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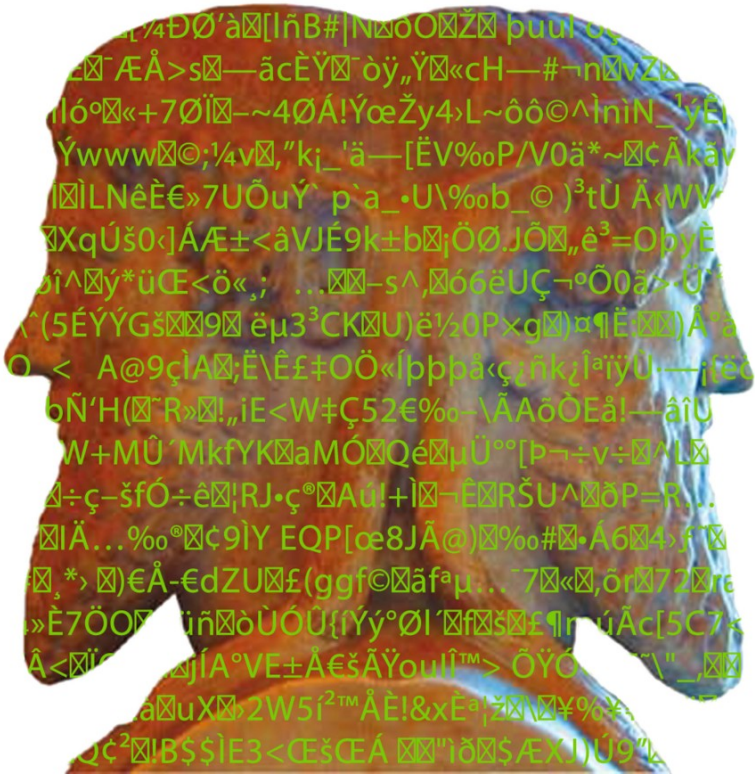
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PROVENANCE

Volume XXVIII, 2010



History on the Move

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Let's Give Them Something to Talk About: Advocating for Archives*

Kathleen D. Roe

Every morning I drive to work past Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, a highly regarded college in the northeast for engineers, architects, mathematicians, and a predictable array of geeks and techno-nerds as well as a couple of what my daughter would term “hot college kids.” What fascinates me during my drive, beyond the people-watching opportunities, is a banner displayed on the overpass linking the two sides of campus that poses one simple question to the students: “Why not change the world?”

I love the spirit that reflects, the encouragement it provides for these fertile minds to have big ideas, big dreams, and big goals. Am I envious of them? Not a bit—because as archivists, we are already there. And I don’t mean because we have our own contingent of geeks, nerds, and “hotties” but because what we do, what results from the use of archival records already DOES change the world. It’s just that we almost never TALK about it.

Think about your last conversation about archives. My bet is that it was either about an archival process or

technique (perhaps EAD-speak or MPLP patter) or about the interesting historical content of some record or about the vaunted researchers who came to use your collections. When was the last time you told someone a compelling story about how the resources in your archives made it possible for someone to obtain rights or benefits? How those resources influenced a major policy decision? How archives helped someone connect with their family or community? Or how archival resources literally saved a life? Too often archives and archivists operate in the background, doing essential but unheralded service. The time has come for this profession to step forward and share the stories of how archives change lives and make important contributions to our society.

Let's step back a moment, though, and talk about what people think about archives. When you tell someone you are an archivist or that you work with archival records, what do they say? "Oh, that must be sooooo interesting." We do not elicit fear as dentists do, the jokes made about lawyers, or the glazed look that bankers engender. When people look at an historical record, as evidenced by the crowds at the National Archives, the two most common words are "oooooh" and "ahhhhhh" followed closely by "look at that handwriting." People love our "stuff" and in an inchoate way understand that there must be some larger purpose or value to all this. In truth they generally haven't a clue what to make of archival records beyond the age or treasure status. So it follows that it does not come immediately to mind for them what difference archival records make.

Knowing that we have so many well-meaning constituents, potential supporters and users, what do we as professionals tell them about archives? We go straight for the jugular and tell them such things as:

- "Did you know George Washington's teeth were actually made out of wood?"

- “We have records that prove Uncle Sam was a real person.”
- “We have reports from a woman who infiltrated Emma Goldman’s organization and sent information to an investigative committee on her activities.”
- And one that will go over especially badly here in Georgia and South Carolina, “We have a diary that shows there were people in Atlanta who aided Sherman’s Union soldiers.”

Somewhere in the far recesses of your mind, does anyone hear a voice screaming “so what?” We often tell people about some amazing historical fact or information in our holdings, or the “treasures” we have--and there are some truly astonishing, fascinating ones. However that does not get us past the “ooooh aaaaah” effect. What we rarely, if ever, talk about is the value of archives and research therein, the outcomes that have been realized because of the use of archival records. We are too often silent about how archives change lives, how they influence decision-making, how they literally can change the fabric and nature of a life, a community, and the landscape of our nation.

So what does it look like when we provide information on the value resulting from the use of archival records? To begin with, here are several examples that demonstrate the specific outcomes of using archives:

Biologists in Georgia are trying to reintroduce the American chestnut, which was almost entirely wiped out by an Asian fungus in the 1930s. But identifying where to plant them so their survival is most likely had been a challenge until one staff member of the Department of Natural Resources went to the state archives and found maps created as the state surveyed land ceded to Georgia by the Creek and Muscogee Indians. The surveyors marked the lots by recording the tree species growing at the corners

there and painted lot numbers on those trees. The resulting maps provide biologists an excellent picture of locations where the American chestnut had grown well in the past, and have served as a guide for the replanting efforts.¹

In the Town of Amherst (NY) the archives has served the town during a controversy that developed between a shopping mall owner and a senior center in the town over an existing right-of-way between a senior center and a local shopping mall. The shopping mall developer had threatened to close the access route fearing litigation, but a letter of agreement located by the archivist in the local planning department's files was used to validate that it was the original intent of the developer, as well as the town, to allow the seniors to use the path. The pathway was kept open.²

In July 2002 a serious disaster occurred at the Quecreek Mine in Somerset County, Pennsylvania with 9 miners being trapped alive underground. No accurate maps showing all the current and closed tunnels existed for the mine, posing serious problems for rescue plans. But the family of a former Department of Environmental Protection mine inspector, who worked from his home, had donated his maps, including ones for Quecreek, to the Windber Museum. Those maps were made available and played an essential role in the location and planning for the rescue of the miners. So literally, archives can save lives.³

¹ S. Heather Duncan, "Old maps give clues where fabled chestnut trees might grow," *The Macon Telegraph*, April 18, 2009, accessed October 21, 2010, <http://www.macon.com/2009/04/18/686786/old-maps-give-clues-where-fabled.html>

² "Archives and You: The Benefits of Historical Records" NY State Archives, State Education Department, Albany, NY, 1990

³ Testimony of Barbara Franco, Director of the Pennsylvania History and Museum Commission before the U.S. House of Representatives Subcommittee on Information Policy, the Census and the National Archives, June 9, 2010.

These are very different stories, but note how each demonstrates very clearly a specific benefit, gain, or value resulting from the use of archives, something that literally either changes the landscape, the rights of individuals, or the quality of a life. Not bad, is it? There are stories like this being played out every day in archives across the country. All too often, we don't know about them. We need to find them—by communicating with our researchers and our staff or colleagues so they do a little “talking” and bring out this essential information. Our good colleagues at the Georgia Archives literally track this type of information in a file on their reference/research website. The Society of American Archivists has just launched an Archives Month campaign called “I found it in the Archives” urging archival institutions to hold contests and undertake initiatives to reveal what users are doing with and finding in historical records.

Turning to another value of archives, as a democracy, we also sometimes forget the essential role that records play in holding governments and individuals accountable. In 2003, the International Conference of the Roundtable on Archives (CITRA) met in Capetown, South Africa, to discuss “Archives and Human Rights,” where Bishop Desmond Tutu observed that “...records are crucial to hold us accountable... They are a potent bulwark against human rights violations.”⁴ Truth and reconciliation commissions, court trials, and many legal proceedings rely on the evidence in archives. Accountability, the demonstration of what really happened, can be enormously important. Let me give you two examples from the United States, lest we

⁴ “Transcription of Speech by Archbishop Desmond Tutu at the 37th Annual Citra Conference: 21 October 2003” <http://new.ica.org/3715/reference-documents/archbishop-desmond-tutu-keynote-capetown-south-africa-21-october-2003.html>, accessed October 21, 2010.

forget that “truth” or “what really happened” is not always immediately available or revealed in our own society:

In 1950, Mary Jean Price, salutatorian of her high school, tried to enroll at her hometown college to become a teacher. She was denied access because she was an African-American and never went to college to fulfill her dream. Instead she stayed at home, helped her aging parents, got married, worked as a janitor, and buried the story. Many years later, she finally told her son and he pursued the facts in the university’s archives. There he unearthed the evidence that she was denied entrance specifically because she was an African-American. He shared that information, and as a result, 60 years later his mother was awarded an honorary degree from Missouri State University. The stories found in archives may not always be “happy,” but confirmation of the accuracy and truth of a situation was extremely important in this case.⁵

Another piece of information that many who lived through the Sixties and Seventies have long wondered about relates to the deaths of four students at Kent State University. Some of us recall endless and divisive debates about whether the Ohio National Guard was ordered to fire on the student demonstration. A KSU communications student had a reel-to-reel tape machine running in his dorm room on May 4, 1970, capturing 30 minutes of audio of the protest, including 13 seconds of the shooting and the aftermath. After preserving the recording for 40 years, the former student learned that the technology now perhaps existed to reduce background noise so that it might be possible to hear if an order to fire was given. The tape was analyzed, and results were found that indicated a handgun appears to have been shot off before the Guard began to fire, leading to further investigation of reports that an FBI

⁵ “Sixty years after rejection, college grants degree” by Ryan McCartney, msnbc.com, July 30, 2010, accessed on October 21, 2010, http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/38472533/ns/us_news-life/.

agent was seen firing his revolver. That generates more questions, but the archival survival of this tape gives a bit more evidence that may help lead to the “truth” of this experience.⁶

Another very persuasive route to gaining support and attention is to demonstrate that archivists have some substantial competencies and capacities to offer to stakeholders and constituents. In a recent Congressional hearing on the National Historical Publications and Records Commission, Karen Jefferson of the Atlanta University Center and Kaye Lanning Minchew of the Troup County (GA) Archives spoke very persuasively about the skills archivists have that will help in dealing with the issues of managing electronic information.⁷ It bears noting that many, many managers and resource allocators “get” that email, blackberries, Facebook, Twitter, as well as databases and other electronic information sources, pose an almost incomprehensible array of problems. The importance and value of our knowledge and capacities with electronic records became particularly clear when David Carmichael, Director of the Georgia Archives, and I met with Senator Carl Levin’s staff to request that the Senator become a co-sponsor of the PAHR (Preserving the American Historical Record) bill. It led to a serious 30 minute discussion about the challenges of electronic information and what archivists have to offer on this. Normally one can expect 5 to 10 minutes of even a staffer’s time; so, clearly this was a topic that really captured

⁶ “Audiotape of Kent State Shooting to Get New Analysis” AOL News, April 29, 2010, accessed on October 21, 2010, <http://www.aolnews.com/nation/article/audiotape-of-kent-state-shooting-to-get-new-analysis/19458944>.

⁷ Testimonies of Karen Jefferson, Atlanta Clark University and Kaye Lanning Minchew, Troup County (GA) Archives before the U.S. House of Representatives Subcommittee on Information Policy, the Census and the National Archives, June 9, 2010.

attention and support, as Senator Levin indeed became our Democratic co-sponsor along with Republican Orrin Hatch.

If the human stories or technology anxiety don't win over supporters to archives, the sheer economics can also be underscored. Professor Elizabeth Yakel and students from the University of Michigan did a survey to measure the economic impact of government archives on their local community. Some of you may have participated in this study, as we did at my employing institution, the New York State Archives. The study provides useful statistics such as the fact that archives were the primary destination of 69% of the people surveyed, and provides information on the amount of money they spent on average for food, lodging, and other expenses related to their visit.⁸ So for the hardcore realist among our managers, stakeholders, or government officials, archives can demonstrably stimulate the economy.

It takes a bit to develop the mindset for capturing the information that demonstrates the outcomes and impact of archives, but some practice will have astonishing results. And that little troublemaker in the back of your mind is probably saying to you "I can't take the time to do this. I can't collect this kind of information." Wrong, wrong, wrong. You may be a bit shy or reluctant to ask, you may have to do the dreaded statistics or collect data, but you need to do it, and you will learn amazing things—it will literally give you "something to talk about" that people important to your program will want to hear. We can also share the information we collect across our regions, among similar types of repositories, or within your two regional organizations. Everyone isn't alone on this – and we can tell each others' stories or find similar ones in our own repositories.

⁸ "Measuring the Economic Impact of Government Archives: A Nationwide Study," Archival Metrics, accessed on October 21, 2010, <http://archivalmetrics.org/node/22>.

That leads to the second major point I want to make. Consider which of the following apply to you and your archival repository:

- We are ridiculously well-endowed financially and can hire all the staff we want or need, all the equipment we want or need, and do all the programs and activities we want or need – and we always will have this level of financial support.
- We are a vital part of the (university/government/community); everyone loves what we do, understands what we do, values what we do and supports our organization.
- Our collections are being used by the optimum number of people for every possible use one could think of – and more.

If these apply to your repository, then I have nothing to offer you. However, for those who do not have these conditions, then the time is here to talk about the value of archives. Whether you work on the reference desk, process or preserve records, do archival web crawls, or are an archival manager, advocacy should be a part of your job – all the time, every week, every month, and every year. You need to do it consciously, and conscientiously. You need to do it. It is that simple.

Doubtless one of the following is likely to go through the mind of many archivists:

- It's not my job – I'm just the archivist, not a manager/politician etc.
- I hate having to suck up to [choose the one that relates to you] politicians, managers, university presidents, board members.
- I don't like to have to beg for things.
- I have no training for this.
- It's not a good time to be asking for money, equipment, staff.

- But I have so much work I need to do ... I don't have time for that.

If you're not saying it now, you will use those excuses later – especially the last one.



Kathleen Roe encourages archivists at the 2010 Society of Georgia Archives annual meeting to advocate for their archives.

As many of you know, I've been working for over 3 years with colleagues in the Council of State Archivists, the Society of American Archivists, and the National Association of Government Archives and Records Administrators on an effort to obtain federal legislation, the PAHR Act, to bring \$50 million in formula-based funding to the states and territories.⁹ One of the most compelling things I was told by Anne Georges, a very savvy and experienced member of the staff of our lead House sponsor, Congressman Maurice Hinchey, gets to the heart of the problem. She told me that there was absolutely no doubt in her mind that we could get this legislation passed. "The only thing that will stop you," she told me, "is if your community does not do the work to make this happen."

⁹ Preserving the American Historical Record website, accessed on October 21, 2010, www.archivists.org/pahr.

Doing “the work” is the essence of advocacy. For PAHR, it has meant that we have had to prod, push, and plead with our professional colleagues to write letters, make calls, or apparently most scary of all, make visits to their federal legislators. It is essential to bring in the numbers from the “grass-roots” and we are making progress. But it would be disingenuous to say that the archival community has been highly responsive to our requests for support. Along with my dear colleague David Carmichael and the other members of the PAHR Task Force, we have wheedled, cajoled, and worked with many, many people to get letters and visits to take place. It takes time, patience, and support, but we are developing some really good advocates throughout our community, and there are people who’ve just given it a try despite their lack of previous experience.

It has meant pitching PAHR and getting support from organizations whose members will benefit: the National Association of Secretaries of State, the International Institute of Municipal Clerks, the American Library Association, various national genealogical organizations, as well as businesses like Ancestry.com and Hollinger Corporation. It’s work – but somebody, in fact everybody, has to do their share of it.

Advocacy is not just for national legislation, however. Think about what you do that you cannot do as well as you’d like, if at all, because someone else holds the purse-strings, can make decisions about your work, or is essential to opening the doors you need to do your work. You may need to advocate with your immediate supervisor to be able to work on a project you believe is critical, try a new approach, or move an idea forward. You may need to convince a donor to place an important collection in your care. You may need to convince administrators that your program is not the first to go on the budget-cut chopping block. The possibilities are endless. The solution is simple.

Start talking about what you do and why your archives is of value, inestimable value, for your constituents and for the person who makes the decisions.

Don't wait for a crisis before you start talking. Have you ever had a friend, a family member, or a colleague who only seeks you out when they need something from you? That happens to administrators, government officials, and resource allocators all the time. It makes them feel as good and as well-respected as it makes you feel when that happens. And let's face it, archives are not the easiest thing to explain – so you have to spend half of your time just getting them clear on what you do and what you have before you can ask for what you need, whether it is money, permission, or support.

So start “talking” to the people you need to influence now. They need to be familiar with you and your organization. Introduce your organization to those key people, invite them to events, give them a tour, show them documents that will touch their particular interests and their hearts. Offer to advise them on managing their own records – this is particularly helpful since there are a lot of records slob out there, and you have something of value to offer them.

If you can't do it, either because you are “not allowed,” you are too incredibly shy to speak to another person, or your natural voice sounds like the lead singer in a “screamo” band, you can be the background person who feeds the information to the person who can do the talking. Many times, in truth, it is much more effective to have someone who uses your service doing the talking to a resource allocator about why your organization is so essential to their work.

Advocacy takes real planning – from the identification of the audience to whom you need to advocate, to honing the message, to getting supporters to help you, to learning the ropes to successfully carry out your effort. I can't give

you all that in this brief time, but you can learn to do it. I can tell you honestly that it takes time to do it, but it is imperative that you take the time. Most importantly, I can tell you with absolute assurance that if you don't do advocacy, no one will come looking for you to be your patron, to give you money, or to change the conditions in which you work. You will not be able to change anything significant if you don't do advocacy, if you don't start "talking" about the value of archives.

We're not clerks stocking shelves at Wal-Mart, auditors scrambling to evaluate numbers, or personnel administrators managing paperwork and processes for hires and terminations – all those jobs need doing, but they do not have a very direct and immediate connection to the value of the function they support. As archivists, we have a unique and exhilarating opportunity to see very directly how what we do literally "changes the world" – and that is a great gift we should not neglect or squander. If you value what we do, if you value the outcomes historical records enable, then it is time for you to become an archival advocate. So I leave you with this final suggestion and request: Let's talk.

Kathleen D. Roe is Director of Archives and Records Management Operations at the New York State Archives where she oversees records management services to state and local governments, and the management of the State Archives facility, holding over 200 million items. She is past president of the Council of State Archivists and currently serves as chair of the CoSA Government Relations Committee. She has chaired or served on numerous SAA committees, is a member of the Government Affairs Working Group, and is a Fellow of SAA. Her current professional activities focus around serving as the chair of the CoSA/SAA/NAGARA Preserving the American Historical Record (PAHR) Task Force and advocating, nagging, and generally

talking endlessly about the need to enact the PAHR
legislation presently before Congress.

Through to Cyberspace: And What Janus Found There*

Richard Pearce-Moses

A few years ago, I was presenting at a workshop in electronic records management for state agencies in Arizona. Many in the crowd came from agencies that had done little or no thinking about how they would manage their electronic records. They had basic questions, like “How long do I need to keep email?”

The attendees were not happy to hear that the messages needed to be filed by content as retention period was based on the content, not the means of delivery. I pointed out that email may be the most challenging problem of electronic records management. Organization is difficult at best because the messages were managed – more usually unmanaged – by the recipient. Likewise, disposition was usually at the users’ discretion. Complying with discovery or open records requests was incredibly complicated, because any single message that should have been deleted could still be on any number of desktops, Blackberries, and personal computers at home. Moreover, transferring those messages that need to be kept permanently to the archives was no trivial matter.

The attendees wanted a simple answer, a specific period of time for all email. One fellow commented that managing electronic records should be easier at that point in the information age. The reality is we are not that far into the information age. Ford introduced the Model T in 1908, making cars widely accessible.¹ A hundred years later I rarely look under the hood of my car. I have looked under the hood very rarely in the last fifteen years. However, when I bought my first car in 1974 – a Volkswagen Beetle, which was considered very reliable at the time – I was regularly under the hood. To keep the engine running smoothly, I had to gap the valves on a regular basis, change the points and condenser, and check the timing. That was nearly seventy years after the Model T.

By comparison, dating the origin of the information era with ENIAC (*Electronic Numerical Integrator and Computer*) in the mid 1940s would be like starting with Karl Benz's patent for the automobile in 1886. The IBM 1401 Data Processing System, introduced in 1959, might be a better marker because it was the first system to sell more than 10,000 units.² However, the IBM PC, introduced in 1981, might be the most equivalent milestone in terms of popularizing the computer and putting it in the hands of non-technical people. The Apple II and the Kaypro came before the PC, but they were never as pervasive as the PC.

A century after the introduction of the Model T, cars require little maintenance. Given the thirty years since the introduction of the PC, computers are a relatively new

¹ “After 20 years of experimentation, Henry Ford finally saw the fruits of his labor in October 1908, with the introduction of the Model T. “The Model T Put the World on Wheels,” Ford Motor Company website, <http://www.ford.com/about-ford/heritage/vehicles/modelt/672-model-t> (checked 10 October 2010).

