

**RESTAGING THE RECORD:
THE ROLE OF CONTEMPORARY ARCHIVES IN SAFEGUARDING AND
PRESERVING PERFORMANCE AS INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE**

by

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Bounded by and framed within the question of the role of contemporary archives in preserving expressions of intangible cultural heritage, this dissertation examines the existing ways performed and event-based cultural heritage are fixed and represented; problematizes prevailing notions of information as evidence in archives; and disrupts issues of archival custody. The dissertation offers new ways of thinking about the points where archives and intangible cultural heritage intersect; as such, the project analyzes these intersections by examining three differing modes of performance-based archivy.

With an eye toward existing archival theory and practice as well as an understanding of “the archive” grounded in performance studies, this dissertation uses three unique case studies to analyze and interrogate the perceived disconnect between “the archive and the repertoire,” as well as to expand the body of research on the preservation of event-based cultural heritage. The cases selected for this study, representative of the digital humanities, local practice and international policy, are: the Live Performance Simulation System’s Virtual Vaudeville prototype; the Katherine Dunham Archives and the Dunham Technique; and the implementation of the United Nations Scientific, Educational and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)’s 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage.

These cases collectively interrogate boundaries between archive and repertoire, illuminating the existing ways contemporary archives document, safeguard and preserve event-based cultural heritage. At the same time, each individual case investigates instances of event-based archivy, highlighting necessary shifts in archival theory and practice to better support the preservation of performative means of cultural expression.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ANLA	The Association of Newfoundland and Labrador Archives
CORD	Congress on Research in Dance
CEDP	Cultural Economic Development Program (Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, Canada)
DanceNL	Dance Newfoundland and Labrador
FARO	Flemish Interface Centre for Cultural Heritage
FOIA	Freedom of Information Act
FRBR	Functional Requirements for Bibliographic Records
ICH	Intangible Cultural Heritage
NALIS	National Library and Information System (Trinidad and Tobago)
NCC	National Culture Council (Trinidad and Tobago)
NEA	National Endowment for the Arts
NEH	National Endowment for the Humanities
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NINCH	National Initiative for a Networked Cultural Heritage
NSF	National Science Foundation
NYPL	New York Public Library
PATC	Performing Arts Training Center (East St. Louis, Missouri)
TUCO	The Trinbago Unified Calypsonians' Organisation
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

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PREFACE

I am because we are.

- Ashanti Proverb

Writing a dissertation is a thing that splits you open. It requires you to think about the world, your world, the world you have created in ways that make you uncomfortable, scared, sometimes small, often distracted and many times a little mad. A project such as this does not happen in isolation and I did not journey this path alone. I am because we are.

I want to thank my committee – Alison Langmead, Brian Beaton, Dean Ronald Larsen, Lenny Berkman and my advisor, Richard Cox—for answering questions, offering thoughtful feedback, talking me down off the ledge, and for patiently allowing me to do my own thing in my own time, always believing my passion for the topic would see me through.

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I would not have begun this journey without the encouragement and absolute faith of Dr. Geof Bowker, whose steadfast support continues to lift me up; and Dr. Susan Leigh Star, who first believed I could succeed in a doctoral program and whose memory shines bright in each success I've enjoyed along the way. Similarly, my decision to undertake a study on archives and performance was greatly influenced by the late, great Dr. Bernadette Callery. It was my honor to know her and I wish she could be here to see what this project has become. I found the movement, Bernadette. Thank you.

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There are several people whose love and compassion and support and generosity have known no bounds and I'd like to take a moment to call them by name. To put their names in my mouth in a moment of humility and gratitude:

Ilana Turner, thank you for reminding me to always play to win. Shilo Rae McGiff, without you, this project would have been 1200 pages of drivel. Like breath, sister. In every moment, you are loved like breath.

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And finally, my parents, Sandra and Olson Sutherland and my brothers Omar and Erik Sutherland. I am because we are.

A NOTE ABOUT TERMINOLOGY

This dissertation interrogates the role archives play in documenting performative practices. For many cultures, performance is a deeply rooted aspect of cultural tradition and part of a system of complex statements about colonialism, identity, agency and collective memory. In the United States, as with other secularized and industrialized societies, these kinds of culturally-based performative practices are less common. Rather, performance in these societies is more frequently conceived of as music, dance and theater—that which is stageable. While these forms also carry cultural importance, they do not immediately conjure concerns about the deep human ramifications of potential loss. The term “performance” is therefore used broadly in this dissertation to encompass all manners of performed acts, inclusive of all of humanity’s performative qualities and occasions.

UNESCO uses the term “intangible cultural heritage,” which is, as explained in more detail in Chapter 6, a term that has emerged from proclamations, recommendations, conventions, charters, and codes addressing cultural heritage issues over the past century. UNESCO defines intangible cultural heritage (ICH) as “a living form of heritage which is continuously recreated and which evolves as we adapt our practices and traditions in response to our environment. It provides a sense of identity and belonging in relation to our own cultures.”¹ UNESCO’s concept of intangible cultural heritage encompasses oral traditions and expressions, performing arts, social practices, rituals, festive events, knowledge and practices concerning universe and nature, and traditional craftsmanship. This study conceives of intangible cultural heritage as cultural

¹ UNESCO, “Kit of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage: Questions and Answers About Intangible Cultural Heritage,” (UNESCO, 2011), 2. Available from UNESCO: <http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/en/kit/>.

inheritances that cannot be touched, held, boxed, shelved, fixed, or put on permanent display. Rather, intangible cultural heritage is akin to living heritage. It allows for new understandings and accountings of changes in cultures, customs and traditions over time; the cultural impacts of colonialism and migration; and cultural creation, reinvention, rights, and protection.

Discussions of intangible cultural heritage are present throughout this dissertation, not only in the chapter on UNESCO: Katherine Dunham's dance pedagogy is based on elements of intangible cultural heritage from the French and British West Indies, and the Virtual Vaudeville team, whose work focused on re-presenting both the tangible and intangible aspects of past performances, came together at a cultural heritage conference. In this study, the term intangible cultural heritage can be thought of as synonymous with "event-based cultural heritage," and "performed cultural heritage." Terms such as performed acts or performance refer to performance, broadly conceived, as discussed above.

UNESCO further stipulates that when working with intangible cultural heritage, one cannot separate the tangible from the intangible. For example, in Trinidad, Carnival traditions incorporate both tangible and intangible elements. A person who "plays Mas" (engaging in the Carnival masquerade tradition) will dance to Calypso and Soca music in brightly colored costumes such as feathered headdresses. To effectively safeguard Carnival as an element of Trinidad and Tobago's ICH, one must consider both the tangible (costumes, musical instruments) and the intangible (dance, music) together. It is important to note here that a tangible element may produce an intangible element and vice versa: a steel pan drum (tangible) produces steel pan music (intangible) and a food tradition such as making roti (intangible) produces a tangible, edible element. For these reasons, it is vital to recall that the tangible and the intangible do not exist in isolation; rather, each one informs and defines the other.

Safeguarding is also a word used by UNESCO. It implies the continuity of a cultural heritage practice. It does *not* imply fixity. In contrast to safeguarding, preservation is an information stewardship term that does imply a degree of fixity. Both terms are used in this dissertation to represent the act of fixing or ensuring the continuation of a performed act, as appropriate, whether it be representative of Trinidad and Tobago's cultural heritage or a reproduction of a vaudeville act—or both.

I. PROBLEM STATEMENT

I.A. BACKGROUND

In the field of archival studies—as well as the broader library and information science field—professional standards and frameworks for documenting and preserving event-based cultural heritage as evidence remain noticeably absent.² While it is true in general that standards for archival preservation are few, existing standards do not address the specific needs of intangible records.³ Similarly, while the bodies of literature that address archives and performance are vast, there are few points of intersection in the scholarly discourse which connects them. Similarly, few scholars address issues of safeguarding performed heritage and even fewer are in the field of archival studies, those perhaps best positioned through craft, training and scholarship to develop theories and methodologies for the preservation of event-based records. Although Library and Information Science scholar Deborah Turner has addressed the existence of “oral documents”

² While standards are few, tools have been developed that may aid in constructing methods or frameworks for intangible cultural heritage. The Functional Requirements for Bibliographic Records (FRBR), a conceptual entity-relationship model developed by the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA), provides for events and custodial relationships to be defined as entities and for relationships between those entities to be defined as well. In a similar vein, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) has created a thesaurus of authorized terms for cultural artifacts which includes intangible cultural heritage; the UNESCO thesaurus is useful in describing ephemeral and event-based artifacts.

³ Specifically, the Society of American Archivists has endorsed ISO 16363 and ISO 16919 which define recommended practices for assessing the trustworthiness of digital repositories as preservation standards.

(and by extension “oral records”), and others have called for new ways of representing and preserving cultural expressions, no significant empirical studies have been conducted in archival studies in this area.⁴ Similarly, the fields of performance studies and cultural anthropology have developed bodies of literature that address the archive as an embodied space, but do not speak to archives as physical spaces or as realms of distinct professional expertise. These conversations about how to achieve something permanent from something fleeting and event-based are happening concurrently, but not in collaboration. This study speaks to the intersection of concerns raised by scholars in the abovementioned fields: those that seek to pluralize archives and give voice/create counter-narratives where process and power have created gaps, vagaries and silences; and those that have expressed anxiety about a limited ability to capture or document the experience of live performance.

I.B. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

In addition to practical concerns about the current limitations of event-based archivy, a gap exists in the body of research that addresses archival *theory* outside the realm of cultural heritage that can be deemed tangible. Ephemeral art and cultural events have enormous social and cultural value, yet archives and other memory institutions do not have robust theoretical frameworks which support their preservation. Discussions about archives in the performance studies literature, on the other hand, focus primarily on an “embodied archive,” suggesting that modes of reception and transmission are best employed to ensure the permanence of performed cultural heritage. For example, performance studies scholar and New York University professor Diana

⁴ See, for example: Deborah Turner, “Conceptualizing Oral Documents,” *Information Research* 12, No. 4 (October, 2007): <http://www.informationr.net/ir/12-4/colis/colis32.html>.

Taylor, in her seminal book *The Archive and the Repertoire: Performing Cultural Memory in the Americas*, draws attention to what she deems a radical difference between archival traditions and what she calls “the repertoire,” an aggregate of embodied gestures and practices. This study hypothesizes that while such a disconnect might currently exist, contemporary archivists might re-conceptualize archival traditions such as custodial relationships with records creators, as well as collaborating with scholars in fields such as the digital humanities, creating new possibilities for archives and archivists to embrace the work of preserving or safeguarding event-based and other intangible cultural heritage. Performance, as a temporal mode of cultural production, is particularly at risk for loss over time. Reframing performative acts as archival evidence mitigates concerns about the completeness of the record. Working with performers as communities of practice to better understand the evidentiary properties of performed records also addresses concerns about loss. Taylor’s work lays a foundation for understanding the gaps between the archive and the repertoire. Furthering Taylor’s analysis, this study maps these gaps, finding points of connection and opportunities for intervention.

The temporal nature of performance naturally raises questions about the ability of archivists to capture and preserve performed works. Archivist Hugh Taylor, writing for *The American Archivist* in 1979, provides context for the archival community’s current approaches to documenting performed cultural heritage, saying:

First, we should recognise [*sic*] that archival principles, as we know them, were formulated and developed by scholarly bureaucrats from a careful study of textual public records based on the registry and the filing cabinet, and this is reflected in our stewardship over the past century. Non-textual material showed little evidence of a time series and obstinately resisted an original order between inclusive dates.⁵

⁵ Hugh Taylor, “Documentary Art and the Role of the Archivist,” *American Archivist* 42, no.4 (October 1979): 419.

Even though challenges arise when attempting to document performance in archives, many performing arts archives have been established through direct working experience with artists and live arts collections. As such, the materials which generally comprise their collections are uniquely related to the performance professions and do not have their counterparts in standard print collections. If, however, the archivally captured performance simply reflects tangible artifacts (e.g. costumes, scripts, light plots, choreographic notation) to what extent can the records be considered an accurate record of the performance? What comprises a reliable record of performance? Sophia Lycouris, British scholar and Graduate Program Director at the Edinburgh College of Art, views the representations archivists currently create as a “manifestation of registered concerns,” rather than an attempt to reconstruct the original. Lycouris goes on to suggest that to capture the *essence* of a performance is more organic than attempting to reflect a reality.⁶

With an eye toward existing archival theory and practice as well as an understanding of “the archive” grounded in performance studies, this dissertation uses three distinctive case studies to analyze and interrogate the liminal spaces between the archive and the repertoire, as well as to expand the body of research on the preservation and safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage. The cases selected for this study are: The Live Performance Simulation System’s Virtual Vaudeville prototype, the Katherine Dunham Archives and the Dunham Technique, and the implementation of the United Nations Scientific, Educational and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)’s 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage.

⁶ Sophia Lycouris, “The Documentation of Practice: Framing Trace,” *Working Papers in Art and Design*, accessed November 24, 2010, http://sitem.herts.ac.uk/artdes_research/papers/wpades/vol1/lycouris2.html.

The Virtual Vaudeville prototype is the product of collaboration among a diverse group of United States scholars including computer scientists, 3D modelers and animators, theater practitioners and historians of both theater and music. Funded by a \$900,000 grant from the National Science Foundation, the objective of the project was to use digital technology to address issues of cultural transmission and representation in live performance. Using motion capture technology—among others—the project aimed to represent an historical performance tradition using a virtual reality environment. The project further sought to simulate the experience of attending a live performance: an experience that would necessarily need to incorporate not only elements of sight and sound, but also the interactive nature of a live audience experience. Scholars immersed in the Virtual Vaudeville project were, in part, testing hypotheses about historical performance practices and engaging with historical performance traditions as performance (rather than as theater or film). Furthermore, the project sought to use digital technologies to answer the question: “Is it possible to archive a live performance?”

Building on an understanding of performance-based archivy established in the analysis of the Virtual Vaudeville prototype, the second case study examines how the work of dancer and choreographer Katherine Dunham have been persistently represented in archives and interrogates the efficacy of The Dunham Technique as an embodied “archival” practice. Katherine Dunham’s pioneering dance pedagogy, based on her own anthropological studies in the West Indies, is a rare example of how cultural transmission works in Western societies. Dunham extrapolated her field work in Trinidad, Martinique, Haiti and Jamaica to create a new form of dance informed by the cultures of these island nations. Combined with her classical ballet training, Dunham’s dance work—foundational to The Dunham Technique—is “safeguarded” and endures *in the bodies* of her dancers. At the same time, Dunham’s archives hold her field notes, choreographic notes,

correspondence and visual evidence of her work. Together, these embodied practices, the embedded cultural knowledge and the archival record comprise Dunham's legacy in dance. Dunham's use of transmission as a safeguarding practice is one that is echoed in the theoretical underpinnings and practical implementation of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)'s 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage.

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) advocates for the transmission of intangible cultural heritage from one generation to the next as a primary means of preservation and safeguarding. In 2003, UNESCO adopted the Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage which identifies and creates a framework for representative aspects of intangible cultural heritage in need of safeguarding around the globe. UNESCO employs both modes of transmission and conventional archivy in safeguarding intangible heritage. On an organizational level, UNESCO's deployment of the 2003 Convention provides an existing framework for how cultural transmission and archivy work in tandem. This case study explores "the archive" and "the repertoire" from the perspective of a global, intergovernmental organization, providing a broader lens through which to analyze the role of archives in preserving performed cultural heritage.

These three cases, considered collectively, shed light on the perceived boundaries between archive and repertoire, allowing for a robust discussion of how contemporary archives can best support the safeguarding and preservation of event-based cultural heritage. At the same time, each individual case provides an opportunity to interrogate event-based archivy, creating a space in which both archivists and performers can speak to the need for potential shifts or

adaptations in archival theory and practice and identify ways that archives might better support the preservation of performance as a means of cultural expression.

I.C. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The larger questions underpinning this dissertation are too broad to be adequately addressed in one study. Questions such as *What is the role of contemporary archives in safeguarding expressions of intangible cultural heritage?* and *What constitutes an authentic record of performance?* describe lifelong research agendas. This study therefore addresses the following, more narrowly constructed, questions:

Q1: What can a case study of three existing approaches to performance-based archivy reveal about the archival role in safeguarding and/or preserving event-based cultural heritage?

Q2: How might existing archival theories and practices need to shift to more effectively attend to event-based cultural heritage?

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

II.A. INTRODUCTION

This literature review synthesizes scholarship from multiple disciplines related to records of live events and performances. The dissertation examines the relationship between contemporary archives and records of intangible cultural heritage. The literature review is therefore framed around the project's three case studies, each of which examines this relationship through the lenses of archive and repertoire; form and function; and evidence, materiality, and custody. Specifically, The Live Performance Simulation System's Virtual Vaudeville prototype case study speaks to the evidentiary properties of records, while the archives of the dance work done by anthropologist and choreographer Katherine Dunham addresses issues of performativity and materiality. The deployment of UNESCO's 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage, then, unites these discussions, integrating archive and repertoire—form and function—on a global scale. Working within this frame and bearing in mind the guiding question for the larger research agenda—*What comprises a reliable record of performance?*—this review examines the literature relating to information as evidence as well as scholarship on archives and performance; it also explores shifting views on archival custody.

The larger project underpinning this dissertation questions the current ways archives record and preserve expressions of intangible cultural heritage, including acts of performance.

The project also seeks to navigate an apparent gap between transmitting cultural heritage as a safeguarding or preservation measure and applying conventional archival practices where performance is concerned. No cohesive body of literature exists on the specific topics engaged by this research project; this gap in the literature is particularly evident in the extant archival studies research. This review synthesizes archival articulations in the performance studies literature and locates scholarship about performance in the archival literature. Finally, to address the gap in the literature around event-based archivy, this discussion highlights spaces for further study in event-based archivy.

II.B. EVIDENCE: FUNCTION OVER FORM

The Archive is made from the selected and consciously chosen documentation from the past and from the mad fragmentations that no one intended to preserve and that just ended up there ... In the Archive, you cannot be shocked at its exclusions, its emptinesses, at what is not catalogued.⁷

The act of creating records means different things to different cultures and societies. Records are assigned meaning not only by their creators, but also by subsequent custodians, researchers and scholars. As a result, records are imbued with cultural significance and the repositories in which they are held are located in our consciousness as sites of memory, legacy and in some cases, survival. Just as the act of records creation implies a desire to create a documentary record and imbues artifacts with cultural meaning, the creation of archives implies a desire to systematize and support the preservation of cultural evidence and societal memory. Archives also have a long history of acting as agencies of accountability. Accountability in archives is connected to notions

⁷ Carolyn Steedman, "The Space of Memory," *History of the Human Sciences* 11, no. 4 (1998): 67.

of trust, transparency and responsibility. Accountability is also closely linked to an understanding of archives as keepers of evidentiary records.

Evidence is a term that has different meanings in different contexts whether legal, scientific or historical. Archival theory and practice around evidence have been influenced by diplomatics, history, law, textual criticism, management theory and library science.⁸ Evidence is often used as the basis for constructing legal arguments and testing scientific theories. Traditionally, “evidence” in the archival sense has been defined as “the passive ability of documents and objects and their associated contexts to provide insight into the processes, activities, and events that led to their creation for legal, historical, archaeological, and other purposes.”⁹ The concept of “evidence” in archival discourse appears as early as Hilary Jenkinson’s description of the archivist as one committed to the “sanctity of evidence.”¹⁰ Archival pioneer Theodore Schellenberg’s articulation of evidence recognizes a distinction between the evidential and the informational value of a record, suggesting that the evidential value of a record lies in the documentary significance of the circumstances of its creation while its informational value is more closely tied to its content.¹¹ Throughout the 1990s and during the early part of the 21st century, confronted with the advent of electronic records, many archival scholars argued that preserving a record’s evidential value was the primary role of the archivist

⁸ Anne J. Gilliland-Swetland, *Enduring Paradigm, New Opportunities: The Value of the Archival Perspective in the Digital Environment* (Washington, D.C.: Council on Library and Information Resources, 2000), 7.

⁹ Gilliland-Swetland, *Enduring Paradigm*, 10.

¹⁰ Hilary Jenkinson, as quoted in Terry Cook, “Archives, Evidence, and Memory: Thoughts on a Divided Tradition,” *Archival Issues* 22, no. 2 (1997): 177. For more on the Jenkinsonian notion of evidence, see Terry Cook, “What is Past is Prologue: A History of Archival Ideas Since 1898, and the Future Paradigm Shift,” *Archivaria* 43 (Spring 1997): 17-53.

¹¹ For more on this distinction, see: Jonathan Furner, “Conceptual Analysis: A Method for Understanding Information as Evidence, and Evidence as Information,” *Archival Science* 4 (2004): 233–265.

as recordkeeper.¹² Contemporary archival scholars have problematized the discourse on records and evidence, suggesting that a preoccupation with evidence and reliability in Western archivy has inappropriately narrowed the lens through which archival work is viewed.¹³ Archivist Brien Brothman, for example, argues in his article “Afterglow: Conceptions of Record and Evidence in Archival Discourse” that appending words such as “evidence,” “truth” and “reliability” to records undermines their inherent authenticity.¹⁴ By contrast, Yale archivist Jennifer Meehan asserts in her 2006 article, “Towards an Archival Concept of Evidence,” that: “drawing upon legal conceptions of evidence need not place undue limitations on archival notions of record and evidence.”¹⁵ As is the case with much of the archival discourse, however, scholarship on records and evidence focuses almost wholly on tangible and text-based records. This historical trend

¹² See for example: Sue McKemish and Frank Upward (eds.), *Archival Documents: Providing Accountability Through Recordkeeping* (Melbourne, 1993); Terry Eastwood, “Educating Archivists About Information Technology,” *American Archivist* 56, no. 3 (Summer 1993): 458-466; Sara J. Piasecki, “Legal Admissibility of Electronic Records as Evidence and Implications for Records Management,” *American Archivist* 58, no. 4 (Winter 1995): 54-64; Wendy Duff, “Ensuring the Preservation of Reliable Evidence: A Research Project Funded by the NHPRC,” *Archivaria* 42 (Fall 1996); Adrian Cunningham, “Waiting for the Ghost Train: Strategies for Managing Electronic Personal Records Before it is Too Late,” *Archival Issues* 24, no. 1 (1999): 55-64; Margaret Hedstrom, “Archives, Memory, and Interfaces With the Past,” *Archival Science* 2, nos. 1-2 (2002): 21-43; Stephen Mason, “Authentic Digital Records: Laying the Foundation for Evidence,” *Information Management Quarterly* 41, no. 5 (September/October 2007); and Adrian Cunningham, “Good Digital Records Don’t Just ‘Happen’: Embedding Digital Recordkeeping as an Organic Component of Business Process and Systems,” *Archivaria* 71 (Spring 2011).

¹³ Terry Cook offers a discussion of the history of diplomatics and the authenticity of the record in “Evidence, Memory, Identity, and Community: Four Shifting Archival Paradigms,” *Archival Science* (June 2012). DOI 10.1007/s10502-012-9180-7. (see, for example, Brien Brothman, “Afterglow: Conceptions of Record and Evidence in Archival Discourse,” *Archival Science* 2 (2002): 311-342.) (p. 313).

¹⁴ Brien Brothman, “Afterglow: Conceptions of Record and Evidence in Archival Discourse,” *Archival Science* 2 (2002): 313. Brothman’s primary concern in this article is distinguishing between “two social acts: the making and keeping of records and the gathering and making of evidence.”

¹⁵ Jennifer Meehan, “Towards an Archival Concept of Evidence,” *Archivaria* 61 (2006): 134.

notwithstanding, archivists have more recently begun to examine notions of *information* as evidence, broadening the scope of scholarship on the evidentiary value of archives.¹⁶

In the January 2005 published proceedings of the American Society for Information Science and Technology (ASIS&T), Jonathan Furner, Marcia Bates, Michael K. Buckland and Anne J. Gilliland-Swetland, members of the University of California Los Angeles Center for Information as Evidence, suggest that while material with evidentiary properties may be conceptualized as information, among scholars affiliated with the information sciences “only the archival scientist commonly treats artifacts primarily as evidentiary records of the occurrence of historical events.”¹⁷ Anne J. Gilliland-Swetland, taking the archival science view of the evidentiary properties of information holds that, “the key to conceptualizing, and, by implication, managing information as evidence lies in understanding the potential nature and use of individual or accumulated information objects for probative or interpretive purposes.”¹⁸

Jonathan Furner, associate professor in the Department of Information Studies at the University of California Los Angeles, stresses that evidence can be mental or physical – or, to expand Furner’s concept, *intangible* or *tangible*. Furner states in his 2004 article, “Conceptual Analysis: A Method for Understanding Information as Evidence, and Evidence as Information”:

Just as we often speak of mental entities – things that exist in our minds, such as ideas, thoughts, and beliefs, and classes of such entities, such as propositions – as being evidence, we also often speak of events, objects, or situations in the physical world

¹⁶ For a more thorough analysis of the differences among documents, records and information in this context please see Jonathan Furner, “Conceptual Analysis: A Method for Understanding Information as Evidence, and Evidence as Information,” *Archival Science* 4 (2004): 233–265; see in particular pages 258-262.

¹⁷ Jonathan Furner, Marcia Bates, Michael K. Buckland and Anne J. Gilliland-Swetland, “Conceptions of Information as Evidence,” *Proceedings of the American Society for Information Sciences and Technology* 39, 1 (2005): 497.

¹⁸ Furner, et al., “Information as Evidence,” 498.

external to our individual minds as being evidence (or sources of evidence).¹⁹

Furner goes on to suggest that both form and content contribute to the evidentiary value of information. For Furner, content can be conceived as “anything that serves as the physical expression or representation of human ideas or thoughts,” and may include intangible content such as utterances.²⁰ The theoretical underpinnings employed by Furner may prove useful in delineating new concepts of “record-ness” for performance-based archivy as well as in determining the evidentiary value of intangible cultural heritage.

Extending Furner’s argument and reworking Brien Brothman’s “afterglow” metaphor, archivist Jennifer Meehan suggests shifting the focus from the relationship between record and evidence to the relationship between *event* and record. With this reconfiguration, Meehan makes explicit a relationship that is often assumed and establishes the relationship between event and record as the foundation for conceptualizing any consequent relationships.²¹ Meehan’s repositioning of Brothman presents an opportunity to consider the *event* in the archival process; an opportunity previously stunted by an archival tendency to bypass a consideration of the *event as record*.

Archival scholar and educator, Richard J. Cox also suggests in his book *Managing Records as Evidence and Information* that, “the physical entity of the document, which in the past dictated aspects of access, security, and maintenance, has so changed as to call all such

¹⁹ Furner, “Conceptual Analysis,” 251.

