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## Archives and K-12 education: opportunities for collaboration

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Archives and K-12 Education: Opportunities for Collaboration

By

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Accepted in Partial Completion  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Arts

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## MASTER'S THESIS

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Claire E. Huntley  
March 14, 2013

**Archives and K-12 Education: Opportunities for Collaboration**

A Thesis  
Presented to  
The Faculty of  
Western Washington University

In Partial Fulfillment  
Of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Arts

by  
Claire E. Huntley  
March 2013

## **Abstract**

American archives are currently in a state of under-utilization and change must occur in order for them to survive the twenty-first century. The archives hold information that can be used for teaching research methods, honing critical thinking skills, and fostering a greater understanding of our past. Recent literature in the fields of education and archives suggest increased interest the integration of primary sources into K-12 curriculum, yet there are intellectual gaps left unfilled. Research indicates that both teachers and students are lacking sufficient knowledge pertaining to the proper use and understanding of primary sources. Archivists have an opportunity to promote archives and increase quality scholarship thorough the use of primary sources in K-12 education. This thesis provides resources for connecting current curriculum standards in the state of Washington, and resources from local, state, and national archives. The goal is to demonstrate the broad applicability of archives in the classroom and highlight the scholarly skills that can be developed though the use of primary sources.

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## **Introduction**

Archives have the power to enhance education in the United States. Teachers and archivists can help students develop strong critical thinking, research, and inquiry skills through the use of primary source documents. American archives are currently in a state of under-utilization and change must occur in order for them to survive the twenty-first century. One way to reach out to communities and gain support for the archive is by partnering with K-12 teachers to help facilitate an increase in the integration primary sources into classrooms. Traditionally archivists have neglected the K-12 community, and thus neglected tapping into a broader demographic of archives users. Archival records allow students to gain a more personal understanding of history, use critical thinking skills to consider how people interpret and remember events, and help build historical context for a greater understanding of the past. The archivist plays an important role in making these learning opportunities available to students and teachers. Archivists' background knowledge in research techniques and professional training in collections management allows them to work as facilitators in school-archives partnerships. Introducing teachers and students to the archives is a process through which archivists can promote the archives as a community resource. Archival research, paired with historical context building and authentication, help students gain research experience and develop critical thinking skills that will serve them throughout their lives. This thesis provides resources for both archivists and teachers by connecting current curriculum standards in the state of Washington, and resources from local, state, and national archives. The goal is to demonstrate the broad applicability of archives in the classroom and highlight the scholarly skills that can be honed through the use of primary sources.

The digital age has given the archivist a greater ability to connect with diverse user groups, collaborate with professionals in other fields, and make archives more widely accessible to the public. Today, history education in the United States focuses more on social history and the development of skill sets rather than simply teaching students names and dates of prominent historical figures. “Doing history” is becoming more of the norm, where teachers aim to personalize history for students by bringing a wide variety of sources and activities into the classroom.<sup>1</sup> Students are learning to make sense of various sources, to understand experiences of people in the past, and to think critically about information they discover. The current direction of history education in the United States fits extremely well with the nature of archival research. Inquiry, authentication, context building, and critical thinking are necessary skills for quality archival research. Coincidentally, these same skills are often found in state standards for history and social studies education. In the State of Washington social studies standards also heavily emphasize inquiry-based research and critical thinking. For example, Washington state standards explicitly call for fourth graders to use primary sources to develop an understanding of multiple perspectives of historical events.<sup>2</sup> By seventh grade, students in Washington State must be able to interpret primary sources to support a thesis and conduct inquiry-based research.<sup>3</sup>

Why then, have archivists paid so little attention to this obvious connection between the archives and K-12 education? Perhaps the stereotype of passive archivists holds true. For whatever the reason, few archivists have chosen to be involved in outreach to the K-12 education community. Teachers, on the other hand, have shown great enthusiasm toward integrating

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<sup>1</sup> Levstik, Linda S and Keith C. Barton. *Doing History: Investigating with Children in Elementary and Middle Schools* (Mahwah, New Jersey: 2001), 47.

<sup>2</sup> State of Washington, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction. “Washington State K-12 Social Studies Learning Standards.” 2008: 40-41.

<sup>3</sup> Washington State KJ-12 Social Studies Learning Standards, 2008: 58, 69.



primary sources into classroom activities. The education field is filled with literature on the topic and online teacher resources for primary source integration are abundant. Archivists have the ability to address teachers' lack of experience using primary sources by participating in educational outreach and collaboration with K-12 teachers and students. The proliferation of digital archival materials over the last decade has made a drastic impact on the ability of teachers to access materials. Teachers are now able to easily and quickly browse through thousands of primary sources online. Archivists have been working to make their holdings accessible online and in many cases have increased outreach and promotion of this new way of accessing archives. What many of the current online programs lack is quality guidance for navigating the archives and practicing scholarly historical inquiry.

Both archivists and teachers have been working within their respective fields to increase the use of primary sources, yet there are intellectual gaps left unfilled by much of the work that has been done. The archive is not a textbook. Information from the archive is sometimes complex and should always be approached with understanding of historical context. Without proper guidance from teachers, students will miss critical elements when using primary source documents. Students, especially those in lower grades, require assistance with historical contextualization, inquiry, and authentication. It is essential that teachers understand how primary sources differ from secondary sources. Teachers must be equipped with the necessary skills to guide meaningful, primary-source based classroom exercises. Archivists should assume an active role in understanding the needs of the K-12 community and work to serve it. When done properly, collaboration between archivists and teachers can dramatically enhance the learning experiences for students of all ages.

Archivists have the ability to help teach the skill sets necessary for teachers to effectively use primary sources. The nature of the archive is one in which documents are not examined individually, or taken as fact, but rather the archive is a place of inquiry; a place where searching, questioning, and intellectual assessment are key. Teachers have the opportunity to learn a variety of skills and methods from archivists. Archivists' reference skills help teachers locate pertinent material within the archives. Archivists can then ask follow-up questions to help guide teachers and gain knowledge about curriculum and students' needs. Researching in a collaborative style allows archivists and teachers to share skill sets. Professional development opportunities provided by the archives are an excellent way for archivists to actively meet the needs of teachers. Educating teachers on “thinking like a historian,” is a valuable skill which will help teachers to be better partners with archivists, and in turn help students gain scholarly research habits. The vastness of the archive may be overwhelming. Understanding the complexities of primary sources and the institutions where they are housed can be daunting. With the help of archivists, teachers can be well prepared to use primary sources effectively. Archivists' in-depth knowledge of collections and research techniques puts them in a position to help to teachers looking to efficiently and effectively enhance social studies curriculum.

The goal of this thesis is to draw clear connections between the archives and K-12 education. Examining the current state of archives in relation to K-12 education, discussing current programs available to teachers who wish to use primary sources in their classrooms, and making suggestions for realistic and meaningful collaboration between archivists and teachers are all steps toward engaging archivists and teachers in the exploration of opportunities for partnerships. Once teachers have the necessary skills to teach with primary sources, students

will be able to more fully engage in meaningful explorations of history. Central to the suggestions outlined are the use of state, regional, and local archives resources. Washington State is used as an example for the realistic suggestions offered at the conclusion of this thesis.

Collaboration between archives and schools on a community level has the potential to be a powerful partnership. The partnership transforms learning opportunities for students, teachers, parents, and the community as a whole. Archivists benefit by being more aware of non-traditional user groups, understanding the communities in which they work, and generating greater support for the archives. In an economic climate where funding for the archives seems to be slipping away at every turn, it is critical for archivists to step out from their passive positions. State standards call for the use of primary sources and teachers have made their enthusiasm clear within the education community. If archivists do not act in a timely fashion their profession may be doomed. As Randall Jimerson, former president of the Society of American Archivists, urged in 2009, archivists must consider their role in society.<sup>4</sup> It is a role in which archivists have the power to contribute to the education of K-12 students. How archivists choose to contribute reflects upon the profession as a whole. In order for the archives profession to maintain positive growth, archivists must understand their unique role in society, embrace that role as an active one, and interact with their communities for the common good.

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4 Randall C. Jimerson. *Archives Power, Memory, Accountability and Social Justice*. Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2009), 23.

## **Chapter I:**

### **History & Memory**

History education has undergone a dramatic transformation in recent years. The development and practice of social history has been by far the greatest shift. Social history focuses on ordinary people and marginalized groups rather than the typical prominent, white figures, which were often the focus of history lessons prior to the 1960s.<sup>1</sup> In recent years, a greater focus on minority groups and women has driven changes in both the content of history lessons, and the ways in which lessons are taught. No longer does Early American history focus solely on the founding fathers. Today more emphasis is put on racial hierarchy, the everyday experiences of slaves, women, and immigrants to the new world. Culture wars in the United States during the 1990s helped spur this movement further and increase support for teaching a more inclusive type of history.<sup>2</sup> It is now common to find lessons focusing on previously marginalized groups and there is a greater appreciation and acceptance of social history in classrooms throughout the United States.

One argument in support of social history is that it allows students to understand a more well-rounded and inclusive history.<sup>3</sup> The twentieth century was a time of rapid change in the United States and throughout the world. Women gained the right to vote, child labor laws increased, and the Civil Rights movement drastically changed the landscape of American culture. With these changes came discussions on discrimination, marginalization, and a greater

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1 Cheryl Mason Bolick. "Digital Archives: Democratizing the Doing of History," *International Journal of Social Education*, Vol.21 No.1 (2006): 69.

2 Bolick, "Digital Archives," 9.

3 Linda S. Levstik and Keith C. Barton, *Doing History, Investigation with Children in Elementary Schools*. (Mahwah, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2001), 3.

recognition of the role diversity plays in the United States.<sup>4</sup> Decades of drastic social change spurred teachers to re-evaluate the type of history education they were providing.

The teaching of social history varies. While some teachers use updated books that focus on minorities and women, other teachers have begun integrating more non-textbook primary sources into their teaching. Many teachers favor personalizing history in a way that allows students to connect with material on a level far deeper than they would be able to from simply reading a textbook. Multi-sensory experiences help to personalize history for students.<sup>5</sup> The varied format of archives makes them an exceptional resource for creating multi-sensory experiences. Students with visual or audio impairments, for example, are still able to use archives. Audio archives provide an excellent way for students with visual impairments to explore the archives. Those with audio impairments may find the opportunity to touch and feel archival documents very helpful. Archives are home to letters, diaries, photographs, audio and video recordings, scrapbooks, paintings, and drawings. The odor of a decaying newspaper can captivate one's nose, while hearing a Fireside Chat in FDR's iconic voice can be a delightful audio experience. The multi-sensory nature of the physical archive is one from which all students can benefit. Variability in format of archival materials, along with breadth of subject matter, makes the archives experience beneficial to students of varying abilities and learner types. Archives at national, state, regional, and local levels all provide primary resources to help connect students to the past in captivating ways.