² “1401 Data Processing System,” IBM website, <http://www-03.ibm.com/ibm/history/interactive/index.html#/FoundationsOfModernComputing/1401DataProcessingSystem> (checked 10 October 2010).

technology. It should be no surprise that all the problems are not yet worked out, that IT systems are not as reliable as cars.

A little more than a decade ago, the National Archives and Records Administration first began plans for the Electronic Records Archives (ERA). Ken Thibodeau recounts that in 1998 few archives in the world had experience preserving electronic records, that only the simplest forms of electronic records could be preserved, that those methods were not scalable to the increasing number of electronic records, and that the archival profession had not yet provided a firm theoretical basis for long-term preservation and access.³

Some may believe that, from an archivist's perspective, things haven't really changed that much since then. I believe that the records management and archives professions have made significant progress over the past twelve years. At the same time, I believe that there is much work to do and that the work will be hard. I offer some personal thoughts on the state of digital archives.

Archivists are No Longer in Denial

Elizabeth Kubler-Ross observed that when faced with grief – especially with death – people regularly respond in five stages: denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance.⁴ Given the profound impact of digital information on the records professions, records managers and archivists are faced with the death of the old way of doing things.

³ Kenneth Thibodeau, "The Electronic Records Archives Program," Bruce Ambacher, ed., *Thirty Years of Electronic Records* (Scarecrow, 2003), p. 92. Note that the National Archives' work with electronic records predates development of ERA, with the first acquisition on 16 April 1970. See Thomas E. Brown, "History of NARA's Custodial Program for Electronic Records," in *Thirty Years*, p. 1.

⁴ *On Death and Dying* (Macmillan, 1969).

When I served as president of the Society of American Archivists (2005 - 2006), I was very concerned that most archivists were stuck in denial. I would often hear colleagues say, half joking, that they would deal with electronic records by retiring. Such a statement was less amusing when made by someone in their twenties. I was somewhat pessimistic about the future of the profession. If records managers and archivists did not step up to the plate, someone else would take their place. Many information technologists did respond, with the result that today many senior executives turn first to their IT shops for advice on electronic records.



Richard Pearce-Moses addresses attendees at the 2010 Society of Georgia Archivists annual meeting

During the year I was president, I worked hard to engage the profession in a discussion about electronic records. I talked to a lot of records professionals about their

response to the digital era.⁵ Fortunately, my pessimism was unfounded. I learned that most archivists did not have their heads in the sand, although their attitudes and approaches varied considerably.

Many archivists did not see a great need to learn technical skills. They indicated that they can hire someone with those abilities. I question if this approach is truly viable. Without technical knowledge, how will they know if the solution provided addresses the problem or if it is reasonable and sustainable? More than a few suggested that the next generation of archivists, who grew up with computers, would have the necessary skills. Unfortunately, the skills to use desktop applications, send email, and surf the web are not the skills that archivists need to preserve and provide access to the records.

In 2006, a group of archivists with practical experience working with electronic records came together at the *New Skills for a Digital Era* colloquium to address that question.⁶ The attendees noted that archivists need a robust, technical understanding of the very nature of electronic records in terms of media and formats. The participants also saw a need for familiarity with more technical skills, such as database management systems and query languages, markup languages, and file transfer.

One insight that surprised me, though, was a need for “soft” skills. To thrive in the digital era, archivists need to

⁵ See Richard Pearce-Moses, “President’s Message,” *Archival Outlook*, September/October 2005 and following issues; <http://www2.archivists.org/sites/all/files/AO-SepOct2005.pdf> (checked 18 Oct 2010).

⁶ See Richard Pearce-Moses and Susan E. David, *New Skills for a Digital Era: A Colloquium Sponsored by the National Archives and Records Administration, the Society of American Archivists, and the Arizona State Library, Archives and Public Records, 31 May – 2 June 2006* (Society of American Archivists, 2008). <http://www.archivists.org/publications/proceedings/NewSkillsForADigitalEra.pdf> (checked 18 October 2010).

work with a wide range of people. No one person has all the knowledge. Some of the most important skills records professionals can have include communication, negotiation, and facilitation.

Today, I think that a large number of archivists continue to struggle with electronic records because they lack technical skills. Archivists who are willing to get those technical skills are uncertain which ones they need. Fortunately, a number of archival educators have seen the need for formal education. Records professionals can get excellent training through programs at the School of Information and Library Science at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill and through the University of Arizona, to name only two.⁷ Clayton State University, in Morrow, Georgia, next to the National Archives Southeast Branch, has just started a program that focuses on digital archives.⁸

Through the Looking Glass

Records professionals are much like Alice through the looking glass. As they enter the strange space of electronic records, they see a world transformed. They see things in a new light. At the same time, they see a reflection on what they already know.

What do records professionals need to know to thrive in the digital era? I would answer with a question. What do they need to know about paper records (and other analog formats)? I began programming on a Teletype in 1968, and I began working seriously with the problem of digital

⁷ See "Concentration in Archives and Records Management," <http://sil.unc.edu/programs/arm> (checked 30 October 2010) and "Digital Information Management," <http://grad.arizona.edu/live/programs/description/272> (checked 30 October 2010).

⁸ See "Master of Archival Studies," <http://cims.clayton.edu/mas/> (checked 30 October 2010).

archives about ten years ago. Allow me to offer some ideas, based on my own experience and observations.

Most records professionals are unaware of what they know about paper formats. We grew up with paper. Much of our knowledge is tacit and unarticulated. The more time we spend with records in cyberspace, the more aspects of paper records and paper-based recordkeeping systems come alive. Over time, cyberspace becomes less strange and scary as we recognize the familiar in the new. Digital signatures and public key infrastructure? Not too far from chirographs, a technique used for centuries to authenticate records. Luciana Duranti used diplomatics, which has its roots in the seventeenth century, as a starting point to think about electronic records.⁹

Similarly, I think most archivists gain new appreciation for what they know about paper records when they start studying digital information. (By analogy, I really learned English grammar only when I studied German.) In this new context, concepts that were vague or assumed stand out in relief. The underlying archival principles take on new clarity.

Entering cyberspace, archivists begin to learn new terms almost immediately. They can name things that they had never really thought about before. For example, when I worked in historical collections I seldom thought about the authenticity and integrity of the records. Once, I questioned if a description on the back of a photograph was trustworthy. It was an early 20th century photo and the caption on the back did not seem to match the image. The

⁹ *Diplomatics: New Uses for an Old Science* (Society of American Archivists and the Association of Canadian Archivists in association with Scarecrow Press, 1998). For the source of diplomatics, see Jean Mabillon, *De re diplomatica libri vi. in quibus quidquid ad veterum instrumentorum antiquitatem, materiam, scriptuam, & stilum* (Luteciae Parisiorum, sumtibus viduæ L. Billaine, 1681), citation from the catalog of the Library of Congress, <http://lccn.loc.gov/07006236> (checked 18 October 2010).

caption was neither signed nor dated. More significantly, it was written using a felt tip pen, which meant it was significantly after the date the photo was made. While I questioned the caption, I never thought of the discrepancies in terms of authenticity and reliability. Working with digital materials, I understand those concepts much better, and understand why I was troubled by the caption.

Capturing publications from the web requires decisions about how far to follow links. What are the boundaries of the publication? Does a link point to an integral part of the document, or is it external information used as a reference? Include too many links, and the document could include the entire web. With print documents, the question is moot; they have boundaries. “Four-corner” documents have a first and last page, and the pages have limited dimensions. A staple is metadata made tangible, offering information (sequence and contents) about information (the pages themselves). What seems to be a trivial notion in paper has significant implications in cyberspace.

Spending more time with websites, it becomes apparent that many have a lot in common with archival collections. The individual or organization that produced the site is the provenance. The directory structure is analogous to series and subseries. By looking at websites as archival collections, rather than individual publications, it is possible to use archival methods to appraise, acquire, and describe the materials more easily.¹⁰

Although many things in cyberspace have a certain familiarity, they are not exactly the same. Correspondence and email have clear parallels. In spite of the similarities between paper and digital records, the formats are

¹⁰ See Richard Pearce-Moses and Joanne Kaczmarek. “An Arizona Model for Preservation and Access of Web Documents,” *DttP: Documents to the People* 33, no. 1 (Spring 2005). Online at <http://members.cox.net/~pearce-moses/Papers/AzModel.pdf> (checked 18 October 2010).

sufficiently different that approaches to managing them the same way may fail.

If people received their emails, Tweets, and texts on paper, they would take steps to manage the volume. At some point, their desks would be so cluttered they would have to throw away the useless messages and they would have to file the rest to find them. Otherwise, they would never get in their offices or get anything done. In the realm of paper, records managers took advantage of the filing system to manage retention. In the digital era, space and access are no longer a problem. People resist discarding and filing messages. “Get a larger hard drive! They’re cheap!” and “Why file? It’s easier to just search my inbox, even when it has 10,000 messages!” Records professionals – especially those involved with discovery and litigation – know these suggestions lead to more complex problems. However, the reality is that many (maybe most) people do not delete or file their email. The challenge is to explore this new space, this bit of *terra incognita*, to find new ways that work, new ways that people will adopt. That process requires some of the soft skills I mentioned earlier. A bit of anthropology, sociology, and psychology wouldn’t hurt.

Continuing to explore cyberspace, archivists will quickly discover a vast area of digital preservation. Many individuals have done extensive investigation in this area, such as media longevity and format migration. Questions about how subtle changes in the way a document is rendered can affect authenticity and meaning of a record are very important and interesting. This work is invaluable. At the same time, it is often fragmented, and it is hard to see how those pieces fit together. More challenging, records professionals often find this information of little value when trying to offer recordkeepers practical advice on managing records.

Fortunately, to end on a positive note, a number of projects are trying to find ways to apply the ideas by

developing workflows. The Persistent Digital Archives and Library System (PeDALS) project is trying to automate processing electronic archival records.¹¹ Archivists in seven states worked together to define a common methodology to acquire, accession, describe, store, and provide access to electronic records. The methodology was expressed as business rules, discrete steps that archivists go through to curate a collection. Those business rules were then implemented in software. Writing the code took time, but it took considerably less time than manually processing the collections.

For example, the rules for accessioning records include taking an inventory to ensure that all files were received, that no extra files were received, and that the files' integrity was not compromised. The rules to describe the records include running the New Zealand Metadata Extractor to capture preservation metadata. Rules for description also include writing rules to map metadata received with the records to a standard schema.

This approach is, I believe, a paradigm shift. Archivists will no longer work directly with records. Given current resources, traditional approaches will not scale to inspect, organize, describe, and preserve a million emails. In

¹¹ Persistent Digital Archives and Library System (PeDALS). Principal support from the Library of Congress, National Digital Information Infrastructure and Preservation Program, with additional funding from the Institute of Museum and Library Services, Library Services and Technology Act. See <http://www.pedalspreservation.org/> (checked 18 October 2010).

In addition to PeDALS, other projects are addressing similar concerns. Reagan Moore, Richard Marciano, and Chien-Yi Hou have been leaders in the area of distributed storage and rules-based processing through their work on iRODS and DCAPE. See "IRODS: Data Grids, Digital Libraries, Persistent Archives, and Real-time Data Systems" (DICE, 2010); <https://www.irods.org/> (checked 18 October 2010) and DCAPE: Distribute Custodial Archival Preservation Environments (SALT, 2010); <http://salt.unc.edu/dcape/> (checked 18 October 2010).

essence, archivists must find ways to take advantage of the fact that these are *digital* records, which lend themselves to machine processing.

These tales of cyberspace are hardly a basket of fruit and cookies from the Welcome Wagon. The profession is faced with two equally frightening realities: the vast amount that we do not yet know and the need to reconceptualize how we do our job. Dante tells us that the inscription above the gates of hell reads, “abandon hope all ye who enter here.” The same might be appropriate for cyberspace.

Whenever talking about the challenges records professionals face, I fear that I will trigger paralysis, the ultimate form of denial. Instead, I would like to leave them with encouraging words, with a sense of hope. Rather than fear of the unknown, I hope through a bit of autobiography my colleagues will sense opportunity and discovery in a new and untamed land. Originally, I did not want to work with electronic records. I knew it would be a lot of hard work, although I am happy to tackle a challenge. What scared me was that I knew there was real chance of failure, and I dislike failure. Fynnette Eaton, electronic records archivist at the Smithsonian at the time, gave me the courage to dive in when she told me, “Whatever we do, we may fail. But if we do nothing, failure is guaranteed.”

So, welcome to cyberspace! Dive in and give it your best! I promise you that when you do, you will find a fascinating world!

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Currently, he is the Director of the Master of Archival Studies program at Clayton State University in Morrow, Georgia. Previously, he served as Deputy Director for Technology and Information Resources at the Arizona

State Library and Archives. He has worked with a variety of subjects and formats, including photography, regional history, Native American art and culture, and state and local government. For the past decade, he has focused on digital archives and libraries, including finding ways to capture and preserve digital publications on the Web and new ways to automate processing electronic records.

He served as the President of the Society of American Archivists in 2005-2006. The American Library Association presented him with the Kilgour Award for Research in Library and Information Technology in 2007, and the Library of Congress named him a Digital Preservation Pioneer in 2008. Pearce-Moses is the principal author of *A Glossary of Archival and Records Terminology* (Society of American Archivists, 2005).

History on the Move: Relocating Special Collections and Archives

Pam Hackbart-Dean, Leah Agne and Julie Mosbo

As anybody who has moved from one house or apartment to another knows, moving is hard work. It requires physical strength, to be sure, but it also demands mental strength since any move will cause a mixture of excitement, frustration and anxiety. The most crucial step to minimize mental stress is planning, which should be started as far in advance as possible. Because every move offers its own challenges, communication, coordination and flexibility are also essential. The same principles apply to moving an academic library's special collections. The focus of this article is on the preparation and execution of a move. In it, we highlight the level of attention to detail entailed, which in turn necessitates an amazing amount of planning. And even then, contingencies arise. We share experiences that demonstrate the likelihood of obstacles along the way, problems to be resolved and the potential scope of post-move recovery projects. A successful move will ensure that the collections are undamaged by either the move or their new surroundings and that they are available to researchers as soon as possible. While the goal is

straightforward, the reality can be a challenge for any special collections center.

Established in 1956, the Special Collections Research Center (SCRC) of Morris Library at Southern Illinois University Carbondale (SIUC) holds 80,000 volumes of rare books and approximately 20,000 cubic feet of manuscripts and photographs in all areas of the University's curriculum and research interests. Early collections focused on the history of southern Illinois and modern literature. More recently, SCRC has grown in three particular areas: American philosophy, freedom of the press and censorship, and Illinois political history. SCRC continues to acquire materials related to southern Illinois history, American and British expatriate writers, and the Irish Literary Renaissance. SCRC also maintains the University Archives, documenting the school's history from a small teacher's college in the 1870s to the post-World War II boom in higher education that transformed SIUC into a modern research institution.

Our collections consist of late nineteenth to twentieth century types of paper, monograph and photograph collections, as well as bound ledgers, sound recordings (cassette tapes, reel-to-reel, wax cylinders, vinyl records), visual recordings (film, U-matic, beta tapes, VHS, DVD), a limited number of maps, architectural drawings, posters, portraits, and three-dimensional objects. Our rare book holdings range from old and fragile materials to current publications.

In 2009, SIUC completed a \$56.5 million renovation and expansion of the first five floors of Morris Library: to date, the largest capital project in the school's history. This massive undertaking included a 50,000 square foot addition and a complete makeover of the library's exterior and interior. During the previous four years, the bulk of the library's several million volumes, as well as its staff, were relocated to a new Butler-type storage building, specially

constructed on the edge of campus. Other library services were moved to existing structures, including an old lumber yard building and a former dorm. SCRC moved to two existing offsite storage facilities in 2005. These buildings held both collections and staff, with onsite reference service limited to one location. One building had been designed as library offsite storage, which meant that shelves were sized for books rather than archival boxes, though it did have a caged area which made it more secure. The second building, formerly a lumber yard building, also contained book shelving; additionally, we were able to install some mobile archival shelving. This building was off-campus in an industrial area. It had a barbed wired fence around the property and no signage, as well as an alarm system directed to campus police.

As a unit of Morris Library, SCRC had continual discussions with architects, university personnel and library administration about plans for security, environmental controls, and appropriate shelving within the renovated library. Any renovation or construction project typically encounters setbacks and delays, and ours did as well. Owing to our sensitive holdings, we were the next to the last unit to move back into the library. Circulating library collections and personnel had moved back in three stages, each stage being delayed at least three months due to construction issues. This added up to plenty of coordinating experience between university and library administration by the winter of 2009, when it was our turn to move. Leading up to this project, our staff consisted of four full time staff, three faculty and four students. We also hired two extra help positions. One assisted with surveying holdings, tagging individual collections to be moved, and updating our shelving locations once we moved into our newly renovated area, while the other worked on publicity projects in the new building. At the time we did not have a manuscript archivist, so the SCRC Director oversaw

preparations for moving the manuscripts.

Before planning the project, we reviewed the archival and library literature and found a wide spectrum of views on planning and moving library materials. However, there was less discussion of unexpected things that could go wrong even with extensive and conscientious planning.

A number of articles provide helpful examples pertinent to individual repository settings. These individual stories provide consideration on management issues pertinent to any move, including planning, moving personnel, building design and construction, public relations, staff morale, preservation, and security. Eleven archivists who have been involved in moves from small to grand in scale at institutions of all sizes recount cautionary tales and lessons learned in *Moving Archives*, edited by John Newman and Walter Jones.¹ Each of the archivists shares the common bond of moving an archival collection with few published guidelines in professional literature. Each author teaches us something new, reinforces what we already knew, and illustrates certain patterns. Their differences serve to explain how varied approaches can result in a successful move and how disasters can be avoided.

Two recent survivor tales related to renovation and moving are Emily Weaver's "Renovating the Atlanta History Center Archives: Moving People, Places and History" and Leigh McWhite's "A Comedy of Errors: Repository Renovation in Reality." Weaver discusses relocating collections during a renovation and moving them back to a permanent space, as well as layout plans for the "new" Special Collections at the Atlanta History Center.²

¹ John Newman and Walter Jones, *Moving Archives: The Experiences of Eleven Archivists* (Landham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2002).

² Emily Weaver, "Renovating the Atlanta History Center Archives: Moving People, Places and History," *The Primary Source* 28 no. 1 (2008).

McWhite chronicles the University of Mississippi's Archives & Special Collections timeline as anecdotal evidence of various hazards and problems one repository experienced during the construction process. It is a cautionary tale.³

Other resources are designed specifically to assist those planning and executing moving an archives and directed to those who have never taken on this responsibility. These articles contain specific information on packing, security, preservation, as well as equipment, personnel, and transportation required when moving an archives. Mary Frances Morrow's "Moving an Archives," identifies common challenges encountered during a move.⁴ Ted Ling describes the process of relocating an archives from an old to a new building.⁵ Caroline Bendix gives guidance on best practices for moving collections.⁶ Helen Forde discusses the organization and planning required for a successful move.⁷ Finally, Thomas P. Wilsted's *Planning New and Remodeled Archival Facilities* discusses various aspects of planning a move from establishing a budget to creating a move schedule.⁸

The Northeast Document Conservation Center has published *Protecting Collections during Renovation*, a thorough leaflet authored by Karen Motylewski, which

³ Leigh McWhite, "A Comedy of Errors: Repository Renovation in Reality," *The Primary Source* 28, no. 1 (2008).

⁴ Mary Frances Morrow, "Moving an Archives," *American Archivist* (Summer 1990): 420-431.

⁵ Ted Ling, "Shifting the Sands of Time: Moving an Archive," *Journal of the Society of Archivists* (2000), 169-181.

⁶ Caroline Bendix, *Packing and Moving Library and Archive Collections* (London: The British Library, National Preservation Office, 2005).

⁷ Helen Forde, "Moving the Records," *Preserving Archives* (London: Facet Publishing, 2007), 155-176.

⁸ Thomas P. Wilsted, *Planning New and Remodeled Archival Facilities* (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2007), 131-141.

proposes ideal solutions for renovation planning and for responses to fire, water, chemical hazard, and security emergencies. While there are no ideal situations and solutions in any renovation, Motylewski provides the basic understanding needed to apply ideal concepts to realistic, organized chaos.⁹

Laying the foundation: Where did We Start?

Project Planning

The previous SCRC Director, who had helped design the unit's new space, retired shortly after the project began. In 2006, the newly appointed SCRC Director, as well as a new University Archivist and Political Archivist, arrived in Carbondale. A new Rare Book librarian joined in 2008. Although the physical layout of the new space had been determined, some changes were allowed, such as installing security cameras in the reading room, acquiring appropriate archival shelving, increasing processing space with bigger tables, and adding wireless capability in the processing room and stacks area.

One of the first priorities for the new staff was to survey the holdings at the two storage sites. The new SCRC Director soon realized--after evaluating the overall size of the collections--that there was not enough space to move the entire holdings back to the newly renovated space. We decided to leave the archival copies of theses and dissertations, as well as unprocessed political and manuscript collections, in the "off-site" storage. Maintaining reference and access was another priority as was preparing individual collections for the inevitable move. Acquisition and collection development took a back

⁹ Karen Motylewski, "Protecting Collections during Renovation," (Andover, MA: Northeast Document Conservation Center, 2007) http://www.nedcc.org/resources/leaflets/3Emergency_Management/09ProtectingCollections.php.

seat. We accepted collections that fit our collecting policy but we did not actively solicit collections. Assessing what we had and preparing for our move were our most important tasks.