²⁰ Furner, “Conceptual Analysis,” 252. Here Furner is building on existing theoretical foundations from speech act theory in terms of inference, utterance and meaning.

²¹ Meehan, “Archival Concept of Evidence,” 139.

functions into serious re-evaluation as to their applicability.”²² Although Cox is referring to electronic records, the assertion holds true for event-based records: the physicality of the record is secondary to its function as evidence of a transaction or activity.²³

Linked to discussions about evidence are notions of accountability. Because scholarship on accountability has been shaped by political and social events as well as technological advances, notions of accountability in the archival profession are closely tied to personal experience and reflect the manner in which archival traditions have developed in different parts of the world.²⁴ As such, the tenets of public accountability will manifest differently in different cultures and societies. In the Western tradition, archives which maintain public records function as repositories of documentary evidence, preserving in their records such things as acts, deeds, land grants, titles and edicts which speak to issues of ownership and responsibility. The Western public archives tradition has supported political movements and policy production as well as reflecting and sustaining cultural norms. Dutch archivist Eric Ketelaar in his 2001 article, “Tacit Narratives: The Meanings of Archives,” asserts that:

[archivists] are learning (or relearning) from anthropologists, sociologists, philosophers, cultural and literary theorists to look up from the record and through the record, looking beyond - and questioning - its boundaries, in new perspectives seeing *with* the archive (to use Tom Nesmith's magnificent expression), trying to read its tacit narratives of power and knowledge.²⁵

²² Richard J. Cox, *Managing Records as Evidence and Information* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2000), 6.

²³ The Pittsburgh Project is one project of note that attempted to define functional requirements for electronic recordkeeping. See: The Pittsburgh Project, “Functional Requirements for Evidence in Recordkeeping,” <http://www.sis.pitt.edu/~bcallery/pgh/MainPage.htm>.

²⁴ Livia Iacovino. “Archives as Arsenals of Accountability,” in *Currents of Archival Thinking*, Terry Eastwood and Heather MacNeil, eds. (Santa Barbara: Libraries Unlimited, 2010), 182.

²⁵ Eric Ketelaar, “Tacit Narratives: The Meanings of Archives,” *Archival Science* 1 (2001): 132.

Archivists, archival scholars and archival educators seem to agree: archives are, in effect, evidence of past actions that serve multiple interests through their documentary functions. The evidentiary value of the record does not change regardless of its form. Extending this understanding of function over form in the record provides a basic framework within which to examine archives and performance.

II.C. PERFORMANCE: FORM OVER FUNCTION

*The possibility of enabling a more accurate, objective, and accessible memory of live performance is the primary promise of the performing arts archive.*²⁶

Victor Turner, whose foundational work in the anthropology of ritual, symbols and performance has inspired myriad scholarly interventions on the converging performative modes of play, drama and community, asserts that performance is critical to the reproduction of culture and that life and art will imitate one another according to an essential cultural feedback mechanism which operates in perpetuity.²⁷ The discipline of performance studies was institutionally inaugurated by collaborative efforts between Turner and Richard Schechner, professor of performance studies at the Tisch School of the Arts at New York University.²⁸ Emerging as academic departments in the late 1960s, performance studies as a discipline challenges the boundaries of performance in secularized and industrialized societies and expands the definition of performance to include

²⁶Matthew Reason, "Archive or Memory?: The Detritus of Live Performance," *New Theatre Quarterly* 19, no. 1 (2003): 85.

²⁷Frederick Turner, "Hyperion to a Satyr: Criticism and Anti-Structure in the Work of Victor Turner," in K. Ashley, ed. *Victor Turner and the Construction of Cultural Criticism: Between Literature and Anthropology* (Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 1990): 152.

²⁸Ian Maxwell, "The Ritualization of Performance (Studies)," in Graham St. John, ed. *Victor Turner and Contemporary Cultural Performance*. New York: Berghahn Books, 2008, p. 65.

such things as oral traditions, rituals, commemorative rites, festivals, carnivals and parades; the performance studies view of performance explodes the limits of performance to embody all of humanity's performative qualities and occasions. The definition of intangible cultural heritage used by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) echoes this interpretation of performance; the dissertation also utilizes this expanded definition, i.e. "performance" is not limited in scope to that which is stageable.

Richard Schechner, professor and editor of *The Drama Review: The Journal of Performance Studies*, has written extensively on performance studies—as opposed to the more bounded term "theater studies"—suggesting that as a discipline, performance studies is based on the premise that anything can be studied as performance. The methods and tools employed in performance studies are derived from the social sciences, history, gender studies, psychoanalysis, semiotics, game theory, popular culture studies, and media studies.²⁹ According to Schechner, something is performance when,

[A]ccording to the conventions, common usages, or traditions of a specific culture at a given historical moment, an action or event is said to be a performance. This expansion was at first driven by a strong avant-garde and by increasingly sophisticated interactions between non-Western and Western cultures. Later the expansion was driven by the emergence of the Internet—with a resulting blurring of the boundaries between the actual and the virtual, between so-called art and so-called life.³⁰

The performing arts, particularly in Western cultures and academic domains, have often

²⁹ Richard Schechner, "Performance Studies in/for the 21st Century," *Anthropology and Humanism* 26, no.2 (2002): 60. Archival scholar Francesca Marini echoes this sentiment in her article "Archivists, Librarians and Theatre Research," *Archivaria* 63 (2007): 18. Marini links the larger field of performance studies to activities and events such as circus and political performances and reinforces Schechner's belief that performance studies builds on other disciplines such as anthropology and sociology and is "inherently interdisciplinary." For more on the interdisciplinary nature of theater and performance studies, see also Marvin Carlson, "Theatre History: Methodology and Distinctive Features," *Theatre Research International* 20, no. 2 (Summer 1995): 90–96.

³⁰ Schechner, "Performance Studies in/for the 21st Century," 61.

been defined as theater, dance and music. Most colleges and universities offer these three options as majors in their performing arts programs, which is to say that one can be a theater major, a dance major or a music major. Francesca Marini, Archives Director at the Stratford Shakespeare Festival, affirms this, noting that “[a]mong others, the two disciplines of theatre studies and performance studies, which are distinct, although overlapping at times, both look at performance in its many incarnations. Historically rooted in literary studies, theatre studies developed as an independent academic discipline throughout the last part of the nineteenth century and over the course of the twentieth century. Today theatre studies programs exist in universities all over the world.”³¹ As a result, many university archives are familiar with the detritus of these kinds of performance and have developed systems, which are addressed later in this literature review, with which to appraise, preserve, represent and arrange provisions of access to those materials.³²

As has been noted, however, the realm of performance studies encompasses much more than the conventional modes of performance inherent to theater, dance and music; one might anticipate that archival practices vis-à-vis performance—writ large—could arguably be less conventional as well. As the shift from theater arts programs to performance studies programs occurred in the United States, university archivists began to see changes in the kinds of performance materials making their way into their institutional archives. At the University of Massachusetts Amherst, for example, collections that address campus performances are no longer limited in their contents to such things as play scripts, programs, playbills, posters, promptbooks, stage models, stage plans, costume and prop pieces, libretti, and scores. Rather,

³¹ Francesca Marini, “Archivists, Librarians, and Theatre Research,” *Archivaria* 63 (2007): 17.

³² For more on managing performing arts holdings in university archives please see, Helen Willa Samuels, *Varsity Letters: Documenting Modern Colleges and Universities* (Metuchen and London: Society of American Archivists, 1992): 88-89. The journal *Performing Arts Resources*, published by the Theatre Library Association also offers periodic updates about theater holdings in university archives.

with the emergence of the Asian Arts and Culture Program in 1993, campus-sponsored programs at the university's Fine Arts Center began to produce programs such as Chinese acrobatics and traditional puppet plays that leave different kinds of traces of the performed work behind. Now, large dragon masks and pieces used in traditional tea ceremonies have joined the scripts, drawings and photographs that formerly comprised the University's archives of performance. Archivists at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, much like archivists on university campuses everywhere that have seen an outgrowth in performative genres and styles, have simply learned to adapt conventional archival methods to these collections, albeit with necessary adjustments.

Regardless of the need for alternative methods of archival practice, the essential tenets of performing arts archivy remain the same. Issues of appraisal, representation, preservation, outreach and access all continue to be pillars of archival theory and practice and provide fundamental guidelines for performance materials housed in archival repositories. For example, writing in 2007 about collecting and outreach activities at Dalhousie University, Kathryn Harvey and Michael Moosberger assert in their article, "Theatre Archives' Outreach and Core Archival Functions" that for a strong theater archives, the existence of non-archival reference materials is just as important to researchers as the collections themselves:

[A]rchivists need to assess their documentary universes and define levels of acquisition they consider to be appropriate ... [This approach] balances the needs of users against the fact that archives cannot document everything for everyone.³³

Tangible records of performance have multiple purposes. Some will be factual such as databases which document an event taking place at a particular place and over a period of time.

³³ Kathryn Harvey and Michael Moosberger, "Theatre Archives' Outreach and Core Archival Functions," *Archivaria* 63 (Spring 2007): 38..

Others will attempt to capture the event so others can experience it. When documenting dramatic periods and events such as demonstrations, battles, and outpourings of grief such as public funerals, however, how does the archivist capture the mood of the time or reflect what it meant to take part in or live through such experiences? Can the archivist provide evidence of the past through the records selected and/or created for posterity, when human experience is inherently interactive, experiential, and performative? Many artists and theorists reject the notion of fixed-form documentation.³⁴

Australian performing arts librarian Richard Stone asserts that “[c]ommon to all the performing arts is a progression from creative impulses and inspiration, to preparation and execution, to the ultimate performances before an audience. At any point of this process objects, documents and publications are generated. All of them [have] potential for heritage consideration, for being collected and preserved.”³⁵ Stone’s essay goes on to raise the question of *how* one documents performance, which is itself not an object but an expression of personal or cultural identity—or, an interaction between artist and audience.

Current archival practice recommends that subsequent to a performance, the work is “preserved” in various forms: scripts, stage managers’ and assistant directors’ notes, dance notations, musical scores, costume renderings, set designs, lighting plots, videos, photographs, sound recordings, posters, playbills, programs, audience and press accounts, and remaining artifacts such as props and costume pieces.³⁶ It is these remains that enter the archive, these

³⁴Schlesinger, K. and Bloom, P. and Ferguson, Ann. Eds. *Performance Documentation and Preservation in an Online Environment*. New York: Theatre Library Association, 2004.

³⁵ Richard Stone, “The Show Goes On! Preserving Performing Arts Ephemera, or The Power of The Program,” *Arts Library Journal*, 25(2000): 31.

³⁶ There is an enormous amount of potential data (including newspaper articles, blogs and press releases) that documents the holdings of tangible remnants of performance in existing performing arts archives. Although this manner of documenting performance is typical, this study is primarily concerned with

traces which must be preserved in a way that characterizes their interrelatedness if these remnants (what British theater scholar, Matthew Reason, calls the “detritus” of live performance) are to communicate the “aura” of the original performance.³⁷ Representations of performance in archives can be misleading, however. Because performance is an iterative practice, it is not always clear, for example, if the archival detritus stem from rehearsals or from a specific performance, or if they simply reflect ideas that were discounted.

Universities and public libraries nonetheless maintain large holdings of performance-related materials and employ traditional methods of archivy to appraise, preserve, describe and provide access to these collections. Among the most notable in the United States are the Harvard Theatre Collection at Harvard University in Cambridge, Massachusetts and the New York Public Library’s Performing Arts Library. The Harvard Theatre Collection includes documentary material related to the history of the performing arts including theater, dance, opera and musical theater. The Harvard Theatre Collection, unlike many other performing arts archives, foregrounds their collecting interest in other forms of popular entertainment such as magic and conjuring, music hall and variety, pantomime and extravaganza, puppetry, toy theater, circuses and menageries, fairgrounds, pageants and outdoor drama, festivals and spectacles, film, and minstrelsy. Among the materials that fall outside Harvard Theatre Collections collecting scope

contemporary archivy, which has begun to reimagine the boundaries of archives in such a way that new paradigms for safeguarding or preserving performance are possible. Some of these holdings will be used as potential data sources (in the Virtual Vaudeville case study, for example, vaudeville archives will be culled for data; the Katherine Dunham archives will as well). For a more generalized sense of the holdings of existing performing arts archives, see for example: Kevin Winkler, ed. *Their Championship Seasons: Acquiring, Processing, and Using Performing Arts Archives*. Performing Arts Resources, 22. (New York: Theatre Library Association, 2001); Society of American Archivists Performing Arts Roundtable, “Ephemeral Archives,” <http://ephemeralarchives.wordpress.com/>; Society of American Archivists Performing Arts Roundtable, *Performance!: The Newsletter of the Society of American Archivists Performing Arts Roundtable*; and *Dance Research: The Journal of the Society for Dance Research*, which periodically publishes a segment entitled “Archives of the Dance,” a report on dance holdings at various archival institutions.

³⁷ See Matthew Reason, "Archive or Memory?," 82.

are items such as actual costumes, stage sets, backdrops, large stage properties and large stage set models. Because in performance traditions such as Caribbean Pre-Lenten Carnivals these larger items constitute the tangible record of the performance, it is critical to examine the collecting and appraisal policies of archives of performance as they are currently written.

The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts houses one of the world's most extensive archival collections in the performing arts field, including vaudeville records and a small collection of the Katherine Dunham Dance Company's business records. The Library is known for its large collection of performance-based materials such as historic recordings, videotapes, autographed manuscripts, correspondence, sheet music, stage designs, press clippings, programs, posters and photographs. The Library holds a comprehensive dance archive, stating that it is "part museum, part film production center, and part consulting service to the professional dance community. It preserves the history of dance by gathering diverse written, visual, and aural resources, and it works to ensure the art form's continuity through an active documentation program."³⁸ Similarly, the Library holds an extensive music collection with a curatorial mandate to capture the creative output of contemporary composers as well as an archive of recorded sound which aims to be a leader in developing technology that allows sound to be transferred from obsolete to accessible formats.

In addition to university and public archives and libraries, some arts institutions and performers have chosen alternatives to housing their materials in institutional archives. For reasons such as those discussed in Marini's study (the need for ongoing access to materials, for example), some performing arts groups have opted to maintain their own archives, in-house, often with the assistance of a trained archivist. Some examples of this are the San Francisco

³⁸ New York Public Library for the Performing Arts. "Jerome Robbins Dance Division," <http://www.nypl.org/locations/lpa/jerome-robbins-dance-division>.

Ballet, the Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre and the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, all of whom retain archival materials onsite and employ at least one trained archivist. One exceptional example of this process in action is the Merce Cunningham Dance Company, which was the life work of dancer and choreographer Merce Cunningham.

Before his death in 2009 at the age of 90, Cunningham developed a “legacy plan” to preserve the dance work of his company as well as his original choreography.³⁹ The Legacy Plan comprises a Legacy Tour, a Digital Preservation plan for Cunningham’s dances, and arrangements for the Merce Cunningham Dance Company’s closure and transfer of all Company materials to the Merce Cunningham Trust. The Legacy Tour commenced in February 2010 with a two-year celebration of Cunningham’s life’s work and gave international audiences a final opportunity to see the original dances of Merce Cunningham. Of particular interest is the creation of what Cunningham called “Digital Dance Capsules,” digitized documentation related to 86 of Cunningham’s dances. Cunningham’s dance knowledge, largely pulled from the Cunningham archives, and inclusive of lighting, music, set design, choreography, and costumes are being systematically described, digitized, and entered into a database for restaging Cunningham’s work. The Merce Cunningham Foundation is attempting to preserve Cunningham’s key works so that “future generations can study and perform these dances with knowledge of how they originally came to life.”⁴⁰

Research by archivists Sarah Jones, Daisy Abbott and Seamus Ross suggests that since many performers use archives as sources of inspiration for new works, performance records should be more creative and experimental in nature, focusing on the potential for the artistic

³⁹ See Merce Cunningham Trust, “History: Legacy Plan,” <http://www.mercecunningham.org/history/> and Merce Cunningham Trust, “Merce Cunningham Dance Capsules,” <http://dancecapsules.mercecunningham.org/?8080ed>

⁴⁰ Merce Cunningham Dance Company, “Dance Capsules,” <http://www.merce.org/p/dance-capsules.php>.

community to reuse documentary records that would otherwise be considered inactive archival records. Of documenting performance Jones, Abbott and Ross assert that

[t]he temporal nature of performance causes tension: the fear of loss leads to an urgent desire to counter this through documenting, while the loss inherent in this process leaves many dissatisfied with the outcome. The representations that are usually created, such as the photographs and drawings, are often discounted as inadequate and unfaithful—they provide a window onto an event yet do not recreate the experience.⁴¹

The characteristics of any given record can provide critical evidence that lends context to a documented work; the same is true for records of performance, whether they are to be reused, transmitted or housed for long-term preservation and future access.⁴² Matthew Reason, in questioning the efficacy and validity of the performing arts archive, contends that archivists are overly concerned with a self-imposed moral imperative to save or rescue the attributes of cultural heritage and legacy inherent in all of human performance by reducing them to two-dimensional representations of live arts.

Archival documentation, the message is clear, must be conducted at the center of creation itself. As you perform you must record, and as you create you must document. Here it is possible to see the transformation of a valuation of live performance's ephemerality into a fear of ephemerality and a subsequent valuation of documentation and the document."⁴³

He further maintains that as a result, the only histories of performance that enjoy persistent credibility are the records of performances that remain fixed and stagnant in archival repositories. As is discussed in more detail later in this chapter, the limitations of Reason's argument become apparent when engaging with the scholarship of archivists and archival educators such as Jeannette Bastian. Bastian provides an historical overview of archival custody,

⁴¹ Sarah Jones, Daisy Abbott and Seamus Ross, "Redefining the Performing Arts Archive," *Archival Science* 9 (2009): 167.

⁴² Jones et al., "Redefining the Performing Arts Archive," *Archival Science* 9 (2009): 165-171.

⁴³ Reason, "Archive or Memory?," 84.

suggesting that access be foregrounded over custody.⁴⁴ This postcustodial approach is one that is arguably more appropriate for event- and performance-based archivy.

Matthew Reason is not alone among his peers, however, in his understanding of the archives as stagnant. The literature in performance studies that addresses “the archive” can generally be characterized as either positioning the archive and archivist as sanctioned keepers of history or as being corporeal, *embodied*. Diana Taylor, whose book *The Archive and the Repertoire: Performing Cultural Memory in the Americas* is a touchstone for scholars interested in South and Latin American performance, addresses “the archive” in the Derridean sense, meaning the archive which encompasses the whole of human meaning and memory.⁴⁵ Taylor’s notion of the archive is one that extends to the physical body, whereby performance, or what Taylor has termed “the repertoire” is, quite literally, an *embodied archive*. Although Taylor’s concept of “archive” is not how archivists think of the practical aspects of their work, there is a small but growing body of literature—particularly in performance studies journals—on the archive itself as liminal, embodied and performative.⁴⁶ Per Taylor, “The live performance can never be captured or transmitted through the archive;” however, “the archive and the repertoire [described as ‘embodied memory’, e.g., gestures, movement, orality] have always been important sources of information [each] exceeding the limitations of the other, in literate and semiliterate societies. They usually work in tandem and they work alongside other systems of

⁴⁴ See for example, Jeannette Bastian, “Taking Custody, Giving Access: A Postcustodial Role for a New Century,” *Archivaria* 53 (Spring 2003):76-93.

⁴⁵ See Jacques Derrida, *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995).

⁴⁶ See for example, Elin Diamond, “Performance in the Archives,” *Theatre History Studies* 28 (2008): 20-26; Philip Auslander, “The Performativity of Performance Documentation,” *Performing Arts Journal*: 84 (2006):1-10; and Antoinette Burton, *Archive Stories: Facts, Fictions, and the Writing of History* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005).

transmission—the digital and the visual, to name two.”⁴⁷ This dissertation challenges Taylor’s argument and asserts that rather than working in tandem, one following the other, the archive and the repertoire operate more effectively *in concert*.

Like Taylor, André Lepecki, Associate Professor in the Department of Performance Studies at New York University, discusses the corporeal, or embodied, archive in his article, “The Body as Archive: Will to Re-Enact and the Afterlives of Dances.” For Lepecki, the question of returning to a dance, or “re-enacting” it, is one that speaks to dance’s ability to “escape Orpheus’s curse of being frozen in time.”⁴⁸ Lepecki introduces a specifically choreographic “will to archive,” which he establishes as echoing, yet differing from, art critic and historian Hal Foster’s notion of the “archival impulse” in contemporary art.⁴⁹

Despite annual conferences and meetings which focus specifically on archives, professional organizations—such as the Theater Library Association, the American Society for Theatre Research and the Congress on Research in Dance—and their members have found no better solution to event-based archivy than archivists. Two performance studies journals were established in the United Kingdom during the late 1990s to bring to the forefront issues of documenting and preserving performance, *Performance Practice* and *Studies in Theatre Production*. These efforts emerged out of both a real and perceived need to record, contextualize, and share new directions and experiments in performance documentation, and—of equal importance—to somehow negotiate ways to capture and render eternal an almost wholly

⁴⁷ Diana Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire: Performing Cultural Memory in the Americas* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2003): 20-21.

⁴⁸ Andre Lepecki, “The Body as Archive: Will to Re-Enact and the Afterlives of Dances,” *Dance Research Journal* 42, 2 (Winter 2010): 29.

⁴⁹ See for example, Hal Foster, “An Archival Impulse.” *October* 110 (2004): 3–22. Foster defines “archival impulse” as directly resulting from a current “failure in cultural memory” produced by our “society of control.”

transitory practice.⁵⁰ Research conducted from 2002-2005 by Francesca Marini, Archives Director at the Stratford Shakespeare Festival, entitled “Sources and Methodology of Theater Research in the View of Scholars and Information Professionals,” provided a picture of theater research from the points of view of theater scholars and of performing arts archivists and librarians. Marini interviewed scholars and practicing archivists and librarians in Italy, France, Belgium and the United States. Among Marini’s conclusions was a recognition that performing arts archivists and librarians must themselves be versed in knowledge creation in performance disciplines and must also act continuously as researchers themselves.⁵¹

Because Taylor, Lepecki and others have identified “the repertoire” as distinct from “the archive(s),” their scholarship has created a binary whereby archive and repertoire are necessarily separate. They have failed to navigate the potential spaces *between* archive and repertoire wherein the two may work cooperatively and symbiotically. This dissertation, through careful examination of instances of both archive and repertoire, traverses and bridges this gap. The Katherine Dunham case study, in particular, speaks to both archive and repertoire; Dunham, concerned about cultural inheritances of African-Americans, used modes of transmission (discussed below) in her dance work. The dances of the African diaspora were intended by Dunham to survive in the bodies of her dancers. Mapping the space between Dunham’s dance archives and dancer as archive speaks to potential points of intersection.

This research study is also distinguishable from Francesca Marini’s project, which addressed theater research specifically. This dissertation is broader in scope in that it concerns more than research practices in theater arts; rather, the case studies represent dance traditions,

⁵⁰ Steve Dixon, “Digits, Discourse, and Documentation: Performance Research and Hypermedia,” *The Drama Review* 43, no. 1 (Spring 1999): 155.

⁵¹ Francesca Marini, “Archivists, Librarians and Theatre Research,” *Archivaria*, 63. (Spring 2008), 7.

theatrical traditions and the broader performance traditions identified by UNESCO as “intangible cultural heritage.”

Before the early 20th century, discussions about cultural heritage were restricted to artifacts, monuments and sites with little or no attention given to the intangible forms cultural heritage may take. As the significance of human interaction with cultural heritage objects became more apparent, the language of cultural heritage documents shifted to include considerations of more ephemeral notions of heritage such as performance. Similarly, the recognition that intangible forms of cultural heritage merit the same institutional considerations as tangible cultural heritage expanded the realm of cultural expression considered worthy of preservation.⁵² In 2003, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) adopted the Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage. UNESCO’s concept of intangible cultural heritage encompasses oral traditions and expressions; performing arts; social practices, rituals, festive events, knowledge and practice concerning the universe and nature; and traditional craftsmanship.

Under the terms of the 2003 Convention, to safeguard intangible cultural heritage is to continuously recreate and transmit it from one generation to another. The concept of *transmission* as it is being used by UNESCO is based in cultural anthropology and comprises the passing of cultural meaning from one generation to the next.⁵³ Transmission is one of several preservation or “safeguarding” methods employed by UNESCO in their strategy to safeguard

⁵² United States Department of State Bureau of International Information Programs, “Living Legacy: Preserving Intangible Heritage,” *eJournal USA* 15, no. 8 (2010): 5.

⁵³ This definition of transmission is not intended to be comprehensive. Beyond the automotive definition, *transmission* has been used in epidemiology to define the spread of illness; in telecommunications to describe the transfer of information over distances; and in Buddhism to designate the moment of spiritual awakening, for example.

intangible cultural heritage such as rituals, festivals, oral traditions and other manifestations of cultural performance.

Recognizing the risk of cultural obsolescence, UNESCO maintains that safeguarding intangible cultural heritage is *best* accomplished through transmission.⁵⁴ One component of the Convention is a mandate that all requests for the inclusion of an intangible cultural heritage element on the urgent safeguarding list originate from the group or community currently responsible for the element's care.⁵⁵ One example that crosses social, national and cultural boundaries is oral traditions and storytelling. Present in nearly every culture in which there has been a history of orality and/or a strong narrative tradition, stories, legends, folktales, myths, cultural lessons and ceremonial rites are passed from one generation to the next; most often, these cultural instruments are never "set" or fixed by inscribing them in textual terms.

Before the advent of the written word, information was stored in bodies, in cultural memories, and in oral traditions, enacted only in their performances. In his 1982 book *Orality and Literacy* historian and philosopher Walter Ong examines the ways in which orality can be considered a technology. Per Ong, some cultural information is available only in sound, in bodies and performances, and in fixed, formulaic oral phrasings that act as mnemonic devices or memory aids. Ong asserts that the knowledge stored in bodies is passed, generation to generation, through performance. Ong maintains that the way a culture stores and retrieves its important information is intricately tied to how individuals in that culture think. Most cultures of the world are oral cultures. Ong notes that of tens of thousands of languages spoken across the

⁵⁴ This emphasis should not negate the reality that UNESCO still finds value in partnering with local archives and other memory institutions to safeguard the tangible detritus of intangible cultural heritage, much in keeping with Western archival traditions around performing arts archivy.