The archive provides a wealth of primary sources and is valuable in that it can often provide a humanistic element not found in mass-produced textbooks. Local archives provide an especially valuable source for information on communities and the distinctive cultures within

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4 Levstik and Barton. *Doing History*, 3.

5 Levstik and Barton. *Doing History*, 47.

them. As a resource, the archive fits extraordinarily well with social history education. The breadth of resources within an archive, especially large-scale archives, is vast and can be used in conjunction with existing curriculum across a variety of subjects. State history, which is often taught in the fourth grade, is an excellent example. State and local archives are a treasure trove of sources related to curriculum standards for fourth grade, as I will detail in Chapter V. Connecting young students to the communities in which they live, and personalizing local history, is a constructive practice and aids in the development of strong knowledge of culture and place.

It is critical to understand that society's memory fluctuates and there is conscious selection involved in the process of memory making, preserving, and passing on. The archive is one source for information about some cultures and groups, but not all. Underrepresented groups in the archive tend to include women, minorities, and members of the LGBT community. Other underrepresented groups are those that do not fit the mold of the archives, whose records are not written on paper, or even with words. Understanding this concept is critical when considering historical context and authentication. Social Studies Learning Standards for the State of Washington require students to consider multiple perspectives of major events in state history and to be able to understand how different people may have experienced the same event.<sup>6</sup> Students must understand that while textbooks and archival documents provide varying accounts, there still may be accounts silenced by their lack of conformity to the written-record based archive. For example, much of Washington State's territorial and early statehood curriculum focuses on the interactions between whites and the indigenous people of the Northwest. Essential to understanding differing viewpoints from the two cultures is acknowledging that written

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<sup>6</sup> Washington State K-12 Social Studies Learning Standards, 2008, 8.

records from whites in the Northwest far outnumber those of indigenous people. When using primary sources in the classroom teachers must not only understand this concept themselves, but they must also be able to pass the concept on to their students. It is not good enough to mention this information at the beginning of the first lesson involving primary sources. Understanding the *lack* of records needs to be a theme throughout all lessons using primary sources. Quality research involves not only collecting information, it also involves the acknowledgment of information which cannot be found or does not exist.

Creating an online portal through which people may access information from their homes, without traveling to an archives, allows for far greater access to archival holdings. Digitizing primary source materials and making them available online for public access allows archives to extend themselves to a new, wider, and more diverse group of users than ever before. Not only does online access to archives allow fast searching, but it also allows access for people who may not have the resources to travel to an archive and spend time physically sorting through sources. Now, from a laptop on a school desk, a home office, or even a smart phone, people can access archival resources with the click of a button. Internet access is required, and although many Americans do not have internet access in their home, public libraries offer computers and internet access for public use.<sup>7</sup>

The archive has been, in a sense, democratized due to the advent and growth of the internet. With potential future funding for the archive, more and more sources could eventually be available online. Increasing access to archival resources allows for greater availability of

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<sup>7</sup> Census Bureau, United States. "Computer and Internet Use in the United States: 2010." Table 3A. Accessed December 1, 2012 <http://www.census.gov/hhes/computer/publications/2010.html>. The United States Census Bureau Reported in 2012 that 75.9 percent of households in the United States have at least one person who has internet access, 65% of which have access within the home.

information to a more widespread user group. Students are one user group that is especially well equipped to utilize online primary sources. Technology education is being integrated into curriculum at all levels, starting as early as elementary school. Students beginning school in the twenty-first century are far better equipped with skills for web navigation, internet research, and digital document creation, as compared to students who began school prior to the turn of the new millennium. The increase in technology education for young students allows them to participate in online learning activities and conduct research across the internet. Accessing digital archives should, and hopefully will become as common as searching for information through online libraries or encyclopedias.

Internet access in schools is widespread and access to computers in the classroom is growing rapidly. Teachers have been working for years to find new ways of integrating primary sources into their teaching of social history. Studies have shown that teachers are interested in using online primary source documents to help fill the gaps left by history textbooks.<sup>8</sup> Many textbooks follow the traditional narrative of American history, often ignoring marginalized people or groups. In an effort to better teach social history, teachers have begun including additional sources of information in their classrooms. Archivists have the opportunity to take part in this rapidly growing trend. By becoming well versed in the needs of teachers and K-12 students, archivists have the opportunity to expand their reach far beyond the archives' walls. Archivists can provide better, more tailored services to teachers, and expand user groups to include K-12 students.

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<sup>8</sup> Bolick, "Digital Archives," 129.



## Chapter II: Review of Archives Literature

Education is a topic that archivists have addressed in a small number of articles over the past few decades. Recent articles discussing K-12 education focus on the use of digital primary sources, the need for archivists to assist in the training of pre-service teachers, and case studies examining one-time trials wherein K-12 students worked with archival materials and archivists. In 1986 Ken Osborne penned “Archives in the Classroom,” an article which includes a call-to-duty of sorts for archivists. His strong approach, which was formulated in the pre-internet era, is still timely to today's discussion.

This neglect of the educational potential of archives is unfortunate on at least three counts. First, the failure to forge possible links between archives and schools denies the schools an invaluable resource for improving the quality of teaching, especially in the fields of history and social studies. Second, it denies society at large a chance to appreciate and to benefit from the evidence and the records upon which its sense of identity and continuity depends. Archivists are certainly aware of the social and cultural significance of their role...Third, by not engaging in educational work, either with the public at large or with the schools, archives deny themselves the possibility of building and benefiting from the support of a knowledgeable and sympathetic public.<sup>1</sup>

Many of these problems continue to plague the archives profession. There have been a small number of archivists who have worked to address Osborne's first point, yet significant gains have not been made on a broad scale across American archives. Links between the archive and education seem obvious. History, social studies, and civics are subjects that have the clearest connection to the archive. Understanding culture, society, government, and our past are all values that teachers seek to pass on to their students.

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1 Ken Osborne. “Archives in the Classroom.” *Archivaria* 16 (1986-87): 17.

Individual efforts to link archives and education for the benefit of the teachers and students have been addressed to different degrees within the fields of education and archives. The topic has been addressed heavily in recent education literature, yet the archives profession has produced only a smattering of case studies and articles.

Osborne's second point, regarding the community at large, is also a serious issue. There is a problem that every archivist knows exists: the general public tends to have very limited knowledge of what the archives is or does. While this is a sad fact, it is also one that can be changed. As mentioned in Osborne's third point, the archives are denying themselves publicity and support from the community. Partnering with schools is a way to address each of Osborne's three points. Not only will the educational potential of the archive help enhance teaching and learning experience, but it will also help create more awareness of archives, and in turn help generate increased public acknowledgment.

Recent articles have discussed remedies to the problems discussed by Osborne. Julia Hendry's 2007 article, "Primary Sources in K-12 Education: Opportunities for Archives," sheds light on significant questions facing the archival field and its relationship to the education profession. After acknowledging the lack of willingness from archivists to participate in outreach to K-12 schools, Hendry offers theoretical solutions to help increase the use of archives in an effort to hone critical thinking and scholarly research skills.<sup>2</sup> Hendry's call for teachers to encourage students to dig deeper into the issue of authenticity is a strong point.<sup>3</sup> It is one that this thesis aims to expand on. Her arguments, though written over two decades after Osborne's, echo many of the same arguments he made in 1986.

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<sup>2</sup> Julia Hendry. "Primary Sources in K-12 Education: Opportunities for Archives." *The American Archivist* Vol.70. (2007): 115-117.

<sup>3</sup> Hendry, "Primary Sources in K-12 Education," 125.

Today's educational standards for social studies are focusing more on skill sets, such as critical thinking and analytical interpretation, rather than pure content. Archivists can seize this opportunity by promoting the valuable ways in which archival documents can be used to develop skill sets. Analyzing archives and education case studies can be helpful in planning useful outreach. Tara Zachary Laver's 2002 article, "Off the Shelf and Into the Classroom: Working with K-12 Teachers to Integrate Digitized Collections into Classroom Instruction," provides valuable information based on a grant-funded project conducted by Louisiana State University (LSU) and a group of Louisiana teachers. LSU special collections staff and materials, along with teachers who expressed interest in participating in the project, worked together to help create lesson plans focused on the Louisiana Purchase.<sup>4</sup>

Laver's article is a valuable resource within the archival community, as it provides information on the nature of working with K-12 teachers, as well as successes and failures of the partnership. The main points demonstrated by this case study are: the need for participation from willing archivists and/or special collections professionals, willing and interested teachers, a body of quality resources from which to draw, and the ability to have direct collaboration between archivists and teachers.<sup>5</sup> Developing classroom programs will be more appealing to teachers if it is clear that connections to state standards can be made through the program. Additionally, Laver found it beneficial for archivists to provide teachers with background information on how to use primary sources, the difference

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4 Tara Zachary Laver. "Off the Shelf and Into the Classroom: Working with K-12 Teachers to Integrate Digitized Collections into Classroom Instruction," *The Southeastern Librarian*: Vol. 50 (2002): 34-35.

5 Laver, "Off the Shelf and Into the Classroom," 36-37.

between primary and secondary sources, and the correct terminology for referring to various types of archival records.<sup>6</sup>

The LSU case study demonstrated a number of elements that are necessary for a successful program and helped the participating LSU staff understand the needs of the teachers. LSU staff learned there was a need for teachers to receive training on appropriate use of primary sources. Orientation on navigating the repository's website also was found to be helpful to teachers who were unfamiliar with the site and its search options. This finding demonstrates that archivists cannot assume teachers understand the nature of primary sources, or how to search using online, digital collections. Knowing these results, archivists must communicate with teachers early on in order to understand their needs. Providing guidance on such topics is part of what archivists can do in order spur teachers' interest in classroom programs.

Willingness to participate and communicate regularly is critical to success. In this case three employees from LSU Special Collections worked directly with teachers to help build lesson plans, select materials, and work out kinks pertaining to online access of digitized documents.<sup>7</sup> The communication between professionals from the fields of archives and education made for a well-rounded attempt at integration of digitized collections into classrooms. Laver's case study illustrates some of the roadblocks archivists may face when beginning partnerships with education professionals. It also demonstrates how results have been achieved through university, archive, and classroom collaboration.

A case study by Anne Gilliland-Swetland, Yasmin B. Kafi, and William E. Landis provides a useful guide for archivists and teachers considering partnerships. The study

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<sup>6</sup> Laver, "Off the Shelf and Into the Classroom," 37-38.

<sup>7</sup> Laver, "Off the Shelf and Into the Classroom," 37.

involved researchers, archivists, teachers, and students. It focused on 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade science education in Los Angeles. As in Laver's results, Gilliland-Swetland et al. found that teachers participating in the University of California – Los Angeles (UCLA) research program also needed assistance in understanding the nature of primary sources and how to best utilize them.<sup>8</sup> The study's aim was to “examine teacher attitudes about the use of primary sources in the classroom.”<sup>9</sup> Overall the feedback from teachers was positive. After working with researchers and archivists, the teachers demonstrated a better understanding of the nature of primary sources, the usefulness of primary sources, and how best to integrate them into the classroom. In addition, the study found that archives can be used effectively in science education. This demonstrates the broad applicability of archival resources. Archives played an integral role in enhancing the students' overall experience of studying science and history.

