozen reports freely available online. JSTOR, an accessible archive of more than 1,000 scholarly journals and other content, and Portico, a service that preserves scholarly content published in electronic form for future generations, are also part of ITHAKA.

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