The university's budget concerns had an impact when it came to selecting movers. Choices included using only special collections staff to move all the materials, hiring local day laborers under the supervision of a professional manager and library staff, or employing a professional library moving company. We met with a library moving firm from St. Louis that would manage and provide labor for the move. However, the cost of this was prohibitive. Since our move was complicated by our various materials' formats and number of locations, we convinced library administration to hire a professional manager and local day laborers. We chose an experienced moving consultant who had planned and executed the move of the general collection of Morris Library and had experience moving other special collections. Most importantly, the consultant was able to work within our budget.

A date was set several months before the move for the winter of 2009. Due to scheduling and budget constraints, there was no chance of moving the date up to late spring or early summer. As the moving date got closer, we followed the weather reports very closely. Sure enough, two days before the move they began to forecast snow (which turned out to be rain). The Preservation Librarian and the SCRC Director sought to postpone the moving day, but the moving consultant decided against a last minute change.

Assessing services and collections

One of the hardest elements of planning for any move is to accept its impact on other projects. Depending on the state of the collections and the extent of processing or

accessioning backlogs, the tasks of labeling, measuring, and rehousing for a move will require considerable time and effort. Because we had moved once, we hoped that the collections were shelved in consistent order. Even so, we began initial planning for the move two years before the anticipated move date. This meant putting excellent projects and ideas aside for a limited time, which occasionally frustrated staff and patrons with seemingly “slowed” services and a temporary focus on physical rather than digital horizons.

Ignoring the normal divisions of labor, all staff contributed to the arduous and repetitive physical tasks of move preparation, assisting with such things as shelf reading, repairing labels, and dusting off boxes. It was important that all staff members fully understood the reorganization project that was underway and the importance of adhering to strict shelving and reshelving protocols during the period leading up to the move. The task of move preparation could become exponentially more time consuming if staff members undid each others' efforts. The tasks we worked on included:

- Shelf reading to create an accurate container by container shelf locator or to update the current shelf locator.
- Surveying for labels that needed to be replaced or reattached.
- Fixing incorrect or unclear labels.
- Measuring odd-size containers and logging standard container sizes, item by item.
- Repairing existing containers.
- Ordering archival-grade containers to replace any damaged containers or containers that would not protect contents during normal stacking and handling by movers.
- Accessioning (or re-accessioning) and rehousing loose materials in storage and processing areas.

- Setting a strict deadline for accessioning (or re-accessioning) and rehousing loose materials in all staff members' personal areas.
- Implementing the consistent use of call slips for retrieving and reshelving materials, if not already in practice.
- Planning a small-scale digital project that students or extra help could work on during the weeks of the actual move and shortly following when materials were temporarily inaccessible. The project we designed was to migrate our digitized photographs from a standalone program into CONTENTdm, which is now available on the web. This included cleaning up and adding to the metadata.

Even with all of those essential projects underway throughout the year prior to the move of the Special Collections, we already had a nagging sense that we were unprepared and behind schedule. In order to work with our moving consultant/manager, the SCRC Director needed a great deal of specific information about each collecting unit at a moment's notice.

To start, each unit was asked to give the Director a list of processed and unprocessed collections, along with the number of cubic feet associated with each collection and their processing status (i.e., if processed, to what level?). The next request involved determining the total physical size of each collecting unit, to be given in inches. In each unit, the individual archivists went around the two storage buildings to measure the rows of shelving and subtract empty spaces from the linear total. This effort encountered the following obstacles.

- It was hard to accurately measure unpackaged, loose, oversized material that had been stored in stacks, some of it awaiting basic accessioning.
- It was difficult to tell how the boxes would be arranged on new shelving (not yet purchased) or to

be able to estimate linear/cubic feet, depending on how boxes would be oriented.

- Unprocessed collections stored by accession number in the lumber yard storage facility were interfiled with materials stored for other collecting areas and had to be measured one box at a time, rather than by rows.

Once the initial survey was completed, each unit was asked to report how many and what type of boxes were associated with each individual manuscript and archival collection, and how much space might be needed for future growth. It soon became clear that we needed to survey all materials from each unit, box by box, and create an item by item shelf list showing the name of each collection, the record group, manuscript number or accession number, the container type (record storage cartons, clamshells, document flip-tops, etc.), the individual container number, an estimate of potential growth, the current location, the destination, and any notes (such as preservation concerns or additional work needed before moving).

Once the information was entered into a spreadsheet, we could use sorting and formula functions to assemble any needed physical description in our new shelf list. We devised codes for each different type of container, from standard boxes to odd shaped materials. This shelf list spreadsheet proved useful over and over again before, during, and even after the move, to answer additional questions posed by the director and moving consultants.

We used it to provide growth estimates and a mapped estimation of how the individual record series and collections would be shelved, including where each collection would start and end in the new building and where spacing would be needed. Once the move started, two more columns were added to list a movers' tag number and a shelf location in the new building for each individual archival container.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N
1	Building	Row	Bank	Shelf	Collection #	Box #	Box type	Accession	Title of EDC/Notes	Notes				
2	Storage 2	32	I	1	1	4	2-1	1	RC	684	Ben Gelman Collector	Photo negatives, oral history transcripts		
3	Storage 2	32	I	1	1	4	2-1	2	RC	684	Ben Gelman Collector	Southern Illinoisian Photographs		
4	Storage 2	32	I	2	1	4	2-1	3	HOV	684	Ben Gelman Collector	Southern Illinoisian Photographs		
5	Storage 2	32	I	2	1	4	2-1	4	HOV	684	Ben Gelman Collector	Southern Illinoisian Photographs and negatives		
6	Storage 3	11S	4.5		12	1	1	1-17				MacVicar		
7	Storage 3	11S	2.3		15	3	1	1				Doc-12, RC-3		
8	Storage 3	10N	4		16	3	1	1-18				Doc-16, RC-2		
9	Storage 2	36	K	7	16	8	1	1	HOV	746	Elena Slepceovich Papers	Austella		
10	Storage 2	23	M	6	16	8	1	2	RC	746	Elena Slepceovich Papers			
11	Storage 2	24	D	1	16	8	1	3	RC&VO	746	Elena Slepceovich Papers			
12	Storage 2	36	J	1	16	8	1	4	RC&VO	746	Elena Slepceovich Papers			
13	Storage 2	24	F	7	16	8	1	5	RC	746	Elena Slepceovich Papers			
14	Storage 2	25	B	7	16	8	1	6	RC&VO	746	Elena Slepceovich Papers			
15	Storage 2	26	A	1	16	8	1	7	RC&VO	746	Elena Slepceovich Papers			
16	Storage 2	25	E	6	16	8	1	8	RC	746	Elena Slepceovich Papers			
17	Storage 2	26	D	2	16	8	1	9	RC	746	Elena Slepceovich Papers			
18	Storage 2	26	L	4	16	8	1	10	RC	746	Elena Slepceovich Pap	Drawer #1		
19	Storage 2	26	N	3	16	8	1	11	RC	746	Elena Slepceovich Pap	T. Wood		
20	Storage 2	27	I	4	16	8	1	12	RC	746	Elena Slepceovich Pap	SHES Published Curriculum		
21	Storage 2	24	D	3	16	8	1	13	RC	746	Elena Slepceovich Pap	Teachers' Resource Guides & Related		
22	Storage 2	28	K	6	16	8	1	14	RC	746	Elena Slepceovich Pap	Springfield & Springfield		
23	Storage 2	31	N	6	16	8	1	16	RC&VO	746	Elena Slepceovich Pap	SHES Budget		
24	Storage 2	28	O	3	16	8	1	17	RC	746	Elena Slepceovich Pap	SHES Symbols, Folder etc., Personal Collection		
25	Storage 2	30	M	7	16	8	1	18	RC&VO	746	Elena Slepceovich Pap	Theses and Dissertations		
26	Storage 2	30	N	1	16	8	1	19	RC&VO	746	Elena Slepceovich Pap	Theses and Dissertations		
27	Storage 2	31	N	7	16	8	1	20	CS	746	Elena Slepceovich Pap	Personal file		
28	Storage 2	28	O	1	16	8	1	21	RC&VO	746	Elena Slepceovich Pap	Old medical books, Professional Assoc. Commr		
29	Storage 2	31	N	6	16	8	1	22	RC&VO	746	Elena Slepceovich Pap	Springfield speeches		
30	Storage 2	32	E	4	16	8	1	23	RC	746	Elena Slepceovich Pap	Health Education books and articles		
31	Storage 2	31	N	7	16	8	1	24	HOV	746	Elena Slepceovich Pap	Photographs, certificates, memorabilia		
32	Storage 2	32	D	2	16	8	1	25	RC-odd box	746	Elena Slepceovich Pap	Teaching curriculum kits and Society for Public		
33	Storage 2	31	N	7	16	8	1	26	HOV	746	Elena Slepceovich Pap	Sanitation Study, Dissertation		
34	Storage 2	32	E	4	16	8	1	27	RC	746	Elena Slepceovich Pap	Diplomas and artifacts: pins, medals, awards		
35	Storage 2	32	E	6	16	8	1	28	HOV&VO	746	Elena Slepceovich Pap	Awards and education, scrapbook		
36	Storage 2	32	E	6	16	8	1	29	RC	746	Elena Slepceovich Pap	SHES Permanent records		
37	Storage 2	35	M	4	16	8	1	30	RC	746	Elena Slepceovich Pap	Reprints, Files and Medical dictionary		
38	Storage 2	35	M	4	16	8	1	31	RC	746	Elena Slepceovich Pap	SHES '10, M. Pollack		
39	Storage 2	35	N	6	16	8	1	32	RC	746	Elena Slepceovich Pap	Health Books '5		
40	Storage 2	35	O	2	16	8	1	33	RC	746	Elena Slepceovich Pap	SHES early papers '4		
41	Storage 2	35	O	2	16	8	1	34	RC	746	Elena Slepceovich Papers			

Example of a survey used for collections not shelved sequentially

Physical preparation of collections

Moving arrangements dictated some activities required of SCRC staff as the scheduled move approached. Since an outside moving consultant would manage the actual move and day laborers would do the physical move, we labeled our collections with movers' tags. The task of moving of 11,000 boxes and 80,000 books out of two buildings and into a third needed to be highly efficient. We were only allocated only 13 days and a moving crew of 15 members.

As a group, the director, archivists and librarian had to determine how to shelve boxes in the new building and communicate the requests of the movers. We decided to use an S- pattern throughout the building so that the sequence of materials in each row wraps around continuously to provide a convenient and logical arrangement. Numbers and lettered labels were created for each row and shelf in the new facility and applied to the new shelves in advance.

This greatly improved the process of communicating with the moving manager, allowing everyone to refer commonly to rows by number and to determine easily that a certain box should land at a certain location in the new building. The manager planned for more than one area to be shelved simultaneously, providing him a method of verifying the desired spacing. Row numbers were laminated and affixed using removable tape and Velcro, so that we could easily rearrange and re-use them as needed.

Cleaning

Before moving any item into the new space, we made sure that the storage spaces and shelving had been cleaned appropriately. Because of the amount of dust and dirt left by the renovation that settled on the shelves, we had to have them cleaned twice. If a moving company or a library relocating service is used for the move it is best to find out whether they will clean the boxes. If not, local staff will need to wipe down all surfaces using reusable microfiber cloths which can be found in most hardware stores.¹⁰ We were told only a month before the move that SCRC staff would be the ones cleaning and dusting the boxes. The Preservation Librarian demonstrated how to properly dust the materials and boxes to staff and student workers. Each

¹⁰ For more information on general cleaning and stacks maintenance, see the following: Preservation 101, "Collection Maintenance," http://www.preservation101.org/session5/expl_maint.asp (accessed April 26, 2010); President and Fellows of Harvard College, HUL Weissman Preservation Center, "Library Preservation at Harvard: Cleaning Rare Books," <http://preserve.harvard.edu/guidelines/cleaningrarebooks.pdf> (accessed April 26, 2010); University of California at San Diego Libraries Preservation Department, "UCSD Stack Cleaning Procedures," <http://orpheus.ucsd.edu/preservation/bstclean.html> (accessed April 26, 2010); University of Washington Libraries, "Stacks Cleaning Procedures," <http://www.lib.washington.edu/Preservation/clean.html> (accessed April 26, 2010).

archivist or librarian was in charge of cleaning the materials on their own shelves with the help of shared student workers. Then, two weeks before the move, we were told that the day laborers would clean the materials and boxes as they were moved. Staff passed on the training they received to the day laborers. We had to double check to make sure that labels were not knocked off during dusting. If a label was not adhered correctly, the cloth would catch on the adhesive and pull the corners off.

To insure that we would have enough cleaning supplies, we purchased items a month ahead of the move. Some stores will only keep a certain number of items in stock and this gives them time to order more. Microfiber cloths proved to be a difficult item to find. We purchased ones made for car washing and had to make several trips to the only store that had them, as we kept buying out their stock.

Packing

Before we moved boxes, we examined each to make sure that the items were packed correctly and would not shift. Some of the storage boxes required spacers because they were not full. Fragile, breakable items like glass, glass negatives, ceramics, and plaster pieces were packed and padded securely.

As we packed the items, we had to keep in mind the exact route that these materials would travel. One of our storage buildings is located across town. To get to the library, the moving trucks had to drive through a gravel parking lot and over railroad tracks. The Preservation Librarian asked if the drivers could take a second route that would avoid the train tracks but the moving manager stated that there would be no problems going over the tracks. As a precaution we did triple check the packing of fragile materials to insure their safety. For some of the items, we were still not comfortable with the driving route. At the

request of the SCRC Director, the Preservation Librarian moved boxes of glass slides, glass negatives, and a plaster death mask in a separate vehicle.

Items that were less fragile, such as archival boxes, were placed in “speed packs” on dollies and/or on carts that were then stretch-wrapped. Bound volumes and books were placed on carts and stretch-wrapped.



Example of speed packs being loaded onto a truck

Additional Packing Tips

Spacers can be purchased from most archival suppliers. In addition to large quantities of spacers, we also used scraps of acid-free board leftover from projects in the Conservation Lab. Boards were cut to standard box sizes and inserted by staff and student workers as they worked in the collections. Maps, posters, architectural renderings, and other large format items often housed in map drawers could remain in the map drawers during the move. Our movers decided to remove the drawers from the cases before moving the cabinet. Though this was understandable

to reduce the weight, they proceeded to stack the map drawers on top of one another without paying any attention to the content inside or how the drawers sat on top of one another. Luckily, no damage was done.

Oversize document boxes were packed and transferred in the “speed packs.” While the standard document boxes packed together tightly in the speed packs, the odd size of the oversize document boxes allowed for only so many boxes per row. Without padding, the boxes shifted in the carton and became a headache for the movers.

Films, video, and audio were housed typically in sturdy boxes. They were packed tightly and to the top of the box to limit shifting during the move so that the tapes/film would not get tangled. However, the weight put stress on the boxes, which bulged at the bottom. Boxes endured further stress when the movers stacked the boxes on top of each other.

Moving Tags

To reorder boxes during the move in a planned manner, they need to be labeled with colored and/or numbered moving stickers that indicate the new sort-order at a glance. In our case, these labels were provided by the moving company.



Colorful tags make it easier for identification

Special movers' tags serve the dual purpose of creating a straightforward numerical sequence for shelving boxes and

identifying gaps from missing or misplaced boxes for the new space. They can also be used to indicate intentional spacing gaps by adhering several tags to one box. Larger spacing instructions for our movers had to be noted separately in shelf increments using large, brightly colored half-page flags affixed to the last box before a gap indicating the number of shelves to be left empty.

The moving manager offered to take care of all of the custom tagging of our collections for the SCRC move. Two weeks in advance of the move, he sent a lone assistant with the tags. We recognized immediately that the assistant could not accomplish his task alone in the time allotted and proposed a supplemental plan. SCRC staff would take over the custom tagging of the entire university archives, photographs and manuscript collections, leaving the smaller and more sequentially shelved political and faculty collections to the mover's tagger.

However, even under this plan, which called for all hands on deck assistance and 17-hour work days on the part of the SCRC archivists, there was only barely enough time to finish in two weeks, with almost no time built in for archivists to check the work or address any large problems, such as custom tags applied to the wrong boxes or applied out of sequence.

Our sequential mover's tags came in reels of 500, so in order for multiple people to apply tags simultaneously, the collections had to be broken down into precise sections of 500 containers and each person had to tag precisely those designated 500 boxes without adding or skipping anything. Our lack of a collection-ordered shelf sequence in the storage buildings complicated the task. If a box was missing, difficult to identify, or located in another building, a tag number on the reel would still have to be removed in order to get at the next number. So each tagger kept a collection of tags affixed temporarily to a sheet of Mylar, set aside in this manner to be applied later to any missing,

off-site, or problematic boxes. Sometimes large strings of sequential boxes from the same archival series were spread out between different buildings. Nearly every tagger at one time or another missed a box or string of boxes early in the day and created a major sequential error that involved painstaking after-hours correction.

At the end of the two-week tagging crunch, the move manager arrived to prepare the moving crews. Looking over the tagged collections and considering the complexity of the sequence, he decided to take reordering the collections out of the moving project. Since reordering the collections as part of this move was originally his recommendation we found this to be unspeakably frustrating. Instead, a compromise was reached whereby together the move manager and SCRC staff would give reordering a try.

The new plan called for the university archivist and two students to remove boxes from the shelves in the current buildings and stack them in the new tag number order in the widest part of the aisles, ready for the movers to pick up each day. Fortunately, after several days and nights of such presorting, the move manager had a chance to get to know the day laborers who formed the moving crew, realized that they could manage to put the boxes in number order themselves, and released the SCRC staff. He ordered that the move carry on as originally planned, with reordering included.

The Move

The decision to continue to provide reference services while planning for the move meant that thinly stretched special collections areas were stretched even thinner. As part of planning for the move itself, we now had to decide whether or not to attempt to continue to provide reference services while the collections were in actual transit. We quickly realized that it would be necessary to close

temporarily. Once this decision had been made, we could publicize the move itself, as well as the reduction or closing of reference services, through the library's website, local press, and archival listservs. Pinning down an exact date was tricky, however. Other areas of the library were scheduled to move as well, and not every stage was going according to the original schedules. We needed to plan the move for a time that would not overlap with other archives areas, as well as a time when our staff offices would also soon be moved

Careful thought was given to planning what path the materials would take from their current location to their new location. The move coordinator and staff identified weaknesses in the flow path within the two facilities, such as tight corners, current location of loading docks, size of doors, and other logistics. The Preservation Librarian trained the movers/day laborers in how to handle the archival collections. She reviewed the care and handling guidelines as well. Finally, we prepared general instructions to ensure that everyone could accurately and safely move our collections (see appendix A).

Both storage buildings housing items had reasonable overhangs at the loading dock so that the materials might not get wet during loading. The problem was that our newly renovated library did not have any kind of overhang for unloading. As soon we realized it was going to rain, the Preservation Librarian and the Library Administration asked our university's Construction Management Services to erect a temporary canopy of two by fours and a plastic tarp. Though it might sound precarious, the canopy helped immensely and has even weathered an "inland hurricane" since its construction.

Three staff members and the move manager coordinated the move, one individual in each designated area, working with the laborers. Two staff members were located at our two off-site buildings, at the loading docks.

At the new building, a staff member verified the arrival of each shipment and dispatched it to the stacks to be unloaded. As a final point, the move manager remained in the new stacks to check off the arrival of the boxes and see that the materials were placed on the shelves correctly.



Loading dock canopy built for SCRC move. Photo courtesy of Julie Mosbo.

As the materials were moved, we also had to coordinate the transfer of staff, files and equipment to the new facilities. Institutional records and staff files had to be counted and marked. This was an excellent opportunity for staff to deaccession or weed out old administrative and personal records before moving into their new space. Lastly, we synchronized the transfer of telecommunication and data lines, working with our IT department to move computers, printers, servers and other equipment.

Security

Security remained our top priority during our move.

Staff was present at all times to ensure that unauthorized individuals did not wander into either the old storage location or the new space and to become familiar with all of the movers. Staff was stationed at both the old storage locations and the new space to watch over the security of the collection and prevent theft or mishandling.

The move manager and the movers were instructed that special collections items could never be left unattended. The day laborers had set start, stop, and break times on a schedule so that they did not leave items on the truck while they went to lunch, took breaks or left for the night.

Quality Control

As the materials settled in our three floors of stacks areas in the renovated library building, we began to make a final inspection of the old space to ensure that collections, office files and equipment had not been left behind. In the first pass, we found 15-20 tagged boxes that had simply been missed and another 30-40 boxes that had been left out of our moving plan altogether, all of which we still hoped to take with us to the new facilities. The movers were accommodating. They asked that we transport any overlooked boxes to the loading dock of each building and stack them up ready to transport to the new building. After they finished work on a different section of the library, they picked up the boxes and dropped them off for us. While the moving crews would not return to shift as needed and intershelve the missed boxes, the Library Dean arranged to provide a local laborer to assist us with that task a few weeks after the move.

Once settled in our new home, we needed to create new shelf lists. Pre-move shelf lists were easy to convert to that purpose. A single student assistant could be set to work checking the new shelflist against the stacks areas to make sure all of the materials had arrived and been shelved in the

desired order. It turned out to be very important that we started this process *before* the moving crews had disbursed or departed from the library, because immediately we ran into a major error. Due to a miscommunication, the move manager had instructed the crews to ignore all spacing directions for the second floor stacks area. This meant that over six thousand boxes had been shelved with no allowances for growth space.