⁵⁵ UNESCO, "Intangible Cultural Heritage," http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=17716&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html.

world, only 106 have written forms.⁵⁶ In oral cultures, words hold power: “The spoken word is always an event.”⁵⁷

One quality of oral traditions is their lack of textual fixity. Fixity, or permanence, is a core archival concept. However, writing on the idea of “permanence” in archives in 1989, historian James O’Toole suggests that by

emphasizing certain characteristics that enhanced the memory—the use of formulaic language and rhythm; the embodiment in ritual of important stories, values, and pieces of information; the association of physical objects with certain events; the reliance on social and interpersonal communication of things to be remembered — all oral cultures, even those that survived into the twentieth century, achieved a degree of permanence in what they knew, preserved, and handed on to the indefinite future. Some degree of timelessness was achievable in such cultures: a kind of permanence was possible.⁵⁸

Modern information science is still grappling with utterance as mode of information transfer and has proffered, via Deborah Turner, Assistant Professor at the iSchool at Drexel University, the concept of an *oral document*. To arrive at this concept, Turner turns to the work of Milman Parry (founder of oral tradition studies) who demonstrates that Homer's poetry, previously thought to be based in literate traditions, arose from works that survived orally for generations prior to being fixed in print. An *oral document*, per Turner, is a type of document that incorporates evidence or information made available in what is said (content) and by how it is uttered (structure).⁵⁹ Where content analysis and conversation analysis involve analyzing turns

⁵⁶ Walter J. Ong, *Orality and Literacy* (London: Methuen and Co.: 1982), 7.

⁵⁷ Ong, *Orality and Literacy*, 75.

⁵⁸ James O’Toole, “On the Idea of Permanence,” *American Archivist* 52 (1989): 12.

⁵⁹ Deborah Turner, “Conceptualizing Oral Documents,” (paper presented at Conceptions of Library and Information Science conference, Boras, Sweden, August 2007, Boras, Sweden. (Available at <http://informationr.net/ir/12-4/colis/colis32.html>).

in talk, the technique used to identify oral documents involves determining what evidence an utterance retains of the practices used to create or maintain it.

The process of identifying an oral document specifically involves determining whether an utterance incorporates any of the following six properties:

- *materiality*: practices that give a document substance or weight;
- *institutionalization*: practices that help a document perpetuate a context;
- *social discipline*: practices involving training and oversight that surround a document;
- *historicity*: practices that ensure a document's relevance over time;
- *structure*: practices that inform the order in which information within a document is conveyed; and,
- *boundaries*: practices used to help mark the document's beginning and end.⁶⁰

Four approaches to analyzing utterance encourage the exploration of new ways that information scientists can contend with oral information. Content analysis facilitates the articulation of intentions, meaning and values evident within contributions to a discourse made in oral (or written or another) media. Discourse analysis aids in understanding what ideology, rhetoric and similar phenomena are reflected in utterances that are not routine or not a part of daily life. By contrast, conversation analysis suggests that every day or routine talk manifests and perpetuates these phenomena. Finally, the research strategy used to identify oral documents demonstrates that practices shaping oral information can produce an oral artifact.⁶¹

Jeannette Bastian, well-versed in the preservation of cultural meaning where issues of cultural performance and archivy are concerned, uses the record attributes prescribed by contemporary archival theory of *structure, content and context* in conjunction with Michael Buckland's non-textual definition of documents to support a theoretical framework that allows for performed cultural events (such as pre-Lenten Carnival celebrations in Central America and

⁶⁰ Turner, "Oral Documents," <http://informationr.net/ir/12-4/colis/colis32.html>.

⁶¹ Turner, "Oral Documents," <http://informationr.net/ir/12-4/colis/colis32.html>.

the West Indies) to be signifying objects and, by extension, documents.⁶² This argument suggests that the evidential nature of a document supersedes its need to be text-based.⁶³ Carnival is therefore presented by Bastian as an archival “document” – through the lens of a cultural production replete with context, structure and content. Carnival, like other performances, in its purest and most authentic living and temporal form cannot be permanently fixed in boxes or on shelves.⁶⁴

Similarly, scholars writing on Mesoamerican recordkeeping have drawn attention to the missed opportunities for cultural understanding that occur through privileging strictly alphanumeric, text-based records in archives.⁶⁵ Mesoamerican written culture comprised pictographs, ideographs and logographs; it represents, in its essence, a system of recording information based on images. In his 1994 writing on text and bodies, John Monaghan, professor of anthropology at the University of Illinois Chicago, asserts that anthropologists view the Mesoamerican codices not only as archival documents, but as scripts to be performed. Songs in the Mesoamerican tradition were composed to transmit historical tales of events such as feasts

⁶² See Jeannette Bastian, “‘Play Mas’: Carnival in the Archives and the Archives in Carnival: Records and Community Identity in the US Virgin Islands,” *Archival Science* 9 (2009): 118. See also Michael K. Buckland, “What is a Document,” *Journal of the American Society for Information Science* 48, no. 9 (1997): 804-809.

⁶³ Deborah Turner has written quite a bit on the concept of “oral documents.” See for example, Deborah Turner, “Can a Document be Oral?” *Proceedings of HICSS, 43rd Hawaii International Conference on System Sciences*, 2010. See also Deborah Turner and Warren Allen. “Investigating Oral Information,” (paper presented at the Conceptions of Library and Information Science Conference, London, United Kingdom, June 2010. Proceedings in *Information Research* are forthcoming. (Available at <http://InformationR.net/ir/15-3/colis7/colis703.html>)

⁶⁴ For more on the notion of “permanence” in archives, see: James O’Toole, “On the Idea of Permanence,” *American Archivist* 52 (1989): 10-25.

⁶⁵ See for example: Stuart McKee, “How Print Culture Came to be Indigenous,” *Visible Language* 44, no. 2 (2010): 161-186; Hortensia Calvo, “The Politics of Print: The Historiography of the Book in Early Spanish America,” *Book History* 6, no. 1 (2004): 277-305; and John Monaghan, “The Text in the Body, the Body in the Text: The Embodied Sign in Mixtec Writing,” in *Writing Without Words: Alternative Literacies in Mesoamerica and the Andes* Elizabeth Hill Boone and Walter D. Mignolo, eds. (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1994): 87-99.

and battles as well as reconstructing elite genealogies.⁶⁶ These “scripts” do not work in isolation, however, lending credence to the idea that marrying the archive with the repertoire preserves both tangible records and embodied practices as evidence of human information culture.

Recognizing limitations in the existing tenets of archival science has encouraged new paradigms in archival theory and practice where issues of performance are concerned. Because UNESCO’s methods focus so heavily on transmission, it is worth noting that many forms of cultural performance and expression beyond the North American continent do not translate to scripted theater or dance and musical notation; UNESCO’s approach to the safeguarding of performance traditions stands in contrast to the performing arts archives discussed earlier in this literature review. Because the UNESCO methods articulated above are notably different from those employed for protecting tangible heritage, the UNESCO case study provides a perspective complementary to the Katherine Dunham archives. Historically, the preservation of tangible heritage has been conducted in brick and mortar archives in the custody of trained archivists. There are two overlapping areas, however, between the UNESCO model and the conventional archive. The first is the recognition by UNESCO and other cultural organizations that some tangible elements are often associated with intangible cultural heritage. The 2003 Convention, therefore, includes in its definition of intangible cultural heritage the “instruments, objects, artifacts and cultural spaces” associated with the intangible cultural heritage which are preserved in institutional archives. The second area of commonality can be found in the aforementioned traditions of performing arts archivy. Traditional archives that are called upon to preserve records of ephemeral and temporal events continue to grapple with similar issues as those who

⁶⁶ Monaghan, “The Text in the Body,” 88.

seek to safeguard, through transmission and other means, intangible cultural heritage as defined by UNESCO.⁶⁷

UNESCO's model is only one possible solution. Archivists might also consider issues of custody in event-based archivy. The records and information management profession provides a deep body of literature on non-custodial relationships with records creators.

II.D. STEWARDSHIP: MAINTAINING FORM AND FUNCTION

In the past thirty years, discussions have appeared in the archival literature concerning shifting views on maintaining the custody of and provisions of access to archival records. In the records and information management profession, issues of custody are often linked to litigious concerns (such as an “auditable chain of custody” in cases of eDiscovery).⁶⁸ In diplomatics, concerns about the authenticity of the record are also linked to custody. From the earliest days of formalized archival practice, a direct chain of custody from records creator to archives was carefully established, documented and maintained. The archival principle of provenance was considered the primary means of preserving evidence of the functional relationships between records that were created, maintained, and transmitted to the archives as a unified whole. That

⁶⁷ For more on the 2003 Convention and other UNESCO projects involving the preservation of intangible cultural heritage, please see: UNESCO, “Intangible Cultural Heritage,” http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=17716&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html.

⁶⁸ eDiscovery is a legal and records management term that refers to electronic discovery requirements during lawsuits. Records management journals such as *Information Management Journal* and white papers published by ARMA, the professional association for records and information managers, provide up-to-date content on eDiscovery rules and regulations.

body of records was also designated as separate from those of other creators in an effort to maintain their contextual information: the framework in which they were created and used.

The custodial role of the archivist in the United States has some of its roots in the formation of the National Archives. In 1877 a Committee on Public Buildings and Grounds, appointed by President Rutherford B. Hayes, suggested constructing a building designed specifically for the centralized storage of inactive government records. The proposed “hall of records” was intended to operate as a storage facility to house these records. The plan was for the records to remain the property of their originating offices; they would not be available for research outside the originating office. Between 1906 and 1911, historian J. Franklin Jameson began working to change the proposed hall of records into a “national archives.” This new nomenclature reflected Jameson’s view that originating offices should surrender intellectual and physical custody of their inactive records and that procedures should be designed to permit future use of government records without oversight from the office of origin.⁶⁹

Shifting trends in archival theory, however, suggest that archival principles such as original order, *respect des fonds*, and the chain of provenancial custody, intended to guarantee the authenticity and reliability of the record, have now come to be considered “historically contingent, not universal or absolute.”⁷⁰ As early as 1981, F. Gerald Ham, writing for the *American Archivist* noted that archivists have long been concerned with the uniqueness of the materials in their care and have taken very seriously the call to preserve the materials in their

⁶⁹ Victor Gondos, Jr., *J. Franklin Jameson and the Birth of the National Archives 1906–1926* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1981): 30-32. See also Kathryn A. Scanlan, “ARMA v. SAA: The History and Heart of Professional Friction,” *American Archivist* 74 (2011): 428-450.

⁷⁰ Terry Cook, “Fashionable Nonsense or Professional Rebirth?: Postmodernism and the Practice of Archives,” *Archivaria* 51 (2001): 27.

custody.⁷¹ Ham goes on to argue, however, against fully custodial roles for archives. Although Ham's main contentions with custody had more to do with what he foresaw as emerging technological trends and a vast overabundance of materials over which to try to maintain (responsible) custody, aspects of his argument ring true for contemporary archives of performance. Ham writes,

[Archives] now realize they must encourage and assist other institutions and organizations such as local historical societies, public libraries, municipalities, voluntary associations, businesses, and so forth, to share this responsibility. In effect, they must encourage planned proliferation and decentralization ... [A]rchival centers have begun to accept this role, limiting their accessions program and enlarging their program of extension services. The dynamic new role has many facets. One is that of an archival service center providing traditional services in a new cooperative setting ... [which] might include cooperative purchasing of supplies ... records survey and appraisal, and records processing.⁷²

Ham supported the notion of "private" archives wherein corporations took responsibility for maintaining their own records. The corporate archives model is one that we take for granted in today's archives and records management environments. Ham's vision is not too far afield of modern archival theory; both archival scholar Jeannette Bastian and Francesca Marini, Archives Director at the Stratford Shakespeare Festival, advocate postcustodial models for archivists working with archival materials from community-based performance practices.⁷³ Marini's previously discussed 2002-2005 study found that,

⁷¹ F. Gerald Ham, "Archival Strategies for the Post-Custodial Era," *The American Archivist* 44 (Summer 1981): 207.

⁷² Ham, "Archival Strategies," 212-213.

⁷³ Archival scholar and UCLA professor Anne J. Gilliland is involved in several projects related to documenting communities that may inform the theoretical implications of this study. See for example: Gilliland, Anne J. "Contemplating Co-creator Rights in Archival Description," *Knowledge Organization* 39, no.5 (September 2012): 340-346 and Andrew Lau, Anne Gilliland, and Anderson, Kimberly. "Naturalizing Community Engagement in Information Studies: Pedagogical Approaches and Persisting Partnerships," *Information, Communication & Society* 15, no.7 (2012): 991-1015. Cristine N.

Depending on the characteristics of the archives and libraries in which they work, archivists and librarians described varying degrees of control over the sources held. For example, stronger control is possible when the sources are no longer in use by their creators, compared to the theatres and festivals where materials get consulted or reused for new productions and, in some cases, never entirely cease to be active. In working theatres, conflicts may arise between the archives and the different departments, which do not always transfer what they should, or return materials requested for internal exhibitions, in a timely manner. Active theatres and festivals are often more focused on day-to-day operations. In these cases, archives are not a priority, resulting, at times, in inadequate support and missed opportunities.⁷⁴

Similarly, international archival scholars have suggested post-custodial archival roles for indigenous and aboriginal materials which may be culturally sensitive or require unique access provisions. Internationally, Canadian archives have adopted a more proactive approach to indigenous collections while still retaining exclusive control and custody of the vast majority of records and artifacts; they have developed consultation services and involve Aboriginal peoples in decisions about the handling of culturally sensitive artifacts. Requests for the repatriation of a limited array of objects and human remains have been considered. Canadian legislation has yet to embrace a fully inclusive approach toward Aboriginal involvement, however. A true co-management of archival materials does not yet seem to exist, although New Zealand is also moving in that direction.⁷⁵

A 1999 article published in *Archivaria* echoes the idea of loosening the custodial control of records as one way to better serve the needs of researchers. Past-SAA President Timothy L.

Paschild offers a cautionary tale about resource management in community archives projects in, Cristine N. Paschild, "Community Archives and the Limitations of Identity: Considering Discursive Impact on Material Needs," *American Archivist* 75 (2012): 125-142.

⁷⁴ Marini, "Archivists, Librarians, and Theatre Research," 26.

⁷⁵ Bradford W. Morse, "Indigenous Human Rights and Knowledge in Archives, Museums, and Libraries: Some International Perspectives with Specific Reference to New Zealand and Canada," *Archival Science* (December 2011), DOI 10.1007/s10502-011-9165-y.

Ericson and University of Wisconsin Oshkosh Archivist, Joshua Ranger, advocate for loaning archival collections in their article, "'The Next Great Idea': Loaning Archival Collections."⁷⁶

Using the University of Wisconsin's longstanding archival interlending program as an example, Ericson and Ranger assert that:

University archivists have built strong programs around their ability to benefit undergraduates, graduate students, faculty, administrators, and other researchers by bringing together critical masses of primary resources pertaining to a variety of chosen topics. Among other benefits, the ability to borrow archival collections from neighboring institutions has dulled the competitive zeal that some archivists instinctively feel regarding acquisitions, and has laid the groundwork for cooperative efforts in user services that would otherwise be impossible.⁷⁷

Finally, concerns have been raised in the archival discourse around stewardship and digital records.⁷⁸ The earliest and most outspoken critic of archival custody in the virtual environment was David Bearman, a museum professional who served as Deputy Director of the Office of Resource Management at the Smithsonian in the mid-1980s. Bearman's critique of custody maintained that the ongoing costs of managing digital records was unsustainable given the available resources of most archival programs and that management of digital records by creators would ensure that the original remained fully functional and accessible.⁷⁹ Australian archivists

⁷⁶ Timothy L. Ericson and Joshua P. Ranger, "'The Next Great Idea': Loaning Archival Collections," *Archivaria* 47 (1999): 85-113.

⁷⁷ Ericson and Ranger, "'The Next Great Idea,'" 86.

⁷⁸ See for example: Frederick J. Stielow, "Archival Theory and the Preservation of Electronic Media: Opportunities and Standards Below the Cutting Edge," *American Archivist* 55 (Spring 1992): 332-343; Philip C. Batin, "Strategies for Managing Electronic Records: A New Archival Paradigm? An Affirmation of Our Archival Traditions?," *Archival Issues* 23, no. 1 (1998): 17-34; and Gillian Oliver, Brenda Chawner, and Hai Ping Liu, "Implementing Digital Archives: Issues of Trust," *Archival Science* 11, nos. 3-4 (2011): 311-327.

⁷⁹ David Bearman, "An Indefensible Bastion: Archives as a Repository in an Electronic Age," in *Archival Management of Electronic Records*, ed. David Bearman, vol. 13 of *Archives & Museum Informatics Technical Report*, ed. David Bearman (Pittsburgh: 1991), 14-24.

were also quick to embrace a post- or non-custodial model, seeking to integrate archival and records management functions in the early 1990s.⁸⁰

As digital scholarship (D-scholarship) projects become more prolific, one might anticipate a similar shift in the discourse to address issues of stewardship and large-scale digital projects, and the resulting “big data.” The creation of the Virtual Vaudeville prototype was supported by tremendous amounts of data and in turn, was also the source of much data. Because one of the guiding questions for the Virtual Vaudeville prototype design was, “Is it possible to archive a live performance?,” the case offers an opportunity to explore these emerging issues of representation and custody in digital humanities environment.⁸¹

II.E. CONCLUSION

Whether the archival model adheres to a conventional custodial trajectory, follows a less conventional non- or post-custodial path, is corporeal or embodied, mimics UNESCO’s transmission model, or some combination therein, archivists are still determining the best methods of fixing ephemeral events and other expressions of intangible cultural heritage. The literature discussed above examines both the need to preserve performance and existing methods of doing so. The reviewed literature suggests a variety of beliefs and knowledge practices where event-based archivy is concerned. Despite these variations, there is currently no perfect system. Many who work with intangible cultural heritage have expressed concern over the privileging of

⁸⁰ See, for example: Frank Upward, “Modelling The Continuum as Paradigm Shift in Recordkeeping and Archival Processes, and Beyond—A Personal Reflection,” *Records Management Journal*, 10, no. 3 (2000): 115-139.

⁸¹ The Virtual Vaudeville Project, “Virtual Vaudeville: The Concept,” <http://vvaudeville.drama.uga.edu/concept.htm>.

text-based and other tangible forms of cultural heritage in archives. Others are concerned about issues of custody and access. Because of the ephemerality of the intangible record, new ways of thinking are necessary to address gaps and vagaries in the archival corpus that are the result of textual privilege and archival custody. The dissertation project examines the extant frameworks and foundations of archival theory and practice for intangible cultural heritage and offers potential new frameworks for future work in this area.

III. METHODOLOGY

The adequacy of a research method depends on the purpose of the research and the questions being asked. For some, the choice of method is both political and moral; critics of quantitative methods, for example, have rejected the idea of turning people into numbers, preferring instead to rely upon qualitative methods.⁸² The decision to engage in a qualitative study of archives and performance stems primarily from the human endeavor that performance requires. In a study such as this one, it is critical to elucidate the meaning behind human decisions, rather than to simply note quantitatively that a decision was made.

Although quantitative research methods provide raw data and experimental designs tend to yield comparison data, neither quantitative research nor experimental design uncover the “why” behind the quantitative data. Because this study asks, in part, about the need for theoretical or practical shifts in performance-based archivy, analyzing *why* and *how* tangible representations are selected as placeholders for ephemeral events is arguably more important than stating quantitatively, for example, that scripts are present in a significant percentage of theatrical collections. While it may be clear from a quantitative study (such as a survey instrument) that only tangible artifacts are preserved in archives, interview data from a

⁸² See, for example: Daniel Bertaux, *Biography and Society: The Life History Approach in the Social Sciences* (Beverly Hills: Sage, 1981) and Brian Fay, *Critical Social Science: Liberation and Its Limits* (Ithaca: Cornell, 1987).

qualitative study offers instead theoretical alternatives to traditional archivy through a more holistic examination of the issues and concerns of stakeholders.

III.A. CASE STUDY RESEARCH

Many of the variables that interest social scientists such as democracy, power and political culture are difficult to measure because, for example, a process that is “democratic” in one cultural context may be decidedly *undemocratic* in another. Achieving a deeper understanding of processes and other conceptual variables is considered the principal objective of case study research.⁸³ Case study research is optimal for studies where surveys and experimental designs fall short of explaining an existing phenomenon, such as the archival tendency to reduce a performance to its tangible artifacts. For this dissertation, case study research provides an opportunity for “an intensive, holistic description and analysis of a single ... phenomenon.”⁸⁴

Case study research is one of several qualitative methods that allow investigators to identify and measure the indicators that best represent culturally sensitive theoretical concepts (ethnography is another example).⁸⁵ Because performance is often categorized as cultural expression, this methodology allows for cultural meaning to be a consideration in analysis and reporting. As an inquiry that focuses on understanding individual processes, organizations and cultures, case study emerges as an appropriate method because each of the cases selected for this

⁸³ Arch G. Woodside, *Case Study Research: Theory, Methods and Practice* (Great Britain: Emerald Group Publishing, 2010), 16.

⁸⁴ Ravonne A. Green, *Case Study Research : A Program Evaluation Guide for Librarians*. (Santa Barbara, CA: Libraries Unlimited, 2011), 16-17.

⁸⁵ Alexander L. George and Andrew Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2005), 17.

study are based in different cultural traditions.⁸⁶ The case of the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)'s 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage, for example, is rooted in protecting cultural practices, as is the Katherine Dunham case. The Virtual Vaudeville case is similarly culture-oriented as vaudeville was considered both a theatrical and cultural movement. The Virtual Vaudeville and UNESCO cases also stand as process-oriented case; they are examples of what results from collaborative efforts among scholars from multiple disciplines.

This research study was approached through collective and comparative case study methods. A collective case study involves reviewing a collection of similar cases to determine trends, issues, or problems. Each of the three cases selected for this study yielded comparable data points. Text-based, tangible artifacts such as scripts and notations, publicity materials, policy documents, contracts and agreements, oral histories and other recordings comprise a significant amount of the data sources for this research, elaborated and reinforced by data obtained from informal and informational interviews. Finally, a comparative analysis (i.e. comparing data across the three cases) strengthens the reliability, validity and generalizability of the research.⁸⁷ In deploying collective case study methods for this project, collected data was analyzed independently and then synthesized to identify commonalities among the three cases.

III.B. SAMPLING

⁸⁶ Woodside, *Case Study Research*, 16.

⁸⁷ Collective case studies are used to evaluate existing programs (the Katherine Dunham archives, for example) and to provide an accurate or holistic view of an entire organization or program (such as UNESCO's Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage).

Purposeful sampling was used in case selection for this study. Although research specialists have suggested more than a dozen strategies for deciding upon a sampling method, the most common sampling involves selecting critical cases, extreme cases, typical cases and varied cases. The power of purposeful sampling, particularly for this study, lies in selecting information-rich cases for in-depth study.⁸⁸ The cases selected for this study were chosen because of their unique performative attributes. Each case represents a performance tradition based in a particular culture or cultural movement. The cases also present approaches to permanence that combine traditional archivy with modes of information transmission and reception, whether that transmission takes place between and among humans or occurs digitally. These cases suggest three distinct ways that archives might function as keepers of intangible cultural heritage as well as revealing attributes of traditional archivy that do not work as well when working with performed works. The three cases selected for this study are:

III.B.1. The Live Performance Simulation System: Virtual Vaudeville Prototype

The Virtual Vaudeville project is a prototype of the Live Performance Simulation System. The product of collaboration among a diverse group of United States scholars including computer scientists, 3D modelers and animators, theater practitioners and historians of both theater and music, the prototype is a single-user 3D computer game that allows users to enter a virtual theatre to watch a simulated performance. The Virtual Vaudeville project team attempted to use digital technologies to answer the question: “Is it possible to archive a live performance?” Using motion capture technology, 3D animation and human actors, the project aimed to represent an historical performance tradition using a virtual reality environment to simulate the experience of

⁸⁸ Green, *Case Study Research*, 39.

attending a live performance. Virtual Vaudeville scholars were, in part, testing hypotheses about historical performance practices and engaging with historical performance traditions as performance (rather than through the mediation of scripted theater or film).

The Virtual Vaudeville case is extreme in its grounding in the digital humanities; few performance-based artistic communities have attempted to document or preserve their work in a digital or digitized arena. While it is also typical in its use of traditional performing arts archives (culling theatrical materials from archives such as scripts, playbills, newspaper clippings and photographs from the American vaudeville era, ca. 1880-1930) to support the creation of the prototype, what makes this case particularly compelling is the conflation of traditional archivy with the digital humanities to address preservation concerns.

III.B.2. The Katherine Dunham Archives and the Dunham Technique

Katherine Dunham (1909-2006) revolutionized American dance in the 1930s by combining ritual-based Afro-Caribbean dance styles with her training in classical ballet. In 1935, as a graduate student in anthropology at the University of Chicago, Dunham accepted a grant to travel to Haiti, Jamaica, Martinique and Trinidad to study the dances of the West Indies. Dunham is widely regarded as a pioneer of the anthropological dance movement and is credited with bringing African, Caribbean and Brazilian dance styles to a then Eurocentric dance canon.⁸⁹ By 1940 she had also founded the Dunham Dance Company and had begun developing a repertoire which combined her interpretations of Caribbean dances, traditional ballet, African rituals and

⁸⁹ Katherine Dunham Center for Arts and Humanities, “Katherine Dunham Biography (1909-2006),” <http://kdcah.org/katherine-dunham-biography/>.

African American rhythms to create a dance pedagogy known as The Dunham Technique.⁹⁰ Dunham continued to expand her choreography and refine The Dunham Technique transmitting dance knowledge to several generations of dancers before her death in 2006.

III.B.3. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)'s 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage

UNESCO's concept of intangible cultural heritage encompasses: oral traditions and expressions; performing arts; social practices; rituals; festive events; knowledge and practice concerning the universe and nature; and traditional craftsmanship. UNESCO has indicated a commitment to safeguarding intangible cultural heritage through conventional archival means as well as through modes of transmission. UNESCO's Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage (outlined below) and its related materials are a current and concrete example of how transmission and archivy work together on an international and organizational level. In 2003, UNESCO adopted the Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage, with four stated purposes:

- 1) to safeguard the [world's] intangible cultural heritage;
- 2) to ensure respect for the intangible cultural heritage of the communities, groups and individuals concerned;
- 3) to raise awareness at the local, national and international levels of the importance of the intangible cultural heritage, and of ensuring mutual appreciation thereof; and
- 4) to provide for international cooperation and assistance.⁹¹

The 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage is the only existing international document of its kind. It has been ratified by 161 nations (excluding the United

⁹⁰ Library of Congress, "Special Presentation: Katherine Dunham Timeline," <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/diglib/ihis/html/dunham/dunham-timeline.html>.