This case study, while beneficial for understanding successful ways to engage students hands on with primary sources, was also an extraordinary case wherein an unusually large amount of resources were poured into the preparation and undertaking of the project. Researchers, archivists, and teachers all worked to provide students with learning opportunities beyond the classroom. Field trips to UCLA's History of Medicine Collection at the Biomedical Library and the Ballona Wetlands gave students a hands-on experience to connect to what they were learning in the classroom. While visiting the Biomedical Library students were able to see and even touch primary sources related to the topic they were studying. Students also had the opportunity to speak with an archivist and tour the closed

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8 Anne Gilliland-Swetland, Yasmin B. Kafi and William E. Landis. “Integrating Primary Sources into the Elementary School Classroom: A Case Study of Teachers’ Perspectives.” *Archivaria* 48. (1999): 93.

9 Gilliland-Swetland, Kafi, and Landis. “Integrating Primary Sources,” 90.

stacks.<sup>10</sup> This type of experience is extraordinarily valuable to students, though it is not realistic for all schools. Budget limitations often impact field trip opportunities. When possible, field trips are most definitely encouraged, as they help students discover real-world connections to better understand learning as an experience that continues well beyond the classroom. Results from the case study indicate that the field trips had positive impacts on the students and their learning experience.<sup>11</sup> Visiting an archive is particularly helpful when students also use digital images in the classroom. The connection between computer screen and physical stacks is an important one and is detailed further in Chapter V.

As demonstrated by these two case studies, the guidance of an archivist is a valuable resource for teachers and other professionals interested in primary source-based projects. Archivists have a unique skill set which can help with reference, access, and education. Understanding the nature of the archive and its holdings is critical knowledge an archivist possesses and should be willing to share with teachers.

Case studies and articles directly related to education are beneficial to understanding the nature of archive-classroom relationship. Archives literature focusing on the nature of the archive is *also* helpful in understanding the archive's function. As James M. O'Toole and Richard J. Cox write in *Understanding Archives & Manuscripts*, “archivists develop a way of looking at records that is particularly their own, different from that of others.”<sup>12</sup> Archivists' ways of thinking are impacted by their hands-on experience accessioning, arranging, and describing records. O'Toole and Cox describe “Archival Knowledge” of an archivist in four broad categories: “knowledge about the individuals, organizations, and

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10 Gilliland-Swetland, Kafi, and Landis. “Integrating Primary Sources,” 100.

11 Gilliland-Swetland, Kafi, and Landis. “Integrating Primary Sources,” 112.

12 O'Toole, James M. and Richard J. Cox. *Understanding Archives and Manuscripts*. (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2006), 87.

institutions that produce records; knowledge about the records produced by those people and entities; knowledge of the uses to which records can be put; and knowledge about the principles best suited to the management of those records.”<sup>13</sup> This unique knowledge helps archivists guide researchers through the sometimes overwhelming nature of the archive.

Guiding research and assisting in reference are major roles for an archivist.

Understanding the needs of users is essential and helps to create higher quality guidance and reference service. O'Toole and Cox give an example of reference as “when someone other than the archivist looks for information in [archives and manuscripts].”<sup>14</sup> They explain, “The reference process must therefore begin with the archivist and researcher communicating clearly to be sure that each understands the other.”<sup>15</sup> Good reference will produce higher quality users. If archivists can understand researchers, in this case teachers and students, assistance provided by archivists will be more useful than a teacher simply searching on his or her own. The importance of reference should not, and frankly cannot, be overlooked. Quality reference will make the next step, locating descriptive information pertaining to records, much easier.

*Understanding Archives and Manuscripts* describes archivists as individuals who take on many roles within the archive. Not only are archivists responsible for accessioning, arranging, describing, and making documents available, but they are also charged with providing reference service, participating in outreach, and supervising archives facilities. In larger institutions archivists may have the opportunity to focus on one area for a majority of their working hours. As suggested in “Integrating Primary Sources into Elementary School

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13 O'Toole and Cox. *Understanding Archives and Manuscripts*, 88.

14 O'Toole and Cox. *Understanding Archives and Manuscripts*, 124.

15 O'Toole and Cox. *Understanding Archives and Manuscripts*, 125.

Classrooms,” institutions that have the resources for multiple archives staff may have an archives professional with an education background on.<sup>16</sup> This is helpful, but it is also a luxury that not every archive can afford.

Literature from the archives field on K-12 education comprises a rather small body of work, yet there has been a noticeable increase in articles published after the turn of the new millennium. Recent articles have focused on the use of technology in conjunction with archives. The internet has already greatly impacted the archives. Online, digital content is being offered by more repositories. Young students are learning to use technology in their everyday learning. Archives case studies acknowledge this and have emphasized the need for teachers to be well versed with technology related to online archives. As technology reaches further and further into the classroom, and archives continue digitization efforts, it is likely that more attention will be paid to the issue of archives in the classroom.

Much of what has been written specifically on archives in education are case studies from one-time, grant-funded projects, or calls to action for more archivists to participate in outreach. While this thesis is indeed another call to action, it also seeks to provide clearer connections between current education standards and to offer examples of how archives can be used in conjunction with various themes throughout 4<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 11<sup>th</sup> - grade curriculum in Washington State. Considering the knowledge found in archives cases studies, paired with education literature and current education programs focused on the use of primary sources, this thesis aims to make a clear statement that mutually beneficial collaboration between archivists and teachers can greatly increase the quality of social studies education for K-12 students.

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16 Gilliland-Swetland, Kafi, and Landis. “Integrating Primary Sources,” 93.



### **Chapter III:**

#### **Education Literature & Primary Sources in Classrooms**

The discussion in this chapter focuses on how teachers integrate primary sources into their teaching, what types of resources are available to teachers, and how the primary sources are being used in the context of history education. The goal of this chapter is to educate archivists on the current state of primary sources in K-12 classrooms in order to gain a better understanding of how they can use their expertise and resources to enhance and expand current tools and trends in education. After examining these trends this chapter explores the gaps found in primary-source-based history lessons. The chapter then suggests how archivists and teachers can work together to fill voids in order to create a more well-rounded, intellectually sound approach to using primary sources.

Teachers have been enthusiastically integrating primary sources into their classrooms for decades. With the increase in social history, partnered with the recent “boom” of online primary source materials, teachers have been quick to develop new lessons and activities for students. Projects across the nation, including History Day, have promoted the archive and exposed thousands of students to primary sources.<sup>17</sup> Teachers and other education professionals have been conducting studies, writing articles, and developing activities centered on primary sources. The National Council for Social Studies is one organization that has integrated articles on uses of primary sources into a number of its teacher-resource

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<sup>17</sup> National History Day is a program encouraging the use of primary and secondary source research skills. Primary and secondary students participate in contests at local, state, and national levels. According to the National History Day website, students participate in “analyzing and interpreting their sources and drawing conclusions about their topics’ significance in history, students present their work in original papers, websites, exhibits, performances and documentaries.” National History Day, “What is National History Day,” <http://www.nhd.org/About.htm>.

publications.<sup>18</sup> Efforts to increase the use of primary sources in classrooms, most often by the use of online archives, are strong within the social studies education community. Using primary sources in classrooms is not only about enhancing content for social studies and history students. Primary sources are also used to help develop skill sets for research and testing. Development of research, analysis, critical reading and thinking skills are all related to the proper use of primary sources.

There are a wide variety of for-purchase teaching materials based on primary sources. This indicates a demand from the education community. For example, the company Teacher Created Materials has developed teaching kits for various themes and eras throughout history, such as “Elections,” “American Presidents Then and Now,” and “The Great Depression.”<sup>19</sup> These “Primary Sources” kits include primary source reproductions in the form of political cartoons, news articles, photographs, and letters. The aim of these tools, as stated by their creators, is to “help students experience history through multiple perspectives and apply critical-thinking skills.”<sup>20</sup> Similar types of hands-on kits are also offered for purchase through Colonial Williamsburg. “Hands-On History, 18th-Century Artifacts for the Classroom,” kits offered by Colonial Williamsburg include reproduction artifacts and primary sources in an effort to help students understand the daily lives of slaves, women, American Indians, and soldiers.<sup>21</sup> The goal of these truly hands-on kits is to “motivate students to analyze primary sources, formulate historical questions, and develop

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18 National Council on Social Studies, “Publications,” <http://www.socialstudies.org/publications>.

19 Teacher Created Materials Publishing, *Created by Teachers for Teachers and Students*. Huntington Beach, CA. 2012: 120.

20 Teacher Created Materials Publishing, *Created by Teachers for Teachers and Students*. Huntington Beach, CA. 2012: 120.

21 Colonial Williamsburg Teaching Resources 2012-2013. Williamsburg, VA. 2012: 8-9.

hands-on literacy skills.’’<sup>22</sup> All of these kits are designed to engage students and personalize history, yet without proper guidance from teachers the primary sources become de-contextualized. Presenting stand-alone reproductions of primary sources can be a pitfall. Before engaging with the kits students must understand that the material in the kits is different from textbooks and other secondary sources. If students do not understand the nature of primary source they will not gain a proper understanding of the materials with which they are working.

The National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) and the Library of Congress (LOC) are two organizations that function as prominent resources for teachers interested in integrating primary sources into classrooms. Both of these organizations have websites where primary sources and educational materials can be accessed at no cost. The websites are designed for teachers and students. The Library of Congress (LOC) website offers free, accessible primary sources, and lesson plans which can be searched by state standard and Common Core criteria.<sup>23</sup> With each activity or lesson comes a list of benchmarks and standards that the activity meets. This allows teachers to decide quickly and easily which activities could fit well into their current curriculum and assist in meeting state and national standards.

Another way for teachers to search for materials on the LOC website is through the selection of “State Content,” “Common Core,” or “Organization.” After selecting which of

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22 Colonial Williamsburg Teaching Resources 2012-2013. Williamsburg, VA. 2012: 9.

23 The Common Core is an emerging set of national standards. Currently there are only two subject areas for which Common Core guidelines have been approved: English Language Arts and Mathematics Standards. Adopted in 45 states and 3 United States territories, the Common Core Standards are gaining broad-based appeal and may eventually include a Social Studies standard. Common Core State Standards Initiative, homepage. Accessed September 20, 2012. <http://www.corestandards.org/> “In The States,” <http://www.corestandards.org/in-the-states>.

the three options to search for, users can then select state, grade level and subject.<sup>24</sup> Search results are then presented in a chart format with appropriate activities linked to standards or organizations. While this search tool is helpful and works well, the drawback is that many state and Common Core standards are linked to only a few pre-made activities, or none at all. For example, when searching: State Content / Washington State / Grade 4 /Social Studies, the results provide only one activity. The single result is for Washington Social Studies 4<sup>th</sup> grade standard 1.1.4.<sup>25</sup> The activity provided is an online, interactive tool titled “The Thomas Jefferson Building: Secret Messages,” which did not include primary sources.<sup>26</sup> No primary sources were linked to 4<sup>th</sup> grade standard 1.1.4 or to any other social studies standard for Washington 4<sup>th</sup> graders.<sup>27</sup> When searching: State Content / Washington / Grade 6 / Social Studies, more results are found. Three “Collection Connections” for standard 1.2.3, and a total of 16 classroom materials for standard 1.3.1 are available<sup>28</sup>. The primary sources and activities provided to meet 6<sup>th</sup> grade state standards are helpful, yet as with all results from the Library of Congress, there are major drawbacks.