After we caught the error, the University Archivist helped the consultant to draw up a clear and logical plan for a moving crew to fix the error in a way that would minimize labor and additional expense. It did involve one evening of work to resolve. The university archivist applied neon-pink paper flags to the boxes that should have preceded spacing areas, and a skeleton moving crew worked on spacing the boxes out accordingly over the next two days. Later, we learned that the moving tags were not removable and would tear the boxes. The Preservation Unit trained one of the extra help staff to remove the moving tags. During the previous move before the renovation, the mover's adhered tags to actual items, including oversize leather bound books. Now, tags and adhesive were removed using microspatulas and special erasers. No long term damage had been done.

Returning to Business as Usual

Long before the staff had recovered, the time arrived for returning to normal services and reopening the archives to public visitors. Our researchers enjoy our state of the art reading room. However, over the first two months some of the novelties of the new work space came with minor trials. Old systems of retrieval no longer worked and call-slips had to be redesigned. Reference resources were rearranged in the reading room and workroom areas. Tasks that were once automatic and immediate at first required extra time. We had to develop new divisions of labor and protocols for

staff to follow in accessing archival materials of various formats.

The new building came with new rules regarding noise or designated areas for eating and drinking, among other sensitive daily issues. New keys and electronic keys were issued. Elevators, lighting, and computer networks did not function smoothly right away. Staff members were frustrated and exhausted, having run one gauntlet only to find they had started another, possibly longer one.

The Director found it to be a good idea to increase communication with staff at all levels to assure that new policies were realistic, convenient, and functional in practice. It was cumbersome to attempt at this busy stage to resolve everything in formally scheduled meetings, but informal casual communications were helpful on all sides.

In the renovated Morris Library, SCRC has more storage space, individual offices for archivists, a workroom for processing, a workroom for digital projects, and a state of the art reading room—a total of 20,276 square feet. In all, over 11,000 cubic feet of manuscripts and archives and 80,000 volumes of rare books were brought back to campus.

The move was not over until we were all satisfied, and this took a while. We had to prioritize necessary tasks and formulate a realistic timeline. We acknowledge that this was a very stressful project for all involved. But it felt good to celebrate and thank all those involved. In fact we celebrated with a glass of champagne and invited the Dean and other library personnel involved. It took a while for the sense of a smooth workflow to return but the excitement of being in a clean, well-organized work place has yet to grow old.

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APPENDIX

(This is an example of what was developed at Southern Illinois University Carbondale¹¹)

Instructions for Movers **Special Collections Research Center** **Southern Illinois University Carbondale**



General Instructions:

I. Move

- a. The move includes, but is not limited to, office contents such as files, books and general office/business related items. Except as noted, the primary office furniture for each staff will not be a part of the move. The move will consist primarily of box transfers consisting of items including staff files and workstation contents. SCRC has 10 vertical file cabinets (legal).
- b. The move includes moving and unloading all collections consisting of 11,000 cubic feet of paper records and photographs housed in boxes; 40,000 books (*shrink wrapped and placed on book trucks by SCRC staff prior to move*) onto shelves as directed by SCRC staff.

II. Standards

- a. Moving vehicles must be enclosed—not open to the elements in any manner—when transporting materials for SCRC.
- b. At no time shall the Mover leave University

¹¹ These instructions were customized using the following sources: *Request for Quote* Moving Services, Office of the Secretary of State, Georgia Department of Archives and History, circa 2004 and Wilsted, 140.

- property unattended or in unsecured areas.
- c. No smoking, eating or drinking (even water) on the premises, as well as in and around vehicles transporting holding of SCRC.
 - d. Move will be halted during inclement weather or any other emergencies.
 - e. Materials must be well cushioned against shock, vibration, rattling, shifting and jostling
 - f. Secured in a non-damaging manner to protect from falling out of the transportation device
 - g. Transported on devices designed to minimize the danger of toppling
 - h. Transported on devices designed to withstand the weight load of the records
 - i. All boxes must have on labels securely--No adhesive labels or tags shall be applied directly to book collection under *any* circumstances. In cases where volumes must be individually tagged, this will be done by inserting flags in text blocks.
 - j. Boxed records should remain oriented horizontally or vertically as they are currently stored or as instructed by SCRC staff
 - k. Books that are shelved upright in their original locations will be shelved upright in their new locations unless flagged by SCRC staff. Books that were shelved flat in their original location will be shelved flat in their new location unless flagged by SCRC staff.
 - l. All materials will be placed on shelves according to instructions from the SCRC staff.
 - m. Movers will need to be focused on accuracy in reading and placement of the boxes and focused on physical condition of the boxes (damaged boxes must be replaced—task to be performed by SCRC staff as needed).

- n. Shelving heights may need to be adjusted in some areas—movers will work with SCRC staff on making determination of change.

III. Safety

- a. The mobile shelving units in Storage 3 and in the Morris Library basement are moved with a hand crank system. These units weigh several tons when they are full, so it is essential to be aware of others in the aisles when moving the units. Always insure that no one is in the aisle before turning any of the cranks on the mobile shelving. Never attempt to move more than one aisle at a time.

IV. SCRC Staff

- a. SCRC Staff will be available during all work hours.
- b. All items in transit must have protective packaging and must be the correct size for the material inside so that they do not shift in transit.
- c. Damaged boxes must be replaced—as needed.

V. Security

- a. All temporary staff must be supervised by permanent staff at all times
- b. Trucks/vans must be locked upon departure and unlocked upon arrival.
- c. The movers in cooperation with designated SCRC representative will follow the established route from the current SCRC location to Morris Library
- d. No records/collections will remain on the trucks over night.
- e. No archival materials are allowed in the same van/truck as the office files/furniture.

VI. Miscellaneous

- a. Special handling
 - a.i. Filing cabinets (drawers need to be secured/locked in place)
 - a.ii. Card catalog cabinets (drawers need to be secured/locked in place)

Easing the Learning Curve: The Creation of Digital Learning Objects for Use in Special Collections Student Training

Judith A. Wiener

Introduction

Low-staffed and often under-funded, academic libraries have traditionally relied upon student labor to maintain library services and to complete a seemingly unending workload. The use of students within the archival or special collections setting is no different. Special Collections departments often use students to complete tasks that could be reserved to the realm of professional staff. These include processing collections, preservation and conservation work, digitizing, and providing reference assistance.¹

Academic library professional staff members often rely on students to provide high levels of service and skills. Yet, students pose unique challenges professional or paraprofessional staff may not. Perhaps the most obvious

¹ Anke Voss and Rachel Vagts, "Managing Student Assistants in the Archives," presentation at Midwest Archives Conference, Bloomington, IN, October 1, 2005.

difference is that the primary focus of a student's life on campus is being a student. This means that his or her archival job is often secondary to a student's studies and other campus activities, and this is often reflected in the amount of time that a student remains in a job position, time that can be dedicated to the job, or consistency in work schedules during various academic terms. Another obvious challenge with student workers is that they do eventually graduate. This means that student workers are guaranteed to be part of the archival staff with a high turnover rate.

In the case of undergraduate students, it is very unlikely that entering students will also come with any sort of knowledge of what an archival institution is, what it does, or what types of work take place within its confines. This presents a particularly unique challenge when one is trying to train a student about a task which is unfamiliar in purpose, significance, or meaning.

These challenges speak for the need for student worker educational training materials to be consistent, basic, and easy to repeat. Given the limited professional staffing in many departments, it is also important that the training not take too much of the professional staff's time. Although the need for hands-on training will always be necessary to a certain extent, an organized and comprehensive training manual can ensure that the proper introduction to archival and preservation methods were provided to all archival student workers with a minimal expenditure of the permanent staff's time.

The special collections and archives departments at The Ohio State University have similar challenges to those discussed thus far. These departments use student labor to maintain everyday services and activities. Until the creation of the special collections digital student manual, however, each of the departments had vastly different ways of training students. In 2004, the head curators of the

departments decided to create a unified process to train students more efficiently and consistently. Based on these shared needs, the decision was made to create digital learning objects to meet these challenges.

Digital learning objects are small, self-contained, and reusable blocks of digital instructional material that can be easily and quickly adapted to a multitude of instructional situations and needs.² The small units of material can also be mixed and/or stung together to provide customized classes based upon the differing institutional and instructional situations. According to Laurel A. Clyde,

The concept of learning objects is based in both instructional technology and computer science. Instructional technology has been a factor in the current shift of instruction towards more student-centered, problem-based strategies. Computer science has contributed the ideas associated with object-oriented programming and computing. This object-oriented approach is based on the creation of digital components (called “objects”) that can be used and re-used in different contexts and even for different purposes.³

The multi-purpose nature of a digital product was particularly appropriate for the needs of the various special collections departments at The Ohio State University

² Robert J. Beck, “What are Learning Objects,” Center for International Education, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee (last updated November 23, 2010), http://www4.uwm.edu/cie/learning_objects.cfm?gid=56 (accessed December 29, 2010).

³ Laurel A. Clyde, “Digital Learning Objects,” *Teacher Librarian: The Journal for School Library Professionals* V. 31, no.4 (2004), http://www.teacherlibrarian.com/tltoolkit/info_tech/info_tech_31_4.html (accessed September 30, 2009).

because the curators foresaw having similar training objects ready for other training opportunities. These other opportunities included intern, researcher, volunteer, and scholar training situations.

The following article reviews the professional literature on the topic of student training in library and special collection settings with an emphasis on technology-delivered training methods. It discusses specific examples of the decisions that need to be made when creating a digital student training manual and examines techniques for implementing digital learning objects as an educational delivery method. Finally, the author analyzes the experience of the creation of The Ohio State University Libraries Special Collections training manual.

A Review of Literature

A review of archival and library literature on the topic of student worker training revealed that student workers in archives and libraries provide both benefits and challenges to employers. Budget constraints and inadequate staffing mean that students are relied upon in these settings to complete a wide variety of tasks. These tasks can range from clerical to quasi-professional in nature. Student workers fill a critical staffing need and may also take up a considerable portion of the budgets of most libraries. Without this help, most archives and institutions would be hard-pressed to fulfill their mission let alone their hours of operation.

Archival literature has explored the topic of student workers in a limited fashion. In their 1992 article, "Learning by Doing: Undergraduates as Employees in Archives," Barbara Floyd and Richard Oram remark that undergraduate employment is especially attractive to archival managers at universities due to inadequate professional staffing, low student staffing costs, and the ready availability of students needing jobs. However, the

authors recognize that student labor also brings with it a series of challenges such as recruitment, selection, and training. The authors note that these special issues are not usually identified or discussed in the professional archival literature.⁴

Floyd and Oram conducted a survey as part of their study and discovered that students employed within university archives are completing a wide variety of tasks from clerical to semi-professional in nature. The survey also revealed that more than half of the archival institutions utilizing student labor did not have training manuals. The authors argue that the development of specialized archival skills through tools such as a manual is paramount to successful archival staffing. The authors explain that,

undergraduates. . . need to be exposed to the fundamental principles of archival theory and practice early in their training. . . although developing a student manual as part of a training program is very time-consuming the investment pays off in the long run. The supervisor will discover that less time will be devoted to individualized training and supervision.⁵

The authors did not provide details about the specific materials that should be included in manuals.

Archival training has a strong tradition of hands-on instruction, perhaps because of the non-routine nature of many of the tasks completed by staff. This can lead to the reluctance of some managers to create a student manual.⁶

⁴ Barbara L. Floyd and Richard W. Oram, "Learning by Doing: Undergraduates as Employees in Archives," *American Archivist* 55 (Summer 1992): 441.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 445.

⁶ Margalotti, Jaime L, "Utilizing Student Library Assistants in University Archives and Special Collections" (MLIS thesis, University

However, the creation of such a manual can actually benefit the institution by documenting the procedures for these non-routine tasks, serving to offer guidance and reinforcement when one is faced with non-routine circumstances, and serving to lessen the overwhelming nature of training overload on students or the need to spend staff time retraining student workers.⁷

The Society of American Archivists (SAA) has recognized the need to provide effective training to student assistants in order to create higher standards of work performance, morale, and accomplishment for both workers and managers. The SAA handbook for managers of student workers suggests that the departmental orientation include general worker expectations and an introduction to the institution and archival theory. General expectations could include items such as human resources policies, customer service standards, and evaluation schedules. The institutional overview could include references to the repository's history, mission, goals, and function. An overview of archival theory could include a general primer to the basic of archival work and definitions. The overview should be left to a minimum, as "explaining all the theoretical/historical foundations of archival work is not only time-consuming, but often counter-productive. Tailor the depth and scope of explanations to the kind of work the students do."⁸

Although the archival literature provides a cursory review of the challenges and benefits of student workers,

of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 2004), <http://etd.ils.unc.edu/dspace/bitstream/1901/90/1/jaimemargalotti.pdf>, (accessed December 29 2010).

⁷ Michael D. Kathman and Jane McGurn Kathman "Training Student Employees for Quality Service," *Journal of Academic Librarianship* 26 (May 2000): 179-180.

⁸ College and University Archives Section of the Society of American Archivists. *Student Assistants in Archival Repositories: A Handbook for Managers* (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 1992): 21-23.

general academic library literature has explored the topic in a more in-depth manner and has included an investigation into the delivery of digital training methods. Such a detailed exploration of this topic is not surprising, given that students comprise a large part of the academic library workforce. A 1996 American Research Library (ARL) survey revealed that 24 percent of the staff of ARL libraries was comprised of students and that these students performed a wide array of tasks, from circulation duties to ready-reference responsibilities.⁹ Because of this high level of responsibility, training is placed as a high priority in many library articles concerning student employees.

In their book, *Effective Management of Student Employment: Organizing for Student Employment in Academic Libraries*, Baldwin, Wilkinson, and Barkley note,

supervisors have an obligation both to train student employees to do their job and to develop them. A development program is needed to provide students with a broadening experience designed to build on their strengths and give them positive work experiences.¹⁰

In this way, students are not only prepared for the job at hand, but are also developed to provide an increasingly higher level of service and skills that they can take with them upon graduation.

Properly trained students are also more likely to have a higher level of job satisfaction and success. In her manual for student employee supervisors, Kimberly Burke

⁹ David A. Baldwin, Frances C. Wilkinson, and Daniel Barkley, *Effective Management of Student Employment: Organizing for Student Employment in Academic Libraries* (Englewood, CO: Libraries Unlimited, Inc., 2000): 7.

¹⁰ *Ibid*, 175.

Sweetman asserts that most supervisors fail to properly train students because they see it as a wasteful use of time, given the often-temporary nature of their employment. However, well-trained students often stay longer and decrease the likelihood of high-turnover rates that often plague student worker positions. She suggests that the creation of toolkits, such as digital learning objects, can be one way to ensure proper and consistent training, increase student job satisfaction, and cut supervisor training time.¹¹

The literature also points out the importance of mass student preservation training for students working in all academic library departments. As Anthony J. Amodeo points out in his book chapter entitled, “Preservation Awareness for Student Workers: Adding a Quiz to the Agenda,” budget cuts mean that library books must last longer before being replaced and a stretched-thin library staff can mean that little attention is given to student preservation training. In reaction to the realization that improper preservation training of staff members who frequently handle materials could mean disaster for collections, many universities attempted mass training methods such as video presentations. However, these mass training methods were sometimes inconsistently applied and Amodeo argues that consistent hands-on training and follow-up training quizzes are necessary to fully train students in preservation techniques for general library collections.¹²

Other authors also conclude that consistent student training is necessary for an effective student work force.

¹¹ Kimberly Burke Sweetman, *Managing Student Assistants: A How-To-Do-It Manual for Librarians* (New York: Neal Schuman Publishers, Inc., 2007): 87-89.

¹² Anthony J. Amodeo, “Preservation Awareness for Student Workers: Adding a Quiz to the Agenda,” in *Promoting Preservation Awareness in Libraries: a Sourcebook for Academic, Public, School, and Special Collections*, ed. Jeanne M. Drewes and Julie A. Page (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1997), 66-74.

This is especially true in large university multi-library systems. In their 2001 article, Terri L. Holtze and Rebecca E. Maddox discuss the challenge of implementing student training programs across multi-library systems, such as the authors' institution, the University of Louisville. The authors identify the need to train students consistently in an ever-fluctuating student workforce environment. The authors also note that the cost of student labor is higher when student training is not centralized in a multi-library system. Therefore, when students doing similar tasks are trained via a centralized training program better quality of student training is coupled with a savings in funding invested in training.¹³

Holtze and Maddox also suggest that web training could be used to facilitate a centralized training program. They point out that "by using the web for ... skills training, we reduce the problems of physical distance, scheduling conflicts, and lack of communication." In addition to web training, the authors are also proponents of hands-on training offered in the form of a large seminar attended by all student workers.¹⁴

Using computer-assisted training to overcome the challenges of student worker training is a concept that was recognized as microcomputer technology began to emerge. In his 1984 article, Marvin C. Guilfoyle remarked that a standardized computer-assisted training manual had been recognized as a solution to the difficulties of training part-time student workers with inconsistent schedules. His institution, the Clifford Memorial Library at the University of Evansville, developed its first computer-assisted training manuals in 1978. Guilfoyle stressed the importance of having staff members who were proficient in developing

¹³ Terri L. Holtze and Rebecca E. Maddox, "Student Assistant Training in a Multi-Library System," *Technical Services Quarterly* 19 (February 2002): 27-28.

¹⁴ *Ibid*, 28.

lessons in the computer medium selected and noted that a successful computerized training program depends on the audience's ability to use the training program handed to them.¹⁵

Yesterday's computer-assisted microcomputer training program has become today's macromedia Web experience. Despite the advances in technology, the fact remains that digital training programs rely on both users and developers who are experienced and comfortable with the training program selected. A modern-day example of the University of Evansville microcomputer training program can be found in the Bloomsburg University interactive instructional program. To solve its problem of student training inconsistencies, the University contracted with the Institute of Interactive Technologies and used its graduate students to develop an on-line training tool utilizing content developed by the librarians and library supervisors. In this way, the library was able to use the volunteer labor of graduate students in a technology program to develop a program that did not require the use of its staff as technology developers. However, in this situation, library experts could design the content without needing to be computer experts. The end result was that student workers were presented with a computerized program that was professionally-developed and contained quality training instructions.¹⁶

Despite the many benefits of digitally-delivered training programs, it is important that hands-on training is also provided and planned for in a training program. Often,

¹⁵ Marvin C. Guilfoyle, "Computer Assisted Training for Student Library Assistants," *Journal of Academic Librarianship* V. 10 no. 6 (1984): 333-336.

¹⁶ Erik Poole, Frank Grieco, Heather Derck and Tom Socash., "Training Library Student Assistants: Bloomsburg University's Interactive Instructional Program," *College and Research Libraries* V. 62 no. 5 (2001): 537-538.

the demonstration of techniques can be more valuable than a description of the task. As Katherine Elizabeth explains in her article about training students for the specialized needs of an academic law library, “Computerized training allows student assistants to learn at their own pace and to review as needed. It also frees up some of the student’s time. But computerized training should be accompanied by personal interaction. It will be necessary to keep in touch with students, check on their progress, and use on-the-job training when necessary.”¹⁷

Many academic libraries have examined and have found a great deal of success with computer-assisted and Web-based training programs. Together with hands-on instruction, technology-assisted training programs, such as those that use digital learning objects, require the existence of technology-savvy program developers and users but can be extremely beneficial in easing the learning curve of student workers and meeting the challenge of providing constant and consistent quality student training programs.

Developing the Objects

The development of digital learning objects for student training in the Special Collections departments at The Ohio State University was a solution to a shared student training inconsistency problem. Although the departments have varying administrative reporting lines, they are all led individually by head curators and often solve shared problems through a special collections roundtable group that meets monthly to discuss activities and issues. The head curators within these departments also meet annually at a retreat to set agenda items for the upcoming year’s roundtable sessions.

¹⁷ Katherine Elizabeth Malmquist, “Managing Student Assistants in the Law Library.” *Law Library Journal* 83 (Spring 1991): 308, 309.

The nine special collections departments that participated in the digital student manual project had vastly different ways of training students. During the 2004 and 2005 The Ohio State University summer curators' retreats, the curators identified the creation of a unified and digitally-available student manual as one of the roundtable group's main goals for the upcoming year. Work on the manual began immediately after the retreat by a library science practicum student, who was charged with developing and creating the components that would make up the manual. The manual was completed and distributed to the curators for implementation at the start of the 2005-2006 academic year.

The urgency for a unified student manual at that time was also compounded by the fact that The Ohio State University library system began a major renovation and reassessment of space. During the renovation, departments were forced to share space and students. After the renovation, some of the collections that were previously housed in separate locations were combined into one location within the renovated main library building and were expected by library administration to share, to some extent, resources such as student workers.

Until the completion of the unified digital student manual, the amount and standardization of training seemed to depend largely upon the size of the student staff within each department. Smaller locations hired a limited number of graduate student assistants per year and had low student staff turnover. These locations relied solely upon hands-on training for student staff. Larger departments hired a moderate number of undergraduate and graduate students per year, used a series of loose-leaf instructional handouts and manuals to train students, and relied heavily on hands-on training. The printed material distributed for training purposes focused primarily upon the collection contents and location, general and emergency policies and

procedures, departmental contacts, and quick reference tips. Few departments included information about preservation and archival processing.