⁹¹ UNESCO, "Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage 2003," http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=17716&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html

States and the United Kingdom), most recently the Bahamas in May 2014.

Three countries were selected for close reading in the UNESCO case study: Belgium, Canada (specifically the province of Newfoundland and Labrador), and Trinidad and Tobago. These countries were selected in part because of geographic dispersion and in part because of their willingness to participate in the study. Each nation offers a distinctive view of the Convention, UNESCO politics and policies, the relative benefits of ratifying the Convention and how the Convention is deployed. At the same time, these three nations, considered collectively, offer a broad view of the Convention and the global stage on which it operates.

III.C. DATA COLLECTION

Data for this study was collected from observation, interviews and unobtrusive data sources such as archival and institutional records. The observational data for this study is primarily comprised of unstructured direct observations and site visits: unstructured observations involved observing physical facilities and professional practices. Site visits provided the opportunity to conduct both interviews and unstructured observations, such as in Trinidad and Tobago where traditional Divali celebrations were underway at the time of the research visit.

Data collection for the Virtual Vaudeville case study included four interviews, three of which were conducted in person: Bruce McConachie, Professor of Theatre at the University of Pittsburgh, David Saltz, Principle Investigator and Associate Professor of Theatre at the University of Georgia, and a former grant reviewer from the National Science Foundation who participated in the study on the condition of anonymity. One interview was conducted via telephone with Susan Kattwinkel, Associate Professor of Theatre at College of Charleston.

Observational data also provided evidence for the Virtual Vaudeville case; a site visit to Atlanta, GA to interview David Saltz allowed the researcher to view and better understand the multiple technological apparatus used to create the prototype (explained in detail in Chapter IV). Additionally, the case study calls on data from internal project documents provided by Saltz and the original project proposal which was obtained through a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request from the National Science Foundation (NSF). The Virtual Vaudeville Prototype and secondary sources completed the dataset for the Virtual Vaudeville case.

Similarly, the Katherine Dunham archives were used for observational and unobtrusive data. The Katherine Dunham Archives are comprised of the Katherine Dunham Collection at the Library of Congress, The Katherine Dunham Papers, 1919-1968 at Southern Illinois University, and the Katherine Dunham Correspondence, Contracts and Interviews at New York Public Library. The Katherine Dunham Collection at the Library of Congress is a collection of 1,694 still and moving images that document Dunham's career including her early anthropological explorations in the 1930s, her work as a choreographer, her dance technique and teaching method, performances and her anthropological analysis of the dances and rituals of the African diaspora.⁹² The moving images include ethnographic footage collected by Dunham of vodoun rituals and other dance forms. The Dunham Technique is captured on several videotapes in the collection, demonstrating Dunham's teaching style and providing a glimpse into her methods of transmitting dance knowledge. Many of the images (both still and moving) are available for remote viewing online.

The Katherine Dunham Papers at Southern Illinois University are comprised of 50 cubic feet of correspondence, writings, scripts, notes on dance techniques, and musical scores.

⁹² Library of Congress, "Inventory: The Katherine Dunham Collection," <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/natlib/ahas/warehouse/dunham/200006106/0001.pdf>.

Although personal correspondence comprises the bulk of the collection, some of Dunham's anthropological dance notes are also among the Papers. The Performing Arts Library at New York Public Library (NYPL) holds a small collection of Katherine Dunham's correspondence, contracts and interviews among their Performing Arts Research Collections. Additional Dunham materials are held in the Jerome Robbins Dance Division of NYPL and can be found in the papers of her devotees, Lavinia Williams (Lavinia Williams Papers, 1940-1989) and Dr. Glory Van Scott (Glory Van Scott Collection, 1974-2000) as well as in the American Ballet Theatre Archives.

In addition to the primary and observational data, three interviews with former Dunham dancers/current Dunham instructors and one informal interview with a Dunham archivist completed data collection for this case. Ron Hutson, Dunham Dance Instructor at Point Park University, Dr. Albirda Rose, co-founder of the Institute for Dunham Certification, Dr. Halifu Osumare, co-founder of the Institute for Dunham certification and Southern Illinois University archivist Matthew Gorzalski provided critical interview and correspondence data. Historical newspapers and secondary sources completed the data for the Dunham case.

The data collected for Chapter Six, UNESCO's Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage, was culled from interviews with cultural heritage workers and documents related to the Convention. Interviews were conducted in Port-of-Spain, Trinidad in November 2013 with Alicia Blake and other representatives from the Ministry of the Arts and Multiculturalism and culture-bearers from Trinidad and Tobago including Omela Reid and Lutalo Massimba (a.k.a. Brother Resistance). Colleen Quigley, archivist at Memorial University of Newfoundland was interviewed in New Orleans, Louisiana at the Society of American Archivists annual meeting while Intangible Cultural Heritage Development Officer for the

province of Newfoundland and Labrador, Dale Jarvis, participated in a telephone interview. Additional data came from email correspondence and documents obtained directly from UNESCO officers in Trinidad and Tobago and Belgium; the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage and other supporting documents from UNESCO; recordings of ICH elements from UNESCO; historical newspapers; and secondary sources.

Interviews for this study serve as a complimentary method to other methods in the evaluation process; as suggested above, interviews provide crucial data in addition to clarifying other data. Informal and informational interviews were conducted with people involved in each case. Unobtrusive data, or data that originates from objects rather than people, were used both as a data source and to corroborate observational and interview data. Non-textual sources such as recordings of Katherine Dunham's technique, dance classes, fieldwork in the Caribbean, oral histories and video documentation of intangible cultural heritage safeguarded through UNESCO's 2003 Convention also provided sources of robust data.

Data collection resulted in complementary field notes which were coded for analysis. Points of comparison across the three cases, such as interview data and data from text-based primary source materials, provided a context within which to analyze existing frameworks for preserving event-based cultural heritage, thus addressing the primary research question: *What can a case study of three existing approaches to performance archivy reveal about the archival role in safeguarding and/or preserving event-based cultural heritage?* The second question, *How do existing archival theories and practices need to shift to more effectively attend to event-based cultural heritage?*, is addressed directly in the cross-case analysis. Through identifying instances where archives have succeeded and/or failed to produce a satisfactory record of performance, the cross-case analysis highlights three areas of comparative study.

III.D. DATA ANALYSIS

Professor Emeritus of Education at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, Robert E. Stake, observes that quantitative and qualitative methods differ most at the stage of data analysis.⁹³ Qualitative researchers are involved with analysis throughout the study while quantitative researchers build their research on the statistical significance of one test or a collection of statistical data. In qualitative research, a good narrative description of the findings and a careful analysis of the data collection and *coding* are considered enough to replace the statistical findings in a quantitative study.

A cross-case analysis, such as the one applied in this study, focuses on common themes.⁹⁴ Considering multiple cases in multiple settings enhances generalizability; for this reason, three varied cases were selected for this study. In addition to concerns about generalizability, cross-case analysis allows for assertions and causative interpretations. Through cross-case analysis, explanations for trends or patterns that may emerge from these varied cases can be examined in different configurations.⁹⁵ The cross-case analysis for this study began with the raw data, followed by case-by-case analysis. Using data from all three cases, themes were developed to more effectively and efficiently organize data. These themes were derived from the data set itself.

⁹³ Robert E. Stake, *The Art of Case Study Research* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1995).

⁹⁴ John W. Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Traditions* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1998).

⁹⁵ Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln, *Collecting and Interpreting Qualitative Materials* (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 1998).

Coding is assigning abbreviated designations to collected data. As is standard for qualitative case study research, coding for this study occurred at two levels: identifying information about the data and selecting interpretive constructs related to the analysis of the data.⁹⁶ Professor of Adult and Continuing Education at the University of Georgia, Sharan B. Merriam asserts that category construction is tantamount to data analysis. It was therefore critical to establish codes and categories early in the study for purposes of consistency. Themes or categories from the relevant literature formed the basis of some codes, but “in vivo codes,” words or themes derived directly from the data set, were the primary codes used.⁹⁷ Two commonly used frameworks for coding are grounded theory and analytical induction. Grounded theory was used for this research project.

Grounded theory pioneer, Barney Glaser, and other grounded theorists have contended that slices of data from many different sources are much more compelling than data from one source.⁹⁸ Grounded theory involves constantly comparing themes within the data from interviews, observations, narrative data and note-taking. Unlike empirical data, grounded theory emerges as the case or evaluation unfolds in a naturalistic fashion.⁹⁹ Grounded theory involves using open coding and line-by-line analysis to dissect the data while looking for emerging themes.

To address the research question of the role of contemporary archives in event-based archivy, it was critical to understand and analyze the actions of both archivists and performers both within the context of records creation and in regard to strategies for performance

⁹⁶ Sharan B. Merriam, *Qualitative Research and Case Study Applications in Education* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1998).

⁹⁷ See Appendix D: Codes. Coded dataset available upon request.

⁹⁸ Barney G. Glaser, *Theoretical Sensitivity: Advances in the Methodology of Grounded Theory* (Mill Valley, CA: Sociology Press, 1978).

⁹⁹ Green, *Case Study Research*, 87

documentation and preservation. Open coding as a mode of analysis separated this data into discrete parts, while axial coding collated the data by making connections between themes or categories.¹⁰⁰ Axial coding as a strategy for data analysis aided in identifying relationships among separate pieces of data and focused on conditions such as the context, actions, strategies, and consequences of actions.¹⁰¹ Both open coding and axial coding were useful in this study in analyzing each case independently and comparing data across cases.

III.E. VALIDITY, RELIABILITY, REPLICATION

Social science research specialist Robert K. Yin recommends using multiple sources of evidence to establish a chain of evidence to construct validity.¹⁰² Yin further suggests maintaining a chain of evidence to increase the reliability of the case study. This chain of evidence helps to ensure quality control throughout the evaluation of the program or case.¹⁰³ The chain of evidence in this research study began with the research questions and ends with the case study report (this dissertation). The research questions have defined and dictated the case study protocols previously outlined.¹⁰⁴ Data collection and analysis were supported by the creation and maintenance of a database in the form of an Excel workbook, from which the foundation for the dissertation narrative emerged.

¹⁰⁰ Anselm L. Strauss and Juliet M. Corbin, *Basics of Qualitative Research: Grounded Theory Procedures and Techniques* (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 1998).

¹⁰¹ Green, *Case Study Research*, 87-88

¹⁰² Robert K. Yin, *Case Study Research: Design and Methods, 4th ed.* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2009), 41.

¹⁰³ Green, *Case Study Research*, 92.

¹⁰⁴ The interview protocols are available in Appendix C: Interview Protocols.

Some researchers have argued that replicability is not possible because of real world changes and the uniqueness of individuals. Catherine Marshall and Gretchen B. Rossman conclude in their 2006 text *Designing Qualitative Research (4th edition)*, that researchers should allow others to inspect their procedures, protocols, and decisions by keeping all collected data in well-organized, retrievable formats.¹⁰⁵ The data for this study was maintained in a Microsoft Excel workbook and can be produced upon request. This research study addressed concerns about replicability through ongoing communication with interview subjects as well as providing transparency about procedures, protocols and decisions through dissertation committee oversight.

III.F. LIMITATIONS

All research studies have limitations. Limitations are the characteristics of design or methodology that impact or influence the application and/or interpretation of the results of the study. Because the researcher is the primary instrument of data collection and analysis, qualitative case studies are most often limited by the sensitivity and integrity of the investigator.

Sample size and generalizability are two additional potential limitations of case study research. Although the sample size for this study is limited to three cases, it was still possible to cull meaningful data. Any conclusions drawn from this study could be said to represent the behavior of one group at one particular moment in time; concerns were therefore addressed by the scope of each case study. For example, the UNESCO case study offers an array of instances

¹⁰⁵ Catherine Marshall and Gretchen B. Rossman, *Designing Qualitative Research 4th ed.* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2006).

of global intangible cultural heritage being safeguarded, from which a purposeful selection of several differing examples were made. In addition to a close reading of three nations' interpretations of the Convention, the chapter also provides examples from other countries in an effort to proffer a view of the Convention that offers both depth and breadth.

No causal conclusions have been drawn from this research because it was impossible to rule out alternative explanations for any observed phenomena. For example, because the Virtual Vaudeville project is no longer active, there was an opportunity to discuss why it was short-lived; no direct causal conclusions have been drawn about the pro tem nature of the project, however, because the timeframe and the scope of this research study did not allow for all possible explanations to be examined in detail.

Finally, the scarcity of significant prior research on the subject of archives and performance or archives and intangible cultural heritage means there is only a limited foundation on which to build an understanding of the research problem. This limitation was addressed by examining related research in archival theory and practice as well as existing research in other fields as was appropriate.

IV. THE LIVE PERFORMANCE SIMULATION SYSTEM: THE VIRTUAL VAUDEVILLE PROTOTYPE

This chapter examines how archives of performance were used to support the creation of the Live Performance Simulation System's Virtual Vaudeville prototype and explores the applicability of existing archival theory and practice for scholars reconstructing historical performances in digital environments. Finally, the chapter considers the efficacy of endeavors such as the Virtual Vaudeville project as future models for archives and archivists who strive to help societies safeguard performed events as cultural heritage.

The chapter therefore provides brief historical context for vaudeville as a mode of performance at the turn of the 20th century; discusses the Virtual Vaudeville Prototype and the archival evidence upon which it was built; and finally, unpacks the Virtual Vaudeville prototype as both an evidence-based project fashioned from archival research and as an archival record.

The case study employs data from an array of internal project documents including the original project proposal which was obtained through a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request from the National Science Foundation (NSF); interviews with four key project participants including the Principle Investigator, David Saltz, and an NSF project manager familiar with the project and its funding history; the Virtual Vaudeville Prototype itself; and secondary sources.

IV.A. BACKGROUND

This case study investigates one early digital humanities project that sought to revolutionize present-day representations of past performances by moving an historical performance into a digital environment. The objective of the Virtual Vaudeville project was to use digital technology to address a problem fundamental to performance scholarship and pedagogy: how to represent and communicate the phenomenon of live performance using media. For the project team, this problem was especially pressing because the goal was to represent a performance tradition from the past.¹⁰⁶

One strategy to address the problem of representing historical performance traditions has been to build *physical* reconstructions of historic spaces and to stage performances in them, such as with London's famous Globe Theatre reconstruction. This solution, however, requires an unsustainable investment of money and land, and is feasible in only a limited number of cases.¹⁰⁷ As David Saltz asserts in the Virtual Vaudeville project description, "[P]hysical reconstructions are available only to people at one geographic location, and they implement only one interpretation and so cannot be used to evaluate conflicting scholarly interpretations of the historical evidence."¹⁰⁸ Another mode that has been employed to represent historical performance traditions has been to collocate printed archival detritus, thereby creating a performance-specific archive. For example, the Annenberg/Corporation for Public Broadcasting Multimedia Collection created a CD-ROM containing documents pertaining to Henrick Ibsen's play *A Doll's House*. Although the disk contains video clips of filmed performances, documents

¹⁰⁶ David Saltz, "A Live Performance Simulation System: Virtual Vaudeville: Project Summary," (National Science Foundation Grant Proposal, 2001).

¹⁰⁷ David Saltz, "A Live Performance Simulation System: Virtual Vaudeville: Project Description: Objectives," (National Science Foundation Grant Proposal, 2001): 1.

¹⁰⁸ Saltz, "Virtual Vaudeville: Project Description," 1.

written by Ibsen, and sketches of costume and set designs, no attempt was made to recreate what an original performance would have looked like.¹⁰⁹ Finally, a third strategy that has been employed to represent historical performance traditions is the *virtual* recreation of theatrical spaces such as the Chestnut Street Theatre Project, spearheaded by University of Washington professor Jack Wolcott. The Chestnut Street Theatre Project recreates the Chestnut Street Theatre in Philadelphia in the 18th century.¹¹⁰ The interior drawings are impressive and viewers enjoy an impression of what the theatre looked like from multiple angles. Again, there is no attempt to recreate an actual performance within this virtual environment.¹¹¹

The Live Performance Simulation System's Virtual Vaudeville prototype was conceived as a response to the problem of performing arts archivy. The product of collaboration among a diverse group of United States scholars including computer scientists, 3D modelers and animators, theater practitioners and historians of both theater and music, the prototype is a single-user 3D computer game that allows users to enter a virtual theatre to watch a simulated performance. Initiated in 2001, the project sought to use digital technologies to answer the question: "Is it possible to archive a live performance?" Using motion capture technology, artificial intelligence techniques, a 3D game engine and a human actor, the project aimed to represent an historical performance tradition using a virtual reality environment to fully simulate the experience of attending a live performance. These scholars sought to proffer an archive of experience, one that would incorporate elements of sight and sound in addition to the interactivity of a live audience. Scholars immersed in the Virtual Vaudeville project were, in

¹⁰⁹ David Saltz, "A Live Performance Simulation System: Virtual Vaudeville: Project Description: Scholarly Implications," (National Science Foundation Grant Proposal, 2001): 2.

¹¹⁰ Jack Wolcott, "The Chestnut Street Theatre Project,"
<http://www.videoccasionsnw.com/history/cst/cstabout.htm>.

¹¹¹ Saltz, "Virtual Vaudeville Project Description: Scholarly Implications," 2.

part, testing hypotheses about historical performance practices and engaging with historical performance traditions as performance (rather than through the mediation of scripted theater or film).

The Virtual Vaudeville Project aimed to test the potential of virtual environments to provide high-quality theater experiences to remote audiences. One objective of Virtual Vaudeville was to simulate a feeling of “liveness” in a virtual theatre: the “sensation of being surrounded by human activity onstage, in the audience and backstage, and the ability to choose where to look at any given time (onstage or off) and to move within the environment.”¹¹² In what was a radical departure from existing methods, the Virtual Vaudeville team proposed using motion capture technology to capture real-world performances by professional, highly skilled actors, singers, dancers, acrobats and musicians, thus recreating an historical performance for a digital environment. In so doing, they hoped to make important advances in the design and implementation of virtual environments, advances which would build on prior successes in creating photo-realistic simulations of real 3D environments by introducing a large quantity of complex human performance data. Virtual Vaudeville was intended to constitute an invaluable work of applied scholarship and provide an “unprecedented resource for visualizing past performances and testing hypotheses about historical performance practices.”¹¹³

The long-term goal of Virtual Vaudeville, then, was to develop a flexible set of techniques and technologies that scholars and theatre practitioners could use to simulate a wide

¹¹² Saltz, “Virtual Vaudeville: Project Summary.”

¹¹³ David Saltz, “Virtual Vaudeville: A Digital Simulation of Virtual Theatre,” (PowerPoint Presentation, National Science Foundation, 2002). The Virtual Vaudeville Project Summary elaborates on this idea saying that the technologies and strategies developed through Virtual Vaudeville have applications which extend well beyond the simulation of theatrical performances; the same requirements and obstacles arise in the attempt to simulate any kind of performative event, including political congresses, coronations, parades, festivals, battles, rituals, riots, and so on.

range of performance traditions, from Classical Greece to Japanese Noh Theatre. As Principle Investigator David Saltz argued in his proposal to NSF,

Virtual Vaudeville offers scholars in all disciplines in the humanities a model for a new kind of “critical edition.” A conventional published monograph can pick and choose details to examine, and so lacuna and even contradictions in the historical analysis are easy to overlook. The imperative of precisely recreating both on-stage and off-stage events will demand an unprecedented degree of scholarly thoroughness and rigor ... It will provide an unprecedented resource for students to engage with historical performance traditions as performances (and not as literature or film).¹¹⁴

Saltz’s “critical edition” model is particularly useful for representing vaudeville as a performance tradition. While archives have traditionally struggled to document, maintain, represent and ensure provisions of access to performance of all kinds, vaudeville presents a specific challenge as a popular art form. “High culture” is a term that was introduced in the late 19th century by English poet and cultural critic Matthew Arnold. Arnold conceived of culture as the “best that has been thought and said” in the world.¹¹⁵ In contrast to popular or mass culture, Arnold saw high culture as a force for moral and political good. Vaudeville, as a form of popular culture that emerged just following the publication of Arnold’s seminal book, *Culture and Anarchy*, did not qualify as “high culture” or “high art.” As such, vaudeville, as a popular form, was even less likely to attract the attention of a nascent archival field concerned primarily with historical manuscripts and government records. Today, the significance of this history is immediately apparent for vaudeville scholars. Each Virtual Vaudeville team member interviewed for this project identified lack of archival documentation as a motivating force behind creating the Virtual Vaudeville prototype.

¹¹⁴ Saltz, “Virtual Vaudeville Project Description: Scholarly Implications,” 2.

¹¹⁵ See Matthew Arnold, *Culture and Anarchy: An Essay in Political and Social Criticism* (New York: McMillan, 1899): viii.

IV.B. VAUDEVILLE

During the late 19th and early 20th centuries the entertainment industry in the United States grew rapidly. Circus, sports and minstrel shows were joined by two new forms of variety entertainment—burlesque and vaudeville. Together, these performative practices comprised the nexus of the post-industrial popular culture industry. Variety entertainment consisted of several short acts performed consecutively; it often included feats such as ventriloquism, acrobatics and magic tricks.

Vaudeville was variety entertainment. A highly visual, non-literary, form of American entertainment with a complicated delivery system, the remnants of vaudeville survive in stand-up comedy, stage and film musicals, and other modern performative practices.¹¹⁶ From its earliest days, vaudeville struggled against prevailing Victorian values: early forms of variety theater had an insalubrious reputation, and in the late 1800s, a growing realm of inexpensive amusement inspired the cultural elite in the United States to attempt to “reclaim music, drama and the arts from the unwashed masses.”¹¹⁷ This self-selecting cultural noblesse sought to preserve art, to save artistic expression for those who truly appreciated quality and beauty. Vaudeville represented the opposite of this “high culture,” paradigm. Associated with rough-housing and prostitution, vaudeville was pure popular entertainment, consisting of a highly diverse series of very short acts, known as “turns.” The turns ranged from singing groups to animal acts, from comedians to contortionists, from magic tricks to short musical plays.

¹¹⁶ Virtual Vaudeville, “What is Vaudeville?”

<http://www.virtualvaudeville.com/hypermediaNotes/WhatIsVaudevilleF.html>

¹¹⁷ LeRoy Ashby, *With Amusement for All: A History of American Popular Culture Since 1830* (Lexington : University Press of Kentucky, 2006): 107.

Vaudeville had an effect on popular culture that is still evident: for example, many contemporary film and television ethnic stereotypes—Jewish, Irish, Italian, African American—derive from the ethnic caricatures that were strongholds of vaudeville comedy. Vaudeville era comedian Frank Bush, the single complete act in the Virtual Vaudeville prototype, exemplifies this brand of ethnic humor.¹¹⁸ After the Civil War, many comedians performed in blackface or donned Irish or German costumes and makeup. Frank Bush specialized in “the Jew” and “the Yankee.” He made his name as the solemn, bespectacled character of Isaac Levy Solomon Moses. Dressed in a long black peddler’s coat and sporting a pointed beard, he set the standard for what were considered “benign” Jewish characterizations on the stage.¹¹⁹ The historical era predating the terms “politically correct” and “culturally sensitive” in the United States is exemplified by 1900s audiences and their hearty response to Jewish character comedy and blackface. Frank Bush *flourished* as a “Jew comic” from the 1870s-1890s. There were also ample ethnically Jewish performers, but they were performing in blackface or engaged in singing and dancing acts.¹²⁰

In its prime, vaudeville appealed to a broad cross-spectrum of the public, representing every class and ethnic group. The wealthiest patrons could purchase exclusive box seats, while working class spectators could purchase inexpensive seats in the galleries. Vaudeville, as an event-based cultural form, had something for everyone.¹²¹

¹¹⁸ Virtual Vaudeville, “What is Vaudeville?”

<http://www.virtualvaudeville.com/hypermediaNotes/WhatIsVaudevilleF.html>

¹¹⁹ Frank Cullen, Florence Hackman and Donald McNeilly, “Frank Bush, ca. 1860-1930” in *Vaudeville, Old and New: An Encyclopedia of Variety Performers in America, Volume I*, by Frank Cullen (London: Routledge, 2007): 173.

¹²⁰ Douglas Gilbert, *American Vaudeville: Its Life and Times* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1940), 287 - 290.

¹²¹ Virtual Vaudeville, “What is Vaudeville?”

<http://www.virtualvaudeville.com/hypermediaNotes/WhatIsVaudevilleF.html>

IV.C. THE VIRTUAL VAUDEVILLE PROTOTYPE

*Virtual Vaudeville allows the user to switch between two very different ways of experiencing the simulated performances. In what we call 'invisible camera' mode, viewers fly through the 3D space to observe the performance from any position in the theatre and zoom in as close to the performers as they please. Alternatively, the viewer can adopt an embodied perspective, watching the performance through the eyes of a particular member of the audience.*¹²²

In September 2000, the National Initiative for a Networked Cultural Heritage (NINCH) held a “Building Blocks” conference in Washington, D.C. The conference was designed to bring together 90 humanities scholars to articulate by field and across disciplines the most pressing needs in the humanities that could be addressed by networked computing. Funded by the Rockefeller Foundation, the National Science Foundation (NSF) and the Gladys Krieble Delmas Foundation, Building Blocks was the first step in a new Computer Science and the Humanities Initiative, designed to “create a framework of shared understandings and vocabulary with which [humanities scholars could] build practical agendas for working with computer scientists.”¹²³ The specific and immediate goals of Building Blocks were to map a long-term research agenda for joint humanist-scientist work and to outline a series of short-term projects to answer the most pressing of the identified needs. Another goal of the NINCH project was for scholars to leave the conference with the beginnings of a grant proposal to submit to NSF. NINCH was, in many ways, NSF's way of reaching out to the humanities.

Among those selected to participate in NINCH's Building Blocks session were performance studies scholars David Saltz (University of Georgia), Bruce McConachie

¹²² David Saltz, “PowerPoint: Virtual Vaudeville: A Digital Simulation of Virtual Theatre.”

¹²³ NINCH, “Building Blocks: Intellectual Needs Shaping Technical Solutions,” <http://www.ninch.org/bb/project/project.html> (accessed 29 March 2014). The Gladys Krieble Delmas Foundation “promotes the advancement and perpetuation of humanistic inquiry and artistic creativity by encouraging excellence in scholarship and in the performing arts, and by supporting research libraries and other institutions which transmit cultural heritage” (please see: <http://delmas.org/>).