Materials chosen by the Library of Congress for the purpose of aligning with state and national standards tend to focus on national topics and topics related to the early United States. The main drawback is that much of the LOC content does not pertain to teachers and students west of the Mississippi River. Given the nature and progression of history in the United States, beginning with the thirteen colonies on the East coast, this is understandable.

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24 Library of Congress, “Teachers”. Accessed November 10, 2012. <http://www.loc.gov/teachers/>

25 Grade 4 “1.4.1 Understands that civic participation involves being informed about public issues and voting in elections.” From “Social Studies Learning Standards, p 36.

26 Library of Congress, The Thomas Jefferson Building: Secret Messages. Accessed November 10, 2012. <http://www.loc.gov/teachers/classroommaterials/presentationsandactivities/jefferson.html>

27 Grade 4 “1.4.1 Understands that civic participation involves being informed about public issues and voting in elections.” Social Studies Learning Standards, p36.

28 Grade 6 “1.2.3 Understands a variety of forms of government from the past or present.” From Washington State K-12 Social Studies Learning Standards, p52.

For teachers working in the far Midwest and West Coast regions, the Library of Congress is *not* as helpful when it comes to providing state and regional resources. Teachers across the nation can and should utilize the Library of Congress's online education programs for help with national issues and studying the early United States. In the Western United States, state, regional, and local archives can provide more state-specific resources for teachers.

The National Archives also offers online resources for teachers. Lesson plans are grouped by era in United States History and focus on pivotal events. Currently eight eras are listed, from “Revolution and the New Nation (1754-1820s)” to “Contemporary United States (1968-Present).” The lesson plans include teaching activities, preselected documents from the National Archives, standards correlation information, and potential cross-curricular connections. The standards to which NARA has linked lesson plans are National History Standards.<sup>29</sup> Unlike the Library of Congress, NARA does not provide lesson plan options related to state standards, subject areas, or grade level.

Document analysis worksheets are available for download and distribution in classrooms. These worksheets were designed in house, by staff at NARA. Sadly, the quality of the currently available worksheets is subpar. Designed not by archivists, but by former educators, the worksheets offer little more than a glimmer of guidance for educators. In particular, the worksheet titled “‘Universal Truths’ of Teaching with Documents” makes

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<sup>29</sup> “*National Standards for History Basic Edition*, 1996: The development of the History Standards was administered by the National Center for History in the Schools at the University of California, Los Angeles under the guidance of the National Council for History Standards. The standards were developed with funding from the National Endowment for the Humanities and the U.S. Department of Education.” From “History Standards” <http://www.nchs.ucla.edu/Standards/>

“Schools today vary widely as to when and how they offer their courses in history, and therefore the National Council sought a flexible approach to history standards which would accommodate local variability rather than impose a single national curriculum on the nation’s schools...Deciding when these eras should be studied, whether in grades 5-6, 7-8, or 9-12, is a curriculum decision, and should remain under local or state control.” From “Policy Issues.” <http://www.nchs.ucla.edu/Standards/preface-1/policy-issues>

very broad, generalized, and misguided statements about the use of primary sources.<sup>30</sup>

While the term “universal truths” is itself debatable in reference to the study of history, there are other pitfalls within the worksheet. One of the bullet points reads “[s]ome documents are treasures. Learning about them, and the ideas they embody, connects students to a collective national heritage.” How does this statement provide guidance for a teacher? This so-called “universal truth,” is simply a statement with little substance and does not contribute to an intellectual examination of the usefulness of primary sources. The worksheet also states “[p]rimary sources make students question where information comes from and encourage students to consider their original use.” This statement is highly debatable. I would argue, as an archivist, that primary sources themselves do not inspire students to question information, but rather proper guidance from educators and archivists can encourage students to consider where information comes from. As argued throughout this thesis, young learners require guidance when examining primary sources.

This worksheet demonstrates that information of poor quality is available online and users should be aware of the risks associated with using such information. It also demonstrates the need for archivists to play a larger role in the development of teacher-training materials. Archivists’ expertise in the use of primary sources should not be left out of teacher training materials. Archivists should most certainly be consulted during the preparation of documents related to teaching with primary sources, especially when the materials are being created by an organization such as the National Archives and Records Administration.

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<sup>30</sup> National Archives and Records Administration, “Universal Truths of Teaching with Documents.” Accessed September 15, 2012. <http://www.archives.gov/nae/education/pdf/universal-truths-of-teaching-with-documents.pdf>

Similar to the Library of Congress's teacher resources, the National Archives provides helpful framework for teaching guidance pertaining to national and early American History topics. The benefit which teachers and students are able to get from these pre-made lessons depends on the quality of background knowledge teachers have. Teachers who are well versed in using primary sources will be able to implement the pre-made lesson plans in a more productive way than teachers who are relying solely on the materials provided by the Library of Congress and the National Archives. Teachers who lack historical research and analysis skills will not be able to provide students with the proper guidance when using pre-made lessons. Document analysis worksheets provided by NARA can be helpful in providing stimulating questions, but without follow up from teachers there is no room for extended intellectual exploration of the sources.

What does the proliferation of online teaching tools tell us about the usage of primary source documents in the classroom? The growing number of online programs produced by archives, libraries, and private organizations, along with the multitude of for-purchase classroom materials focusing on primary source documents, support the claim that teachers are interested in, and working toward expanded curriculum using primary sources. It is obvious that teachers have taken on the challenge of creating a more personal, engaging way to present history to their students. There is a commitment to engaging students in history and historical research. State standards in Washington and many other states require the use of primary sources. The level to which many teachers are using primary sources varies.<sup>31</sup> Knowing this, it is essential to follow up with further questions about how primary sources are being used in classrooms, and in what context.

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31 Washington State K-12 Social Studies Learning Standards. 2008, 42.

There are still roadblocks to the successful integration of primary sources into curriculum in K-12 education. Despite the plethora of teaching materials, workshops, and programs available both from non- and for-profit sources, there is still plenty of room to expand the use of primary sources in the classroom and to enhance the quality of instruction and usage of primary sources. As Keith Barton and Linda Levstik claim in their book *Doing History*, teachers still struggle to understand historical interpretation. Barton and Levstik blame the disproportionate emphasis on pedagogy over content in teacher training programs.<sup>32</sup> Some challenges in student comprehension of methods of historical inquiry and interpretation can be related to deficiencies in the education of pre-service teachers. College and university training of teachers often lacks hands-on practice of scholarly historical research. There is a large body of education research addressing the issue of pre-service teachers and their exposure, or lack thereof, to primary sources. The article "Improving Classroom Instruction: Understanding the Developmental Nature of Analyzing Primary Sources," focuses on finding ways to improve document-based activities in classrooms.<sup>33</sup> The study seeks to understand what skills students need for historical interpretation of primary source documents, and how background knowledge influences students' approach to historical understanding.<sup>34</sup>

Results from the study indicate the need for strong, well-honed critical thinking skills. When equipped with a solid skill set in critical thinking, students have the ability to better engage in historical interpretation. As pointed out in this study and others, there is a

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32 Levstik and Barton. *Doing History*, 246.

33 Karen M. Dutt-Doner, Catherine Cook-Cottone, and Susan Allen. "Improving Classroom Instruction: Understanding the Developmental Nature of Analyzing Primary Sources." *Research In Middle Level Education Online* 30, no. 6 (February 2007): 1-12

34 Dutt-Doner, Cook-Cottone, and Allen. "Improving Classroom Instruction," 1.



roadblock to successful integration of primary sources. Teachers themselves are often not well versed in historical research, inquiry or interpretation. Because much teacher training focuses on pedagogy and core subject training, many pre-service teachers do not have personal experience doing scholarly historical research. It is no fault of the pre-service or veteran teachers. Traditional college-level education programs do not include this type of research requirement for pre-service teachers, thus the pre-service teachers cannot be expected to have strong academic research and historical inquiry skills.

Hongming Liaw's article "Using Online Primary Source Resources in Fostering Historical Thinking Skills: Pre-Service Social Studies Teachers' Understanding," focuses on how pre-service teachers understand online primary sources. Results show that amongst pre-service teachers there are large gaps in understanding historical thinking. Without training in historical scholarship or an understanding of how to examine and evaluate primary sources, teachers are unable to pass on the necessary skills for historical inquiry. Liaw's work demonstrates that teachers must personally have a solid grasp of historical understanding before they can attempt to properly lead students through lessons using primary sources.

Increasing the contextualization of archival documents is one way to expand the use of primary sources. Historical context is a building process whereby students gather information about social, political, and economic events that occurred in the time and space surrounding the event for which they are building context. Students examining photos of protests surrounding school de-segregation in the United State must gain knowledge pertaining to events leading up to de-segregation. They should be aware of the cultural

atmosphere of the era, geographic differences in how de-segregation was perceived by Americans, and how politics influenced culture. Without understanding context students will not fully understand historical events or the primary sources being presented.

Using pre-made teaching kits, or a single document detached from its bibliographic information, runs the risk of losing critical historical context. Teachers are responsible for introducing lessons which help build archival and historical context for students. Using archival documents requires historical context, and without it, a good deal of meaning is lost. Teachers must also understand context related to the sources of the documents. Too often documents are pulled from an archive or library and presented as a stand-alone source without any mention of the archive, collection, or series from which it came. Source information aids in developing a greater understanding of where documents originated. Bibliographic information provides evidence of potential bias, gives evidence for creating a historical timeline, and functions as evidence for citation purposes. Understanding both historical context, and context within the archives, are scholarly skills which will aid in students' intellectual development.

Scholarly research methods are multifaceted and include gathering sources from a variety of locations, creating historical context, and developing complex and challenging historical inquiry. In order for students to develop and eventually master these skills, it is essential for teachers to have mastered the skill sets prior to introducing historical research into the classroom. Sadly, numerous studies have found that a large portion of K-12 teachers are not well trained in scholarly historical research. Archivists are well suited to assist in professional development for teachers. Not only do archivists have an in-depth

knowledge of their institutions' holdings, but they also have a unique set of skills and knowledge that they can share with teachers. While some archivists have suggested that training in historical inquiry and source assessment be integrated into teacher training programs, it is more realistic to provide this type of training in workshop or professional development format. Since changing curriculum for teacher training programs is unrealistic due to the widespread nature of the change, it is necessary for teachers to gain adequate training through channels other than their college-level teacher training programs. Archivists are able to facilitate this training on a more realistic, small-scale level.