A common student instructional training video had been attempted once before by the various departments. The video, called *Archive Man: Raiders of the Lost Archive*, was created by the curators of the special collections roundtable group in 1996, The Ohio State University Library's preservation department, and The Ohio State University theater department. The goal of the video was to introduce students to general archival and preservation tools, techniques, procedures, and policies. The video followed the adventures of the fictional superhero Archive Man as he participated in an Indiana Jones-type adventure to protect library collections from dangers and villains. Although the film introduced important and useful ideas and concepts, the video was not as educational and detailed in nature as many of the curators had hoped. As a result, the video was not used in several departments, used only a few times in some, and used as student entertainment in others. At the start of the digital manual project, none of the departments were using *Archive Man: Raiders of the Lost Archive* as part of their student training routine.

In contrast to the video training effort, the curators wanted to present detailed information through the digital student manual. As in *Archive Man: Raiders of the Lost Archive*, the new manual needed to introduce key archival and preservation tools, techniques, procedures, and policies that are universal across the various departments. Although students in each of the departments had varying levels of responsibilities, common key concepts were identified as important for students to know in every department. These concepts included proper handling of materials and collections, basic processing skills, assisting patrons in the

usage of materials, and proper scanning and photocopying techniques.

The curators also identified the need to cover general human resource and student worker policies in the digital student manual. These policies included timesheets, attendance, breaks, and paycheck information. In addition, the curators indicated that human resource information for student worker supervisors would be a desirable unit of the manual. A section was also included to direct students to further information from both on and off campus sources. These informational resources included archival, library, employment, training, and emergency information. In this unit of the manual, students were given links and phone numbers of resources such as human resources, the Library of Congress, and the campus police.

Another area that the curators felt was lacking in their current student training manuals was the subject of customer service. Many users of special collections only interact with the staff present in the public areas of the departments. In many departments, this meant that student workers may be the only staff working with researchers at certain times. In closed stacked areas, such as the special collections departments, researchers must rely upon the workers in the reading room to bring them material. These customers expect a level of service that many curators felt was deficient in many student workers' skill sets. The curators also expressed concern that poor customer service experiences may mean that researchers may not return or, worse, may create bad publicity for the department and, thus, decrease the likelihood of future use or donations. Customer service skills and techniques were considered an essential addition to the digital student manual.

In addition to the needs of students working within the departments, several of the curators expressed the need to train communities other than student workers in several capacities. This need centered primarily on the training of

proper handling and usage techniques for special collections materials for students, general users of the materials, and volunteers. Several curators also taught classes that required use of their collections as part of the classroom assignments. Providing one-on-one instruction to these students during the school term continuously proved to be a large time commitment on staff. To solve this annual problem, portions of the manual could be assigned to students taking courses requiring the usage of special collections materials. Thus, the curators needed the manual to be generic enough to be useful in a multitude of circumstances.

After the general needs of the various departments were established, an analysis of the preferred digital delivery method was made. All existing manuals had site-specific information that the curators felt was essential to the proper training of their student workers and the new manual had to be easy to change by each of the departments to best fit their purposes. Although various digital delivery and software packages were considered, it was obvious that the technology, budget, and software gaps that existed among the various departments meant that a more user-friendly and commonly available interface was desired. The Microsoft presentation software *PowerPoint* met these requirements. It had the further advantage that the curators already used the program in their classes and everyday lives and felt that the content could be easily modified by current staff members. Finally, the fact that *PowerPoint* could be delivered via the web made the program the best choice for the manual.

Once the delivery method was selected, the content of the manual could then be created. Using the needs and suggestions of the curators, the manual's seven units included general information for students; introduction to special collections, customer service, general preservation techniques and policies, general archival processing

techniques and policies, resources for the students, and a supplemental unit to guide student supervisors on The Ohio State University's student worker policies. The division of the manual into units meant that the curators could select which sections they would assign to various communities. For example, student workers might be assigned all units except for the supervisor supplement, while a student assigned to use the collections for a class may only be assigned the introduction to archives and general preservation techniques and policies units.

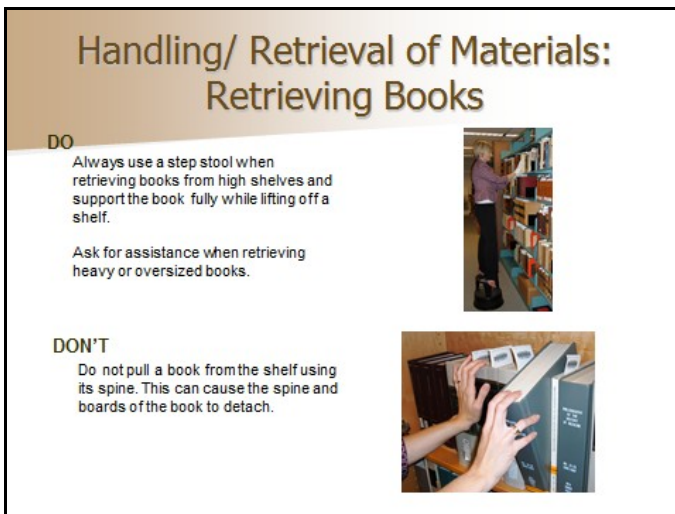


Figure A: Common student tasks, such as the handling and retrieval of books were photographed to illustrate the correct way to handle special collection materials.

The manual creator was influenced by materials already being delivered by the Web, such as Donia Conn's *PowerPoint* presentation for the staff of the Syracuse University Library about the care and handling of books and manuscripts.¹⁸ Conn's presentation successfully used

¹⁸ Donia Conn, "The Care and Handling of Books and Manuscripts: a Workshop for SUL SCRC Staff and Students," (Special Collections

PowerPoint, photographs, video clips, and text to demonstrate proper archival procedures successfully. Common archival procedures and situations were staged and basic preservation tools were photographed to illustrate concepts and processes featured in the digital manual. (See Figures A and B)



Figure B: A photographic glossary of preservation tools was included in the digital learning object on general preservation to familiarize students with their correct use and purpose.

Once the content had been developed through the exploration of the curators' needs and an observation of web-delivered tools already in place, it was time to create a design for the slide presentation. The goals set forth by the curators were that the design should be easy to replicate, read, and share. Based on these goals, the decision was made to use the design templates already available in the

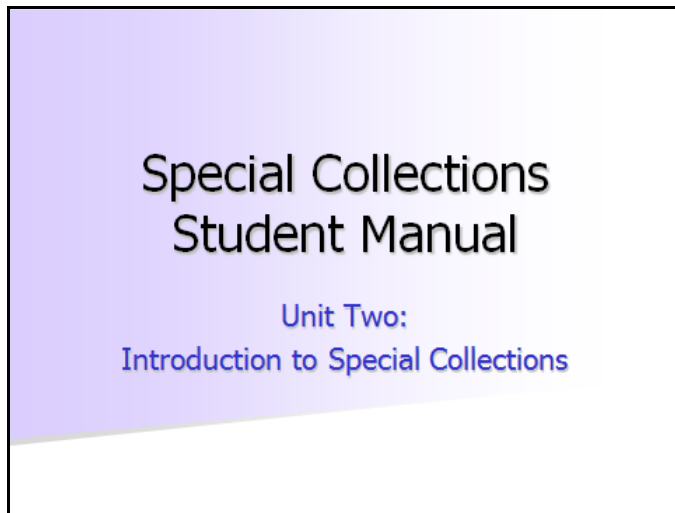
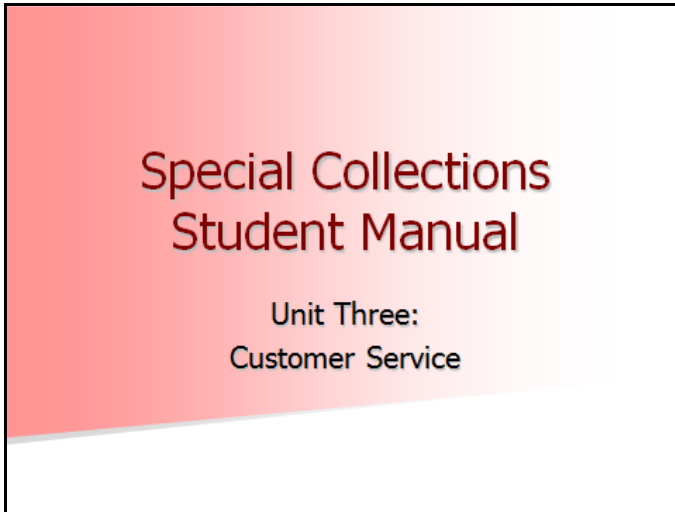
PowerPoint software. An easy to read and display slide design template was selected. However, the slide had some questionable colored screens that made the slides difficult to read. To solve this problem, a custom color scheme was developed and applied to the slides. This solution met all of the goals set by the curators. (See Figures C and D)

Implementation Options

Upon the completion of the digital learning objects the curators approved the basic content that would be used for all departments. Next, the curators made alterations based upon their specific needs and then were ready to use the tool for student training purposes. Once the digital manual was distributed to the curators, the emphasis of the project turned to implementation.

The manual creator provided guidance to the curators about implementing the manual and how the objects could be easily modified to best fit their needs. Based on the research completed in the area of student training, the manual creator recommended that students should view the manual during their first few days on the job and prior to performing any hands-on training. This would give students a baseline level of familiarity with concepts and activities before hands-on training or work activities began. The manual creator also showed the curators how the *PowerPoint* manual could be modified to fit individual needs and delivered locally on the department's computers, on the World Wide Web, or via classroom delivery programs such as *Blackboard* or *WebCT*. This last option could be particularly attractive to those curators who teach classes and must educate entire classrooms on proper handling procedures.

The manual creator recommended that the implementation process include frequent reassessments of



Figures C and D: To ensure the slides used in the digital manual would be easy to replicate, read, and share, a standard design template already available in the PowerPoint software was selected. A custom color pallet was created to make the slides easy to read and to easily differentiate the learning objects within the manual. The Customer Service slide (Figure C), for example, used a rose shades while the object on special collections concepts (Figure D), utilized a lavender-color palette.

the manual's contents. The techniques represented in the manual reflected the archival best practices known at the time of manual creation. Also, the student manual contained specific student worker policies established by The Ohio State University Human Resources Department that were subject to frequent revision. As best practices and human resources policies change throughout time, it was important that the manual change as well to remain current.

It is important to note that the digital student manual was not intended as the sole medium for student training needs. All special collections departments included in the manual project intended to utilize hands-on training methods, especially to demonstrate delicate or complicated processes. Although these techniques and concepts are introduced in the digital learning objects, the manual creator suggested that the departments continue to use hands-on training and close supervision to ensure students are completing their tasks in a proper manner. Although not a desired component of the digital manual at the time of development, it was also suggested that the various departments might want to create quizzes to assess that students had gained the appropriate amount of knowledge through student training.

Assessment of the Project and Lessons Learned

The unified digital student training manual was implemented in a majority of the special collections departments in the 2005 – 2006 academic term. Although considered a useful tool by the head curators, many were not using the manual or using it in a limited capacity three years later, at the start of the 2008-2009 academic term. The disuse of the project in such a short time frame occurred due to a wide variety of reasons.

Many departments cited a change in staff responsibilities, including the training of students and volunteers, that had occurred since the manual's creation.

Staff members with new responsibilities were not told of the existence of the manual and it, therefore, was not incorporated into regular training courses by the new student supervisors. Some departments had cut or limited student staffing due to budget concerns and felt that a structured training program was not needed for the smaller staff with little turn-over. Still other departments had recruited more advanced graduate students who did not have the need for such basic skills training.

Two departments continue to utilize the program fully as part of their entry-level training needs. These departments use the manual as a starting point to introducing students to archival and student worker concepts and also provide additional hands-on training. Several students in these departments have remarked that the program is a useful introduction to the basics of student work in a special collections setting. In these areas, the digital manual is working as designed and is used in conjunction with hands-on training. However, no complete updating or assessment of the tool other than anecdotal evidence has been made since its implementation due largely to the lack of staff time to devote to updating the digital learning objects.

The need for a unified training program was and, arguably, is still needed for the student training needs of The Ohio State University Special Collections departments. Despite being appropriate for the needs of the special collections units at the time, the digital manual is no longer included in the training programs of the majority of the departments due to unforeseen circumstances. These include changes in student backgrounds, budget constraints, and staffing changes combined with challenges in succession planning for student training responsibilities.

Although the tool is, by design, easy to modify and customize by department, no central support for the training program existed after the departure of the

practicum student who created the manual. With no centralized support system, the success of the unified training program fell to the responsibilities and challenges faced by each individual department. Therefore, instead of the unified training program intended, the digital manual became more of an optional, albeit anecdotally useful, item in the toolbox of student training of each individual department.

From this experience, one could argue that a truly successful student centralized training system needs not only the support and participation of various departments at the beginning of the project, but also the firm dedication to student training on an ongoing basis. This might include the work of a staff member or members at an organizational level, instead of each departmental level, who is responsible for the frequent revision, assessment, and promotion of the tool to all departments. This could be a position that resides in library administration, a rotating responsibility among each of the departments, or work completed by a student training committee. Once established, this role should not take an inordinate amount of time but may be essential to such a program's continued success.

Conclusion

The creation and implementation of consistent, comprehensive, and easy-to-use-and-modify digital learning objects is a solution that can be used in any special collections department, large or small, to ease the student worker learning curve and solve the unique challenges of student training. Student labor, by its nature, is categorized by high turn-over rates, which means that training is frequent and can, therefore, be inconsistent. Although consistency is also possible with a printed manual, the digital manual ensures that any changes or modifications needed are accomplished in an easy and inexpensive

manner. This is because there are no printing fees and extensive reformatting of a printed manual is unnecessary in digital form.

Potential inadequacies of digital learning objects are also identifiable. Hands-on student training is still necessary for complicated or complex techniques and procedures. An over-reliance on digital training methods could be deemed unnecessary and students could potentially cause harm to materials within the collection using misunderstood and incorrect techniques. Follow-up assessment is likewise recommended to ascertain the effectiveness of student training. It is also important to note that another downside to digital learning objects is that they require a certain technology competency level to develop, modify, or use. Closely linked to this problem is the fact that digital learning object modifications could be time-consuming and may rely on a limited number of technology-savvy staff members to make time in their schedule for such modifications. To combat these deficiencies, it is recommended that provisions for ongoing revisions, assessments, and promotion be identified at a centralized institutional and not individual departmental level.

The digital delivery of student training manuals in a special collections setting such as that present at The Ohio State University is a noteworthy example of a solution to problems inherent in training large groups of students on a regular and routine basis. Beyond the creation of the training objects, ongoing support at the central level is recommended to ensure continued success of the student training program. Despite the large scope, such a project can reap many rewards and benefits from this investment in time and resources.

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Postmodernism, Processing, and the Profession: Towards a Theoretical Reading of Minimal Standards

Melanie Griffin

As Frank Burke noted in 1981, evidence-based practice rather than theory tends to dominate professional literature about archives. The papers presented at archival conferences and published in journals often concern themselves with the quotidian functions of archives: processing, description, access, preservation, reference, education, and (in the decades since Burke wrote) digitization. This situation is hardly surprisingly given the fundamentally practical – indeed pragmatic – thrust of archival work. The field is often referred to as a science, not a theory, and abstract concepts neither offer concrete solutions to the immediate questions of daily practice nor provide new techniques for managing collections. Focusing on the practical, however, has its own limitations, and the restrictions of a practice-based literature and profession led Burke to compare archivists to a “large corps of parish priests when no one has bothered to devise a theology under whose standard they can act.”¹

¹ Frank G. Burke, “The Future Course of Archival Theory in the United States,” *American Archivist* 44 (1981): 40-46, quotation on 45.

While Burke's criticism of archival literature reflects the professional concerns of nearly three decades previous, in some ways it still appears remarkably current. Consider the flurry of professional literature inspired by Mark Greene and Dennis Meissner's 2005 article "More Product, Less Process: Revamping Traditional Archival Processing" (whose recommendations for minimal processing are often referred to as MPLP).² Written in response to an article firmly grounded in exploring and improving upon existing practices, the MPLP studies contribute to the practical body of literature that Burke argued dominates archival discussion. At the same time, however, they are concerned with ideological arguments about the form and function of archives. While the ramifications of minimal standards processing for practice are well-documented, the theoretical questions which MPLP literature raises are not.³ This article seeks to address the broader ideological and theoretical questions involved in recent minimal standards processing recommendations through analysis of Greene and Meissner's original article and the immediate responses and case studies which it generated, in order to relate this body of literature to theory-driven notions of archival administration.⁴ By identifying theoretical issues in

²Mark A. Greene and Dennis Meissner, "More Product, Less Process: Revamping Traditional Archival Processing," *American Archivist* 68 (2005): 208-263.

³ See Matt Gorzalski, "Minimal Processing: Its Context and Influence in the Archival Community," *Journal of Archival Organization* 6 (2008): 186-200, for the implications of MPLP for practice.

⁴ In addition to the case studies published in archival journals which this article analyzes, there have been a number of papers and sessions at the SAA annual conference and the Midwest Archives Conference devoted to MPLP. There have also been numerous conversations on the Archives & Archivists listserv (see, for example, <http://forums.archivists.org/read/search/results?forum=archives&words=mplp&sb=1>, accessed 9 September 2010).

writings on MPLP rather than focusing on practice alone, it is possible to move beyond the pejorative, reductive connotations often associated with the phrase “minimal standards processing” and to view the recommendations as congruent with the more labor-intensive suggestions often associated with theoretical ideas of archival management.

Postmodern Theories of Archives

Before analyzing the ideological implications of minimal standards processing, it is first necessary to address archival theory in general and to trace previous applications of theory in practice. While the relationship between archival practice and theory neither began with nor is limited to the school of thought generally termed “postmodern,” archival theorists have frequently employed postmodern concepts over the last two decades to explore questions of the authenticity, context, and power of archival records. As such, these concepts provide a useful framework for exploring the theoretical implications of minimal standards processing.⁵ Despite its ubiquity, postmodernism is often criticized as being exclusively an academic exercise that is overly concerned with, as Terry Cook writes, a “relativism” that results in “every meaning [hiding] a meaning within an infinite cycle of deconstruction,” leading to the idea that there are no absolutes other than texts themselves.⁶ Additionally, the relevance of postmodernism to everyday tasks is open to question, or, as Mark Greene has written, “[a] pragmatist ... must ask whether postmodernism has anything useful to

⁵ For a thorough bibliography of theoretical approaches to archives, see Terry Adams, “Archival Theory, Notes towards the Beginnings of a Bibliography,” May 2010 <http://www.uiweb.uidaho.edu/special-collections/papers/theorybb.htm>.

⁶ Terry Cook, “Fashionable Nonsense or Professional Rebirth: Postmodernism and the Practice of Archives,” *Archivaria* 51 (Spring 2001): 14-16.

say to archivists.”⁷ Nonetheless, much recent archival literature (discussed below) accepts that postmodernism does provide analysts of archival practice with a constructive tool, especially since, as Cook notes, postmodern theories are “beginning to address archives directly.”⁸ The postmodern theories which address archives directly tend to take their genesis from Michel Foucault’s *Archaeology of Knowledge (L’Archeologie du Savoir, 1969)* and Jacques Derrida’s *Archival Fever: A Freudian Impression (Mal d’Archive: Une Impression Freudienne, 1995)*.

Through analyses of the systems of power which govern speech, writing, and cultural memory, both Foucault and Derrida formulate theoretical questions with direct applications to selecting, processing, and describing archival collections. In *Archeology of Knowledge*, Foucault explores the relationship between “statements,” which are the basic unit of “discourse,” and “speech acts,” arguing that while a statement is a meaningful unit, its meaning is not predetermined since its existence depends upon the rules and conventions that govern its creation. Speech acts, their meanings, and the truths which these meanings contain are therefore relative to the situation in which the speech act occurs rather than being universals; as a corollary, meaning and truth are historical and historicized concepts, utterly dependent upon context.⁹ By extension, Foucault’s definition of an archive is not simply the collection of documents that have been preserved by a society but rather the “*system of enunciability*” [italics in

⁷Mark A. Greene, “The Power of Meaning: The Archival Mission in the Postmodern Age,” *American Archivist* 65 (2002): 53.

⁸Cook, “Fashionable Nonsense,” 20-21.

⁹Michel Foucault, *The Archeology of Knowledge and The Discourse on Language*, trans. A. M. Sheridan Smith (New York: Pantheon Books, 1979). See especially pp. 79-113 for a discussion on “speech acts,” “statements,” and “discourse” as well as their relationship to “linguistic performance.”

original] that led to the utterance of certain statements (or texts, or documents).¹⁰ Rather than focusing on the individual speech acts comprising an archive, Derrida is concerned with the archive in its broadest sense(s) in *Archive Fever*. He explores the archive as an abstract idea or “concept,” the personal body (be it individual or corporate) that governs the items in an archive, the items that constitute the archive, and the act of and desire for archiving. Derrida’s exploration of archives is heavily invested in the notion of power, including the power of the documents preserved in an archive and the power assumed by archivists as they speak for and interpret the archive.¹¹ Central to the idea of archival power is the relationship between the documents inside an archive and those left out and the ways in which this selection influences and shapes cultural memory. This is a process that, as Verne Harris has discussed at length, is inextricably tied to political power in its ability to remember and also to forget.¹² The process is not neutral, Derrida argues, but rather reflective of the culture which it seeks to document and the act of archiving “produces as much as it records the event.”¹³ If one accepts the arguments laid out by both Foucault and Derrida, there can be no neutral description or classification, no finding aid or processed collection that does not convey meaning created by the archivist and, by extension, the systems of power that influence the archivist’s decisions. Archival practice, from appraisal to processing to description, adds additional layers of contextualized meaning to the collections being preserved and described and therefore is politicized work.