(University of Pittsburgh) and Susan Kattwinkel (College of Charleston). Grouped together as much by chance as design, these scholars brainstormed digital initiatives they felt would support their scholarship and pedagogy.¹²⁴ The group considered circus, earlier forms of variety entertainment as well as minstrelsy. Kattwinkel and McConachie, however, both vaudeville scholars, were particularly interested in blackface, immigrant performers, and working class audience issues.¹²⁵

Following the NINCH session, David Saltz, whose work at the University of Georgia was in the use of interactive technologies in live performance and who had unfettered access to a cutting-edge computer department and information technology scholars, took the lead on what was then termed the Live Performance Simulation System project.¹²⁶ The group, which consisted of the aforementioned scholars (Saltz, McConachie and Kattwinkel) was joined by several theater historians who focused on the acts represented in the prototype as well as music and theater architecture. Lastly, the project team included computer scientists from the Georgia Institute of Technology and the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, California, who brought 3D animation skills and motion capture technology to the project.¹²⁷ In the end, the Virtual Vaudeville team comprised a diverse array of scholars from around the country, including computer scientists, 3D modelers and animators, theater practitioners, and theater and music historians.

The group selected vaudeville as an object of study not only because Kattwinkel and McConachie were vaudeville scholars, but also because the literary aspects of vaudeville are its least significant attributes. While published sketches exist, these do not capture what is most

¹²⁴ Dr. Susan Kattwinkel, interview with author, August 7, 2013.

¹²⁵ Dr. Bruce McConachie, interview with author, June 4, 2013.

¹²⁶ Dr. David Zucker Saltz, interview with author, August 19, 2013.

¹²⁷ Dr. David Zucker Saltz, interview with author, August 19, 2013.

arresting about vaudeville: they do not capture the energetic variety or the larger-than-life style. Also, historically speaking, until recently there has been a dearth of theater scholarship devoted to popular forms; rather, theater scholarship has traditionally focused on “high art.”¹²⁸ Vaudeville, therefore, presented a perfect unit of study: not only is vaudeville a visually demanding art form, but there was still a significant amount of raw research to be done. Temporally, vaudeville also provided rich ground for reconstruction:

I really like it because it's recent enough that you can really reconstruct it with a good bit of detail. So let's say we were doing Greek theater. There's so much speculation involved in every detail that it would be hugely speculative. Any little detail: what the actor's costumes looked like, how they moved, what the set looked like. You know, all of these core issues. Whereas with Vaudeville, there's tons of material. It's right at the dawn of the film age, so even a lot of these acts are recorded a lot of them aren't, so it's not like it's redundant. But we do have that kind of information.¹²⁹

Finally, the group selected vaudeville because it would allow them to explore cultural norms in the turn-of-the-century United States. From the 1880s through the 1920s, several kinds of vaudeville acts served as typical parts of larger vaudeville productions including blackface comedy acts, dance numbers, contortionist performances, juggling acts, singing groups, comic monologues and skits of full-length plays. In short, as a result of the diversity of acts and audience members in early vaudeville, simulating a vaudeville performance would offer scholars more than simulating the performance of a “classic” piece of dramatic literature such as the aforementioned *A Doll's House* by Henrik Ibsen or, for that matter, a circus.¹³⁰

The proposal for the Virtual Vaudeville prototype was submitted to the NSF in response to a call for proposals for Phase II of their Digital Libraries Initiative which began in 1998. Phase

¹²⁸ Dr. David Zucker Saltz, interview with author, August 19, 2013. This change began in the 1980s with scholars like Bruce McConachie pushing for work on subjects such as melodrama.

¹²⁹ Dr. David Zucker Saltz, interview with author, August 19, 2013.

¹³⁰ Saltz, “Virtual Vaudeville: Project Description: Scholarly Implications,” 3.

I of the Initiative had begun in 1994 with six proposals funded from 103 submissions. Highly competitive, Phase II of the Digital Libraries Initiative received over 400 proposals of which approximately 50 were funded, Virtual Vaudeville among them.¹³¹ At the time, various inquiries were made regarding live performance that fell within the NSF's areas of interest. Some were associated with dance and choreography and a considerable amount were linked to human motion, gesture recognition and sign-language recognition. Many of the researchers were seeking funding to simulate human capabilities in robotics.¹³² While the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) or the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) might have been a more natural fit for funding a project such as Virtual Vaudeville, NSF at the time had a budget in excess of \$5 billion while NEH labored under a budget closer to \$150 million.¹³³

The NSF awards were selected based on peer-review process and program manager final decision on project funding. Virtual Vaudeville was considered a unique proposal in that it was one of a few proposals dealing with intangible cultural heritage. NSF had received a number of proposals related to endangered languages and oral traditions. They also had several dealing with performance, but Virtual Vaudeville was generally considered a strong proposal and NSF had high hopes that it would break new ground not only in establishing a line of research that was taken and would be received as legitimate within the computer science community (which was at that point very conservative, and still is, in terms of what they consider legitimate topics for research) but the hope was that Virtual Vaudeville would also further human understanding of

¹³¹ NSF Project Manager, interview with author, July 17, 2013.

¹³² NSF Project Manager, interview with author, July 17, 2013.

¹³³ NSF Project Manager, interview with author, July 17, 2013.

virtual environments and the ability to capture virtual reality environments in a way that people would find appealing and informative.¹³⁴

Key to the Virtual Vaudeville proposal was the depth of the proposed collaboration between technology, scholarship, pedagogy and art. Virtual Vaudeville was created to make a significant contribution to all four domains simultaneously, rather than merely using any one in the service of the others.¹³⁵ David Saltz had been working with a group of scholars aiming to integrate theater and digital performance, using Shakespeare. He understood that the Virtual Vaudeville team was naïve about the ease with which a project such as this could be accomplished. It was for this reason, in addition to his access to technological resources at the University of Georgia, that he was selected as Principal Investigator on the project.¹³⁶ The scope of the project, as proposed, was much larger than what was eventually funded by NSF. Initially the project team requested \$3 million to reproduce four vaudeville acts in a virtual environment. The project was whittled down to one act with the idea that later endeavors would see the remaining acts completed.¹³⁷ In the end, the Live Performance Simulation System was funded by NSF through their Digital Libraries Initiative with a grant for \$900,000 which was supplemented by an additional \$110,000 from the State of Georgia.¹³⁸ With this funding, the project team created the Virtual Vaudeville Prototype.

The complete Virtual Vaudeville prototype (1) simulates a single act by vaudeville comedian Frank Bush using a live actor and motion and facial capture, (2) offers a “flythrough” of B.F. Keith’s Union Square Theatre as it would have appeared during the vaudeville era, and

¹³⁴ NSF Project Manager, interview with author, July 17, 2013.

¹³⁵ Saltz, “Virtual Vaudeville: Project Description,” 1.

¹³⁶ Dr. Bruce McConachie, interview with author, June 4, 2013.

¹³⁷ Dr. David Zucker Saltz, interview with author, August 19, 2013.

¹³⁸ Saltz, “PowerPoint: Virtual Vaudeville: A Digital Simulation of Virtual Theatre.”

(3) presents possible responses from six individual spectators. To accomplish the Frank Bush act, David Saltz—as he would in any theatrical production—wrote a script, hired an actor (George Contini) and directed a scene. He blocked the actor’s movements and made decisions about tone and quality. The difference in the case of Virtual Vaudeville was that Contini was equipped with an optical motion capture suit and later with optical facial motion capture markers.

Optical motion capture relies on a series of light reflective markers placed at key places on the body. Markers are typically placed at joints, but can be placed as necessary to capture data. Facial motion capture uses a larger number of markers placed on the facial muscles to capture the intricacies of facial expression. When artists use motion capture for animation, fewer markers are desirable allowing animators to further manipulate rudimentary movement and design their own characters. A typical motion capture system uses anywhere from 4 to 32 cameras to capture the subject’s movement. The Virtual Vaudeville team at the University of Georgia used 8 cameras placed strategically around a small studio black box theater. They chose Autodesk Filmbox (FBX) for their motion capture software to capture data from the markers and analyze position, angle, velocity, and acceleration. The team then animated the movement with Maya, Autodesk’s 3D computer graphics software, reproducing Contini’s movements on a 3D model of Frank Bush.¹³⁹ This process is, in part, recreated on the Virtual Vaudeville website.¹⁴⁰

The flythrough of the Union Square Theatre, on the other hand, was created from visual images mapped into Maya. Frank Mohler, Virtual Vaudeville’s designer, had done extensive archival research into the Union Square Theatre and created a set of blueprints from the dimensions he uncovered in the archives. David Saltz took a series of photographs representative of vaudeville

¹³⁹ Saltz, “PowerPoint: Virtual Vaudeville: A Digital Simulation of Virtual Theatre.”

¹⁴⁰ Virtual Vaudeville, “Movie Gallery,” <http://www.virtualvaudeville.com/gallery/movies.htm>.

era architecture and interior theater design. Details from these images were painstakingly reconstructed in the Maya animation environment.

The prototype opens up for historical investigation a range of ethnic, gender and class interactions during America's industrial age.¹⁴¹ From the perspective of audience interaction, the team intended for viewers to have the ability to select one of four spectators, each representing a different socio-economic group common in 19th century America. These spectators enjoy rich and complex biographies: Mrs. Dorothy Shopper, a wealthy socialite attending the performance with her young daughter; Mr. Luigi Calzilaio, an Italian immigrant “fresh off the boat,” attending the performance with his more Americanized brother; Mr. Jake Spender, a young “sport” sitting next to a Chorus Girl (with whom he may or may not strike up a relationship, depending on the viewer's choices); and Miss Lucy Teacher, an African American schoolteacher watching the performance with her boyfriend from the second balcony, where she is confined by the theatre's segregation policy.¹⁴² These biographies, created for them from course-based archival research in the theater department at the University of Pittsburgh, were written to motivate the intentionally individuated responses of each audience member. The team envisioned an interactive audience experience:

The people in the boxes, a woman in the booth, Dorothy Shopper and her daughter; then the Italian and the Irishman sitting in the balcony and the African American in the balcony. We did elaborate biographies for them. And the idea was that there would be some artificial intelligence so you'd be sitting there and you have like an avatar and you could applaud or laugh or make a joke – a joke that was appropriate to you. And that person would respond appropriately to your joke. So the [Naval Postgraduate School team] actually provided us with a game engine so we could script those interactions¹⁴³

¹⁴¹ David Saltz, “Virtual Vaudeville: A Digital Simulation of Virtual Theatre,” (PowerPoint Presentation, November 2009)

¹⁴² David Saltz, “PowerPoint: Virtual Vaudeville: A Digital Simulation of Virtual Theatre.”

¹⁴³ Dr. David Zucker Saltz, interview with author, August 19, 2013.

The interactions were subsequently scripted, and some of the audience responses are actualized in the prototype: there are a set of six pre-rendered audience-members who react to Frank Bush's comedy act. Their facial expressions were informed by the archivally researched biographies and captured by optical facial motion capture technology. Acting students at the University of Georgia were used for this motion capture. The highly interactive audience experience that the Virtual Vaudeville team sought to deliver, however, was never fully realized.

Many vaudeville acts reflected the enthusiasms and anxieties of their time, particularly the integration of new immigrant groups into mainstream American culture, and the marginalization of African-Americans from that same culture.¹⁴⁴ As David Nasaw suggests, vaudeville gradually “deracialized most immigrant groups, but continued to categorize blacks as racially separate and radically Other.”¹⁴⁵ To this end, there was a strong desire to tackle the issue of blackface and minstrelsy in America's theatrical past. Asking questions such as “through whose eyes do we see,” “how do we construct Otherness?,” and “on what does the construction of our own identity depend?” were important to the team of scholars working on this project: they sought to bring critical questions of class, race and gender to the educational table, using archival evidence and emerging technologies to examine these themes.

The team was acutely aware that it was imperative to consider both the strengths and weaknesses of simulation as a representational method; among their chief concerns was “Disneyfication,” or presenting an idealized view of past and perpetuating historical stereotypes and prejudices. Discussions about how to address this concern precipitated an internal team controversy about including blackface in the prototype.

¹⁴⁴ Saltz, “Virtual Vaudeville: Project Description: Scholarly Implications,” 2.

¹⁴⁵ David Nasaw, *Going Out: The Rise and Fall of Public Amusements*, (New York: Basic Books, 1993). See also: Saltz, “Virtual Vaudeville: Project Description: Scholarly Implications,” 2.

[B.F. Keith's theater] had an ethnically mixed audience. It had the balcony, you know, with segregated African American spectators and that was something that we wanted to be able to look into and explore, too. And then we were deciding, 'All right, well, what acts are we going to do?' and we came up with four acts that we were gonna be researching: one was going to be Sandow the Magnificent, one was going to be the Four Cohans, one was going to be Maggie Cline and then we were going to do some sort of ethnic humor which was the sort-of definition of Vaudeville humor and at that point the group decided blackface would be a good thing to study. I was there. And I said, from the sort-of scholarly table, that that all sounded reasonable and good. And so we decided on that.¹⁴⁶

Each of the team members recalls that blackface was part of the initial discussion among the Virtual Vaudeville team. The particular recollections, however, vary: "The way I remember it, [we were] interested in doing blackface and when [David Saltz] was getting ready to put in the NSF proposal he was told that some Congressman sent it back and told them that he wouldn't allow American tax dollars to pay for filth for his kids to watch on the internet."¹⁴⁷

A representative from the National Science Foundation was interviewed for this research study. He contends that the National Science Foundation does not make a practice of censoring the work of scholars funded under their programs. There are, nonetheless, requirements that projects must meet to qualify for NSF funding. Among those requirements is, for example, a stipulation that projects must be based in the United States. This rule influenced the Virtual Vaudeville team's decision to use American vaudeville as a unit of study. Also, because NSF funding is sourced from the federal government of the United States, all limitations that apply to the application of federal funds also apply to NSF-funded projects (such as alcohol exclusions, etc.). Because of these limitations and exclusions, and because of the work involved in submitting a grant proposal to NSF, it is not uncommon for researchers to contact NSF program

¹⁴⁶ Dr. David Zucker Saltz, interview with author, August 19, 2013.

¹⁴⁷ Dr. Bruce McConachie, interview with author, June 4, 2013.

directors to inquire about NSF's interest in or potential willingness to fund a given project.¹⁴⁸ It is unclear whether a conversation about blackface specifically was ever held with an NSF project manager.

David Saltz, whose participation in the project was uniquely liminal—part scholar and technology specialist, part artist and theatrical director—realized that in simulating the scene he would have to have real actors, *real people*, in blackface. At the same time, Saltz received word from team members at the Naval Postgraduate School and Georgia Institute of Technology that doctoral students working on the project were concerned about losing their funding as a result of their involvement in a project that utilized blackface. From Saltz's perspective, the difference between studying blackface and simulating it was significant:

Well, we're simulating it. And what are the implications of simulating it? So I'm going to actually have to have a white actor do blackface? And then how do we deal with that? ... Once you start doing blackface and putting it out there it is extremely sensitive ... [F]rom a scholarly standpoint, studying blackface, yes, but how are we going to simulate it? What does that mean?¹⁴⁹ One of the interesting theoretical issues with simulation in general is that when you're looking at it there's one risk that -- whenever I give a talk about this, I say one of the dangers in general is the distanciation. That you sort of create this vision of completeness that's not real. And we work against that by providing all of our scholarly sources and materials in the footnotes, but it's still a[n] immersive experience. So when we were talking about it with the blackface we were actually propagating blackface. And somebody can read into it and provide all the commentary they want about it, but if they don't -- and even if they do! -- the first experience is blackface.¹⁵⁰

Another team member recalls that,

there was a lot of legitimate conversation amongst ourselves about that. About, 'Well, how is the site going to be used?' and if we did a blackface performance, how might that get in the way of what we were trying to use the site for and how might that cause the site some issues and how might that obscure our purpose of it? We can put it in there and have a scholarly conversation about it like every

¹⁴⁸ NSF Project Manager, interview with author, July 17, 2013.

¹⁴⁹ Dr. David Zucker Saltz, interview with author, August 19, 2013.

¹⁵⁰ Dr. David Zucker Saltz, interview with author, August 19, 2013.

other aspect of the show, but not everybody would be able to do that. So, I recall that I was actually okay with waiting on that. My thought was, ‘Well, if we’re going to think big, it’ll get bigger.’ ... But there certainly would have been at least some blackface characters somewhere, if not like really a minstrel act. I don’t remember the word ‘filth’ being used. I do remember that there was some outside pressure not to do that.¹⁵¹

Finally, Saltz concluded, “[Beyond the issues of simulation] we talked about what would be a good representation of vaudeville and, well, [blackface] should have been at the very beginning of the project. If we wanted to look at blackface, which was fascinating, then first of all, we needed a different group. We were all white [*laughs*], none of us had that specialization and we’d need to spend a lot of time reflecting on exactly how we were doing it.”¹⁵²

Over time, project team members also developed conflicting expectations of the project. For Saltz and the historical/creative team, the goal was to create a polished tool. For the technical team, on the other hand, it was a proof-of-concept project. Working separately, the technical teams from the Naval Postgraduate School and Georgia Tech delivered minimal prototype functionality. The Naval Postgraduate School team delivered the artificial intelligence, but it was never implemented by the team at Georgia Tech. Eventually, in the face of halted progress, funds were diverted from Georgia Tech to create the website as it exists today, with eight pre-rendered audience-member perspectives.¹⁵³

Although NSF project managers were disappointed by what they deemed “minimal reporting” back to the agency from the project team, they also report that they did not receive a proposal for the renewal of the Virtual Vaudeville project.¹⁵⁴ When asked why the team did not apply for additional funding, Susan Kattwinkel stated that “Essentially [NSF funding] allowed us

¹⁵¹ Dr. Susan Kattwinkel, interview with author, August 7, 2013.

¹⁵² Dr. David Zucker Saltz, interview with author, August 19, 2013.

¹⁵³ Dr. David Zucker Saltz, interview with author, August 19, 2013.

¹⁵⁴ NSF Project Manager, interview with author, July 17, 2013.

to basically solve the problem: ‘How would this project get done.’ And then once we had solved the problem, NSF wasn’t interested in us actually completing the project. They were like, ‘Well, you’ve created the system, you’ve created the technology, you’ve worked together and that’s what we wanted.’ And then they weren’t interested in doing it anymore.”¹⁵⁵

The Virtual Vaudeville project team strove to create a prototype that was realized in a fully immersive game environment. From the beginning, the focus was on creating the world of the performance: 3D models of the theater, a house populated with audience members, the stage act and multiple “player” perspectives. They imagined a virtual environment in which the user could use embedded hyperlinks to retrieve historical information culled from archives.

IV.D. THE ARCHIVE AND THE REPERTOIRE

*Manuscripts, paintings, sculptures, films, and recordings are artifacts that can be preserved and archived for subsequent generations to appreciate and analyze. Live theatre, however, is ephemeral. Is it possible to archive a live performance?*¹⁵⁶

Vaudeville producers such as Tony Pastor in the 1880s and, especially, B.F. Keith and E.F. Albee in the 1890s gave birth to vaudeville by turning earlier forms of variety theatre into “respectable” family entertainment. Keith and Albee introduced “continuous vaudeville,” which became standard practice at the turn of the century.¹⁵⁷ The performances ran non-stop all day and into the evening, allowing spectators to enter the theatre at any time and stay as long as they liked — not unlike modern television. The Virtual Vaudeville prototype is set in 1895 in B.F. Keith's New York vaudeville venue, the Union Square Theatre. This theatre embodied all of the

¹⁵⁵ Dr. Susan Kattwinkel, interview with author, August 7, 2013.

¹⁵⁶ David Saltz, “PowerPoint: Virtual Vaudeville: A Digital Simulation of Virtual Theatre.”

¹⁵⁷ Virtual Vaudeville, “What is Vaudeville?” <http://www.virtualvaudeville.com/learn.htm>

“respectable” practices that Keith and Albee had established in theaters in Boston and Philadelphia, and it set the pattern for subsequent vaudeville theatres throughout the country.

Unfortunately, the Union Square Theater no longer exists, and archivists to date have not unearthed photographs of the theater's interior during the period in which the Virtual Vaudeville simulation is set. As previously stated, Frank Mohler, Virtual Vaudeville's designer, developed the basic reconstruction design for the Union Square Theatre after conducting extensive archival research into the theatre's history. He discovered that the 19th century Union Square Theatre, at 58 E. 14th Street in Manhattan existed in three distinct versions, the result of renovations. The reconstruction of the theater for the prototype was based on Mohler's archival research. He found the evidence in newspaper clippings, drawings, theater programs, New York City building code laws, dimensions recorded in monographs from the time and photographs of the exterior of the theater.¹⁵⁸ Although there are few published studies which provide a close reading on Tony Pastor and his theater, there is an archival record of the vaudeville acts performed there and of Pastor's theater in general. There are also substantial artist and business records from Pastor's theater which provide logistical information such as stage size and scenic instructions.¹⁵⁹

In the 1990s, theater historians, working without the benefit of cultural resource managers, encountered anxieties over intellectual property rights in an array of digitization projects with which they were involved. So, too, did the Virtual Vaudeville team.¹⁶⁰ Historically, from as early as the Elizabethan Age, theater artists resisted the printed script due to copyright concerns: in part, scripts meant anyone could perform your work. Of equal importance, however,

¹⁵⁸ Virtual Vaudeville, “The Union Square Theater,” <http://vvaudeville.drama.uga.edu/learn.htm>.

¹⁵⁹ Saltz, “Virtual Vaudeville: Project Description: Scholarly Implications,” 3. These collections are housed at the Harry Ransome Humanities Research Center in Austin, Texas and the Billy Rose Collection of the New York Public Library.

¹⁶⁰ Dr. Bruce McConachie, interview with author, June 4, 2013.

was the understanding that theater was temporal. It was a form of art and entertainment that was meant to be performed, rather than read. As Susan Kattwinkel asserts:

Ben Johnson [1572-1637] was the first one to really publish his scripts as literature. So we did that with legitimate theater but not with vaudeville, not with popular theater. Even the scripts that existed for popular theater wouldn't have been published. People didn't read them like literature the way they do regular plays. So when we have them it's because they were part of usually some manager's collection that just didn't get thrown out.¹⁶¹

As a result, script research for the vaudeville era proved challenging. Theatrical scripts, while among the most prolific source of theatrical records, are nonetheless “notoriously difficult to find for historical performances.”¹⁶² That performing arts archives now place a high premium on collecting and preserving theatrical scripts is a reaction to a two-fold problem: scarcity in printed scripts in archival repositories and a high demand for these printed materials from performance studies and literature scholars. In part *because* performance is notoriously difficult to capture, there is a reverence for the dramatic script. If a scholar is conducting research in “legitimate” theater, scripts are among the detritus s/he might expect to find. This, however, is not the case for vaudeville:

Up until recently nobody was saving TV scripts, scripts for TV shows. It was just something that ‘Well who would save that?’ But now, people do. Now, these are archived and saved. But I think you'd be hard-pressed to find scripts of I Love Lucy and stuff that was popular entertainment. People wrote it, they tossed it away. It was on TV, that was the end of it. They didn't save those things. And popular theater was the same way.¹⁶³

It is true that in the United States it is difficult to recover recordings of such things as television shows prior to the early 1970s because the videotapes studios used to record them were then used

¹⁶¹ Dr. Susan Kattwinkel, interview with author, August 7, 2013.

¹⁶² Saltz, “Virtual Vaudeville: Project Description: Scholarly Implications,” 3.

¹⁶³ Dr. Susan Kattwinkel, interview with author, August 7, 2013.

again for subsequent recordings. From the perspective of performance, many seminal performances—that were videotaped—are gone.¹⁶⁴

Despite the challenge of finding vaudeville recordings from a time when film was new and documenting and preserving popular culture was not a priority, there are vaudeville joke books to be found in relative abundance in performing arts archives—short sketches that were published for performers and amateurs alike. Harder to find in these same repositories are longer scripts such as those performed by the Four Cohans, a second act the Virtual Vaudeville team intended to restage. This also proved challenging for the Virtual Vaudeville team as they conducted their archival research.¹⁶⁵ Despite these challenges, the team was able to locate unabridged theatrical scripts of Four Cohan plays, as they existed. A wholly separate endeavor involved trying to find the associated sheet music.¹⁶⁶ Because many vaudeville performances were musical acts, locating a script in an archival repository without accompanying music renders the record incomplete. Among the most treasured finds in the vaudeville archival research was an item that was not found in an archival repository. As far as scholars and researchers know, no film footage exists of vaudeville comedian and Virtual Vaudeville “star,” Frank Bush. This was, in part, what drew Virtual Vaudeville team members to attempt to recreate his act. In their research, they discovered that an Edison wax recording of Bush existed, which they subsequently tracked down and retrieved from the only existing source: a seller on EBay.¹⁶⁷

¹⁶⁴ NSF Project Manager, interview with author, July 17, 2013.

¹⁶⁵ Dr. Susan Kattwinkel, interview with author, August 7, 2013.

¹⁶⁶ Dr. Susan Kattwinkel, interview with author, August 7, 2013.

¹⁶⁷ Dr. David Zucker Saltz, interview with author, August 19, 2013. As an addendum to this story, the researcher who located and purchased the Edison recording was so excited about it he took it to class to share with his students. Within moments it had flown out of his hands and shattered into hundreds of small pieces on the cement floor.

In addition to scripts and early film footage, Virtual Vaudeville research included photographs and cabinet cards—early trading cards for theatrical artists. In the cabinet card tradition, one could purchase postcards of performers in various roles, posed as if they were on stage. However, as project member and College of Charleston professor Susan Kattwinkel cautions, “[the actors are] always posed for a camera. People use those things for research, for trying to reconstruct what a performance might have looked like, but of course you've got to be very very careful with that kind of material because it was staged for the still camera.¹⁶⁸ Kattwinkel’s note is well-taken: the mediation of the pose and the camera render these images problematic in determining historical facts. Archival research for representative images beyond the cabinet cards was done at the Harvard Theater Collection, the Library of Congress, New York Public Library, the Harry Ransom Institute in Texas and the City Museum of New York.¹⁶⁹

One area in which the Virtual Vaudeville team found significant amounts of tangible archival evidence was the composition of vaudeville audiences. Theater critics at the time paid particular attention to the role and reactions of the audience as did individual performers. Archival

¹⁶⁸Dr. Susan Kattwinkel, interview with author, August 7, 2013. Kattwinkel here is referring to an early photographic intervention. Historian Robert Taft, in his 1938 work *Photography and the American Scene*, posits that the invention of photography and its subsequent technical refinements during the nineteenth century had a profound influence on the American theater. Photography, says Taft, was instrumental in the development of a “cult of celebrity” that had preoccupied the country by the year 1865. Many upper-class families considered it their duty to “have available in every parlor and sitting room a picture book of illustrious Americans.” These illustrious Americans, due in part to the technological enhancements of Walter Benjamin’s “mechanical reproductions,” began to include stage performers; as such, theatrical photographs in the 19th century were images experienced not only on personal levels, but on commercial and social levels as well. The manipulative power inherent in images was put to work by promoters, managers and performers as soon as it became economically viable and technologically possible to do so. José Maria Mora, one of the leading theatrical photographers of the late 1870s, reported that in one year he sold more than 300,000 pictures of celebrities for a total of more than \$90,000. According to Henderson’s *Broadway Ballyhoo!*, “Every large city had its shops lined with bins of reproductions of familiar faces of presidents, politicians, orators, writers, and – especially – actors.” (See Mary C. Henderson, *Broadway Ballyhoo: The American Theater Seen in Posters, Photographs, Magazines, Caricatures, and Programs* [New York: Harry Abrams, 1989], 49 and Robert Taft, *Photography and the American Scene : a Social History, 1839-1889* (New York: Macmillan Co., 1938), 316.