K-12 students are a diverse group. There is no one-size-fits-all solution to integrating archives into education. There are, however, a number of skills that can be taught to students of all ages. Critical thinking is one skill that can and should be developed over time and through studies in various academic disciplines. History is a subject that relies heavily on critical thinking. Without understanding how to gather, interpret, analyze, and authenticate information, students will lack the skills necessary to meaningfully participate in society. Archives provide an excellent opportunity for students to develop and practice critical thinking and research skills. Primary sources often act as puzzle pieces that need to be connected as part of the inquiry process. While textbooks aim to provide complete information on a single topic, primary sources function as pieces of a narrative that can only be fully constructed when historical context is developed.

It may be difficult for K-12 students to “think like a historian” in the traditional academic sense, yet students *are* able to grasp a good, working knowledge of many of the basic skills used by historians. It is a misconception that young learners are unable to think

critically and build historical context. Evidence proves that students as young as elementary school are able not only to comprehend the concept of a primary source document, but to analyze and use primary sources as effective tools in social studies education.<sup>35</sup>

Learning history “to contribute to a participatory, pluralistic democracy” is essential in creating motivation amongst not only teachers, but students as well.<sup>36</sup> Understanding the importance of history not just as events in the past, but also as lessons for the present and future, allows students to gain a greater appreciation. For example, a student may begin a history project on the creation of the Electoral College. During research she may find information about the highly contested 2000 presidential race, or perhaps even the most recent (2012) presidential race. Recent articles and other publications give a very different view on the Electoral College as compared to sources from the early nineteenth century. Encouraging students to survey a wide range of sources, spread out over centuries, teaches students that a news article from a few months prior can still be relevant in a research project/paper about the conception of the Electoral College. An additional facet to this activity is challenging students to search through vast quantities of online materials. Understanding where and how to search for reputable online sources can be challenging for students and teachers alike.

Determining authenticity is a skill that teachers must learn and be able to pass on to their students. The proliferation of digital source materials, which came about alongside the advent of the internet, can present challenges in authentication. Using reputable and well-known sources, such as the Library of Congress, National Archives, or a state/local branch

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35 Barton and Levstik, *Doing History*.

36 Barton, Keith C. and Linda S. Levstik. *Teaching History for the Common Good*. (Mahwah, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2004), 259.

of an archive is one step toward authentication. For evaluating internet sites the text *Using Internet Primary Sources to Teach Critical Thinking Skills in Geography*, suggests a method for authentication. “A-B-C-D Guidelines” have been constructed to help facilitate authentication.<sup>37</sup> Authors Martha Sharma and Gary Elbow suggest teachers and students understand affiliation, bias, clarity, and documentation when examining an internet source. Affiliation refers to the creator or author of the site. Bias, which is often difficult for students to understand on their own, can be spotted by large gaps in information or the lack of contact information for the site's creator. Clarity refers to “red flags” which students may spot, such as grammatical, formatting, or spelling errors. Students should understand this is a sign of poor scholarship, and thus the source may not be credible. The final element for evaluating internet sources is documentation. Source information, including bibliographic entries and links to original information sources, is critical.<sup>38</sup> Not only is documenting sources a good scholarly habit, but it also helps students to understand the connection between what they see on an internet site, and where the information originally came from. These four elements are valuable not only for authenticating internet sites, but also for evaluation of student's own work.

Teachers can ask students to evaluate each other's work in order to authenticate it. Can you contact the author/creator? Has the author left out information about a certain aspect of the topic he or she was writing about? Is the information written well and with proper grammar? Do you know where the sources came from? These are all questions teachers can ask their students during and after research projects. When students learn to

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37 Martha Sharma and Gary S. Elbow. *Using Internet Primary Sources to Teach Critical Thinking Skills in Geography*. (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 2000): 60.

38 Sharma and Elbow, *Using Internet Primary Sources*, 59.

ask these types of questions they gain a valuable skill that contributes to their development of scholarly research habits.

As previously mentioned, social studies education seeks not only to teach history, but also to help students understand and value their participation in a democratic society. Students should understand how to participate in this process and why their participation is important to the continuation of democracy. Information searching and authentication skills are key to participatory democracy. Without the ability to analyze and interpret information, members of society will lack the skills necessary to fully participate in democracy. This skill allows documents from the archive to be tied easily into curriculum for civics. The opportunities to demonstrate authentication and civic involvement through source analysis are expansive. Civic involvement involves information gathering, authentication, and interpretation. Learning a skill set for information authentication directly contributes to productive citizenship and participation in democracy.

Cleary and Neumann's simple statement "asking the right question may be as important as choosing the right documents," is essential to keep in mind throughout the development of various research-related skill sets.<sup>39</sup> Teachers must understand what type of questions and methods of inquiry will best suit the documents chosen, the curriculum, and the nature of their classrooms. Thoughtfully selecting documents to present to students and creating an environment for scholarly inquiry allows teachers to set the stage for high-quality primary source usage. By providing "some sort of cognitive tool to guide their analysis," teachers can produce better, more scholarly results from their students.<sup>40</sup> Instead

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39 Patricia Cleary and David Neumann. "The Challenges of Primary Sources, Collaboration, and the K-16 Elizabeth Murray Project." *History Teacher* 43, no. 1 (2009): 77.

40 Cleary and Neumann. "The Challenges of Primary Sources," 77.

of simply handing the documents over, teachers can walk students through the inquiry process. Asking thoughtful questions is the heart of document-based discussion. Questions can be prepared ahead of time and altered for each activity or grade level.

In lower grades, where critical thinking skills are just beginning to be developed, a teacher needs to provide a significant amount of guidance. Simply “letting the document speak for itself” is not adequate for students who are new to using sources from the archives.<sup>41</sup> A more productive approach is to inform students about the nature of the archives and then to ask well-planned questions. Instead of handing over a document and acting as if the information it contains is like a textbook, which is generally assumed to be historical fact, teachers can provide information about the archive.<sup>42</sup> They can explain how the document was found and why the class is using a source other than the standard textbook. Once students better understand the nature of these resources, as will be discussed in greater detail in subsequent chapters, then is it time for questions.

Education literature on archives in education demonstrates that while enthusiasm is high, full comprehension of proper use of primary sources is not adequate amongst all teachers. Case studies have revealed deficiencies in teachers' abilities to navigate archives and properly use primary sources. Knowing this, partnerships between archivists and educators should be valued for their ability to help improve the current situation. An archivist who is willing and able to communicate with teachers, learn about state guidelines, and help teachers facilitate quality learning, will be a great asset to the archive as an institution, as well as to the teachers and students with whom she works.

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41 Cleary and Neumann. “The Challenges of Primary Sources,” 74.

42 Cleary and Neumann. “The Challenges of Primary Sources,” 74.

## **Chapter IV:**

### **Archivists' Roles in K-12 Education**

Education research has demonstrated that students have the ability to use primary sources at an early age. With the proper background knowledge, K-12 teachers have the ability to create strong, active learners through the integration of archival documents into the classroom. Working with teachers provides archivists with the opportunity to gain a better understanding of the needs of K-12 users, to help teachers to develop skill sets for scholarly historical inquiry, and to reach out into communities to foster awareness of the archives. Archivists are able to easily research state standards and contact teachers via the internet. This allows archivists to review and discuss standards focusing on inquiry-based research, primary sources, and critical thinking skills. After gaining a basic understanding of K-12 standards archivists are better prepared to begin outreach and partnerships with schools.

But why should an archivist spend time and resources helping “non-traditional users?” K-12 students have the opportunity to benefit greatly from archival resources and archivists’ neglect of this fact is a disservice to our education system. It is imperative that young learners be exposed to archives. It is in the best interest of the archivist and archival institution to increase use of archives and take an active role in promotion of the archives. By partnering with communities and schools archives will be able to make their resources more useful for students, while also helping archives to build community support. Grant-funded opportunities for education projects are one example of how the archive could benefit from a partnership with K-12 schools. Demonstrating increased use of an archive



may be helpful for writing grant applications, especially if an archive is able to cite specific, successful projects with schools. Partnering with local schools and community organizations allows archivists to demonstrate how they can help increase historical knowledge. Local schools may be interested in uncovering their own history. Archivists can guide students and teachers through the process of searching for archival resources related to the history of a school and its students. Engaging on a local level will help promote the archive as a go-to resource for community members.

Anniversary celebrations or annual festivals are examples of community events that may include the use of local archives. For example, the Center for Pacific Northwest Studies (CPNWS) in Bellingham, Washington, offers online access to materials generated for Bellingham's centennial celebration. The material online covers a wide range of topics in Bellingham's history, including information on influential residents, industry, and even local schools.<sup>1</sup> The CPNWS website offers “lesson frameworks” for a variety of grade levels.<sup>2</sup> Links are provided to primary sources from the CPNWS and to pertinent secondary sources. Offering this type of online information to teachers is an excellent way for an archive to promote and make its resources available. Online resources directed toward teachers and students are a good first step in archives-classroom partnerships. In order for the partnership to grow and be successful it is necessary for archivists and educators to understand one another and their professional differences, as well as share their skills sets.

Archivists use their training in arrangement and description of records to help guide researchers. Consulting with archivists prior to introducing primary-source-based projects

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1 Center for Pacific Northwest Studies, “Bellingham's Centennial: Exploring the Foundations of Our Community.” <http://west.wvu.edu/cpnws/findingaids/cpnws/centennial/index.html>.

2 Center for Pacific Northwest Studies, “Welcome to Lesson Frameworks,” <http://west.wvu.edu/cpnws/findingaids/cpnws/centennial/index.html>.

into the classroom will help teachers better understand the process of inquiry that is used when examining archival documents. Leading by example allows archivists to demonstrate how to ask questions, search for information, and troubleshoot when necessary.

Researching alongside archivists gives teachers the experience necessary to act as guides for their students. Teachers have the opportunity to understand document source information as it pertains to the larger collection or series.

Using primary sources is not always an easy task, as any researcher will tell you. In order for teachers and other non-archivists to get a better sense of archival materials it is imperative to understand some of the basic concepts behind the archive and archival profession. One important concept related to the records cycle and use of records is the understanding that the original usefulness of records will change and develop over time. The primary use of a document is based on the purpose for which the document was originally created. For example, a bill of sale's primary use is to record a transaction.

The evidential use is then the document's "secondary usefulness."<sup>3</sup> For example, a journal written by a woman living on America's frontier may have originally been created for the purpose of self-reflection and personal record keeping. Today that journal provides information about the daily life of frontier people, from the types of activities families participated in, to how women raised their children. Information from personal journals and letters has the ability to tell readers not only about the life of the creator, but also to give clues into more far-reaching aspects of that time and place. Weather, food, farming, economic transactions, and medical issues are all topics often found in personal manuscripts. The life cycle of a record, from creation to its place within an archival collection, impacts

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3 O'Toole and Cox. *Understanding Archives and Manuscripts*, 98.

how and why the document is used, and for what purpose. Understanding the life cycle of a record and its changing usefulness is a critical concept necessary for using any primary source. The life cycle of the records begins at the creation of the record, continues throughout the document's existence, and ends with either destruction or the record being archived. Provenance refers to the custody of documents throughout this lifecycle. Ownership or custody begins when the record is created and once archived, the documents final custodian is archive.

