Board reattachment decision guide for joint failure

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1. Introduction

Board reattachment is a conservation procedure to join detached cover boards to the text block of a book using a flexible hinge.

Selecting the most appropriate technique or combination of techniques from over a dozen possibilities currently in use can be challenging due to multiple factors and variables that must be considered for each book.

2. Question

The book conservators at Library and Archives Canada asked the question:

“Can decision making for board reattachment be simplified?”

3. Methodology

Mapping the decision process began in 2010. Research into historical and current trends in board reattachment resulted in the development of a selection criteria template for each method.

Trials were conducted by applying thirteen board attachment techniques to eighty books followed by an evaluation of each technique relative to the characteristics of the binding features.

4. Binding features critical to board reattachment techniques

5. Board reattachment techniques

- Strip repair
- Japanese tissue hinge
- Solvent-set tissue repair
- Inside cloth hinge
- Pleated paper hinge

Spine lining
- Full lining
- Split linen flange
- Board slotting
- Split board

Extend supports
- Joint tacket
- New supports - recessed cords
- New supports - sewn or adhered
- New supports - thread
- Extend raised supports

6. Results

Board reattachment decision making is simplified by an in-house Excel tool which provides the best options based on the characteristics of each individual book.