¹⁶⁹ Dr. Bruce McConachie, interview with author, June 4, 2013.

documentation of audiences exists in newsprint, diaries, autobiographies. There is substantial evidence about audience behavior as well as some evidence of who these theater-goers were, where they sat in the theater and how they might have behaved.¹⁷⁰ From this archival research students in one of Bruce McConachie's courses created detailed biographical sketches for the four aforementioned interactive audience members. Finally, in an inspired turn toward restaging the archival record, the 3D model of Sandow is based on measurements taken of Sandow in 1894 by Dr. Dudley Allen Sargent of Harvard University.¹⁷¹

As previously stated, members of the Virtual Vaudeville team strongly assert that the archival holdings related to vaudeville are scarce and insufficient:

The Library of Congress records for vaudeville are not good. There's a lot of stuff—again, I've been there looking for Tony Pastor stuff—they have a lot of records for things that used to be registered there where they used to have copies and then they just didn't anymore. It was Vaudeville stuff and people just threw them out. They don't exist anymore ... You know, we picked some of the main acts, the big Vaudeville acts from the period. We used B.F. Keith's big house because there was a lot of information on that, but, because vaudeville continues to be sort of under-analyzed, and library collections didn't keep their stuff it's a really good thing for putting online and using the materials that we have to pull it all together from various places and put it in one place so that we can look at it altogether because the information on vaudeville, even now, is scattered.¹⁷²

In speaking with members of the Virtual Vaudeville team discrepancies between how archivists understand archives and information stewardship and how other fields understand the term “archives” arise. Here, Kattwinkel misunderstands the nature of archives, suggesting that format dictates archival status:

¹⁷⁰ Dr. Susan Kattwinkel, interview with author, August 7, 2013. Kattwinkel goes on to say that: “Beyond that, I suppose it was just a matter of extrapolating to humanity. Cognitively, people were the same then as they are now. So modeling expressions and that kind of thing was pretty much, ‘Take the equivalent of that audience member today and what are they gonna do? What might they laugh at?’ I think there was a lot of sort of just human nature involved in that. People haven't changed. Society has, but people are essentially the same.”

¹⁷¹ David Saltz, “PowerPoint: Virtual Vaudeville: A Digital Simulation of Virtual Theatre.”

¹⁷² Dr. Susan Kattwinkel, interview with author, August 7, 2013.

[Interviewer: “Did you use newspapers?”] “For this particular project, not that I recall. Most of the vaudeville work I do now, I’m sort of like married to every single 19th-century historical newspaper collection online, both in the UK and here. But back then, I think most of the online research was Library of Congress stuff. That was the primary online source that was available. Everything else was archival.”¹⁷³

Kattwinkel’s misconception is not uncommon. Indeed, it is part of the archival myth that this dissertation dispels for those outside the archival field, and for some within the field as well. As the Virtual Vaudeville project illustrates, the material qualities of the record—the record in this case being the Virtual Vaudeville prototype itself—are archivally less significant than the evidentiary properties of the record.

Virtual Vaudeville team members were interested in scholarly engagement and debate. They were hoping that other scholars might take issue, providing evidence that refuted their vision of vaudeville.¹⁷⁴ While this did not happen, the prototype does successfully demonstrate—in an historical snapshot—the archival potential of motion capture technology and digitizing historical performances. It has proven its educational value as well; it has been used in introductory theater courses at the University of Pittsburgh and the University of Georgia. The prototype is also one that can be *read as an archive*: it is a point-of-view, locked in time. It is an historical work rooted in the 1990s and manifested in the earliest parts of this century that speaks to the questions performance studies scholars were asking at the time and to the evidence available to them. It speaks to a time when performance studies scholars were concerned with recreating historical spaces and digitizing historical performances. The archives that supported the creation of the Virtual Vaudeville prototype—the Library of Congress, the Harvard Theatre Collection, the Performing Arts Library at New York Public Library/Lincoln Center and the

¹⁷³ Dr. Susan Kattwinkel, interview with author, August 7, 2013.

¹⁷⁴ Dr. Susan Kattwinkel, interview with author, August 7, 2013.

archives at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign—are all print and digitized records. They do not capture or represent vaudeville in the same visual, experiential way that the Virtual Vaudeville prototype does. Although Virtual Vaudeville is mediated through the lens of theater and music historians, 3D animators and game designers, it nonetheless provides an aggregate view, based on historical, archival evidence, of the cultural artifact that is American vaudeville.

The Virtual Vaudeville website—more specifically, the server on which it resides—is the only place where all of the Virtual Vaudeville information is collocated, making it one of the most robust single repositories of vaudeville materials in existence. It is also an artifact of what was technologically available at the time. Given the creative and scholarly work that David Saltz and Frank Mohler undertook to restage the theater architecture, the prototype arguably takes on additional archival qualities. The model itself is evidence: the blueprints were created from narrative descriptions and the photographs that Saltz took were digitally mapped onto the virtual reality canvas that became the prototype.¹⁷⁵

The Virtual Vaudeville prototype is currently housed on a server in the theater department at the University of Georgia where it is checked with some frequency by David Saltz.¹⁷⁶ What will happen, however, when and if Saltz leaves the university?

The issue of preserving technology, I could go on about that ad infinitum. But that's one of the problems with all of the stuff. I heard all of these amazing presentations, but nobody ever knew anything about them. Like this super high res[olution] version of Michelangelo's David. I think it's part of the mindset of the research community particularly in the sciences where you do this proof-of-concept research. They develop it but they don't do anything with it. The sustainability of the technology was at the forefront of our minds from the beginning.¹⁷⁷

¹⁷⁵ Dr. David Zucker Saltz, interview with author, August 19, 2013.

¹⁷⁶ Dr. David Zucker Saltz, interview with author, August 19, 2013.

¹⁷⁷ Dr. David Zucker Saltz, interview with author, August 19, 2013.

If no archival intervention occurs, the prototype will also be lost or become obsolete. As a record, the prototype creates the same problem team members were attempting, in part, to solve. The prototype and its attendant components require the same kind of archival thinking in this century that vaudeville did 100 years ago. Here is a clear opportunity for traditional archival intervention. Archives and archivists are specifically—and uniquely—qualified to manage the preservation and stewardship of digital culture. Even if archivists did not take physical custody of the prototype, acting in an advisory role for Saltz and other team members is one appropriate way to move forward. This study finds time and again that collaboration is critical between archivists and performers if performed acts are to endure as representations of society’s cultural heritage.

The central question of this research study speaks to the role of archives in safeguarding and preserving performed acts. Can motion capture and other digital technologies aid in preservation efforts by transmitting the embodied knowledge of the actor? Many technologies that could serve this function fail to connect the human element. Motion capture data, on the other hand, is a direct representation of human movement. Although this data can, as this case study shows, be manipulated, it is one way that cultural transmission happens in digital environments. For example, the Hachimura Laboratory in Japan has been working with motion capture as part of a comprehensive plan to safeguard Japan’s intangible cultural heritage.¹⁷⁸ Working toward a digital archive of traditional Japanese performing arts, Dr. Hachimura combines motion capture data with digitized dance notation (specifically labanotation) to record

¹⁷⁸ Geoffrey Rockwell, “Motion Capture and Noh,” <http://www.theoreti.ca/?p=4002>. I am grateful to Lindsay Kistler Mattock for this reference.

motion related to traditional forms such as noh and kabuki theater.¹⁷⁹ Similarly, 3D animated motion capture data has been used as a tool to assist dancers in learning choreography. Such systems use motion capture data to render 3D images and streaming video to be combined with narrative description and dance notation.

None of the existing technologies for capturing, preserving and transmitting performance is perfect. The way that transmission of cultural knowledge is currently framed requires one person or group of people to transmit information to another person or group. Motion capture, on its own, does not solve the capture/preservation problem, but combined with technologies that utilize information visualization, such as with Virtual Vaudeville, motion capture may offer the closest alternative to human transmission. Without diminishing the human factor, it is crucial to note that Virtual Vaudeville, as a record and as an educative or transmissive tool, functions effectively as both archive and repertoire. The movements Contini made were captured along with attendant cultural information—gestures, facial expressions, audience responses, etc.—that the Virtual Vaudeville team was able to convey.

Archivists, as knowledge managers and information stewards, are increasingly involved in digital curation, digital humanities and big data projects. Becoming conversant in technologies such as motion capture and working collaboratively with records creators to develop better tools, systems and infrastructures that transmit cultural knowledge—while also preserving that knowledge in a way that is meaningful to historians, artists and others who will ultimately use these records—presents an opportunity for archivists to begin establishing practices for records that are in continuous use. At the same time, it provides an opportunity for archivists to reframe

¹⁷⁹ Dance notation can be compared to a musical score while motion capture data is similar to a GPS system. Each movement is recorded in reference to a series of points on the body in space and represented as coordinates on a plane.

event-based archivy as a collaborative process, one that is adaptive and responsive to the needs of all stakeholders.

IV.E. SUMMARY

While performing arts archives supported the creation of the Virtual Vaudeville prototype, its creators were, from the outset, dissatisfied with the existing archival materials available to them. That a group of performance studies scholars sought to create their own archive, without the benefit of an archivist speaks directly to the inadequacy of the archival endeavor where event-based cultural heritage is concerned. Jeannette Bastian has proffered a theoretical framework that creates a space wherein performed cultural events are signifying objects and, by extension, documents. Similarly, Richard Cox has suggested that the physicality of the record is secondary to its function as evidence of a transaction or activity. Extending this scholarship, this chapter argues that that the evidentiary qualities of the Virtual Vaudeville prototype—as a record—supersede its need to be text based.

Virtual Vaudeville is an example of a non-textual record that has clear and specific evidentiary properties and exists outside a custodial archival paradigm. It is one example of how the archive and the repertoire work in concert. In this case, the Virtual Vaudeville prototype acts as both archive and repertoire: as repertoire, it maintains the broad, comical gestures associated with vaudeville acts through Saltz’s direction and the actor’s knowledge of vaudeville; as “archive,” the prototype is attentive to vaudeville’s role as a symbolic representation of the cultural diversity of early 20th century America. Vaudeville—an amalgam of centuries-old cultural traditions, including the English Music Hall, antebellum minstrel shows and Yiddish

theater—was the earliest entertainment form to cross racial and class boundaries. The Virtual Vaudeville prototype safeguards this cultural knowledge by deftly navigating the liminal spaces between archive and repertoire. Another example of a performance tradition that successfully navigates this apparent dichotomy can be found in the dance pedagogy and archives of anthropologist, dancer and choreographer, Katherine Dunham.

V. THE KATHERINE DUNHAM ARCHIVES AND THE DUNHAM TECHNIQUE

This chapter examines how the dance work of anthropologist, dancer and choreographer, Katherine Dunham has endured through archival intervention and Dunham's dance pedagogy, the Dunham Technique. The chapter explores codification and transmission as apparatus for ensuring the continuation of culturally informed movement such as the Dunham Technique. Finally, the chapter analyzes the relationship between archive and repertoire, positioning Katherine Dunham's dance work as a space with tremendous creative and collaborative potential.

The chapter therefore provides historical context for Katherine Dunham and introduces the Dunham Technique; considers archival efforts to document and preserve Dunham's dance work; discusses the Dunham Technique as a mode of cultural communication; asserts that codification and visual literacy are vital to readings of gestural languages; and, finally, reads the interplay between the Dunham archives and the Dunham Technique as one successful negotiation between archive and repertoire.

The case study employs data from interviews with Dunham dancer and Point Park University Dunham instructor Ron Hutson and Co-Founders of the Institute for Dunham Certification, Drs. Albirda Rose and Halifu Osumare; archival oral history interviews with Katherine Dunham; recordings of Dunham's fieldwork in the Caribbean, Dunham Company

dances and the Dunham Technique; historical newspapers; records from the Katherine Dunham archives at Southern Illinois University, Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival and the Library of Congress; writings by Katherine Dunham; and an array of secondary sources.

V.A. KATHERINE DUNHAM

Known through journalistic coinage as “Katherine the Great” or “Anthropological Katie,” Katherine Dunham was born in Chicago in June 1909. She completed her bachelor of philosophy at the University of Chicago in anthropology in 1936, focusing on the dances of the African diaspora. Her first dance company, *Ballet Nègre* was established in 1930 as the premier Negro ballet company in the United States.

Dunham was trained in classical ballet, her formative training influenced by artists such as Ludmilla Speranzeva and Vera Mirova. Speranzeva, who came to the United States with the *Chauve-Souris*, a Franco-Russian vaudeville troupe, was one of the first ballet teachers to accept black dancers as students. Speranzeva introduced Dunham to Spanish dance and dancers, including *La Argentina*, Quill Monroe, and Vicente Escudero. In the late 1920s, just before the economic collapse of 1929, Dunham studied ballet with Vera Mirova; through Mirova, Dunham was exposed to East Indian, Javanese, and Balinese dance forms.¹⁸⁰

Dunham was particularly interested in dances and rhythms as they applied to her own ethnic and cultural background. Upon entering the University of Chicago, she began teaching her own style of dance, partly to explore her theoretical beliefs about the rhythms of the Negro

¹⁸⁰ Library of Congress Performing Arts Encyclopedia, “Special Presentation: Katherine Dunham Timeline: 1928,” <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/diglib/ihas/html/dunham/dunham-timeline.html>.

people, and partly to meet the financial demands of private university education. As a scholar, Dunham's anthropological thesis for the University of Chicago was to be titled, "A Comparative Analysis of Primitive Dance." It was eventually amended to the more bounded "A Comparative Analysis of the Dances of Haiti: Their Form, Function, Social Organization, and the Interrelation of Form and Function." Dunham theorized that in the West Indies,

peasant natives (primarily the Negroes of Koromantee, Ibo, Congo, Dahomey, Mandingo, and other west coast derivation, mixed perhaps with a little Carib Indian and varying degrees of European stock) think very much and behave basically very much as did their African forebears. Consequently they dance very much in the same fashion. Differences there are, of course, due to the shift from tribal to folk culture, to miscegenation, cultural contact, and other items making for social change. But the elements of the dance are still what, in my analysis, would be termed "primitive."¹⁸¹

This shift from tribal to folk culture in Africans transplanted to the West Indies formed the basis for Dunham's dance anthropology. Her scholarship focused on the survival of dances in the midst of this shift. Dunham believed that the political, economic and social organization imposed by Europeans in the West Indies had ceased to be tribal and that the structure of social and art traditions which had been based upon tribal forms had therefore lost their functional validity.¹⁸² In selecting countries for her case studies, Dunham asserted that French colonizers were less interested in cultural domination than their English counterparts. Subsequently, she argued, the integrity of African culture and the sanctity of African religious traditions persist more readily in

¹⁸¹ Katherine Dunham, "Thesis Turned Broadway," in *California Arts and Architecture*, 58 (August 1941). Also in Katherine Dunham, Vève Clark and Sara E. Johnson, Eds. *Kaiso! Writings by and About Katherine Dunham* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2005): 214.

¹⁸² Katherine Dunham, "The Negro Dance," in *The Negro Caravan: Writings by American Negroes*, edited by Sterling A. Brown, Arthur P. Davis and Ulysses Lee (New York: Dryden Press, 1941): 990-1000.

Francophone island nations such as Haiti and Martinique than other Caribbean countries, including Jamaica and Trinidad.¹⁸³

By 1932, Dunham had consulted with her former ballet teacher, Ludmilla Speranzeva, about her desire to open a school for young, black dancers where she would teach them about their African heritage. Speranzeva advised her to forgo ballet, to focus instead on modern dance, and, most importantly, to develop her own style.¹⁸⁴ In 1935 Dunham was awarded a Julius Rosenwald Fellowship to conduct field work in the Caribbean, where she studied the survival of traditional African dance in the face of European colonization and acculturation. Nervous about the disappearance of dances from many “tribal” and “folk” communities, Dunham proposed using film to document these traditions as well as to preserve her own technique.¹⁸⁵ As early as the mid-1930s, Dunham was utilizing a Kodak 16mm camera to record her field studies in the Caribbean in what was, at the time, an innovative approach to fieldwork.¹⁸⁶

Fieldwork in Martinique yielded, for Dunham, a familiarity with not only national dance forms such as the *beguine* and the *valse creole*, but with fighting dances such as *l’ag’ya*. *L’ag’ya*, a cockfight in its most essential form, is performed throughout Martinique where multiple versions, derivations and significances of the dance once thrived. Also known as *damier*, the movements of *l’ag’ya* resemble those of a living chess game, with dancers dancing

¹⁸³ Dunham, “The Negro Dance,” 996. Dunham goes on to express that although some of these dance traditions have endured in the coastal United States (such as off the South Carolina coast), the Caribbean offers a more fertile ground for “an analysis of the survival of the dance in its shift from tribal to folk culture.”

¹⁸⁴ Library of Congress Performing Arts Encyclopedia, “Special Presentation: Katherine Dunham Timeline: 1932,” <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/diglib/ihas/html/dunham/dunham-timeline.html>.

¹⁸⁵ Sara E. Johnson, “Introduction: Diamonds on the Toes of Her Feet,” in Katherine Dunham, Véné Clark and Sara E. Johnson, Eds. *Kaiso! Writings by and About Katherine Dunham* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2005): 12.

¹⁸⁶ Johnson, “Diamonds on the Toes of Her Feet,” 12.

only in the squares of the chessboard.¹⁸⁷ *L'ag'ya* movements are also stylistically similar to Brazilian *capoeira* and the French *savate*.¹⁸⁸

When Dunham returned from the Caribbean, she became a supervisor for the Works Progress Administration's Federal Writers' and Theatre Projects. The role of the Federal Theatre Project was the re-employment of theatre workers who were then on "relief rolls" including actors, directors, playwrights, designers, vaudeville artists, stage technicians and others in the theatre field. The broader purpose was to establish theaters "so vital to community life that they [would] continue to function after the work of the Federal Project was completed."¹⁸⁹ Dunham's arrangement with the Works Progress Administration Federal Writers' Project lasted approximately six months. Through this position, she received funding to produce her first ballet, appropriately titled *L'Ag'Ya*. The Federal Theatre Project agreed to fund a staging of the ballet and Dunham cast it with the "proletariat or lumpen": cooks, chauffeurs, maids and typists, all out-of-work in the thick of the Depression.¹⁹⁰ Inspired by her Caribbean field study, *L'Ag'Ya* debuted in January 1938 at the Federal Theater in Chicago and is regarded as Dunham's first significant artistic breakthrough. Dunham described *l'ag'ya*, saying:

L'ag'ya was a fighting dance, in Martinique when I was there. Sunday afternoons, instead of being horse racing, this, that or the other for the average person it was to go and see an *ag'ya*, a fighting dance. It had drum accompaniment and a certain kind of motions that were pure dance and other kinds of motions that were actually lethal. I guess its closest form would have been the kickboxing that are still found in parts of Gambia. And the *ag'ya* was, well, when one heard there was going to be an *ag'ya*, it just meant that everybody came from near and far to see

¹⁸⁷ Katherine Dunham (writing as Kaye Dunn), "*L'Ag'Ya* of Martinique," *Esquire* 12, no. 5 (November 1939): 84-85, 126.

¹⁸⁸ John. O Perpener, *African-American Concert Dance: The Harlem Renaissance and Beyond* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2001): 141.

¹⁸⁹ Library of Congress, "Federal Theatre Project: Manual for Federal Theatre Projects, October 1935," <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/fedtp/ftwpa.html>.

¹⁹⁰ Katherine Dunham, "Survival," in *Minefields: An Unpublished Work in Progress*, Katherine Dunham Papers, Special Collections Research Center, Southern Illinois University Carbondale.

it, participate in it, to bet on who would win. They had the favorite ag'ya – they would call them fighters, I would call them dancers. And the ag'ya was the climax of our ballet which was of the same name, in which the hero was killed in this particular scene. And it took me actually months to be able to feel that I could teach a person not raised in that culture to be able to give the impression of a lethal dance movement. It sounds easy, but it was not. Finally we did have ag'ya mastered, and we did it as a ballet. And when the scene of the fight itself took place some people in the audience would respond as though they were seeing boxing or a wrestling fight.¹⁹¹

L'Ag'Ya is a classic example of Dunham's style. Although the story about a tempestuous love triangle can be found in many concert dance repertoires, the movement vocabulary originated from the authentic Martiniquais fighting dance. Dunham's *L'Ag'Ya* is also culturally dynamic: it is born of American creative sensibilities but informed by African and European culture.¹⁹²

Although best known as a choreographer and dancer, Dunham constructed new kinetic models that tested traditional “high culture” paradigms.¹⁹³ Dunham was a scholar first and foremost; she was an anthropologist who sought to maintain scholarly engagement through artistic endeavor:

For one thing I was seeking to maintain an academic level. I knew that dance was something that I had to do; I had no choice in it at all. And I knew that it was regarded in a certain position in the world of art, but it had no position whatsoever in the academic world – even sports would have been considered closer, I think, than dance. So my problem was to remain an investigator, an intelligent investigator, a productive one in academics where certainly, anthropology, it was a new science but very much respected. And my problem, my strong drive at that

¹⁹¹ Library of Congress, “Katherine Dunham on ‘L'Ag'Ya,’” Video recording, 2002. Library of Congress, <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/diglib/ihis/loc.natlib.ihis.200003843/default.html>. Accessed June 1, 2014.

¹⁹² Perpener, *African-American Concert Dance*, 141. Recordings of Dunham dancing *L'Ag'Ya* and footage from her Martinique field work are juxtaposed in the short film “Free To Dance,” (PBS, June 2001) which provides a glimpse into Dunham's choreographic method.

¹⁹³ Johnson, “Diamonds on the Toes of Her Feet,” 3.

time, was to remain in that academic position that anthropology gave me, and at the same time continue with the strong drive for motions. Rhythmic motions.¹⁹⁴

Dunham's scholarly contributions furthered the study of comparative diaspora religions, including Haitian Vodun, Cuban Santería, Jamaican Obeah and Brazilian Candomblé. Through her work in cultural anthropology and work—which together comprise the Dunham Technique—Dunham established movements that analyze the legacy of slavery and espouse the worth of African-influenced traditions. Dunham's dance work embodies a “lived dimension of a theoretical construct” of the African diaspora.¹⁹⁵

The Dunham Technique emphasizes cultural contextualization in movement as well as attention to spiritual well-being. Sharing the principles of this Technique was among the primary objectives of the Dunham School of Dance and Theater in New York City. Established at the end of World War II, the Dunham School offered an extensive curriculum in the humanities.¹⁹⁶ The school was unique in that it not only gave professional dance classes in several genres besides Dunham Technique, but also taught music, drama, languages, and anthropological fieldwork techniques. Following its inception in 1944, the Dunham School became the institutional base where Dunham Technique was developed and codified, offering certificates of completion that were accredited by nearby Columbia University.¹⁹⁷

¹⁹⁴ Library of Congress, “*Katherine Dunham on Dance Anthropology*,” Video recording, 2002. Library of Congress, <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/diglib/ihas/loc.natlib.ihas.200003840/default.html>. Accessed June 1, 2014.

¹⁹⁵ Johnson, “Diamonds on the Toes of Her Feet,” 4.

¹⁹⁶ Johnson, “Diamonds on the Toes of Her Feet,” 11. The Dunham School of Dance and Theater was established in 1945 in New York City and operated there until 1957. Sara Johnson argues that the Dunham School essentially anticipated – by decades – the interdisciplinary, historically-grounded discipline of Cultural Studies that emerged in institutions such as the Birmingham School in the 1970s.

¹⁹⁷ Dr. Halifu Osumare, interview with author, May 2, 2014. See also: Institute for Dunham Certification, “Katherine Dunham,” http://www.dunhamcertification.org/Katherine_Dunham_Bio_and_Research_Resources.html.

In 1951, despite warnings from the United States Department of State, Dunham premiered her ballet *Southland* in Santiago, Chile. *Southland*, which exposed the practice of lynching in the American South and showed the United States in poor light; following its presentation, Dunham's company was effectively blacklisted by the U.S. government and financial support withheld. It was an act of retribution that Dunham scholars and dancers believe led eventually—albeit indirectly—to the demise of the Dunham Company in 1965. As Dr. Halifu Osumare, co-founder of the Institute for Dunham Certification explains,

[*Southland*] was a direct statement about racism in America. It came at a time in the 1950s when the Civil Rights movement was gearing up and she wanted to make a statement about the brutality of lynching. She had a stage, an international forum. The State Department really didn't want that kind of image of the United States being advertised around the world. There were efforts by the State Department to get her not to premier the piece, including somebody from the State Department calling John Pratt [Katherine Dunham's husband]. The way the story came down to me was that he just laughed. That's America. She went ahead with it and then they went to France and she did the piece again in Paris. It was a major embarrassment to the United States. They really blackballed her from any kind of state support after that—not that they were giving her much support anyway—but there was a concerted effort to make sure that the company did not get certain dates anymore. Any kind of way of curtailing her ability to perform internationally—the State Department set out to thwart those efforts. That was the beginning of the end of the Katherine Dunham Dance Company. So *Southland* has a place in the Dunham repertoire as the beginning of the end. She was already having such a hard time keeping fifty dancers, musicians going, that the State Department curtailing her touring was just the end.¹⁹⁸

After the Dunham Company disbanded in 1965, Dunham returned to the Midwest and began working within the community of East St. Louis, Illinois. By 1979, Dunham's memoirs "A Touch of Innocence" and "Journey to Accompong" were out of print; of Dunham's dances inspired by African, Caribbean and American folk forms, only one, *Choros*, had been performed by a major company (Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater) since her own company's last New York performance in 1962; only two of her former dancers, Charles Moore and Pearl Reynolds,

¹⁹⁸ Dr. Halifu Osumare, interview with author, May 2, 2014.

were teaching pure Dunham Technique in New York; and although Dunham dancers Talley Beatty, Eartha Kitt and Josephine Premice had achieved national recognition, they were not identifiable choreographically as “Dunham descendants.”¹⁹⁹

Concern over the loss of Katherine Dunham’s legacy and a desire to preserve and perpetuate Dunham Technique prompted Albirda Rose, co-founder of the Institute for Dunham Certification, to codify Dunham’s dance work; this same archival impulse eventually led to the establishment of the Dunham Technique Seminars.²⁰⁰ The first Dunham Seminar was held in 1984; by 1990 early efforts to codify Dunham Technique had already begun with the publication of Rose’s book *Dunham Technique: A Way of Life*. In 1994, as another means of codification, instructors began to be certified in Dunham Technique.²⁰¹ Other efforts to preserve Dunham’s dance work were occurring at the Performing Arts Training Center (PATC) which Dunham established in East St. Louis, IL.