Finding aids contain scope and content notes pertaining to the collection in which the document belongs, bibliographic information about the documents, and offers information about access to and reproduction of the document. Teachers must learn how to understand finding aids in order to perform quality searches, especially through online repositories. The danger related to misunderstanding or ignoring finding aid information is that critical contextual information could be lost. Photographs are a prime example in which finding aids can be extremely helpful. Frequently the style of dress or type of technology visible in photographs can give clues to when and where the photograph was taken. However, these clues can be misleading and there are many factors that can influence the appearance of a photo. The intent of the photographer is impossible to discern based solely on a photograph. If a photo is part of a larger collection, perhaps with personal manuscripts or a series of other photographs, there is much more evidence from which to draw a conclusion. Archivists' intimate knowledge of a finding aid's structure and its content can be shared with teachers in an effort to ensure students do not overlook valuable evidence accompanying archival documents.

When archivists work with K-12 teachers and students they must keep in mind that the goals, process, and end results of research in the archive will not mirror the traditional academic researcher's experience. While the core of the process is the same some adjustments must be made for younger students. Archivists can learn a great deal about how to adapt research strategies and reference questions by communicating with teachers and becoming knowledgeable about grade-level benchmarks. Fourth graders will not “think like historians” as is often encouraged, but rather, if guided properly, they will, in my words, “think like historians in training.” Young students are able to grasp the beginning stages of historical inquiry and information gathering. The skills needed for in-depth and complex, critical analysis of primary sources will be honed over time and put to the test in advanced placement or college history courses. Beginning in elementary and middle school, students are able to learn about different perspectives of historical events and begin the process of source collection. In late middle and high school students become better equipped to work independently to gather sources and research based on their own interests. After developing strong source-gathering and historical analysis skills, students will be ready for higher-level, scholarly research.

Archivists have the opportunity to do outreach that is mutually beneficial. Archivists and teachers are peers of sorts. They both work diligently to foster development of the intellect and encourage active learning. Archivists and teachers are dedicated to creating spaces where people are able learn, and they provide services to the public. The commonalities between these two groups of professionals make them an excellent team for collaboration. Coming together to communicate, plan, and collaborate on learning activities

allows archivists and teachers to greatly enhance the quality of education and create community partnerships.

Diversity is also a component of outreach and expanded user groups. The Department of Education reports that for the 2011-2012 school year, 48% of the student population in the United States was non-white.<sup>4</sup> United States public schools are becoming increasingly more diverse and archives are too. The expansion of diversity in schools and archives can work hand in hand for the benefit of both. Not only do students now have access to more archives focusing on ethnic minorities, women, and LGBT communities, but also archives with diverse user groups will have more cause to continue expanding and diversifying holdings. In communities where large Hispanic populations reside it is especially important for archivists to understand the needs of K-12 students. Nearly one quarter of all students in the United States are Hispanic.<sup>5</sup> Enhancing community access to education can be accomplished through increased consideration of community needs. Archivists can learn from the needs of K-12 users and adapt planning and development accordingly. For example, archivists working in communities with large Hispanic populations may want to consider Spanish-language programming for outreach activities, or increased accessioning of documents related to local Hispanic communities. By doing this the archive becomes more reflective of the community which it serves and helps provide resources for a growing segment of the population. Understanding changing demographics is an ongoing process through which the archive must constantly evaluate its accessioning and make changes accordingly. In order for the archive adapt to history it must evolve over

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4 Department of Education, "National Student Demographics," accessed November 1, 2012, <http://www.eddataexpress.ed.gov/state-report.cfm?state=US&submit.x=21&submit.y=9&submit=Go>.

5 Department of Education, "National Student Demographics." Accessed November 1, 2012. <http://www.eddataexpress.ed.gov/state-report.cfm?state=US&submit.x=21&submit.y=9&submit=Go>

time and take into account the rapid changes in society. This requires updating collections policies, considering changes to outreach programming, and gaining understanding of patron needs.

In addition, exposing ethnically, socioeconomically, and regionally diverse groups of students to the archive creates a greater likelihood of a more diverse group of archivists in the future. Democratizing the archive, as discussed in Chapter I, focuses on increased accessibility to all people, and helping to engage the public in research and discovery. Making the archives profession attractive to a more diverse group of people is important for the survival of modern archives. The United States' demographics are changing rapidly and there has been criticism, even from within the archival profession, that archives are too white and too mainstream. Encouraging students of various backgrounds to use the archive exposes them to possible careers in the field. The expansion of more diverse archival institutions would then be more reflective of our changing society.

Outreach is done to inform, encourage, and inspire, and is an important job function of the archivist. To accomplish outreach on a large-scale archivists must have access to resources. Finding the monetary resources for outreach can often be a daunting task for archivists, especially as funding runs low for many institutions. Gathering resources can be challenging, although active archivists who engage in community affairs have a greater likelihood of securing funding and support for the archives. When an archivist enters into a community she must, often begrudgingly, enter the political arena as well. Archivists must approach outreach with a cost-benefit analysis. Many archivists would rather not participate in politics, yet it is often necessary to do so in order to accomplish goals that will further the

archive and secure future employment.<sup>6</sup> Archivists may need to participate in community events, form relationships with school administrators, or become involved in local library activities to help increase awareness of the archives. Offering help to local groups interested in history and/or genealogy is an excellent opportunity for archivists to get involved and generate more support for archival resources. Any type of involvement in groups can create a political atmosphere wherein tension may occur, yet the benefits to active participation should outweigh any risks. Advocating for the archive is essential. Participating in community events creates a larger public presence and helps generate support for the archive. This gives archivists the opportunity to educate the public about the archive, to gain trust within a community, and hopefully to raise funds. Acting as an advocate for the archive is one way archivists can engage in a meaningful role in society.

Partnering with schools is a fantastic opportunity for meaningful and fruitful outreach. Archivists have the opportunity to work with students, teachers, administrators, and parents. Archivists should be mindful of the many opportunities that partnering with schools can provide them with. By allocating time to perform outreach to schools archivists will see a return via increased use, greater community awareness, and support of the archives through archive-school partnerships.

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6 O'Toole and Cox. *Understanding Archives & Manuscripts*, 131.

## **Chapter V:**

### **Suggestions for Success**

The goal of this thesis is to suggest realistic ways in which archivists and teachers can work together for the benefit of each other and students. This chapter will explore topics related to access and integration of archives into the classroom. There are many considerations that must be taken into account when collaborating and tailoring a program to fit the needs of K-12 students. One major issue is how teachers and students will access materials from the archives. The debate over the use of digitized primary sources versus original-format sources has many facets. Ease of access and use, quality of educational experience, and resource consumption are all factors that must be considered by archivists and teachers when planning a program for students. It is critical for teachers to understand how the different methods of access can be conducted and for them to understand the implications of both.

Using digitized, online primary sources in classrooms allows for fast, relatively easy access for schools that have internet connections and computers. Content accessible online is available around the clock and with the click of a button. Teachers are able to do prep work for lessons from home or school, save images to hard drives or flash drives, and easily integrate the digitized images and source information into lessons. If copyright allows, teachers can also print copies of digitized sources for distribution during class.<sup>1</sup> Financial resources necessary for this method are not too great, assuming internet and

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<sup>1</sup> Further copyright information can be accessed through Peter Hirtle's website. Copyright Term and the Public Domain in the United States. <http://copyright.cornell.edu/resources/publicdomain.cfm>



computers are already available at schools. The positive aspects of this method of source retrieval and usage are many, yet there are some drawbacks.

Examining digitized documents, especially if they are stand-alone images, can drastically de-contextualize the image for both students and teachers. For younger learners it may be especially difficult to understand where the original documents came from if they are viewing a digitized document on a computer screen. The document did not “come from the computer,” as young students of the digital age sometimes assume. To avoid student assumptions like this, and to help develop a better understanding of the nature of digitized sources, it is important for teachers to create context for students. Teachers must explain how sources were originally created, who created them, and how sources came to be archived, and eventually digitized. In order to do this teachers must grasp the concept of the records life cycle and basic archival principles. While learning this may not take great monetary resources, the time needed to understand these concepts is a greater resource burden for the teacher.

Visiting the archive in person can help tremendously with explaining archival principles and giving both teachers and students a hands-on, meaningful experience. Teacher visits to an archive, before beginning a partnership, provide a valuable experience. Physically entering an archive is a ritual of sorts. There are a number of steps that must be taken in order to move from the outside of an archives building to hands-on exploration of documents. Archives require visitors to sign in and lock up personal belongings outside of the reading room. There are rules and regulations when in the reading room. Visitors to the archive must confer face-to-face with archives staff in order

to retrieve documents. Pens are typically not allowed, and archivists or other staff members may need to assist with moving larger items, such as ledgers and maps. The ritual is a multi-sensory experience that helps to heighten visitor's sense of understanding of the valuable and often fragile nature of archival documents.

When funds allow, local schools should most certainly take advantage of the opportunity to use the archives. The ritual of visiting a local archive can be tremendously beneficial to students. Working face-to-face with archivists, inside an archive, gives students a guided experience with a professional. Students are not left to sort through Google search results on their own, or wander aimlessly through their school library. Visiting an archive introduces students to a new world of resources. Meeting with an archivist affords students the opportunity to ask questions as they make their way through the archives. Not only will the archivist benefit from meeting teachers and students face-to-face, teachers will also gain a better understanding of the nature of the archive, the archival process, and in turn be better equipped to bring this information back to the classroom. Due to the somewhat unique nature of the archives facility, such visits generally take extended time and resources compared to an internet search, learning the process of visiting and using an archive is especially important. They will understand the process through which visitors go and they will have formed an introductory relationship with the archives staff. In doing so, teachers and students will be more likely to use archives again in the future.

Another experience which can enhance students' understanding of archival materials is to see an original document next to a digitized copy. Not only would

students be able to compare and contrast the differences and likeness of the two copies, but they would also gain a better understanding of the physicality of the archives. They may notice markings on the original document that are not visible on the digital copy.<sup>2</sup> This demonstrates to the students that there may be differences in visual aesthetics between digitized and original documents. This type of activity, along with a visit to the archives, enhances students' understanding the nature of archival documents and how they differ from traditional sources, such as textbooks.

Yet another beneficial experience is to allow students to view archives stacks. While the students are standing in front of shelves upon shelves of boxes, towering high above their heads, the archivists explains what percentage of the holdings are digitized. If an archives has only digitized and made available a small percentage of their holdings this can be particularly useful. The goal of this exercise is to have students better understand the vast quantities of information available at the archives, compared to limited digitized, online resources. Knowing this information students, can better grasp the vastness and complexities of an archive.

