

1986: Commission on Preservation and Access Formed

In spring 1986, following publication of the report *Brittle Books*, CLR's Committee on Preservation and Access became the independent Commission on Preservation and Access (CPA), created to guide the national preservation effort, with emphasis on the acid paper problem.

Funding for the Commission's first three years was provided by CLR, the H.W. Wilson Foundation, eight universities (Columbia, Yale, Indiana, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, University of Michigan, Princeton, Harvard, and Stanford), and participants in the New York State Preservation Program.

[Patricia Battin](#), director of library services and vice president for information services at Columbia University, was appointed the commission's president in 1987. Two years after her retirement in 1994, CPA was re-merged with CLR to form the Council on Library and Information Resources.

In 1988, on behalf of the Association of Research Libraries, the Commission on Preservation and Access, and the National Humanities Alliance, Battin testified before the U.S. House of Representatives' Subcommittee on Interior and Related Agencies (Committee on Appropriations) to propose a collaborative approach to preserving the nation's brittle books and to ask for an increase in federal funding for preservation microfilming. Her testimony led to an increased appropriation of \$8 million, and a 20-year brittle books preservation plan to microfilm three million endangered volumes, through the National Endowment for the Humanities [Brittle Books Program](#).

In 1999, Battin received the National Endowment for the Humanities medal for her "exemplary public service by organizing and leading a national campaign to save millions of brittle books in America's libraries and archives."

[Read more](#) about the CPA's formation in this excerpt from CLR's annual report ending June 30, 1986, pp. 27–29.