PATC is affiliated with Southern Illinois University, which holds a large collection of Dunham’s personal and professional papers. The Training Center offers academic, performing and community service initiatives to the local community. As one of only two groups permitted to perform Dunham’s choreography, PATC plays a vital role in preserving Dunham Technique. Other institutions play a role in preserving the Dunham oeuvre, including the Katherine Dunham Dynamic Museum and the Institute for Intercultural Communication at the Katherine Dunham Center for Arts and Humanities in East St. Louis, MO.²⁰² University of California, San Diego literature professor and Dunham scholar Sara E. Johnson suggests that Dunham was “an archivist

¹⁹⁹ Dunning, Jennifer. “A Katherine Dunham Celebration,” *New York Times*, January 14, 1979, D14.

²⁰⁰ Albirda Rose, *Dunham Technique: A Way of Life* (Dubuque: Kendall/Hunt Publishing Company, 1990): xii.

²⁰¹ Dr. Albirda Rose, interview with author, November 26, 2013.

²⁰² See: Katherine Dunham Center for Arts and Humanities: <http://kdcah.org>

at heart,” one whose legacy is forever linked to bridge-building and creating institutions.²⁰³ These Dunham institutions, Johnson argues, like Dunham Technique, are mechanisms for producing, preserving and disseminating knowledge. “[T]he Dunham Technique, and her vast corpus of written and film work, function as archives that institutionalized decades of research.”²⁰⁴

Given Dunham’s directorship of one of the first African-American dance companies to tour internationally, her creation of a new dance technique, and a career that spanned close to 70 years, her relatively low profile is cause for critical conjecture. Sara E. Johnson, in her Introduction to *Kaiso!: Writing by and About Katherine Dunham*, suggests that it is perhaps the breadth of Dunham’s accomplishments that is responsible for the underappreciation of her work, that because Dunham “creat[ed] paths where there were none,” her contributions resist easy categorization. Dunham, Johnson asserts, “has catalogued, interpreted and transformed New World, African-derived sensibilities from the vantage point of multiple disciplines, consistently putting them into dialogue with other epistemological frameworks.”²⁰⁵

Halifu Osumare, Co-Founder of the Institute for Dunham Certification argues that Dunham’s anthropological work offsets theoretical deficiencies long current in the study of other cultures and develops an integrative, participant-oriented approach to fieldwork that was decidedly postmodern in a time preceding the ubiquity of the term. Dunham’s “research-to-performance” methodology exemplifies critical innovation; Dunham’s dance work demonstrates that profound humanism emerges from a deep knowledge of cultural specificity.²⁰⁶ Dunham’s dance work not

²⁰³ Johnson, “Diamonds on the Toes of Her Feet,” 5.

²⁰⁴ Johnson, “Diamonds on the Toes of Her Feet,” 5.

²⁰⁵ Johnson, “Diamonds on the Toes of Her Feet,” 3.

²⁰⁶ Dr. Halifu Osumare, interview with author, May 2, 2014. See also Vévé Clark, “Performing the Memory of Difference in Afro-Caribbean Dance: Katherine Dunham’s Choreography, 1938-1987,” in

only documents the traditions of communities neglected by elite historiographies, it also challenges audiences to acquire a new literacy about the cultural context of these traditions, both in their “original” milieu and through contemporary frameworks.²⁰⁷

V.B. THE KATHERINE DUNHAM ARCHIVES

The Katherine Dunham Archives are comprised of the Katherine Dunham Collection at the Library of Congress, The Katherine Dunham Papers, 1919-1968 at Southern Illinois University, and the Katherine Dunham Correspondence, Contracts and Interviews at New York Public Library. Materials on Dunham also exist in the archives at the Jacob’s Pillow Dance Festival in western Massachusetts and the Missouri History Museum.²⁰⁸ The Katherine Dunham Collection at the Library of Congress is a collection of 1,694 still and moving images that document Dunham’s career including her early anthropological explorations in the 1930s, her work as a choreographer, her dance technique and teaching method, performances and her anthropological analysis of the dances and rituals of the African diaspora. The moving images include ethnographic footage collected by Dunham of vodun rituals and other dance forms. The Dunham Technique is captured on several videotapes in the collection, demonstrating Dunham’s teaching style and providing a glimpse into her methods of transmitting dance knowledge. Many of the images (both still and moving) are available for remote viewing online.

Genevieve E. Fabre and Robert G. O’Meally, *History and Memory in African-American Culture* (Cary, NC: Oxford University Press, 1994): 188–204.

²⁰⁷ Johnson, “Diamonds on the Toes of Her Feet,” 6.

²⁰⁸ Missouri History Museum, “Katherine Dunham Collection,” <http://mohistory.org/lrc/collections/objects/Katherine-Dunham>.

The Katherine Dunham Papers at Southern Illinois University consist of 50 cubic feet of correspondence, writings, scripts, notes on dance techniques, and musical scores. Although personal correspondence comprises the bulk of the collection, some of Dunham's anthropological dance notes are also among the papers. The Performing Arts Library at New York Public Library (NYPL) holds a small collection of Katherine Dunham's correspondence, contracts and interviews among their Performing Arts Research Collections. Additional Dunham materials are held in the Jerome Robbins Dance Division of NYPL and can be found in the papers of her devotees, Lavinia Williams (Lavinia Williams Papers, 1940-1989) and Dr. Glory Van Scott (Glory Van Scott Collection, 1974-2000) as well as in the American Ballet Theatre Archives.

The Dunham archival materials hold sentimental value for those with whom she worked and who are charged with her legacy. Halifu Osumare suggests that the Dunham archives at Southern Illinois University are particularly inspiring:

I've spent days pouring over those archives [at Southern Illinois]. Programs, newspaper articles. Things that you just heard about through the grapevine and all of a sudden you're seeing letters from famous people that you didn't even know she knew. Letters from Langston Hughes. Everyone knew Katherine Dunham. The general intelligentsia in the world. She was a woman who was so interested in everything. In culture, in art, in philosophy. She was always engaging the thinkers of the world. I'm so proud to be carrying on her legacy. There's no money in it. It's always an uphill struggle. But it's her legacy and it's so important that it doesn't die.²⁰⁹

Although Dunham's dancers are aware of these printed materials and moving images, for them it is primarily footage of Dunham Technique—sanctioned by Dunham herself before her death and housed at the Library of Congress—that retains research value. That instruction in Dunham

²⁰⁹ Dr. Halifu Osumare, interview with author, May 2, 2014.

Technique was recorded offers another layer of codification; Dunham's dancers assert that it is through this codification that her dance work is fixed and therefore endures.

V.C. THE KATHERINE DUNHAM REPERTOIRE: THE DUNHAM TECHNIQUE

“Dunham Technique is a way of life.” – Katherine Dunham

In her essay, “Notes on the Dance,” Dunham suggests that dance is a constitutive and foundational determinant in all societies:

The emotional life of any community is clearly legible in its art forms, and because the dance seeks continuously to capture moments of life in a fusion of time, space, and motion, the dance is at a given moment the most accurate chronicler of culture pattern ... Alone or in concert man dances his various selves and his emotions and his dance become a communication as clear as though it were written or spoken in a universal language.²¹⁰

Katherine Dunham described Dunham Technique as “a series of movement patterns, isolations, progressions and exercises based on primitive rhythms in dance. These patterns create an awareness of time, space, form and function derived from their most basic interrelationship. Dunham technique is a series of exercises and movement forms, that if mastered, will flow in a logical order into a combination of movement and choreographic patterns.”²¹¹ The Technique has also been used as a tool by both the amateur and professional dancer to facilitate an understanding of culture.

²¹⁰ Katherine Dunham, “Notes on the Dance,” in Katherine Dunham, Vévé Clark and Sara E. Johnson, Eds. *Kaiso! Writings by and About Katherine Dunham* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2005): 519.

²¹¹ Albirda Rose, *Dunham Technique: A Way of Life* (Dubuque: Kendall/Hunt Publishing Company, 1990): 4.

In asserting the need for Dunham Technique, Dunham said, “The techniques that I knew and saw and experienced were not saying the things that I wanted to say. I simply could not, with purely classical ballet, say what I want to say. I could do a story, of course, ballet as you know, so much ballet is just a narrative, but to capture the meaning in the culture, in the life of the people, I felt that I had to take something directly from the people and develop that.”²¹²

Dunham traveled to Haiti, Martinique, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, Mexico and Brazil to better understand the cultural significance of movement. While there, she used a movie camera to capture the ceremonies she was permitted to view. Of this experience Dunham said,

And of course it was rather difficult for me because already I was infringing on some of their taboos by being there. Some of the time I was where women were not normally permitted to be. Some of the time I was where outsiders and strangers were not permitted to be. And, um, I had to overcome that and at the same time they did not know what was in this box that I carried and pointed at them. But like most people in societies other than their own, they don’t like to have things pointed at them. So I had to find a way to fix that camera so it could be taking and recording what they were doing without making them uncomfortable. And this was my big task; I haven’t quite overcome it. There are times when I still film and feel that I’m intruding.²¹³

During her field work, Dunham found that certain dances had specific form and specific function within a given culture. *L’Ag’Ya*, for example, incorporates the mysteries of vodun religion. *L’Ag’Ya* is a full ballet about being put under the spell of another. Its story is one that exists in other cultures (primarily European cultures); as such, there is a similarity in story style. Dunham, however, set the story in Martinique and embedded Martiniquias culture and form.

²¹² Library of Congress, “*Katherine Dunham on Need for Dunham Technique*,” Video recording, 2002. Library of Congress, <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/diglib/ahas/loc.natlib.ahas.200003845/default.html>. Accessed June 1, 2014.

²¹³ Library of Congress, “*Katherine Dunham on her Anthropological Films*,” Video recording, 2002. <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/diglib/ahas/loc.natlib.ahas.200003841/default.html>. Library of Congress, Accessed June 1, 2014.

This cultural significance is immediately apparent in the ballet.²¹⁴ This transmission of culture through anthropologically and culturally informed dance work forms the core of the Dunham Technique. This work was—and still is—essential; American slavery broke cultural bonds and induced enduring cultural disruptions. Dunham sought to restore them.

For me, I came up during Civil Rights and because I was a dancer I was exposed to African-Haitian, African, African-American culture through dance. In those forms you begin to find out something about the person who designed those forms and what was going on in those forms. So Haitian was my first knowledge base and Haitian culture was so similar to what I knew about my own ancestry. My ancestry comes out of New Orleans in Louisiana. When I first went there with them in the 1960s nobody spoke English, everybody spoke Creole. It was a direct relationship to be directly involved in the Haitian culture. Not only in terms of the dance forms but also the linguistic connections to the Yoruba tradition, the Ise religion. So many links were destroyed during slavery but the context of the language and the rhythmic concepts of the blues and gospels and spirituals you begin to see that transferred knowledge. So what Miss Dunham was able to bring to dance, there was a definite transference of knowledge from one cultural center to another.²¹⁵

This attention to cultural transmission fundamental to Dunham Technique took a specific and distinctive form. There are three theoretical models developed by Dunham each of which is necessary to properly execute Dunham Technique. They are: Form and Function, Intercultural Communication and Socialization through the Arts.²¹⁶ These theories formed what Dunham referred to as “The System,” which was the foundation of Dunham Technique.

Used primarily to understand discrete dances and specific dance movement, Dunham’s theory of Form and Function unthreads the ways dance relates to the overall cultural patterns inherent in a given culture’s belief system. Dunham understood that movement has a particular form based on a specific function in a given set of circumstances; translating this cultural

²¹⁴ Dr. Albirida Rose, interview with author, November 26, 2013.

²¹⁵ Dr. Albirida Rose, interview with author, November 26, 2013.

²¹⁶ Albirida Rose, *Dunham Technique: A Way of Life*, 15.

knowledge into staged dances for Dunham precipitated cultural exchange. Information, she believed, was being passed from her choreographic research to her dancers and then, through them, to the audience.²¹⁷ Explicating this in 1941, Dunham wrote that, “In the funeral dance the externalization of grief; the social dances, exhibitionism and sexual selection along with social cohesion; in the ceremonial dances, group ‘ethos’ solidarity in an established mechanism of worship, whether through hypnosis, hysteria, or ecstasy.”²¹⁸ *L’Ag’Ya* is only one example of many ballets in which Dunham depicts a way of life and its underlying belief system. *L’Ag’Ya* was, for Dunham, the first stage of developing and understanding the importance of form and function.

Dunham’s theory of Intercultural Communication builds on the theory of Form and Function. This method is used as a means for gaining a universal understanding and acceptance of others. Dunham believed that through dance, information could be gathered about one’s own culture and the cultures of others. In describing Dunham’s work, Joyce Aschenbrenner gestures at this epistemological argument saying, “without such communication, [Dunham] can be neither anthropologist nor artist, since the conscious mental set of her audience is foreign to the insights she tries to convey.”²¹⁹ As an anthropologist, Dunham recognized the intersection of movement and life patterns; the dance work she saw in the Caribbean was linked to specific cultural perceptions of life and preparations for life events such as birth, love and death.

²¹⁷ Albirida Rose, *Dunham Technique: A Way of Life*, 20.

²¹⁸ Katherine Dunham, “Form and Function in Primitive Dance,” *Educational Dance* 4, no. 10 (October 1941): 2-4.

²¹⁹ Joyce Aschenbrenner, *Katherine Dunham: Reflections on the Social and Political Contexts of Afro-American Dance*. With notations of the Dunham Method and Technique by Lavinia Williams Yarborough. *Congress on Research in Dance 1980 Dance Research Annual*, 12. (New York: Congress on Research in Dance, Inc., 1981): 56.

Predictably, these two theoretical models lead to the third, Socialization through the Arts. Dunham used this model to train people as both artists and communicators. Dunham believed that, given the opportunity, people would learn important information about themselves through the art forms of their given culture(s), situating them within a global context and again promoting intercultural awareness and appreciation.²²⁰

Dunham Technique, while it consists of a system of learnable and transferable qualities, is also dynamic; it continues to incorporate and merge methods of teaching style and application from earlier generations with the contemporary ideas, methods and philosophies which emanated from and were taught by Katherine Dunham.²²¹ Albirda Rose, co-Founder of the Institute for Dunham Certification, asserts that the Dunham Technique “allows one to understand a culture, or many cultures, through dance. [Dunham] found that an understanding of different cultures takes place when one is immersed in the culture. Through experiencing other ways of living, especially through the dances, knowledge is acquired.”²²² This assertion that dance is one way of knowing about culture lays the groundwork for a discussion of how the codification and transmission of culturally informed movement—such as the Dunham Technique—is a potential archival mode for preserving or safeguarding performed heritage.

V.D. THE ARCHIVE AND THE REPERTOIRE

“Long before the written word, information was stored in bodies, in cultural memories, and in oral traditions, enacted only in their performances.”²²³

²²⁰ Albirda Rose, *Dunham Technique: A Way of Life*, 16.

²²¹ Albirda Rose, *Dunham Technique: A Way of Life*, xiii.

²²² Albirda Rose, *Dunham Technique: A Way of Life*, 17.

²²³ Elizabeth Bell, *Theories of Performance* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2008): 57.

As is discussed in the Literature Review of this dissertation, Library and Information Science scholar and Drexel University Assistant Professor Deborah Turner argues that, viewed through the theoretical lens of social constructionism, documents can be oral. Turner's concept of oral documents complements and extends the assertion made in the previous chapter: the evidentiary properties of the record supersede its need to be text-based.

Turner's assertion is based on the premise that document studies, with its focus on tangible forms of evidence, has allowed information scholars to "better understand issues involved in the systematic transmission, storage, and retrieval of informational objects."²²⁴ Turner posits that a recent increase in the use of social constructionist theory (which emphasizes the significance of language and its centrality to the production of knowledge) among library and information science scholars is related to an increase in work that recognizes that information made available orally plays an essential role in knowledge production. Turner's work in orality and knowledge production concludes that the transmission of oral information leads to knowledge-based outcomes similar to those of physical documents; that is, information—*regardless of format*—is transmitted, and knowledge is constructed from that transmission.²²⁵

Turner's work focuses on orality in institutional settings. She holds that "orality not only helps reflect and maintain institutional contexts, it simultaneously perpetuates them."²²⁶ Historian and anthropologist Jan Vansina, whose work focuses on African societies prior to colonization, asserts that the oral tradition plays a dual function in representing both the past and

²²⁴ Deborah Turner, "Conceptualizing Oral Documents," *Information Research* 12, No. 4 (October, 2007): <http://www.informationr.net/ir/12-4/colis/colis32.html>.

²²⁵ Deborah Turner, "Conceptualizing Oral Documents," *Information Research* 12, No. 4 (October, 2007): <http://www.informationr.net/ir/12-4/colis/colis32.html>. Examples of oral documents may include oral arguments, oral tradition, and formal speeches.

²²⁶ Deborah Turner, "Conceptualizing Oral Documents," *Information Research* 12, No. 4 (October, 2007): <http://www.informationr.net/ir/12-4/colis/colis32.html>.

the present.²²⁷ Taken together, Turner and Vansina’s arguments suggest that information passed through non-textual means is capable of maintaining and perpetuating institutional contexts while also representing the past. These two capabilities—maintaining context and representing the past—are both key foundational concepts in North American archivy. Extending this argument to information transmitted through gestural means, one can begin to construct an understanding of how the Dunham Technique, a codified repertoire of cultural information transmitted through gesture (dance), functions in ways similar to conventional, brick and mortar archives: these codified, information-rich gestures form a vocabulary. This dance vocabulary is rendered “readable” through the same kinds of visual literacies one uses to “read” sign language and various other forms of artistic expression, and these readable vocabularies, which convey meaning, function as gestural documents, much the same as Turner’s oral documents. This argument for “reading gesture” as a document or a record is reinforced by a demonstrated national interest in gesture and sign-language recognition. As stated in the previous chapter, as long ago as 1998, the National Science Foundation’s Digital Libraries Initiative (Phase II) received in excess of 400 applications, many of which were requests to fund studies on human motion, gesture recognition and sign-language recognition in digital environments.²²⁸ The term “recognition” in a digital environment can be seen as synonymous with the term for “human” gesture recognition: visual literacy.

Visual literacy refers to the ability to understand visual forms of communication. As with other types of literacy, visual literacy in artistic terms is concerned with form, context and

²²⁷ Jan Vansina Vansina, *Oral Tradition as History* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985).

²²⁸ NSF Project Manager, interview with author, 17 July 2013.

content.²²⁹ Defining these terms, form refers to the arrangement of the visual elements or the formal qualities of the image; content concerns the “sensory, subjective, psychological or emotional properties in response to an image” such as the emotional or intellectual message; while context indicates the set of circumstances or facts that surround a given event, including historical information about the artist or issues referenced in the art.²³⁰ Visual literacy suggests that images, or what is seen, can be read and that meaning can be communicated through visual cues. Those who create visual images—such as choreographers—do so purposefully. In order to “read” or analyze an image, the audience must be able to understand the artist’s purpose and recognize the techniques that have been used. In dance terms, this means that the form of dance must have recognizable elements that have been codified, or set, and can be combined and repeated in any order, retaining their meaning even as context shifts. For Katherine Dunham, codification was a means of “fixing” her dance vocabulary—it was an opportunity to allow a culturally informed movement speak for itself and to (re)present and reinvigorate the cultural traditions of African diaspora peoples most at risk for loss or obsolescence.

In addition to visual literacy, this chapter has made several references to the *codification* of Dunham Technique. Codification is a legal and linguistic term that refers to the act or process of arranging something in a systematic form. Codification may also denote the result of such an act or process of arrangement. Linguistically, codification indicates that a language has been standardized, that it now adheres to a norm and that it can be read and understood by those who possess the proper literacy tools. Normalizing and standardizing a movement vocabulary has similar implications. For example, ballet—also a concert dance form like Dunham Technique—

²²⁹ University of Maryland, “The Visual Literacy Toolbox: Learning to Read Images,” <http://www.humanities.umd.edu/vislit/basics.php>.

²³⁰ University of Maryland, “Visual Literacy Toolbox,” <http://www.humanities.umd.edu/vislit/basics.php>.

was codified in the 17th century in the French courts of Louis XIV. Ballet enjoys its own vocabulary which is based on French terminology; as a result, those conversant in ballet terminology can hear a command for a *jeté* and know immediately that they are expected to jump.²³¹ Likewise, when one sees a ballet dancer execute a *jeté* it is instantly recognizable as such. A *jeté* is comparable to a single word in the ballet lexicon. Combined with other “words” or codified gestures, a series of dance movements form a sentence, also recognizable as a “phrase.” Indeed, *phrase* is a dance term for exactly this—a series of connected movements which transmit meaning. In the Dunham lexicon, for example “fall and recover” is a phrase, both linguistic and gestural, recently codified by Dunham’s dancers. The phrase requires a release at the midsection dropping the head to the floor, and a subsequent recovery to a standing position.²³² As scholars in the Arts Media and Engineering program at Arizona State University assert, “Phrases are a sequence of movements that exist at a higher semantic abstraction than gestures. The problem [of phrasal detection] is important since phrasal structure in dance plays a key role in communicating meaning.”²³³ This understanding of phrasal structure in movement as capable of conveying meaning mirrors Deborah Turner’s assertion that meaning can be transmitted through oral documents. This chapter further argues that, like text-based and oral documents, a *gestural document*—one comprised of codified gestures or phrases—is capable not only of communicating meaning, but also of serving the archival functions of maintaining and preserving context and representing the past. For Dunham Technique, the meaning and context

²³¹ See for example American Ballet Theatre, “Ballet Dictionary,” <http://www.abt.org/education/dictionary/index.html> and Wikipedia, “Ballet Glossary,” http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Glossary_of_ballet.

²³² See: Library of Congress, “*Dunham Technique: Fall and Recovery with Body Roll*,” Video recording, 2002. <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/diglib/ihas/loc.natlib.ihas.200003854/default.html>. Library of Congress, Accessed June 1, 2014.

²³³ Vidyarani M. Dyaberi et. al. “Phrase Structure Detection in Dance,” In *Proceedings of the ACM Multimedia Conference* (2004): 332–335.

are specifically cultural. Dunham sought to restore a cultural past to a group of people from whom history, traditions, cultural expressions and cultural identity had been violently wrenched through the offenses of slavery. Codification of Dunham Technique renders it effective as a gestural document, allowing it to be read and understood visually. It is a mode of cultural communication which is encompassed in Taylor's definition of the repertoire. In speaking to the need to codify Dunham Technique, Point Park Dunham instructor Ron Hutson asserts:

That's one of the things that gives ballet and modern dance such dignity, is that there is this whole body of recorded information on them. They are all codified. And people don't look at Afrocentric dance forms, art forms, as having this kind of codification.²³⁴

Hutson is correct in his analysis. Dance critics from the 1940s through the mid-1960s, when Dunham's company disbanded, categorized her choreographic work as "Negro" or tribal dance, subtly implying in their reviews that these dance forms—and Dunham's work—lacked the seriousness and "high art" qualities of their Western counterparts. For example, Dunham was a contemporary of John Martin, who is widely regarded as the most influential dance critic in the United States. Of Dunham (and Dunham Technique), Martin wrote in *The New York Times*:

This is quite in character with the essence of the Negro dance itself. There is nothing pretentious about it; it is not designed to delve into philosophy or psychology but to externalize the impulses of a high-spirited, rhythmic and gracious race. That Miss Dunham's dances accomplish this end so beautifully can mean only that she has actually isolated the elements of the folk art upon which more consciously created and sophisticate forms can be built as time goes on. This is cultural pioneering of a unique sort.²³⁵

In part as a result of this perception of Afro-Caribbean dance as primitive and unsophisticated, and the knowledge that codification contributes to a sense of institutional and societal credence,

²³⁴ Ron Hutson, interview with author, October 2, 2013.

²³⁵ John Martin, "The Dance: A Negro Art: Katherine Dunham's Notable Contribution." *The New York Times* February 25, 1940, 114.

codification of Dunham's repertoire is the primary way in which Dunham's dancers continue her legacy and preserve the Dunham Technique.

Initial codification of Dunham Technique was done by Katherine Dunham with the help of Albirda Rose. In 1986, Albirda Rose spent six months with Katherine Dunham poring over her materials in preparation for writing *Dunham Technique: A Way of Life*. As part of this process, Rose endeavored to work with Master Instructors of Dunham Technique to codify the terminology of Dunham Technique.²³⁶ Joyce Aschenbrenner's book *Katherine Dunham: Dancing a Life*, a critical study of Dunham's work, had previously been published by the Congress on Research in Dance (CORD), and Rose used these choreographic critiques of Dunham's work from the 1940s through the 1960s along with the drawings and descriptions of Dunham Technique (sketched by Dunham dancer Lavinia Williams) which appeared as an appendix in the back of the book.²³⁷ Dunham's lesson plans and curriculum from the Performing Arts Training Center and video footage of instruction in Dunham Technique and Dunham Company rehearsals rounded out Rose's data collection. Of this process, Rose says:

I started looking at that and comparing that and reading some materials. That with my observations in classes and from the seminars, then with my peers we would sit down and write. We had to write out the exercises that we were taught and we had to draw them. This was the start of *Dunham Technique: A Way of Life* the book that I wrote. It was a codification of some of the basic terminology Katherine Dunham used. The necessity of that terminology came out of, well what we on the West Coast called 'fall and recovery,' Ruth Beckford called 'fall and return.' So it was different things like that in codifying terminology – second position, pliés, the placement of the hand.²³⁸

Dunham dancer Ruth Beckford has said that there are three generations of Dunham Technique. By the time Rose wrote *Dunham Technique: A Way of Life*, she was able to discuss a 4th

²³⁶ Dr. Albirda Rose, interview with author, November 26, 2013.