Physical access to the archive is not without drawbacks. Time and money are needed to plan and fund field trips. Schools in rural or isolated areas many not be within easy driving distance of an archives. In this case, digital archives have to suffice. From the view of an archivist, other concerns include the ability of the archives facility to accommodate large groups, the safety of documents, and of course the staff resources needed for planning and facilitating group tours. Tours of archives facilities require students to be well behaved and respectful, as the fragile nature of archival documents

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2 Matthew Lyons. "K-12 Instruction and Digital Access to Archival Materials." *Journal of Archival Organization* Vol. 1 No. 1. (2002): 26.

requires. For younger students, visits to the reception area and reading room for a presentation by an archivist may suffice. Older, more advanced students may be better prepared for tours of stacks and hands-on work with the documents. Planning appropriate activities within the archive is a process that the teacher and archivist must participate in collaboratively. In doing so, the archivist gains a better sense of teacher and students needs, and the teacher is better equipped to prepare students for the visit.

There is a third, middle-ground option. If a field trip to the archive is not possible it *may* be possible for an archivist to visit school. This option would of course take considerable planning. An archivist could potentially bring a box or two of reproduced records. Archives do not typically allow for the removal of archival documents from the repository, unless the documents were on official loan to a museum or research institution. Archivists can reproduce records and assemble them in the exact order in which they are arranged within a collection. It would be most useful to reproduce an entire box or boxes of records pertaining to a subject which students are studying in their classrooms. The goal of having an archivist visit a classroom is to allow for question and answer between students and to demonstrate how records are arranged and categorized within collections. The visit would also allow students to get a hands-on experience with reproduced documents. Allowing students to search through folders within the box or boxes gives them the opportunity to see the arrangement and make conclusions about how and why documents are grouped together.

The pros and cons of online, digital access versus physical access create a long list of considerations for both archivists and teachers. Visitors see documents and all of

their intricacies, hear the thud of a heavy Hollinger box being set on a reading room table, smell the distinct odor of aging paper, and feel the weight of a tintype, or curling photograph edges in a scrapbook. The experience will translate back to the classroom, where students using digital archives will then be able to think back upon their experience and imagine how the digitized document they are viewing on a computer screen may appear in the archives.

Multi-sensory, hands-on experiences in the archives also benefit students who have visual or audio impairment. An excellent experience for students with sight impairments is to touch and feel archival documents. Touching the outside of archives boxes on shelves in the stacks helps sight-impaired students to experience the large-scale nature of archives. They can smell the difference between a box of aging documents and a textbook in the classroom. Audio archives are also especially beneficial to those with hearing impairments. The opportunity to make archival resources available to all students, regardless of sensory impairments, is an extraordinary usefulness of the archives.

Realistically, physical access to archives is not attainable for all teachers and students. Those unable to visit local archives must make due with online access. Teachers utilizing digital-only or reproduction-only sources in the classroom must take on the responsibility of educating students about the archive. In order to do this, as argued throughout this thesis, teachers themselves must be well versed on the nature of archival sources, how to properly create context for them, and how best to integrate them into classroom lessons.

## **Suggestions for Successful Integration of Primary Source Documents into Classrooms**

Washington state standards dictate that students must learn to understand and use primary source documents during their social studies education. The following paragraphs will highlight how primary sources from local, state, regional, and national archives can be used to meet state standards. Examples are provided for social studies standards in fourth, seventh, and eleventh grades in Washington State. These grades are when students focus most directly on state and regional history, making them an exceptionally well-fitted time in which to integrate local primary sources.

Social studies and history state standards for fourth graders in Washington include a number of components directly related to primary sources. The state standards read:

Students learn about the state’s unique geography and key eras in early Washington State history, particularly the treaty-making period. They use this historical perspective to help them make sense of the state’s geography, economy, and government today. The cognitive demand of many GLEs [grade level learning standards] begins to include analysis and asks students to look at issues and events from multiple perspectives.<sup>3</sup>

Archival materials can assist in meeting these learning goals. Maps are an especially well-fitted choice for fourth grade, as there is an emphasis on understanding local geography and how geography of Washington State has been shaped over time. Not only do primary sources help students understand multiple perspectives, they can also assist with personalizing history for students. There are a number of social studies standards that explicitly call for the use of primary sources. The following standards are two examples that can be directly linked to primary sources:

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<sup>3</sup> Washington State K-12 Social Studies Learning Standards, 35.

## Fourth Grade

### History :

4.3.1 Understands that there are multiple perspectives regarding the interpretation of historical events and creates an historical account using multiple sources.

### Social Studies :

5.1.2 Evaluates the accuracy of primary and secondary sources.<sup>4</sup>

Standards 4.3.1 (History) and 5.1.2 (Social Studies) fit well together and can be presented in the same lesson. Accuracy and authentication are vital to understanding primary sources. Understanding various viewpoints is also essential when exploring multiple perspectives. Linking these two standards could be a discussion of creator bias, clues pertaining to accuracy, and comparison of multiple sources. For example, the Whitman massacre was an event in the Northwest region that involved white settlers and indigenous people of the Northwest. The bloody clash is one that has become central to understanding the often-tumultuous history of relations between white settlers and indigenous peoples in the Northwest region. Teachers can use the topic to introduce primary sources from multiple perspectives. As previously mentioned, this is an opportune time for teachers to discuss the lack of sources pertaining to certain events and eras in history. Why might archives have more sources from white settlers than

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4 Washington State K-12 Social Studies Learning Standards, 38-41.

indigenous peoples? How do the sources from the two groups differ? Asking students to evaluate the primary sources with which they have been presented, and also acknowledging what sources are unavailable, is helpful for creating a more balanced approach to history.

Two documents that could be used for initiating discussion relating to the Whitman massacre are the “Defendants Request” from the Oregon State Archives and “Whitman Mission, Drawing,” from the Washington State Archives. The Defendants Request is a handwritten document from the 1851 Whitman Massacre trial. According to the Oregon State Archives the Defendants Request, “shows that the defendants believed that the Whitmans poisoned the Indians so that they could take their lands and horses. The Cayuse retribution for bad medicine was to kill the medicine man. The five defendants were convicted and hanged in 1851.”<sup>5</sup> Information provided by the archives helps create context for the Defendants Request. Key information related to the historical context helps set the stage for classroom discussion of the document. Students will better understand the potential motives of indigenous people and not view the event merely as retaliation for white settlement, as may be assumed in the absence of additional archival notes provided. The drawing is undated, yet it is known that the creator or the drawing was a survivor of the massacre. Information about the creator aids students understanding the nature of the myriad of perspectives that arise from different experiences (4.3.1), and how accuracy (5.2.1) may be impacted by the experience of the creator. There is little else known about this drawing, which allows for further research into why and when this drawing may have been created. Archivists can help teachers and

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<sup>5</sup> Oregon State Archives. Defendants Request, Whitman Massacre Trial. Accessed January 20, 2012. <http://arcweb.sos.state.or.us/echoes/link10.html>.



students search for related documents. The absence of information presents a challenge both intellectually and physically.

The K-12 Social Studies Learning Standards state that seventh grade will include:

[t]he study of Washington State includes an examination of the state constitution and key treaties. While these two contexts may be very different, the purpose of studying these different regions and eras is the same: to develop enduring understandings of the core concepts and ideas in civics, economics, geography, and history.<sup>6</sup>

This requires the use of primary source documents and is a fitting example of the importance of primary source documents in history.

## Seventh Grade

### Social Studies

5.1: Uses critical reasoning skills to analyze and evaluate positions.

5.1.1 Understands evidence supporting a position on an issue or event.<sup>7</sup>

Social Studies components 5.1 and 5.1.1 focus on analysis through reasoning and evaluation. This type of standard can be used in conjunction with primary sources related to natural resource topics. Washington State is a hotbed for natural resources and concerns related to their use. Examining photographs, reading policies, analyzing maps, and listening to audio recordings of government proceedings are all helpful ways students can gather information to evaluate positions. For example, the Washington State Digital Archives offer a wide selection of audio recordings related to natural resource issues.

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<sup>6</sup> Washington State K-12 Social Studies Learning Standards, 61.

<sup>7</sup> Washington State K-12 Social Studies Learning Standards, 68.

The Agriculture and Ecology Committee, Secretary of State, Seattle City Council, and other government groups have audio recordings that are especially valuable resources in that multiple positions on a single topic can be heard in a single recording. These records can be found by searching related keywords within the audio collection on the Washington State Digital Archives homepage.<sup>8</sup>

## Seventh Grade

### Geography

3.1: Understands the physical characteristics, cultural characteristics, and location of places, regions, and spatial patterns on the Earth's surface.

3.1.1 Analyzes maps and charts from a specific time period to analyze an issue or event.<sup>9</sup>

Geography standards 3.1 and 3.1.1 can be applied to a number of different curriculum topics related to Washington State and beyond. Maps are common within the archives and local repositories have a wealth of resources related to the geography of the Pacific Northwest. The Washington State Archives have a collection of maps that is extensive and easy to search. For example, students in the Bellingham School District interested in understanding the physical characteristics are able to consult maps of Bellingham from as early as 1891. Comparing "Map of Bellingham Bay," from 1891 to a current map aids in illustrating how physical characteristics and the location of places

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<sup>8</sup> Washington State Digital Archives. <http://www.digitalarchives.wa.gov/>

<sup>9</sup> Washington State K-12 Social Studies Learning Standards, 68.

have changed over time.<sup>10</sup> Using multiple sources, both archival and non-archival, also demonstrates to students that information can and should come from a variety of sources.

Washington State Standards call for eleventh-grade students to:

[C]onsider multiple accounts of events and issues in order to understand the politics, economics, geography, and history of this country from a variety of perspectives. In addition, students examine the state and national constitutions and treaties and how these documents govern the rights and responsibilities of all residents and citizens in Washington and the rest of the United States.<sup>11</sup>

The explicit call for the use of documents demonstrates that State of Washington's recognition of the usefulness of primary sources. Eleventh graders are not only using primary sources related to the founding of the United States, they are also challenged to participate in inquiry-based research. In doing so, students are prepared for college-level research and academic success.

## Eleventh Grade

### Civics:

Component 1.1: Understands key ideals and principles of the United States, including those in the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and other fundamental documents.

1.1.1 Analyzes and evaluates the ways in which the U.S. Constitution and other fundamental documents promote key ideals and principles.<sup>12</sup>

The Constitution of the United States, along with the Declaration of

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<sup>10</sup> Map of Bellingham Bay, 1851, General Map Collection, 1851-2005, Washington State Archives, Digital Archives, <http://digitalarchives.wa.gov>, Accessed January 24, 2013.

<sup>11</sup> Washington State K-12 Social Studies Learning Standards, 90.

<sup>12</sup> Washington State K-12 Social Studies Learning Standards, 90.