¹⁰ Ibid, 128-9.

¹¹ Jacques Derrida, *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression*, trans. Eric Prenowitz (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 1-2.

¹² Ibid, 4-11, and Verne Harris, *Archives and Justice: A South African Perspective* (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2006).

¹³ Derrida, *Archive Fever*, 11.

While Derrida and Foucault tend toward the abstract, focusing on principles rather than applications, archivists have expanded upon their ideas, exploring the implications that this branch of philosophical reflection holds for archival practice. In his 1999 article, “The Place of Theory in Archival Practice,” Preben Mortensen provides a bridge between abstract theory and concrete practice when he argues that “[i]f archival studies are to be taken seriously as a discipline with a theoretical or philosophical basis, they must offer something beyond solutions to problems of description, arrangement, preservation, and so on . . . Theories are developed within archival practice and must be understood as a product of this practice itself.” In Mortensen’s analysis, theory does not simply justify the archival profession or place it on an equal footing with historical inquiry because “theory is not only an *explanation* of practice . . . [T]he theoretical point of view influences, as previously explained, the approach to practice” [*italics in original*].¹⁴ This argument posits a reciprocal relationship between theory and practice, with the one informing the other and the conversation between the two inspiring shifts in both practice and thought.

Though Mortensen is concerned with the functional relationship between theory and practice in a way that Foucault and Derrida are not, his analysis does not include concrete examples of how theory might be applied to or change the daily function of an archivist. As one of the first archivists to explore formally the relationship between postmodernism and the profession, Mortensen’s analysis suggests the possibility for cohesion between theory and practice and provides a theoretical framework for later work which exploits the vocabulary of postmodernism in archives. Professional literature exploring appraisal and description provides a way to move beyond the purely

¹⁴ Preben Mortensen, “The Place of Theory in Archival Practice,” *Archivaria* 47 (Spring 1999): 3, 14.

theoretical, for postmodernism highlights the political ramifications of appraisal and selection, the power wielded by memory and the corresponding powerless silence of those who fall outside of history's net, and the impossibility of neutral description. These premises raise further fundamental questions for archivists: Whose history do archives preserve? What role does the archival appraiser play in selecting and shaping social memory? What political functions do archives and archivists serve? What political functions can – or should – they serve? How might an archivist be aware of this power and avoid abusing it? How can description make the function, contents, and context of archival collections more transparent? These are questions which Verne Harris, Randall C. Jimerson, and Mark Greene (to name but a few examples) explore.

Three years before co-publishing “More Product, Less Process,” Mark Greene argued that the “archival paradigm,” as opposed to a “recordkeeping paradigm,” fostered a sense that archives transmit many truths to their users rather than one universal Truth or set of objective facts. He concluded, “[w]hether we knew it or not, those of us who accepted the relativism of the archival paradigm were participating in a larger and seemingly esoteric discussion about what is named post-modernism.”¹⁵ Greene's comment points to a function of postmodernism: rather than providing a new formula for best practices, it provides a lens for interrogating and understanding existing archival practices. Harris, formerly an archivist at the State Archives Service in South Africa during the apartheid era, has been particularly active in discussion about postmodern implications for archives management and influential in suggesting that archives and archivists have a social responsibility in “postmodernity” to “make our work a work of justice” which acknowledges the other, the effect

¹⁵ Greene, “Power of Meaning,” 54.

of political power involved in ascribing the status of the other, and the ever-shifting relationship between linguistic signifiers and the signified, and the archives (in)ability to reflect reality.¹⁶ Similarly, Randall Jimerson has explored archives as a seat of power resulting from their role in the creation of cultural memory.¹⁷ These theoretical pieces take existing practices and explore them through the lens of postmodernism, finding new implications for the ways in which archives are created and curated.

A growing body of archival literature includes discussions of what new archival practices that explicitly acknowledge theoretical considerations might entail. Terry Cook provides a view of what Derrida-inspired postmodern archival practice might look like since, in his view, “[p]ostmodern concepts offer possibilities for enriching the practice of archives.”¹⁸ Cook focuses on the areas of appraisal and description and suggests that, when influenced by postmodern ideas, archival descriptive “discourse would shift from product to process, from structure to function, from archives to archiving, from records to contexts of recording.” In Cook’s model, the relationship between the archivist and the finding aid is particularly important, and in order to address the questions raised by postmodern theory an archivist “would ask what is present in finding aids as a monolith and what is suppressed, and why . . . Archivists would engage openly with their clients and respect their needs, rather than forcing them to accept professional metanarratives of how records should be described.” Descriptive practices, in

¹⁶ Harris, *Archives and Justice* and “The Archival Sliver: A Perspective on the Construction of Social Memory in Archives and the Transition from Apartheid to Democracy” in *Refiguring the Archive*, ed. Carolyn Hamilton et al. (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2002): 135-151.

¹⁷ Randall C. Jimerson, *Archives Power: Memory, Accountability, and Social Justice* (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2009).

¹⁸ Cook, “Fashionable Nonsense,” 15.

Terry Cook's postmodern world, are flexible, cognizant of user needs, and self-aware, and accomplish these ends by being closely linked to the "appraisal reports that justify why the records, now being described are in the archives in the first place, and make clear their fragmentary nature as trace survivals of a much larger documentary universe."¹⁹ This approach allows finding aids to describe collections in a broad social context rather than treating them as objective summaries of artifacts.

Since it is the vehicle for transmitting the institution's interpretation of the collection, the finding aid is crucial to the archivist inspired by and responding to postmodern theory. In their postmodern analysis of archival practice, Michelle Light and Tom Hyry investigate the subjective nature of the finding aid and analyze the ways in which traditional descriptive practices fail to address the decisions that precede creation of the documents.²⁰ Archivists, Light and Hyry argue, "generally omit extremely important contextual information [from finding aids]: the impact of the processor's work[,] ... leaving researchers to assume falsely that we have no transformative impact or to guess about the nature of the work we have done." At the same time that finding aids omit information about the mediation performed by the archivist, they also "present but one viewpoint" and "represent records in a single way, backed by the inherent authority of the institution in which a collection is housed." Importantly, this viewpoint is presented through the medium of "technical, stylistically neutral" descriptive

¹⁹ Ibid, 29-34. This analysis is not to suggest that Cook is advocating minimal standards processing when, in fact, the opposite is closer to the case. It is, however, to highlight the critical and theoretical framework which Cook delineates for the creation of finding aids and to suggest that this framework is extensible.

²⁰ Michelle Light and Tom Hyry, "Colophons and Annotations: New Directions for the Finding Aid," *American Archivist* 65 (2002): 216-230.

standards that “mask [the] subjectivity and influence” of appraisal, processing, and arrangement.²¹ In addition to this theoretical discussion of the finding aid influenced by postmodern literature on power and subjectivity, Light and Hyry use their analysis in order to make suggestions regarding practice, advocating for the addition of colophons and annotations to finding aids. The addition of colophons, or short “statements regarding the creation of a work,” would “provide contextual information” regarding the acquisition, appraisal, and processing of the collection as well as the production of the finding aid. Ultimately, they would “acknowledge [the archivist’s] editorial contributions.” Light and Hyry take their suggestions a step further than Cook’s discussion of theoretically-inspired practice by including concrete suggestions for implementation. They suggest appropriate tags for a colophon in EAD markup, for example, and compare their suggestions to ISAD(G) (General International Standard Archival Description) and RAD (Canada’s Rules for Archival Description) elements.²²

As Light and Hyry note, their interpretation of processing and the finding aid “presupposes” the idea that archivists are editors, and they ultimately argue that the addition of a colophon might “call a researcher’s attention to the mediating ‘I’ present in both the finding aid and the materials it describes.” In a postmodern view of description, the “mediating ‘I’” is inescapable, as is the fact that the finding aid is a cultural artifact. In order to counter-balance the one-sided nature of the finding aid that “privileges the first reading of a collection,” Light and Hyry suggest the inclusion of user-written annotations. Again, they offer specific ideas for implementation, such as web platforms and digital projects that incorporate user comments, with the idea that annotations would “capture

²¹ Ibid, 217, 221.

²² Ibid, 224-25.

increasing amounts of detail about a collection or offer different perspectives on it.”²³ As an alternative or supplement to user annotations, Heather MacNeil, who also reads the finding aid as a “socio-historical text” that is “shaped by particular ideologies and intentionalities, which in turn shape what they include and exclude, what they emphasize and what they ignore,” suggests a system of archival description that finds its inspiration in new textual scholarship. Rather than attempting to present a romanticized notion of archival control that mirrors previous generations’ search for authorial intent in textual editing, archival management inspired by new textual criticism would instead highlight the various attestations, contexts, and voices involved in the acquisition, processing, and description of a collection.²⁴

Theorizing Minimal Standards Processing

These examples of theoretical approaches to archival management differ from recent literature on minimal standards processing in important ways. First, while the literature surveyed above may include suggestions for implementation, these suggestions remain theoretical in nature. To date, no archivists have formally tested the effects of adding colophons to finding aids or explored the ways in which user annotations to a finding aid lead subsequent researchers to view collections differently. Greene and Meissner’s “More Product, Less Process” and the articles it inspired about implementing minimal standards processing follow a different paradigm than the theoretical pieces above, featuring concrete case studies that explore best practices and standards. Second, when the more abstract, theory-driven literature does make

²³ Ibid, 223, 226, 228.

²⁴ Heather MacNeil, “Picking Our Text: Archival Description, Authenticity, and the Archivist as Editor,” *American Archivist* 68 (2005): 264-278.

recommendations for practice, it tends to call for additional information to be added to already lengthy finding aids. Such suggestions stand in direct opposition to the search for what Greene and Meissner call “the Golden Minimum.”²⁵ Third, and perhaps most importantly, the work of archival theory employs a different vocabulary than that found in MPLP literature. The former tends to utilize the rhetoric of philosophy, the latter that of historical precedent and utilitarianism. Despite these fundamental structural and methodological differences, the substance of minimal standards processing literature is not as radically different from the more overtly theoretical discussions as those differences would at first suggest. This utilitarian literature addresses the ideological implications of the practices adopted and reflects a concern with the function of archives, defining the role of the archivist, and fostering a community that encourages multiple interpretations of archival collections. Ultimately, the MPLP literature reflects a postmodern sensibility and addresses the concerns about archival activity that postmodernism raises.

In their original article “More Product, Less Process,” Greene and Meissner begin with a practice-based problem statement: “[p]rocessing is not keeping up with acquisitions and has not been for decades, resulting in massive backlogs of inaccessible collections.”²⁶ The tools employed to investigate this problem are historiographical (an extensive literature review of past processing practices and metrics) and social-scientific (observation of current practice and surveys of both users and archivists) rather than theoretical. The end result is a set of recommendations that seeks to help repositories process their backlogs more efficiently and allow for collections to be used: when possible, process large, modern collections at the series level; if series-level processing is not adequate for a

²⁵ Greene and Meissner, “More Product, Less Process,” 255.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 208.

collection or a series within a collection, process that collection or series to an appropriate level; rely on environmental controls for preservation rather than item-level conservation, such as removing all paper clips.²⁷

While the article's recommendations are grounded in a review of best practices, Greene and Meissner also spend considerable time investigating the underlying ideology that results in processing backlogs. Their "call for change" in the article's final pages is informed and directed by ideological principles that reflect a theoretical concern with the purpose of archives and archivists.²⁸ The authors conclude that there has been a "persistent failure of archivists to agree in any broad way on the important components of records processing and the labor inputs necessary to achieve them" as well as an inability "to distinguish what we really need to do from what we only believe we need to do." To explain the difference which they uncovered between published processing metrics and existing practices of granular processing, Greene and Meissner hypothesize that the "profession awards a higher priority to serving the perceived needs of our collections than to serving the demonstrated needs of our constituents."²⁹ The symptoms of this problem include extensive paper clip removal, re-foldering, and the composition of lengthy historical notes for finding aids.

Greene and Meissner's arguments attribute the ultimate cause of processing backlogs to professional identity and values, identifying two related areas of archival ideology: the creation of finding aids and the purpose of archivists. In analyzing finding aids, Greene and Meissner reflect on the "unfortunate tendency on the part of

²⁷ For a succinct statement of MPLP principles, see Mark A. Greene, "MPLP: It's Not Just for Processing Anymore," *American Archivist* 73 (2010): 175-203.

²⁸ "More Product, Less Process," 236ff.

²⁹ *Ibid*, 212.

processing archivists ... to use the preparation of [biographical and historical notes] as an excuse to demonstrate their own knowledge (of both collection and historical context) and writing ability.” Instead of nuanced, extensively researched mini-essays, Greene and Meissner argue that the “goal” of description “should always be to convey such narrative content and contextual information as briefly as possible and with as little recourse to outside sources as possible” and that a “crisp, simple presentation with minimal verbiage often provides the most effective representation of collection materials.”³⁰ Although the primary concern that drives these recommendations is expediency, Greene and Meissner’s skeptical view of the value added by historical notes is also an ideological stance that bears comparison to postmodern concepts. By advocating a descriptive focus on the collection as a whole rather than the individual pieces that comprise it, “More Product, Less Process” underscores the importance of context and the meanings conveyed through an item’s relationships to other items. This reflects the postmodern concern of understanding documents within their cultural framework and as culturally created information packages. Furthermore, regardless of their length, all finding aids remain cultural products and interpretive acts. The brief form of minimal standards description de-privileges the institution’s first reading of a collection by setting it up not as an authority, but rather as an introduction. As Greene and Meissner assert, the goal of minimal standards description is to “[l]et researchers create significant essays out of or about the collection at hand. *The archivist’s job is simply to represent the materials sufficient to affording acceptable access*” [italics in original].³¹

These comments on the purpose of the finding aid point to a larger ideological concept relating to the identity

³⁰ Ibid, 246-47.

³¹ Ibid, 247.

and function of the archivists and situate MPLP within a conversation that questions the relationship between archivists, librarians, historians, information managers, and the various interpretive roles adopted by each profession. As Luke Gilliland-Swetland notes, “[t]he development of the American archival profession can best be understood as the continuing interaction of two broadly conceived outlooks, those of the public archives and the historical manuscripts traditions.”³² Modern American processing practice of the former largely derives from the European, provenance-driven method for arrangement and description, the latter from the library tradition of item-level description, subject analysis, and classification. These distinctions influence processing and descriptive practices as well as professional identity, and in their broadest (and most reductive) sense align archivists with records managers, or those who preserve records, and the curators of personal papers more closely with historians, or those who interpret records.³³ While never specifically alluding to this long-standing debate, Greene and Meissner argue that the item-level, interpretive practices, derived from the historical manuscripts tradition, “make no sense in an era where acquisitions comprise a huge amount of frequently redundant material, in myriad forms, with no inherent appeal apart from their informational content.”³⁴ MPLP argues against a curatorial approach that focuses on content and fosters close examination of each object, advocating

³² Luke J. Gilliland-Swetland, “The Provenance of a Profession: The Permanence of the Public Archives and Historical Manuscripts Traditions in American Archival History,” *American Archivist* 54 (Spring 1991): 160-175.

³³ See, Gilliland-Swetland, “Provenance of a Profession,” 163-172; George Bolotenko, “Archivists and Historians: Keepers of the Well,” *Archivaria* 16 (Summer 1983): 5-25; and Richard Cox, “Archivists and Historians: A View from the United States,” *Archivaria* 19 (Winter 1984-1985): 185-190.

³⁴ “More Product, Less Process,” 234-5.

instead for processing and description that acknowledges the broad cultural implications of the collection. It suggests that the primary role of archivists is not to interpret the documents in their care but rather to facilitate access so that others might formulate their own individual understanding.

It is within this ideological framework of the information manager / historian debate that Andrew Mangravite published the first formal response to “More Product, Less Process” and MPLP principles in the form of a letter to the editor of *American Archivist* in 2006. In his critique of MPLP, Mangravite argues that there is a fundamental difference between personal papers and institutional records. Personal papers are different from institutional records due to the varied nature of their contents, and “[l]etters buried by [an] accurate but nondescript label may hold reams of useful information concerning the subject’s career or personal life.”³⁵ Due to these differences, Mangravite argues that personal papers require a different level of processing than organizational records. One might call the approach that Mangravite advocates, with its deeper levels of processing and description, a reflection of a “modernist” understanding of archival practice. In this paradigm, careful processing and detailed descriptions create a product that helps researchers navigate a collection by bringing order to chaos. The act of processing, analyzing, and describing primary source material plays a much larger role in this definition of an archivist’s purpose than it does in Greene and Meissner’s, and researching and writing finding aids is a part of that purpose. It is in the realm of the finding aid, Mangravite argues, that archivists provide a “value-added contribution. The ability to create a finding aid that sums up a potentially

³⁵ Andrew Mangravite, “More Product, Less Process,” letter to the editor, *American Archivist* 69 (Spring/Summer 2006): 12-13.

unwieldy sum of knowledge making it both useful and accessible is our special skill.”³⁶

In a postmodern view, this value comes at a price: that of the imposition of the archivist's interpretation of the collection, as well as the assumption that the archivist's “mediating ‘I’” is crucial. Without mentioning Foucault or the cultural construction of language, Greene and Meissner respond to the idea of the archivist's editorial imposition in their 2006 letter to the editor of *American Archivist* that answers Mangravite's.³⁷ Researchers, Greene and Meissner argued in their original article, have come to use collections and formulate their own interpretations, not read those crafted by archivists. In their response to Mangravite, they reiterate this point and add the statement that “we add value most effectively and efficiently by managing our whole enterprise so that we make all of our collection materials available at some fundamental level to all researchers.”³⁸ Minimal standards processing advocates a more holistic approach to an archives' holdings than does item-level processing, and it provides a method to describe all collections, not the select few containing items of particular monetary, ideological, or cultural value that justify a prohibitively time-intensive approach.

While Mangravite's letter previews the resistance offered by many archivists to the suggestions put forth in “More Product, Less Process,” other archivists embraced MPLP concepts and put them into practice. In the two years following the publication of the article, a number of practicing archivists published case studies exploring their implementation of minimal standards processing principles. By nature these articles are hyper-practical, highlighting how minimal standards were implemented at particular

³⁶ Ibid, 12.

³⁷ Mark Greene and Dennis Meissner, “To the Editor,” *American Archivist* 69 (Spring/Summer 2006): 14.

³⁸ Ibid, 15.

repositories, assessing the value that the new processing practices added, and pointing out possible pitfalls for reference staff and users. In addition to delineating the nuts and bolts of adopting new practices, however, they also explore the ways in which MPLP principles reflect ideological questions, such as the purpose of a repository or the function of the finding aid. The case studies help to draw the connections between MPLP implementation and more explicitly theoretical approaches to archival management.

A central tenet of the MPLP approach to processing and description is that it increases access, which in postmodern views of archives accompanies institutional transparency. Shortly after Greene and Meissner's article appeared, Michael Strom published a case study in which he examines the application of MPLP principles to a large collection of congressional papers at Texas Christian University. Strom begins his study by analyzing processing literature for congressional collections and arguing that "collectively, we are not processing congressional collections as closely to the minimum-standards processing model as we may think" and that, as a result, Greene and Meissner's recommendations provide the opportunity to revisit processing metrics and practices. Strom focuses on the measurable results of minimal standards processing at his institution, noting that "having processed the first three series [of the collection], the department is able to turn its attention to other collections in the backlog" and that "the finding aid has provided access to the papers. Reference requests have increased and reference service has improved."³⁹ Donna McCrea described the similar reasons for adopting minimal standards processing at the University of Montana's archives. Her justification cites the

³⁹ Michael Strom, "Texas-Sized Progress: Applying Minimal Standards Processing to the Jim Wright Papers," *Archival Issues* 9 (2005): 106, 111.

importance of providing timely access: “I believe that an archivist at a public institution has an obligation to make collections available ... [and] a full-time processor who took eight hours to process each linear foot would just barely keep up with what the archives [at Montana] acquires in a year,” making no headway on describing the institution’s significant unprocessed backlog. Given the experimental nature of McCrea’s project, the bulk of the article is focused on the institutionally-specific; she describes, for instance, how the archives has “shortened our historical, biographical, and scope notes, leaving more of the burden of discovery on the user rather than on the archives staff.”⁴⁰

Both Strom and McCrea explore the practical implications and benefits of MPLP principles as well as the underlying ideologies which support the adoption of a new processing plan, but their observations also relate to postmodern concerns about the representation of archival collections. As Derrida and Harris have argued, archives will always be exclusionary and never capable of collecting every document or representing every experience; processing and describing all collections that are held, however, makes institutional holdings, as well as any gaps in coverage, more transparent. Not only does this activity facilitate research, it helps to enable discovery of the cultural framework for the institution’s collections through what Harris refers to as the “disclosure of context.”⁴¹ The collections do not exist in a vacuum but rather within the archives’ explicit frame of institutional reference, and MPLP principles provide a vehicle through which these institutions can make this frame of reference known in a timely and cost-effective manner.

⁴⁰ Donna McCrea, “Getting More for Less: Testing a New Processing Model at the University of Montana,” *American Archivist* 69 (2006): 285-6, 288.