Independence, are perhaps the most famous primary sources in United States History. They form the cornerstone of history education for all students and can be used to demonstrate the importance of primary sources as they relate to the function of government. In addition to using the Constitution and Declaration of Independence, students should use related documents in order to gain better historical context. Primary sources related to the Constitutional Convention are numerous and many can be accessed online through the National Archives. For example, the “First Printed Draft of the Constitution,” helps students better understand the process through which the Constitution was created.<sup>13</sup> In order for students to produce a visual image of the Constitutional Convention, they can view current photos of the assembly room where the Constitution was signed.

## Eleventh Grade

### Social Studies

5.2 Uses inquiry-based research.

5.2.1 Evaluates and revises research questions to refine inquiry on an issue or event.

5.2.2 Evaluates the validity, reliability, and credibility of sources when researching an issue or event.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> National Archives and Records Administration. “First printed draft of the Constitution, August 6, 1787, selected pages. Accessed January 25, 2012.  
[http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/charters/charters\\_of\\_freedom\\_zoom\\_pages/charters\\_of\\_freedom\\_zoom\\_6.1.1.html](http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/charters/charters_of_freedom_zoom_pages/charters_of_freedom_zoom_6.1.1.html).

<sup>14</sup> Washington State K-12 Social Studies Learning Standards, 98-99.

These three standards are not only important for students to master in order to succeed academically, but they help students to become productive citizens. The ability to gather, authenticate, and analyze information has been a theme throughout this thesis. It is clear that standards 5.2, 5.2.1 and 5.2.2 address the same themes. Eleventh-grade students should be well versed in how to research using online and physical archives, libraries, and materials available in their classrooms. The end of high school is an opportune time for students to independently research topics based on their interest. Teachers and students can consult the Appendix for a partial list of archival institutions located in Washington State.

### **Professional Development**

A realistic option for teacher training is professional development programming. Offering quality professional development training geared toward teachers allows archivists to promote their resources, participate in community outreach, and increase their knowledge of user needs. All of these things have the ability to greatly expand archivists' presence in the community and create better job security. Attending professional development training provided by an archives gives teachers the opportunity to engage in the multi-sensory experience of visiting an archive. They can talk face-to-face with archivists, gain knowledge of a new resource, and learn skills related to building historical context, conducting meaningful analysis, and authenticating sources. Planning professional development is the starting point for a collaborative partnership

that may evolve through many phases. The next stage is providing professional development programs, followed by teachers implementing learned skills in the classroom. After implementation in the classroom archivists should gather feedback from teachers in order to understand how professional development programs translate to the classroom. After results are gathered the information can be used to adjust future professional development.

The Library of Congress has had great success with its professional development programs. The LOC offers summer training institutes, in-house programs, and online professional development programs. Archivists and teachers beginning the process of professional development can look at the resources provided by the Library of Congress in order to gain ideas about structure and content for local and regional programs.<sup>15</sup> The LOC has a consortium of partner institutions that conduct professional development, but the consortium does not have branches in every state.<sup>16</sup> Professional development at regional and local levels is important for helping to build community partnerships. Communication between teachers and resources professionals helps bring more information and educational opportunities into classrooms.

Professional development programs for teachers can focus on a variety of topics. A good introductory program should focus on a few main topics: repository website navigation, source/bibliographic information, citation requirements, copyright laws/regulations, and the proper use of primary sources. Teachers need to understand the mechanics of the archives before delving into more advanced topics. Archivists can first

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15 Library of Congress, "Professional Development." Accessed November 10, 2012.  
<http://www.loc.gov/teachers/professionaldevelopment/>.

16 Library of Congress, "Consortium Member List." Accessed November 10, 2012.  
<http://www.loc.gov/teachers/tps/consortium/#id>.

guide teachers through the search/retrieval process, then move on to discussions focusing on historical context building and effective use of primary sources.

The time needed to cover these topics varies and must be planned according to the schedules of teachers and archivists. Given that most archivists and teachers work during normal business hours, Monday through Friday, scheduling is an important topic. A teacher in-service or workday would be an ideal time for archivists to offer professional development. A well-planned, one-day event is enough time to cover the basics of archives navigation and primary source use.

Archivists should consider ways to incentivize teacher training. If archives are able to create workshops and programs that directly provide a benefit to the teacher, such as continuing education credits, they are providing a service to help teachers improve their credentials. This type of incentive helps teachers to justify the time and cost that may be involved with learning about archival resources. Archivists should consult with local school districts in order to understand requirements for continuing education and how course fees could potentially be subsidized by the school district. Consulting with local school district also helps archives to better understand the specific, and perhaps unique needs of teachers in their community. National models for professional development, such as those provided by the Library of Congress, are not tailored to specific regions or communities. While there are benefits to large-scale, national programs, community based programs allow for attention to unique needs. The Library of Congress offers an online “Professional Development Builder” that allows teachers to log time spent reviewing professional development materials presented in PDF format.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Library of Congress “Professional Development.” Accessed March 2, 2013.

This is a helpful tool, yet it is impersonal and does not allow for question and answer, as face-to-face professional development does.

The goal of professional outreach related to the archives is not only to share and educate, but also to create an atmosphere in which teachers feel they are gaining valuable experience and enhancing their teaching credentials. Rather than impersonal, rigid, online materials, teachers can learn face-to-face from the experts. Archivists offering professional development for teachers can provide hands-on, personal assistance within the archive. This allows teachers to ask questions throughout the program, see the archive first hand, and have a more rich experience than simply viewing a computer screen. Creating a professional development workshop that clearly understands and works around the needs of teachers is critical for success.



## **Conclusion**

Connecting students to the past is no easy task, but with the help of archivists and well-trained teachers it is possible to provide students with engaging, multi-sensory experiences that will enhance students' education. The varied nature of materials within the archive allows for varied experiences using resources. Learners young and old can use the archives to research any topic they wish. Sight-impaired individuals can use audio records, language learners may find paintings most engaging, while others may prefer traditional manuscript collections. The opportunities to use archives throughout K-12 education are endless. Understanding the nature of the archives and the opportunities to use archival resources in the classroom is a large-scale undertaking and requires collaboration from archives and education professionals.

Taking an active role in advocacy and outreach allows archivists to inform and engage a sector of the public that has traditionally been ignored by the archives field. Partnering with K-12 schools is a way for archivist to reach new demographics, gain support, and demonstrate to the usefulness of the archive to the community. In doing so, archivists aid in ensuring the future security of the archives. Conscious collaboration between well-educated teachers and understanding, active archivists, allows great strides to be made toward integration of archival resources into K-12 education. Through professional development, the use of online materials, and face-to-face communication between archivists and teachers, primary sources can be used to enhance education among K-12 students.

Education literature has demonstrated a strong interest in using primary sources in classrooms and current education standards call for the use of primary sources in social studies education. Yet many teachers are lacking the skills necessary for scholarly historical inquiry, authentication, interpretation, and contextualization. This information confirms that archivists have the opportunity to impact K-12 education. They can work to help educate teachers on the use of primary sources and encourage students to use archival resources in their scholarship. As demonstrated in Chapter V, state standards can be reached using primary sources from local, regional, and national archives. Searching for documents to meet standards and existing curriculum has become simple with the widespread availability of the internet access and digital archival repositories. The ease of integrating primary sources into the classroom is growing, and so too should the archivist's role in education. Archivists must increase their communication with K-12 teachers in order to reach out to a community of young learners through hands-on programming and classroom instruction.

Students who are exposed to a wide range of sources are better equipped to gain historical perspective, which is a key element in social studies and history education in the United States. Students engaging in archival research also hone critical thinking skills that help them interpret sources and come to solid, evidence-based conclusions. Going beyond the textbook is critical to teaching social history in the twenty-first century. In a time when information seems to surround us in every medium, students must learn skill sets to sort through, authenticate, and analyze information. The archive is one channel through which students can learn these skills. With proper instruction

from well-qualified teachers, students are able to interpret and use primary sources as early as elementary school. Knowing this, teachers and archivists should take advantage of the opportunity to help children gain scholarly research skills and better understand our past.

Archivists must seriously consider the benefits of building partnerships with community schools. They should use their professional skill set to step into more active roles and reach out to the K-12 community. In doing so, they will be able to better understand and attend to the needs of teachers and students. Finally, archivists and teachers need to collaborate to form a partnership wherein students are actively using primary sources to understand and interpret the past.

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## Appendix

### Resources for Teachers and Students

There are a wealth of resources available pertaining to the Northwest, pre-statehood, and Washington State. The previously suggested documents are an example of what can be found within the archive. By searching further, and with the help of an archivist, many more relevant sources for classroom use can be found. Resources accessible online and in person include, but are not limited to:

Center for Pacific Northwest Studies, Bellingham, WA  
<http://library.wvu.edu/cpnws>

King County Archives, Seattle, WA  
<http://www.kingcounty.gov/operations/archives.aspx>

National Archives and Records Administration, Pacific Alaska Region, Seattle, WA  
<http://www.archives.gov/seattle/>

Seattle Municipal Archives, Seattle, WA  
<http://www.cityofseattle.net/cityarchives/>

Seattle Public Library, Special Collections, Seattle, WA  
<http://www.spl.org/library-collection/special-collections>

University of Washington, Special Collections, Seattle, WA  
<http://www.lib.washington.edu/specialcollections/>

Washington State Archives, Olympia, WA  
Physical: <http://www.sos.wa.gov/archives/>

Washington State (Digital) Archives, Cheney, WA  
Digital: <http://www.digitalarchives.wa.gov/>

Washington State Archives Branches:

Northwest Regional Branch, Bellingham, WA  
[http://www.sos.wa.gov/archives/archives\\_northwest.aspx](http://www.sos.wa.gov/archives/archives_northwest.aspx)

Southwest Regional Branch, Olympia, WA (house in same location as State Archives)  
[http://www.sos.wa.gov/archives/archives\\_southwest.aspx](http://www.sos.wa.gov/archives/archives_southwest.aspx)

Central Regional Branch, Ellensburg, WA  
[http://www.sos.wa.gov/archives/archives\\_central.aspx](http://www.sos.wa.gov/archives/archives_central.aspx)

Eastern Regional Branch, Cheney, WA  
[http://www.sos.wa.gov/archives/archives\\_eastern.aspx](http://www.sos.wa.gov/archives/archives_eastern.aspx)

Puget Sound Regional Branch, Bellevue, WA  
[http://www.sos.wa.gov/archives/archives\\_puget.aspx](http://www.sos.wa.gov/archives/archives_puget.aspx)

Washington State Historical Society, Tacoma, WA  
<http://www.washingtonhistory.org/>

Washington State Holocaust Education Resource Center, Seattle, WA  
<http://www.wsherc.org/>

Washington State University, Manuscripts, Archives, and Special Collections, Pullman, WA  
<http://www.wsulibs.wsu.edu/holland/masc/index.php>

Washington Women's History Consortium, Olympia, WA  
<http://www.washingtonwomenshistory.org/default.aspx>