⁴¹ Harris, *Archives and Justice*, 14.

In addition to encouraging archivists to move away from extensive and overtly interpretive narratives in finding aids and to make institutions' holdings as transparent as possible, MPLP principles also introduce a way in which the process of archival description can become more accessible and less hidden domain of the archival institution. As a result, processing and description move from the institution's single point of view to a more open and inclusive narrative. This is an idea that Christine Weideman explores as she describes how Yale University implemented minimum standards processing to address existing backlogs and prevent the future accumulation of unprocessed materials in the manuscripts division. Like Strom and McCrea, Weideman details the rationale behind the adoption of minimal standards processing and discusses the implications of this decision for descriptive activities at Yale, citing the need to meet the needs of researchers as well as those of donors. Both goals result in the need to "accomplish more processing in less time." As a result, Weideman notes that the manuscripts division has shifted the burden of discovery and extended interpretation from the processing archivist and reference staff to "the researchers themselves." In addition to this refrain, familiar from Strom and McCrea's case studies, Weideman also describes how she involves donors with arrangement and description: "I now ask donors who created the materials to write all or some of the series descriptions for our inventories. Since we are doing less arrangement and description below the series level we have less to say about the research strengths of the materials. The donors who created the materials, however, often have excellent insight into what the materials document."⁴² Instead of a place for the archivist to document his or her own interpretation of the collection, the finding aid becomes a place where an

⁴² Christine Weideman, "Accessioning as Processing," *American Archivist* 69 (2006): 276-82.

individual involved in the creation of the collection can document information about the materials and record a narrative that includes not just information about the items themselves but also about their place in the collection. This activity is reminiscent of Light and Hyry's analysis of annotations in finding aids, for it does not "privilege ... the processor's own context and perspective,"⁴³ but allows for another voice to join that of the institution.

Critics of MPLP often wonder if minimal standards can adequately reflect a collection's varied contents or support sustained research. In a postmodernist view of archives, one might also wonder if a minimally processed collection could be capable of reflecting the web of systems that informed the creation of the records. Anne L. Foster describes the reasons for adopting minimal standards processing to arrange the University of Alaska's extensive photograph collections, and her case study brings to light a method for acknowledging the perspectives that comprise archival collections through the application of MPLP. In addition to bringing MPLP concepts into the discussion of processing standards for image collections, Foster extends the theoretical implications for MPLP through her advocacy for user-driven processing. Instead of processing for a nebulous community or an ideal user, Foster describes how she analyzed the cultural parameters of her institution's constituency and implemented practices that were tailored to the needs of these users. The case study which she offers is the Field Papers, a collection of materials, including 40,000 photographs, compiled by a glaciologist. In this instance, "applying MPLP concepts meant looking at the collections as a resource created by a scientist, with projected scientific users ... There was no need to create item-level descriptions for these materials ... a long list of vaguely listed individual images ... would

⁴³ Light and Hyry, "Colophons and Annotations," 229.

only cause confusion.” As a corollary, Foster projects that “general public researchers would likely not be interested in most of these scientific views, which focused on technical recall and scientific measurement rather than landscapes, historic events or people . . . With this realization, we were able to stop all the item-level processing and focus on getting a workable finding aid written.”⁴⁴ On one level, this is a utilitarian statement driven by reflection about a collection in a specific repository; on another, it is a practical restatement of the postmodern idea that the creators of records, the institutions that house them, and the researchers who use archival documents all assign meanings to a collection. In this instance, minimal standards processing preserves the layers of meaning and understanding already associated with a collection rather than eradicating them during processing.

As a careful reading of Greene and Meissner’s “More Product, Less Process” and case studies from early adopters of MPLP reveals, the focus of minimal standards processing is not necessarily expediency for the sake of expediency. Rather, minimal standards processing asks archivists to think about the actions they take and the resulting consequences, to evaluate the purpose and function of archival collections, to consider the political and social roles that archivists play as they arrange and describe collections, and then to practice their profession in light of these reflections. In the MPLP literature, archival practice provides a testing ground for theoretical questions as well as the opportunity to consider the purpose and implications of theory. This observation returns the present discussion to Frank Burke’s article on the future of archival theory in the United States. After noting the schism dividing theory from the existing body of practice-based archival literature, Burke argues that once philosophers and

⁴⁴ Anne Foster, “Minimum Standards Processing and Photograph Collections,” *Archival Issues* 30 (2006): 110.

academics have formulated theories about archives, the “task for the working archivist will be to test those assumptions against practice.”⁴⁵ Relating the literature of minimal standards to discourse about postmodern theories of archives facilitates a movement toward a corpus of professional thought that incorporates ideas with practice and thought with action and away from a focus on case studies driven by expediency alone. Recognizing these elements in case studies reveals the “theology” under which Burke’s “parish priests” of archives practice, even when this theology is not explicitly stated as a general theory, for as Preben Mortensen asserted, “practice is not independent of theory ... Theory ... becomes an examination of a practice ... aimed at articulating those general principles, ideas, or theories that give these practices their coherence.”⁴⁶ What remains for working archivists is to acknowledge directly the theoretical implications of existing practices and to explore expressly the cohesion between the two.

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⁴⁵ Burke, “Future Course,” 43.

⁴⁶Mortensen, “Place of Theory,” 19-20.

BOOK REVIEWS

Community Archives: The Shaping of Memory. Edited by Jeannette A. Bastian and Ben Alexander (London: Facet Publishing, 2010. 286 pp.).

Jeanette A. Bastian and Ben Alexander's compilation of essays is a provocative yet accessible examination of the relationships between archives and communities. The book is based on the ideas that archives fulfill humanity's need for community engagement, and that communities express identity by keeping records. "Through their formation, collection, maintenance, diffusion and use, records in all their manifestations are pivotal to constructing a community, consolidating its identity and shaping its memories" (p. xxi). The editors are careful not to define "community archives," allowing the contributing authors to explore multiple definitions of record, archive and community, and examine the variety of forms community archives take. Contributors also examine how professional archivists can build relationships with citizen archivists, and contribute to the development of community archives. The chapters in this book challenge professionals to reexamine traditional records keeping practices, and think critically about our relationships with underrepresented communities.

The book begins strongly with "'It is noh mistri/ wi mekin histri.' Telling Our Own Story: Independent and Community Archives in the UK, Challenging and Subverting the Mainstream" by Andrew Flinn and Mary Stevens. Flinn and Stevens describe community archives as politically subversive, deliberate acts of creation that challenge and undermine traditional histories and illuminate hidden stories. Community archives are "counter-hegemonic" weapons in a fight against

“subordination and discrimination,” (pp. 7-8), and contribute significantly to what the authors call the “democratization of heritage” (p. 18). However, Flinn and Stevens caution against justifying the creation of community archives with the idea that archives create and reinforce identity. As political realities shift, minority community identity could be seen as a threat rather than a value, leaving community archives vulnerable. The solution, they suggest, is to stop relying on anecdotal evidence that indicates a causal relationship between archives and identity, and instead focus on quantifiable evidence of the work archives do in the communities they serve.

The rest of the book unfolds neatly from the first chapter. In chapter three, Glen Kelly describes how the Noongar tribes of Australia have used records such as anthropological field journals to reinforce oral tradition and support land title claims. In chapter 11, Ricardo L. Punzalan tells of residents on the Philippine island of Culion, a former leper colony, using hospital records to celebrate the island’s centennial. Though these records document many acts of erasure, oppression and marginalization, for the residents of Culion they mean much more. One resident describes the archives as something greater than a monument, “a museum full of records about our ancestors who are our heroes” (p. 208). Punzalan also offers insight into the role of the archivist. He says, “Archivists should view their actions as ‘co-witnessing’ and not only as expert authors in the construction of archives as heritage and collective memory of a community. We make archives more meaningful by being aware that, as we perform archival tasks, we participate in, and to some extent mediate, the communal remembrance of the past” (p. 214).

Part of the Facet series “Principles and Practices in Records Management and Archives,” this book is divided

into five sections, each about 50 pages long: “A Community Archives Model,” “Communities and Nontraditional Record Keeping,” “Records Loss, Destruction and Recovery,” “Online Communities: How Technology Brings Communities and their Records Together,” and “Building a Community Archive.” Each section consists of two or three chapters featuring work by respected archival thinkers. Bastian and Alexander have done well in taking a global view of community archives, though the voice of the citizen archivist is noticeably absent. Many of the authors belong to the communities about which they write, however all but one are formally trained librarians or archivists. The professional archivist could benefit immensely from the perspective of the citizen archivist struggling to preserve a history she feels has been neglected. Nonetheless, any archivist interested in the relationship between archives and memory would find this book a rich examination of complex questions.

Sarah Quigley
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Over, Under, Around, and Through: Getting Around Barriers to EAD Implementation. By Michele Combs, Mark A. Matienzo, Merrilee Proffitt, and Lisa Spiro (Dublin, OH: OCLC, 2010; published online at: www.oclc.org/research/publications/library/2010/2010-04.pdf. 44 pp.)

After the plethora of articles published during the last few years on the many obstacles facing archivists in the adoption of Encoded Archival Description, it is very refreshing to find a new publication that gives constructive

help to professionals wishing to implement EAD. This OCLC report, which is accompanied by a webinar reinforcing the ideas and concepts of the paper (available online at <http://www.oclc.org/research/events/mediafeed.xml>), makes great strides in providing solutions to archivists who need assistance overcoming the obstacles to EAD implementation.

The report opens with a brief introduction that indicates the intended audience and purpose for the paper. Directed toward those with a “modest acquaintance” with EAD and an understanding of standard archival description, the report sets out to present a collection of helpful tools to assist readers in overcoming the informational, persuasive, or technical barriers that are often encountered in the implementation of EAD. Each of the authors has had personal experience with EAD and struggled with some of these barriers. Less a basic “how-to” guide than a set of practical suggestions to get around the problems associated with EAD, the authors seek to show that implementation is easier than is often perceived.

The paper is divided into two main sections, the first of which addresses political and logistical issues. Because institutions are frequently unconvinced of the benefits of EAD, the first few pages of the first section are devoted to providing archivists with effective arguments advocating the encoding standard. The points made here provide encouragement not only for reluctant administrators, but also for reluctant archivists themselves. In fact, the remainder of Section I addresses the most common objections that archivists frequently raise when considering the adoption of EAD. The intimidation factor – the sense that EAD is complex and difficult – is perhaps the most daunting obstacle confronting archivists in charge of small archives. The authors encourage readers to break down EAD implementation into small, logical steps. To reduce the complexity of authoring EAD documents, they

encourage the creation of templates. Advocating a “More Product, Less Process” approach to EAD implementation, the authors suggest providing minimum access to collections by encoding existing data, taking advantage of existing MARC records, or creating collection-level finding aids at the time of accession. The authors also provide solutions to workflow issues, suggesting possible ways to get started.

Outsourcing comes up again in the second section of the report, which covers the technical issues in EAD adoption. The migration of existing data into EAD can be accomplished via numerous methods. Once finding aids are in EAD, however, the problem of publishing on the Web remains. Here, too, the authors provide a range of possible solutions. Perhaps the most helpful part of this report is the series of appendices at the end. The first of these lists consortia and EAD aggregators, many of which include tools for EAD creation and best practice guidelines. Appendix II provides a comprehensive, up-to-date list of tools, including online templates, Web-based forms that produce EAD, sources for style sheets, commercial XML authors, content management systems, and much more. The final appendix provides graphic figures outlining possible EAD migration and creation paths as well as possible publication paths.

“Over, Under, Around, and Through” has contributed a great deal to the process of getting new institutions on board with EAD. There is no substitute for the support that can be provided between institutions in various stages of EAD implementation, particularly in states without consortia. Mutual support, preferably local, is key to the long-term success and sustainability of EAD programs.

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Personal Archives and a New Archival Calling. By Richard J. Cox (Duluth, Minnesota: Litwin Books, 2008, 418 pp.)

In *Personal Archives and a New Archival Calling*, Richard J. Cox challenges the archival profession to turn its attention outward to partner with and educate the public about the ways in which it can better preserve personal and family archives. What has prompted Cox's call to action? As he explains in this compilation of previously published essays, humans have an innate urge to create and, in turn, preserve records of historical value - it is our way of attesting "here I am." The increasing accessibility of digital technologies greatly increases the public's desire and ability to document their own lives.

Cox is at his best in chapters four, five, and six, which he admits "represent the heart of what this book concerns," when he demonstrates, through an extensive literature review, the human propensity to rely on documents to create personal identity. While there is a growing trend to romanticize the handwritten letter or leather-bound journal, the role of digital technologies in the creation and transmission of documents is his focus in this volume. In chapters five and six Cox argues that the emergence of documentary forms such as email, blogs, digital images, and family websites are changing the way we create and maintain our documentary heritage. Consider an example such as a missionary family's website featuring photographs of a recent wedding in addition to a link to the parents' blog that documents a recent missionary trip to Africa. Despite the changes in format, Cox maintains "one thing that has not changed is the interest in maintaining one's place in the world by remembering, through archives

and artifacts, where one has come from” (p. ix). Thus, Cox challenges the archival profession to capitalize on the public’s growing desire to create, document and save their personal archives.

In chapter seven, Cox argues correctly that, as a profession, we are still grappling with how to effectively manage and preserve digital material in our own repositories, using email management and preservation as his primary example. Cox states, however, that “if archivists can ascertain how to work with the public on such issues, this will reflect their own success in finding solutions posed by technologies such as email” (p. 217).

If we do not take this opportunity, the risk of losing irreplaceable aspects of the documentary universe grows by the minute. Perhaps Cox envisions the archivist embedded with records creators of all sorts (the amateur local caretaker, the literary lions, the community organizations) while they are still creating and using the records that may eventually be deposited in an archives. While courting collections, curators and archivists alike could use this opportunity to educate creators on how to manage and preserve their paper and digital legacy. While Cox does not make this specific recommendation, he alludes to the many possibilities for building relationships with records creators.

In the excellent concluding essay, Cox mentions some examples of documents and programs that seek to educate the public about the “care and feeding of personal documentation” (p. 303). These examples include programs initiated by the Minnesota Historical Society, the PARADIGM project, and the New Jersey Digital Highway. Cox applauds these projects, examples of what he terms “restor[ing] archival power to the people” (p. 297). I would have appreciated a bit more discussion on how to go about developing these types of outreach documents and programs. But this is not a how-to manual, and Cox does

not intend for it to be. A useful companion to this volume could include lengthier case studies and provide guidance on how the professional archivist can do this in his or her own environment. The professional archivist who seeks to expand his or her role in society would do well to pick up this book and join the growing group of archival advocates, as Cox calls them, equipping the citizen archivists among us with the education and tools to document and preserve their personal archives. For more information about the publisher, contact: <http://litwinbooks.com/>.

Laura L. Carroll
Emory University

From Polders to Postmodernism: A Concise History of Archival Theory By John Ridener (Duluth, MN: Litwin Books, 2009. 208pp.).

John Ridener concisely relates various paradigm shifts in the history of archival theory. He attempts to remind archivists of the centrality of theory at a time when technological changes are forcing the constant evolution of everyday practice. Theory, he says, is driven by the socially defined needs of researchers and archivists' responses to those needs. Theory (especially appraisal) continues to define both the internal and external conceptions of what an archivist is and does.

The one constant throughout the various paradigms Ridener examines is the ever-present tension between the goals of objective and subjective management of the archival record. He finds the initial archival paradigm in the Dutch Manual of 1898, calling it the "consolidation" paradigm. The Manual's authors envisioned a consolidation of records, from disparate locales and differentiated

organizing methods, into central archives with standardized models for arrangement and description. Appraisal was typically rejected, though some of the precedents surrounding “respect des fonds” and other ideas of custody and original order emerged through its prescriptions for practice.

From the Dutch Manual's consolidation focus, Ridener turns to the work of Sir Hilary Jenkinson. Jenkinson built upon the foundation left him by the Dutch, but made more explicit his rejection of appraisal. The theoretical paradigm he established attempted to solidify the “keeper” role for archivists, which clearly divided records preservation from any part of their creation or selection. Ridener aligns the archival vision of both the Dutch and Jenkinson with the development of new forms of historiography incited by, especially, Leopold von Ranke. The historiographical turn through the mid-nineteenth century toward more “scientific” inquiry sought to present history “as it happened.” This disposition depended upon rejecting interpretation while relying upon causal relationships to connect disparate parts of the record. For Jenkinson, this meant that archives had to exist perpetually in the same manner they existed at inception.

The gradual movement away from “social science” historiography and toward the more relativistic views of a new generation of historians led by Charles Beard and Carl Becker in turn led to the prominent role in archival theory of T.R. Schellenberg. Ridener points to the acceptance of appraisal as a new focus for the profession, but he is careful to note the practical considerations of rapid technological change, and the massive growth of the sheer size of records collections. The move toward relativism in historiography helped to garner acceptance of appraisal, but it was the records explosion of the post-war era that created the need for the new paradigm.

The era from Schellenberg to the present becomes

something of a blur in Ridener's work. He problematically merges the rise of the Civil Rights era, the New Left, and new models of hegemony, power, and structure under the overly large umbrella of Postmodernism, and vaguely terms it the "Questioning" paradigm. He rightly notes that no single theory or theorist emerges in this era the way it did under Jenkinson or Schellenberg, and can therefore not be singularly defined. He is also adequately skeptical of applying a postmodern theory determined to reject artificial structure to a profession solely dedicated to creating organizational structure. This does not mean, Ridener says, that archivists cannot learn to glean some of the postmodernists' skepticism of meta-narrative and accept more fluidity of records.

Ridener notes the rapid infusion of technology as a force for creating new paradigms in the future. He may, however, be giving technology too much credit for the growth of new understanding of what archivists do. Technology is certainly a part of that evolution, but there is also a growing acceptance of the fluidity of records; most notably the growing rejection of notions of "permanence."

Still, if immediate technological challenges supplant the theoretical underpinnings of the profession, it will lose its balance. Ridener is right to continue to ask how subjectively archivists can treat records that are growing technologically unwieldy. His book is a welcome reminder that theory can still provide an anchor to keep archivists from being swept away by the technological winds of change.

Michael Law
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Preserving Archives & Manuscripts. By Mary Lynn Ritzenthaler (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2010. 2nd edition. 521 pp.).

In a budget-constrained archival world, preservation best-practices may seem unattainable. Archivists often must choose which actions they can accomplish with limited resources. Realizing the obstacles involved in preserving records, Mary Lynn Ritzenthaler has written *Preserving Archives & Manuscripts* to help archivists identify preservation priorities and take steps to implement them. Ritzenthaler's purpose is to help archivists distinguish between preservation measures that must be undertaken and those that cannot be immediately addressed. Her book is not intended to be a manual on preservation techniques, although practical information is included. Instead, it is meant to guide archivists in making the best preservation decisions feasible for the collections in their care.

In ten chapters, Ritzenthaler covers a number of areas pertinent to the preservation of archival records. She defines preservation in an archival context, and discusses a systematic approach to developing and strengthening an archival preservation program. The book examines the causes of deterioration in archival records and how archivists can create a stable environment that will aid in the preservation of records. Ritzenthaler also describes best practices for handling and storing archival records, as well as how preservation practices can be integrated into daily records management tasks. Finally, she examines the copying and reformatting of archival records, and conservation practices on a collection or item-level scale.

Throughout the book, Ritzenthaler displays extensive knowledge of her subject. Moreover, *Preserving Archives and Manuscripts* is comprehensible for the student and at the same time provides valuable information

for the professional. Most of Ritzenthaler's chapters succeed in providing an overview of potential problem areas and helping archivists identify preservation priorities. Chapter 8 is particularly valuable: it focuses on integrating preservation practices into routine records management practices. Readers interested in conservation practices for paper records will find useful introductory information in this book. In addition to a chapter on conservation practices, an appendix provides hands-on repair procedures for paper records. Accompanying graphics in this section illustrate conservation techniques.

At times, however, Ritzenthaler seems to forget that her book is intended to be a decision-making guide, not a preservation manual or history book. This loss of focus is especially evident in the third chapter where she explores the history of paper-making and the types of media upon which archival records are recorded. Although quite detailed, the chapter adds little to the overall aim of guiding archivists in preservation decisions. Furthermore, her book ends abruptly, leaving readers with no concluding thoughts on the role of preservation within the overall management of a repository. Finally, potential readers of this book should be warned: the focus of this book is almost exclusively on paper-based materials. Information on the preservation best-practices for electronic records is scarce at best. As this is the case, this book may be less useful to archivists in the coming years as archives amass a greater quantity of electronic records.

Preserving Archives & Manuscripts is a good resource on the preservation and conservation of paper-based materials. Although Ritzenthaler sometimes becomes a bit bogged down in the details of preservation practices, for the most part she sticks to the plan and provides an overview of areas that should be of concern to archivists. For the archivist seeking guidance in preservation decision-making, *Preserving Archives &*

Manuscripts should be one of the go-to books in the field.

Jana Meyer
Waring Historical Library

Revisualizing Visual Culture (Digital Research in the Arts and Humanities). By Chris Bailey and Hazel Gardiner (London: Ashgate, 2010. 216 pp.)

Revisualizing Visual Culture is the 6th Volume in the “*Digital Research in the Arts and Humanities*” series edited and compiled by the AHRC ICT Methods Network of Kings College, London. The series addresses the application of advanced ICT (Information Communication Technology) methods towards arts and humanities scholarship. Each volume is a compilation of essays written by experts in the field of digital arts and humanities research. *Revisualizing Visual Culture* is comprised of 11 chapters, each written by a different author who’s outlined in the Notes on Contributors section in the front of the book. This section, along with the bibliography, is helpful in deciphering the many acronyms used throughout.

Topics include: CBIR (Content Based Information Retrieval), metadata, the Semantic Web, Web 2.0, file preservation and migration, 3D representations of unbuilt architecture, “conceptual reorientation” (p. 3) of images and information, place making in the digital research experience, digital archival practices, accessibility, location, net art and internet art history, career shifting, theory, and “the new museum” (p. 163). Chris Baily, both the author of Chapter 1 and a Volume 6 editor, appropriately groups the above-mentioned topics into three categories, Finding, Making, and Understanding. Chapters 2 through 11 are not bound by one category, with each

incorporating a degree of understanding and application that reveals the cohesive scholarship of this collection of essays.

Finding is no longer unique to the librarian as Doireann Wallace points out in Chapter 6, *Words as Keys to the Image Bank*. She states that both the researcher and the general user sorts, labels, annotates, and searches on a daily basis, and with these archival practices now handled by the user, librarians need to rebuild the “archival relationships between image and text” (p. 85). Wallace addresses CBIR, keywording, and the semantic gap between words and images. Her essay continues the dialog initiated in Chapter 2, *Do a Thousand Words Paint a Picture*, by Mike Pringle, who explores the textual internet and how it inhibits those who “speak” visually from researching images in the digital form.

Within the context of Making, is preserving, aggregating, and creating. Core to each of these is education and research, because Making is cyclical. In Chapter 5, *Digital Exploration of Past Design Concepts in Architecture*, by Daniela Sirbu, “unbuilt architecture” is explored through “3D visualization” (p. 61). These 3D models are not digital surrogates of existing architecture, rather manifestations of theories and designs, or “cultural content” (p. 64). Additionally, these “3D visualizations” require a human-computer-interface (HCI) where “information is structured around representations of architecture” (p. 64). Therefore without research, the theories and designs of an architect or culture would never be aggregated and preserved three-dimensionally.

Understanding of the user begins in Chapter 8, where James MacDevitt invites us into a living, breathing archive that is propelled through time not by loss, but by participation. He states, “the Archive and its Users are systematically intertwined,” and that the “Archive is not a thing,” but “rather an activity, or simply, a desire” (p. 111).

Jemima Rellie matches his projection for the archive with her dialog on the evolving nature of art museums and their “ecosystem” in Chapter 10, *Museum Migration in Century 2.08*. Rellie addresses the impact of technology on art collection and exhibition, with the focus shifting to audience participation in a virtual as opposed to physical space. This participation she says, encourages the audience to “incorporate their voices back into the mix” which extends the museum’s content, “creating an ever richer, more nuanced body of knowledge and source of inspiration” (p. 145).

This text, whether used in its entirety or by the individual essay, provides a foundation for discourse and further study on the effects of technology on “the teaching, researching, and archiving of visual culture” (p. 19). The editors have successfully defined revisualization in both its current and future context.

Leigh Ann Davis
Waring Historical Library

The Story Behind the Book: Preserving Authors’ and Publishers’ Archives. By Laura Millar (Vancouver: Canadian Center for Studies in Publishing Press, 2009, 211 pp.).

Based on the title, it would appear this book was written for archivists as a how-to guide for organizing the archives of writers and publishers. Actually, Laura Millar has written a practical and easy-to-read manual for writers and publishers as potential donors of archive collections, providing a persuasive outline explaining everything from what archives are, to their monetary and intrinsic value, to what kinds of materials would be considered of permanent

value for an archives. However, Millar's insights and assessments of how libraries and archives collect, process, and use these materials are helpful to archivists who may be in line to acquire a collection related to the book trade. Many archives at some point acquire the papers of at least one author. An archivist without experience with this type of collection would benefit from the kind of background Millar provides, even though she is addressing the source of these collections. Archivists might also use this book within their own shop when it is necessary to convince or explain to the donor's legal representatives – who are often unfamiliar with the standard practices of the archives profession - how archives work, what standard donor agreements look like, how to place a monetary value on collections, and what are realistic expectations of the archivist.

In twelve concise chapters, Millar's book provides helpful guidance in negotiating the world of literary archives. She uses examples drawn primarily from collections and repositories in Canada, England, and the United States. Interestingly, she discusses the papers of British poet Ted Hughes, purchased by Emory University in 1997 for £500,000 (over \$700,000 in today's market), as an example of the monetary value placed on an author's archives. Of special pertinence to the archivist is Millar's discussion of what types of documents are valuable, enumerating a list that includes book manuscripts, editorial notes, writer-editor correspondence, page proofs, marketing plans, and book catalogs, to name a few. She makes clear the distinctions between records of permanent value and those documenting "housekeeping" details. Also helpful are the simple charts she provides to delineate between keep-discard-review actions for types of records in a collection.

Millar devotes a chapter to some of the many research uses of literary archives, including author

biographies, the history of printing and book design, children's literature as a genre, censorship, and how the use of language changes. In her chapter on electronic records, Millar advises her reader how best to name and file these documents at the point of origin, especially email correspondence, but she can only lament with the rest of us about the transience of electronic formats and the task of shepherding these records to new formats as technology inevitably changes.

Millar assumes that most authors and publishers are unfamiliar with the concept of archives or the meaning and value of their collections. She succeeds in convincing the reader why archives are important perhaps because she has her feet in both worlds in a career that has spanned twenty-five years. She holds a master's degree in archival management and a PhD in archival studies. Besides writing books herself, Millar teaches writing, editing, and information management, and has done editorial consulting for a large part of her career. She also is an associate of the International Records Management Trust. Her background gives an authority and authenticity to her advice in this book that many archivists of literary collections will find reassuring and instructive.

Suzanne K. Durham
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The State Library and Archives of Texas: A History, 1835-1962. By David B. Gracy II (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2010. 226 pp.)

At first glance, a book about the history of the Texas State Library and Archives might not seem broadly appealing. Books about the archives profession in general

can be tedious and dull. However, David B. Gracy's history of the State Library and Archives of Texas is a pleasant surprise. He has written an interesting account of the sometimes tenuous relationship between the library and archive functions of the state library. Extensively researched using Texas library and archives holdings, and reliance on his experience as Texas State Archivist (1977-1986), Gracy explores what he calls "the proper relationship between the library and the archival functions of government" (pp. xiv). This is the story of how Texas established its library and archives as an agency of state government to manage information, and how that classification both helped and hindered the role of the agency.

The Texas State Library and Archives was signed into law in 1909 as the Texas Library and Historical Commission. From the beginning, tensions between the two functions were apparent. Which unit is the most important? What is a state library? The answer to this depended on who was in power at the time, not just the state librarian, but also the governor, legislature, and members of the Texas Library and Historical Commission. All of these players either promoted or hindered the library and archives in its functions.

The book presents a chronological account of the founding of the library and archives, and the associated highs and lows. In eight chapters, Gracy introduces the reader to the many individuals involved in the state library and archives and their respective roles in its growth. There were many issues involved in the power struggle between the archives and the library components. Each took turns leading the agency depending on the interests of the State Librarian and the Commission. There have been a number of strong-willed individuals internally and in outside organizations, particularly the Texas Library Association, that lobbied for increased funding to the agency. The book

highlights the players from these organizations who helped build the agency.

The book concludes with two appendices, one a list of the Texas Library and Historical Commission members, 1909-1962, and a list of the Texas Library and Historical Commission and State Librarians, 1909-1962. The Notes and impressive and exhaustive Bibliography of primary and secondary sources document Gracy's meticulous examination of how the library and archives came to be.

The main points the reader takes away from Gracy's book is not only the continuing struggles of libraries and archives in gaining legislative, public, and financial support, but also the relationship between the library and the archives. It is not a new problem nor will it end as long as an attitude of "libraries and archives are good and needed, just not now and not at this cost" (pp. xx).

For an enjoyable history of one state's adventures in establishing a library and archives, David Gracy's book is the one to read. Archivists today can relate to the struggles recounted in this very interesting book. In a very readable narrative, Gracy shares the story of how Texas, over the years, addressed the struggles between the library and archives functions, the key individuals who shaped these periods of growth and change, and the effects of insufficient resources of money, space, and staff. Gracy has written what could have been an absolutely dull story into a highly engaging narrative.

Brooke Fox
Waring Historical Library
Medical University of South Carolina

The Big Archive: Art from Bureaucracy. By Sven Spieker
(Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2008. 219 pp.)

In *The Big Archive*, Spieker highlights some of the more irrational aspects of the archival mission—particularly the mission of the nineteenth-century archive—by taking many of the concepts thought to be inherent to this mission and using examples to push them to extremes, showing what conclusions might unfold when one takes a concept to its (and beyond its) theoretical boundaries. The book challenges the reader to consider “modern” archives in somewhat of an untraditional light. Can some works and ideas simply *not* be organized through the application of “traditional” archival concepts? Would these same works and ideas fall into any sort of organizational schema in the first place? Do some materials and thoughts inherently reject spatial or temporal containment in any conventional sense? Spieker’s book successfully evokes these questions and many others, causing the reader to wonder if indeed there are remnants of human memory that inevitably resist any kind of typical orderliness and bounds that an archivist would struggle to impose upon them; furthermore, might not the gaps in the archival record be just as important as what is captured for the sake of history? These same questions bring the reader to the primary point of the book, in that the tensions surrounding these questions form a crucible that impacts art movements and artists of the twentieth century.

The chapters are laid out chronologically with earlier content focusing on the late 1800s and proceeding to the end of the twentieth century with the last chapter. From Hegel to Freud to Duchamp to the early Surrealists and onward, Spieker explores the evolution of his thesis, with several chapters focused heavily on the early 1900s. The

work is also served by introductory segments and an epilogue, as well as notes and an index. Several images occur alongside the text and while these images are beneficial, the book may have been better served by color images. As for the introduction, it presents a helpful overview of what will be covered in each of the chapters. While archivists may not be the intended audience for the work, those interested in theory, terminologies, and visual materials may find topics of interest in the book. Individuals from art disciplines and with an interest in visual culture will be served best by this text, especially those with background knowledge of twentieth-century art movements and artists.

While Spieker's examples of the intersection of archives and visual culture are thought provoking, there are elements of the book that may give the reader some pause. One could argue that he glosses over the history of archives and its principles. While the book is not geared towards professionals in the field of archives, it still may have been pertinent for him to give more depth to traditional archives. The notion of an archive is sometimes cast in a negative light in the book, as something bureaucratic, boring, and dull—a stereotype that many archival professionals encounter daily. While much of his work is based on substantive examples, it could be argued that the descriptions of an archive in its various forms and places in time are still at times too subjective and made to fit the argument at hand. A possible weakness of the book is that non-archivists will come away ill informed about the archival mission and its positive aspects. Archives are more than boxes, files, and containment contraptions; unfortunately, non-archivists may instead leave with the impression that *all* archives are, proverbially speaking, "The Man," and are in dire need of being rebelled against.

Then again, Spieker would perhaps argue that such tension is required for this “art from bureaucracy.”

Brittany Bennett Parris
Jimmy Carter Presidential Library & Museum

Web 2.0 Tools and Strategies for Archives and Local History Collections By Kate Theimer (New York: Neal-Schuman Publishers, 2010. 246 pp.).

Web 2.0 Tools and Strategies does exactly what it needs to do. Well known in the archives world as the author of the ArchivesNext blog, Kate Theimer is ideally suited to write this very good introduction, not just to the tools, but also to the rationale for using these Web 2.0 tools. The Introduction and first two chapters frame the argument for using social network tools. Theimer states, “If you agree that archives exist so that their collections can be used, then the Web is the best thing that ever happened to them” (p.4). She goes on to relate the technologies of Web 2.0 as new tools for archivists to help researchers.

She reminds us to review our already extant web presence; to be sure we’re presenting the image and information we want to searchers. Researchers are going to find our web presence and it is important before embarking on an additional layer of outreach that our more basic efforts are up to date, visually pleasing and appropriate. Theimer also advises archivists to assess their technical resources - there may be persons on staff or volunteers who are already using the tools of Web 2.0, and who can easily translate that personal interest into a presence for the archive. It may not be as hard to implement some of these technologies as you first might think.

The next eight chapters take new technologies and explain them for the novice user. The chapters are on blogs, podcasts, Flickr and image sharing sites, video sharing like YouTube, Twitter, wikis, social networking services like Facebook and a chapter that combines mashups, widgets, chat and *Second Life*. Each chapter follows the same format of explanations and specific ways your institution can utilize the technology. Each chapter also includes a real example in an interview format. Real life examples and honest explanations about what the implementations will involve are most helpful, both in attempting to evaluate which of the resources to use, and how each best fits organizational goals. For instance, the archive would not rely on Twitter to enhance the search capacities – by its nature it is used it to inform core users of new items of interest or special events.

The final two chapters of the book deal with institutional ramifications of adopting these technologies - assessment and management. Of particular value are the discussions of determining assessment metrics and of creating policies. Both are most valuable to consider at the implementation of a new program, rather than playing catch up after your new service is underway.

Theimer does a good job of not being too specific with any of the technologies, but still there are changes since the book has gone to press, i.e. Facebook's use of the "like" button and changes to "pages". These in no way detract from the value of the book, and any book that deals with technology is going to quickly be dated in some aspects. She urges the reader to check the Web for the most current information about the technologies.

This book is a valuable addition to the literature and most helpful to the archivist who's been wondering how to get started. It takes what seem to be difficult topics and makes them approachable, and gives enough information for the novice to feel comfortable, while at the same time

adding valuable considerations for those who have already taken the plunge.

Debra Branson March
Young Harris College

To provide readers with a diverse viewpoint, the editors of Provenance present two views on a single publication.

Archives Power: Memory, Accountability, and Social Justice. By Randall C. Jimerson (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2009. 442 pp.).

Well researched and thorough, this book examines the underlying power within archives and the inherent responsibility of the archivist. Jimerson, archivist and former President of the Society of American Archivists, argues that archivists are not mere caretakers of the societal record but shapers of collective memory, and should use that power for the public good.

Following a discussion of what archives are and why they should be maintained, the book looks at inequality found within archives. The inequality is present in the founding principles and administration of the archives that perpetuates a social injustice through the neglect and absence of certain records. This is due to the fact that archives were traditionally founded by and for the social elite, or are controlled by governments who have vested interests to protect. Thus, archives are never neutral. Archivists should aim to “recognize the impossibility of neutrality while accepting the responsibility of professional objectivity.”

The book takes shape with a discussion of

governments who use the archival record to prove legitimacy and manipulate the archival record. The author highlights the work of George Orwell's novels *Animal Farm* and *1984* to bolster his argument. Both novels discuss control of the archival record to reshape the past and control social memory in a theoretical setting. The examples of South Africa under Apartheid and Milan Kundera in Czechoslovakia are examined to give real examples of how this same practice continues to be used.

As societies have moved away from oral traditions, they have become more dependent on the written record as evidence of the past. Thus the archive is the place where collective memory is stored. The appraisal process then becomes the proving ground for the archivist interested in social justice. Pressure from governments or benefactors often influence appraisal. Resisting political power can be difficult, but important, if the record is going to be as complete as possible. What a society chooses to preserve in archives speaks volumes about the values of that society. Jimerson argues "archivists have a moral professional responsibility to balance the support given to the status quo by giving equal voice to those groups that too often have been marginalized and silenced."

Support comes through appraisal and collection policies that are inclusive of a diverse population and movements, as well as an open records policy that allows the archives to redress past injustices. Jimerson points to the effort to restore Holocaust-era assets to Nazi victims using the records in the custody of the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) as a success story. He also points to NARA to illustrate how records can be withheld from the public in the case of the Tuskegee Syphilis Study. In both cases, the archival record is used to remember those who may have been forgotten through negligence or government influence.

This book is essentially a call to action. Jimerson,

and the many other scholars he cites, are already using the power of the archives to include the marginalized voices of society and to open the archives for the public good. He uses a concluding chapter to outline ways archivists can respond to the call of justice. These include appraisal practices, description methods, inclusive reference, and public advocacy.

The book is well written and makes a very good case for understanding the power in archives and using that power for social justice. At times it gets fairly political and he leans to the left. However, Jimerson gives the reader fair warning in the Preface that he is a child of the Civil Rights Movement and has ever been an advocate for social justice. Despite the politics Jimerson is correct that improvements can be made to make archives more inclusive of the population they serve. He does not advocate the accrual of archival records fueled by one's personal passion or soapbox. He simply understands the essential evidence that holds our social memory together and desires for archivists to make it as complete and available as possible.

Robert G. Richards
National Archives at Atlanta

Archives Power: Memory, Accountability, and Social Justice. By Randall C. Jimerson. (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2009. 442 pp.)

The culmination of a career of research and activism, *Archives Power* is an exhaustively researched case for increased social engagement amongst archivists. The volume reads like *Bartlett's* for activist archivists – quotations from leaders in our profession, including Richard Cox, Verne Harris, and David Wallace,

complement passages of popular public intellectuals such as Derrida, Orwell, and Mandela.

A renowned scholar and professor of History and Archives at Western Washington University, Jimerson challenges archivists in *Archives Power* to strengthen their commitment to social justice, government transparency, and the documentation of marginalized communities. Jimerson's politics derive from the late 1970s, in the wake of social upheaval that influenced the academy and the archival profession for years to come. He also writes compellingly about the role his father, a Baptist preacher who was driven from his church in the 1960s over his work on behalf of civil rights, played in shaping Jimerson's own commitment to social justice. This call to social obligation pervades *Archives Power*, which encourages archivists to use their professional acumen to accomplish nothing short of making the world a more just place.

Archives Power proposes an ideal for social engagement for archivists. Jimerson follows this standard with a more measured set of strategies for how archivists working in a variety of institutional contexts might adopt at least part of his suggestions.

Archives Power begins by tracing the history of archives and record-keeping from Mesopotamia through antiquity and the Middle Ages, before working up to the mercantile society during the European Renaissance. Jimerson continues on to a history of the archival tradition in the United States, following the history of the archival profession from the passivity of the first half of the twentieth century to the current postmodernist-inspired claim of inherent subjectivity.

Arguably the heart of *Archives Power*, Jimerson devotes considerable space to a detailed chronicling of the many ways in which archives have been used both to reinforce and subvert political power (and, by extension, political malfeasance). Jimerson reminds us of the power

archives and archivists “wield in mediating the past and shaping the future” through seemingly technocratic activities like appraisal, acquisition, and description.

Jimerson extensively discusses how archives can support and shape modern political movements. He spends considerable time discussing archival practice during and following South African apartheid. The author also discusses how traditional archival values of transparency and accountability have been undermined in the United States.

Jimerson closes *Archives Power* with a chapter entitled, “Rethinking Archival Ethics.” The author makes it clear that many of the ideals of social justice outlined in the preceding chapters may not be practicable for certain archivists. However, Jimerson suggests, “even archivists in repositories less fully dedicated to a social action agenda can contribute to these goals of inclusiveness, accountability, access, diversity, and social justice. It is an ethical choice each individual can make, based on personal choices, institutional constraints, and willingness to take risks” (p. 358). Jimerson demonstrates his sensitivity to the limitations within which many practicing archivists work; strategically, therefore, *Archives Power* may be an easier sell for the archival community than prior ideological challenges to archivists.

The world needs two types of archivists: managers and leaders. Archivists who are managers execute records retention schedules, preserve materials for future use, provide reference services to the research community, curate exhibitions that highlight important items, and promote their repositories through a variety of public relations strategies. Imbued with these characteristics, Jimerson argues, “[a]rchivists thus perform, often behind their professional curtains, a vitally important function of determining what sources of information society will be able to access in the future” (p. 233).

There are also archivists who engage in public debates related to record keeping, evidence, memory, and social justice. They strive to defend, with eloquence and passion, the integral role archivists play in shaping and reflecting society's values. These archivists are leaders, and aspire to be so within and outside their profession. Managers will find *Archives Power* useful; the leaders will find it an inspiration.

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David B. Gracy II Award

A \$200 prize is presented annually to the author of the best article in *Provenance*. Named for David B. Gracy II, founder and first editor of Georgia Archive (the precursor of *Provenance*), the award began in 1990 with volume VIII. It is judged by the Provenance Editorial Board.

Michael Law and Greg Schmidt won the 2009 David B. Gracy II Award for their article, “*Functional Analysis and the Reappraisal of Faculty Papers.*”

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Members of the Society of Georgia Archivists, and others with professional interest in the aims of the society, are invited to submit manuscripts for consideration and to suggest areas of concern or subjects which they feel should be included in forth-coming issues of *Provenance*.

Manuscripts and related correspondence should be addressed to Editor Brian Wilson, Georgia Archives, 5800 Jonesboro Road, Morrow, GA 30260; e-mail: bwilson@sos.ga.gov.

Review materials and related correspondence should be sent to Reviews Editor Jennifer M. Welch, Waring Historical Library, MSC 403, Charleston, SC 29425; e-mail: welchje@musc.edu.

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Use of terms which have special meaning for archivists, manuscript curators, and records managers should conform to the definitions in Richard Pearce-Moses, ed., *A Glossary for Archivists, Manuscript Curators, and Records Managers* (Chicago: SAA, 2005). Copies of this glossary may be purchased from the Society of American Archivists, 17 North State Street, Suite 1425, Chicago, IL 60602-3315; www.archivists.org.

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