²³⁷ Albirda Rose, *Dunham Technique: A Way of Life*, 20.

²³⁸ Dr. Albirda Rose, interview with author, November 26, 2013.

generation of Dunham Technique that began with the Dunham Seminars and continued until Dunham's death. Rose asserts that the 4th generation of Dunham dancers are the last generation to be trained by Katherine Dunham herself, and that one is able, when looking at these dancers compared to Dunham's dancers in the 1940s, to see the evolution of Dunham Technique over time.²³⁹ For example, Dunham's dance company performs in the opening credits of the 1957 movie *Mambo*; later in the film is footage of a dance class that is representative of Level 1 Dunham Technique (which is no longer taught). To the trained eye, compared with the archival footage at Library of Congress, the differences are striking. This, then, raises questions about codification and authenticity. What is the *true* Dunham Technique? Rose asserts,

People who studied at the center in New York or people who danced with her, now I'm hearing this word being thrown out 'authentic' Dunham. If you danced Dunham long enough you would understand that that word is a difficult word because Miss Dunham did not stay static for the 95 years she was alive. She did not stay static. Every year we would come to that seminar, Miss Dunham had something new and different and in-depth that she was reaching for, not only on a technical level but also on a cultural level and what I would classify as a spiritual level.²⁴⁰

In an effort to guarantee that Dunham Technique is codified and transmitted in a unified voice, ensuring that Dunham Technique endures is now handled by committee. Theo Jamison, Keith Williams and Rachel Tavernier, all trained by Dunham at the Performing Arts Training Center in East St. Louis, currently head the Institute for Dunham Certification.²⁴¹ There is, as well, a DVD of Dunham Technique housed at the Library of Congress. Together with Rose's book, the DVD and the embodied knowledge of Dunham's dancers create additional layers of

²³⁹ Dr. Albirida Rose, interview with author, November 26, 2013.

²⁴⁰ Dr. Albirida Rose, interview with author, November 26, 2013.

²⁴¹ Dr. Albirida Rose, interview with author, November 26, 2013.

codification.²⁴² Codification, again, is an attempt to bring all of Dunham's work under the same umbrella: it is a way to make it last and to perpetuate the work.²⁴³ Along with Jamison and Williams, Rose wrote a manual for Dunham Certification that provides a pedagogical basis for an elementary Dunham class. This manual provides descriptors of the Technique and standards for instructors to follow.²⁴⁴ Of codification and certification, Albirda Rose asserts:

There is a vocabulary [of Dunham Technique]. It is codified. We, at the Institute for Dunham Certification, are in the process of writing down all the elements of a proper beginning Dunham Technique class, a proper intermediate Dunham Technique class and an advanced level. Some of that was written down during Miss Dunham's time here. Some of it was not, so we're in the process of doing that. We do have a DVD that she sanctioned with the various levels of the Technique ... so we have that to go on. We have notes that she left with the people that went to the Library of Congress and taped that particular DVD. We are currently getting down on paper all of the various exercises that go with each level.²⁴⁵

Dancers being considered for certification in Dunham Technique go through a rigorous program that begins with understanding how dance, society and culture are intertwined. One must have previous dance training in Dunham Technique and evidence a working knowledge of the Dunham vocabulary. Certification involves pedagogical training, peer education, written examinations based on an established Dunham bibliography and the money to afford attending annual certification seminars for several years running (they cost \$475/week). During Dunham's lifetime, she alone certified instructors. This work, too, now falls to a select, hand-picked group of her most devoted dancers including Albirda Rose and Halifu Osumare.²⁴⁶

²⁴² Dr. Albirda Rose, interview with author, November 26, 2013.

²⁴³ Ron Hutson, interview with author, October 2, 2013.

²⁴⁴ Dr. Albirda Rose, interview with author, November 26, 2013.

²⁴⁵ Dr. Halifu Osumare, interview with author, May 2, 2014.

²⁴⁶ Dr. Halifu Osumare, interview with author, May 2, 2014.

Dunham Technique effectively represents Diana Taylor's repertoire. Upon closer inspection, however, one can see the ways in which Dunham Technique functions in relationship with the Dunham Archives. Dunham Technique consists of a series of codified, culturally informed phrases which can be read as a gestural document. Like other archival records, this gestural document is capable of maintaining and preserving cultural context as well as representing a culturally-informed past. The Dunham Archives satisfy a societal need to maintain the tangible aspects of Dunham Technique and the Dunham Technique itself, as repertoire, satisfies a similar societal need to maintain movement within a cultural context. As Dunham-trained Point Park University dance professor Ron Hutson suggests, to properly safeguard Dunham Technique, a marriage of archive and repertoire is essential:

There's no question for me that Dunham's true archive is in her dancers' bodies. I think that the written word has value, I am a scholar, but I think some people who are in the field of dance are totally body-oriented and I think some of us, and I think that we are fortunate, are physically as well as verbally oriented and expressive. The scholarly aspects, the written aspects, are important. It helps people who haven't danced – and even people who have danced – understand dance ... There's a place for that. But there's a transference of information from body to body that's very much like oral traditions. Oral tradition has been important since the dawn of time, and even though we write things down now, we codify, the oral tradition still works. From body to body as a learning tool, that still works too.²⁴⁷

Around the globe one can find examples of codified gestures which, with the proper visual literacy, can be read, understood and used to transmit knowledge. As previously suggested in this chapter, sign language is one such example, and, as Hutson affirms, ballet is another. Like sign language and ballet, Dunham Technique is comprised of a set vocabulary of movements which can be combined in varying ways to convey meaning and transmit knowledge.

²⁴⁷ Ron Hutson, interview with author, October 2, 2013.

V.E. SUMMARY

Archives currently support the maintenance and preservation of Dunham Technique through collecting tangible artifacts. Although this collecting takes place in conversation with Dunham dancers, when archives take custody, Dunham Technique, like any performed art, is flattened, becomes two-dimensional and is relegated to folders, boxes and shelves. Even the materials made available online lack the three-dimensionality of live performance.

As with the Virtual Vaudeville prototype, the Dunham case suggests that to have performance endure, information professionals must allow artists to maintain their own work in the most appropriate ways. In the case of the Dunham archives, it is these two-dimensional traces of Dunham's work that are maintained by archival repositories while the broader cultural heritage dimensions of Dunham's work survive in the minds and bodies of her dancers. The apparent duality between archive and repertoire meet here: Dunham's work endures because of *both* archive and repertoire, each informing the other and tempering any gaps between them. Taking an advisory rather than a custodial role and providing the necessary infrastructures—such as standards and built systems—is one way that archives can help to safeguard performed acts and other articulations of intangible cultural heritage. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization has modeled this non-custodial relationship in the policy document that is the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage. As is discussed in the following chapter, one can see evidence of this relationship at work in the countries that have ratified and deployed the Convention.

VI. THE UNITED NATIONS SCIENTIFIC, CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL ORGANIZATION'S 2003 CONVENTION FOR THE SAFEGUARDING OF INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE

This chapter examines the ways that archives support or are otherwise involved in the deployment of UNESCO's 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage. Approaching the discussion of archive and repertoire from a global perspective, the chapter offers a close reading of three interpretations of the Convention—Belgium, the Canadian province of Newfoundland and Labrador, and Trinidad and Tobago. Also discussed are the relationships between and among UNESCO as a large, Western, policy-driven organization, national governments, heritage communities and cultural heritage institutions. Finally, the chapter considers the affordances of collaboration in safeguarding performed works.

The chapter provides an overview of UNESCO, defines “intangible cultural heritage” and unpacks the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage. Next, it explores, in depth, three distinct efforts to deploy the Convention, arguing that it is dispersed models, such as UNESCO, that most successfully navigate the space between archive and repertoire. Finally, the chapter offers interventions for contemporary archivy inspired by the UNESCO model.

The case study employs data from: interviews with representatives from the Ministry of the Arts and Multiculturalism and culture-bearers from Trinidad and Tobago; an interview with

the Intangible Cultural Heritage Development Officer for the province of Newfoundland and Labrador; documents obtained directly from UNESCO officers in Trinidad and Tobago and Belgium; the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage and supporting documents from UNESCO; recordings of ICH elements from UNESCO; historical newspapers; and an array of secondary sources.

VIA. UNESCO

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) was established in 1945 after World War II. UNESCO's founding was based on the belief that in the face of two world wars in one generation, "political and economic agreements are not enough to build a lasting peace." That, instead, "peace must be established on the basis of humanity's moral and intellectual solidarity." UNESCO's mission is to build networks among nations that enable solidarity through (1) mobilizing for education, (2) building intercultural understanding, (3) pursuing scientific cooperation and (4) protecting freedom of expression.²⁴⁸

UNESCO is governed by a General Conference, which comprises the representatives of UNESCO's Member States. The General Conference meets every two years; each country has one vote, regardless of size or contribution to the UNESCO budget. UNESCO's General Conference sets policies and establishes work for the Organization. It is empowered to determine both programming and budget; elect members of the Executive Board; and appoint, every four

²⁴⁸ UNESCO, "Introducing UNESCO," <https://en.unesco.org/about-us/introducing-unesco>.

years, the UNESCO Director-General.²⁴⁹ UNESCO's Executive Board is comprised of fifty-eight members elected by the General Conference. UNESCO's website notes that, "skillful negotiations may be needed before a balance is reached among the different regions of the world in a way that will reflect the universality of the Organization."²⁵⁰ Headquartered in Paris, France, UNESCO is a large, policy-driven organization that provides oversight and acts in an advisory capacity. Despite claims about the "universality of the Organization," involvement with UNESCO is a politically and financially complex affair. The United States is just one of several nations not represented in UNESCO's General Conference. The choice of these representatives, while largely a reflection of the diversity of the cultures they represent, is also fraught with political complexities. For example, in November 2013, the United States lost its vote in UNESCO's General Assembly after two years of non-payment of UNESCO dues. The U.S. withdrew financial contributions to UNESCO in 2011 over a disagreement about the admission of Palestine as a full UNESCO member. Despite concerns that the move "[undermines] America's ability to exercise its influence in countries around the globe through [UNESCO's] educational and aid programs," and concerns at UNESCO over the loss of its largest source of external funding, the United States' and UNESCO's hands were effectively tied by their own policies. In the U.S., Congress enacted laws in the 1990s decreeing that the United States stop providing money to any United Nations agency that extends an offer of full membership to Palestine. Under UNESCO's constitution, any country that fails to pay dues for two years loses

²⁴⁹ See: UNESCO, "UNESCO's Governing Bodies," <http://en.unesco.org/about-us/unescos-governing-bodies>. The Executive Board ensures the overall management of UNESCO. It prepares the work of the General Conference and sees that its decisions are properly carried out. The functions and responsibilities of the Executive Board are derived primarily from the Constitution and from rules or directives laid down by the General Conference.

²⁵⁰ UNESCO, "UNESCO's Governing Bodies," <http://en.unesco.org/about-us/unescos-governing-bodies>. Accessed April 28, 2014.

its vote in the UNESCO General Assembly.²⁵¹ As a result of this history, U.S. archival theory and practice is largely absent from the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage; the Convention was already in the works when the U.S. rejoined UNESCO in 2002 after an 18-year absence. The political and financial ramifications of this are wide-ranging as well; the United States has effectively de-funded its interest in UNESCO, contributing to a sense of the “West and the rest” in implementing the 2003 Convention. It is important to keep the reality of these complexities in mind when traversing the interconnected network of UNESCO’s intangible cultural heritage Convention.

VI.B. INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE

Intangible cultural heritage is a term that has emerged out of the varying proclamations, recommendations, conventions, charters, and codes addressing cultural heritage issues over the past century. UNESCO conceives of intangible cultural heritage (ICH) as “a living form of heritage which is continuously recreated and which evolves as we adapt our practices and traditions in response to our environment. It provides a sense of identity and belonging in relation to our own cultures.”²⁵² UNESCO’s definition of intangible cultural heritage encompasses oral traditions and expressions, performing arts, social practices, rituals, festive events, knowledge and practices concerning universe and nature, and traditional craftsmanship. Further, “[t]his intangible cultural heritage, transmitted from generation to generation, is

²⁵¹ Alissa J. Rubina, “U.S. Loses Voting Rights At Unesco,” *The New York Times*, November 9, 2013, A4.

²⁵² UNESCO, “Kit of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage: Questions and Answers About Intangible Cultural Heritage,” 2.

constantly recreated by communities and groups in response to their environment, their interaction with nature and their history, and provides them with a sense of identity and continuity, thus promoting respect for cultural diversity and human creativity.”²⁵³

The government of Flanders, the Dutch-speaking northern region of Belgium (a country whose ICH policies and relationship with UNESCO are explored at length in this chapter), notes that ICH

encompasses those habits, customs, knowledge and practices that are inherited by a community or group or can be placed in a historic continuum, and which the community or group decides in consensus to be sufficiently important to be transmitted to future generations. It always concerns intangible and therefore immaterial expressions of the interaction between man and his environment. Intangible cultural heritage is dynamic. As it evolves in time and interacts with the environment, it assumes new meanings and its use or function changes. The designation as intangible cultural heritage is linked to time and place.²⁵⁴

In addition to recognizing the temporal and spatial affordances of intangible cultural heritage, it is also important to note what intangible cultural heritage is *not*. In her 2004 article, “Intangible Cultural Heritage as Metacultural Production,” anthropologist, museologist and performance studies scholar Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett complicates UNESCO’s concepts of intangible cultural heritage, invoking “high” and “low culture”:

Thus, the Bolshoi ballet and Metropolitan Opera do not and are not likely to make the list, but Nōgaku, which is not a minority or indigenous cultural form, does make the list. All three involve formal training, use scripts, are the products of literate cultures, and transmit embodied knowledge from one performer to another. [...] By admitting cultural forms associated with royal courts and state-sponsored temples, as long as they are not European, the intangible heritage list preserves the division between the West and the rest and produces a phantom list

²⁵³ UNESCO, “2003 Convention to Safeguard the Intangible Cultural Heritage,” <http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/index.php?lg=en&pg=00006>. Last Accessed June 1, 2014.

²⁵⁴ Government of Flanders. *The Government of Flanders’ Policy on Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage: Vision Paper — ‘A Policy for Intangible Cultural Heritage in Flanders,’* (Flanders, Belgium, 2010): 156.

of intangible heritage, a list of that which is not indigenous, not minority, and not non-Western, though no less intangible.²⁵⁵

Kirshenblatt-Gimblett's assertions about "high"/"low culture" and indigenous cultural forms coupled with a growing sense of the "West and the rest," in deploying the Convention, speak specifically to the inherent complexities that arise when a large, functionally Western organization writes broad-stroke global policies such as the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage.

VI.C. THE 2003 CONVENTION FOR THE SAFEGUARDING OF INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE

In the 1990s, a reorientation occurred in UNESCO's approach to folklore, away from a European-inspired archival model to an East-Asian paradigm most commonly associated with "living national treasures" programs in Japan and Korea. This reorientation reflected widespread disappointment with UNESCO's 1989 Recommendation for the Safeguarding of Traditional Culture and Folklore and growing dissatisfaction with the 1972 UNESCO Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage. Along with its predecessors, such as UNESCO's Living Human Treasures program and the Proclamation of Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity, the 2003 Convention is a response to this dissatisfaction. Another reason for a reorientation was UNESCO's conclusion that globalization and social transformation frequently lead to deterioration, disappearance and destruction of intangible cultural heritage, largely the result of insufficient mechanisms for

²⁵⁵ Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, "Intangible Cultural Heritage as Metacultural Production," *Museum Studies International* 56, nos. 221-222 (2004): 57.

safeguarding or protecting ICH from obsolescence. On the other hand, however, UNESCO recognizes that globalization frequently creates opportunities to appreciate, support and enrich cultural diversity. The 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage serves to complement the 1972 World Heritage Convention.

The 2003 Convention was adopted with four stated purposes: (1) to safeguard the ICH; (2) to ensure respect for the ICH of the communities, groups and individuals concerned; (3) to raise awareness at the local, national and international levels of the importance of ICH, ensuring mutual appreciation; and (4) to provide for international cooperation and assistance.²⁵⁶ The Convention is an interventive tool; it is a normative model which at the same time raises issues of value, threat, and moral obligation and informs people's relationships to their own cultural practices. As such, the Convention was conceived as a “permissive document;” much of the language in the text of the Convention is non-prescriptive. The Convention was designed to allow national governments flexibility in their approaches to implementation. Although loosely defined, the Convention does require ratifying States Parties to adopt “appropriate measures” at the national and international level to “encourage and foster all forms of international cooperation aimed at safeguarding intangible cultural heritage” (UNESCO, 2003).

Finally, in Articles 11 through 15 the Convention imposes a number of obligations on States that ratify the Convention.²⁵⁷ Specifically, the obligations outlined in the Convention and in the Operational Directives for implementation are that States Parties are required to:

- take necessary measures to ensure safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage present in its territory

²⁵⁶ UNESCO, “2003 Convention,”

http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=17716&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html.

²⁵⁷ See Appendix E: 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage.

- include communities, groups and relevant NGOs in the identification and definition of elements of that intangible cultural heritage
- create regularly updated inventories of intangible cultural heritage present in their territory
- endeavor to apply safeguarding and awareness-raising measures with the widest possible participation of communities, groups and, where appropriate individuals that create maintain and transmit intangible cultural heritage.
- make regular contributions to the Fund established under Article 25 of the Convention (a contribution of 1% of their contribution to the regular budget of UNESCO).
- periodically submit reports to the Intergovernmental Committee on the legislative, regulatory and other measures taken to implement the Convention. These reports include information on the status of all ICH elements that have been inscribed on the Representative List and the Urgent Safeguarding List.²⁵⁸

The Convention mandates that States Parties pursue policies that value intangible cultural heritage because, per UNESCO, intangible cultural heritage is a mainspring of cultural diversity and a guarantee of sustainable development.²⁵⁹ Each ratifying country has chosen to deploy the Convention differently. A key component of the Convention is a mandate that consideration of an ICH element for safeguarding originate from the group or community in whose hands care of the cultural “object” currently falls. In this way, UNESCO hopes to remove the possibility of cultural appropriation and the intentional misuse of cultural heritage.

As detailed below, in deploying the Convention, most of the reporting States have responded to the requirements of the 2003 Convention by introducing new legislation and/or revising existing legislation. A common legislative goal is to fulfill the UNESCO mandate to establish a national inventorying system. Setting safeguarding policies is another common

²⁵⁸ UNESCO, “How to Ratify the 2003 Convention?”

<http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/index.php?lg=en&pg=00023>

²⁵⁹ UNESCO, “What is Intangible Cultural Heritage?”

<http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/index.php?lg=en&pg=00002>.

objective of new legislation. In some cases, the new legislation also establishes a new institution or designates an existing one to safeguard intangible cultural heritage.²⁶⁰

Although the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage is not flawless, it is the only existing international document of its kind. In what is often a three-stage process, the Convention has been accepted, approved or ratified by 161 nations, notably excluding many large English-speaking countries, namely the United States, Canada, Australia and the United Kingdom. It was most recently ratified by the Bahamas in May 2014.²⁶¹

VI.D. DEPLOYMENT OF THE 2003 CONVENTION FOR THE SAFEGUARDING OF INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE

VI.D.1. Belgium

VI.D.1.a. About Belgium Belgium is a Federal State and cultural policy is set by linguistic region. Each of the three linguistic Communities—Flemish, French and German-speaking—displays independence in their approach to safeguarding intangible cultural heritage and is responsible for the cultural policy in their respective linguistic regions.

While each linguistic region governs its own policy to implement the Convention, structures are also in place to promote the exchange of information. For example, the Agency for

²⁶⁰ UNESCO, “Examination of the reports of States Parties on the implementation of the Convention and on the Current Status of Elements Inscribed on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity,” (*Report of the 8th Session of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage*, Baku, Azerbaijan, December 2013).

²⁶¹ Despite an apparent reluctance on the part of the United States to adopt or ratify the 2003 UNESCO Convention, the U.S. enjoys a rich history of intangible cultural heritage. Among the many intangible heritage claims the U.S. could add to UNESCO’s ever-growing list are the annual Mardi-Gras celebration in New Orleans, the Philadelphia Mummers and the rich body of living history and war reenactors that populate U.S. national parks and engage a sense of national pride.

Arts and Heritage is responsible for preparing, implementing and evaluating the intangible cultural heritage policy.²⁶² The Flemish and French Communities are also partly responsible for the cultural policy in the bilingual Brussels-Capital Region of Belgium. This division of responsibility results in three different kinds of cultural policies and initiatives. By law, however, the three Communities must seek consensus; this was applicable, for example, in 2006 when Belgium ratified the UNESCO 2003 Convention on Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage. This is also the case for proposing elements for the Convention's Representative List, the Urgent Safeguarding List and for the Register of Best Practices. Belgium's three linguistic Communities must speak in one voice in UNESCO's ICH General Assembly and Intergovernmental Committee. The Flemish Community participated actively in the creation of the 2003 ICH Convention, together with the French Community under the Belgian flag. Due, in part, to the high level of ICH activity in the Flemish Community and, in part, to the willingness of representatives of the Flemish Community to participate in this study, this chapter specifically considers the efforts of Belgium's Flemish Community to deploy the 2003 ICH Convention.²⁶³

VI.D.1.b. The Government of Flanders: Deploying the Convention In 2010 the Government of Flanders instituted their Policy on Intangible Cultural Heritage. The ICH policy

offers 'communities, groups and individuals' involved in intangible cultural heritage opportunities to recognise [*sic*], designate and transmit the intangible cultural heritage; focuses on identifying, inventorying and documenting the intangible cultural heritage; provides an international reference framework of the intangible cultural heritage in Flanders; allows expertise to be shared and knowledge to be exchanged with cultural heritage communities in Flanders and

²⁶² UNESCO, Periodic Report No. 00812, *Belgium: Report on the Implementation of the Convention and On the Status of Elements Inscribed on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity*, 2013.

²⁶³ The Government of Flanders, *Policy on Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage*, 146.

elsewhere in the world by focusing on the processes of appropriation and the transmission of intangible cultural heritage. By doing this, the Flemish Community carries out a (safe)guarding policy.²⁶⁴

When first developing ICH policies, the Flemish Community in Belgium began by working from existing popular culture policies which primarily addressed transmittable traditions, customs, knowledge and techniques. A 1997 Cultural Heritage Act defined and recognized both “popular culture” and “intangible cultural heritage” and worked in tandem with two Flemish non-profit organizations—the *Vlaams Centrum voor Volkscultuur* (the Flemish Centre for Popular Culture) and *Tapis Plein*, a non-profit heritage organization subsidized by the Government of Flanders—to raise public awareness and set the stage for the 2003 UNESCO ICH Convention.²⁶⁵ With traveling exhibits, children and youth workshops, an educational publication, training sessions and an interactive website, Flanders’s “Un-Touchable” project targeted children and youth, asking them critical questions about the endurance of their traditions and customs.

The 1997 Flemish Parliament Act on Cultural Heritage introduced another term in Flemish heritage policy that would impact a forthcoming ICH policy: the term “heritage communities.” The Flemish Parliament Act on Cultural Heritage defines a heritage community as a “community that consists of organisations [*sic*] and/or individuals who value specific

²⁶⁴ The Government of Flanders, *Policy on Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage*, 152. Joke Schauvliege, Minister for Environment, Nature and Culture of the Government of Flanders, published the paper [Vision Paper — ‘A Policy for Intangible Cultural Heritage in Flanders’] at the end of 2010. Since then, it is considered to be one of the key texts for decisions within the cultural heritage field, and serves as the basis for further development of the policy for the intangible cultural heritage within the Flemish Community.

²⁶⁵ The Government of Flanders, *Policy on Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage*, 162. For more on *Tapis Plein* see: www.tapisplein.be. See also: UNESCO, Periodic Report No. 00812, *Belgium: Report on the Implementation of the Convention and On the Status of Elements Inscribed on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity*, 2013.

aspects of cultural heritage which they wish, within the framework of public action, to sustain and transmit to future generations.”²⁶⁶

In Belgium, heritage is considered collective property. Heritage communities must come to consensus on the meaning and function of their cultural expressions. The designation of a cultural expression as “heritage,” then, is temporally fixed and defined by both geography and community. This conceptual fluidity allows for subsequent generations to reconsider the value of a given cultural expression, thereby meeting another requirement of UNESCO’s ICH Convention: that communities be responsible for designating their own heritage and determining its cultural value.²⁶⁷

In deploying the 2003 ICH Convention, the government of Flanders, Belgium began, as UNESCO mandates, with a national inventory. Flanders responded to the UNESCO ICH Convention by introducing regulations, such as The Flemish Parliament Act on Cultural Heritage, on the basis of which the *Inventaris Vlaanderen voor Immaterieel Cultureel Erfgoed* (Inventory of the Intangible Cultural Heritage in Flanders) could be created. The *Inventaris Vlaanderen* (Flanders Inventory) served as an awareness-raising mechanism in regards to the communities, groups and individuals concerned. At the same time, it addressed requirements for inclusion on UNESCO’s Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. As will be discussed later in this chapter, in Belgium—as in other nations—inclusion in the *Inventaris Vlaanderen* or on a UNESCO list is considered especially important.²⁶⁸

In terms of performance, Flanders maintains a network of experts for cultural heritage that falls within the field of performing arts, inclusive of music as well as theatre and dance.

²⁶⁶ The Government of Flanders, *Policy on Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage*, 147.

²⁶⁷ The Government of Flanders, *Policy on Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage*, 154.

²⁶⁸ The Government of Flanders, *Policy on Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage*, 147.

Because these forms are also comprised of “important movable heritage such as archives and collections,” there are several networks or “nuclei of expertise.”²⁶⁹ For the arts sector, collaboration with the *Muziekcentrum Vlaanderen* (Flanders Music Centre) and the *Vlaams Theater Instituut* (Flemish Theatre Institute)—which also includes dance—is necessary. Similar partnerships with the amateur arts sector are also required.²⁷⁰ The Government of Flanders expects a Flemish Community cultural heritage organization to devote attention “not only to the movable heritage (such as archives and objects), but also to the intangible cultural heritage which belongs to performing art.”²⁷¹

The Flemish Parliament Act on Cultural Heritage introduces a practical and theoretical model whereby one designated organization is subsidized, and serves to anchor a heritage community: that is, to guide the heritage community and to maintain and disseminate knowledge and expertise. Archives, libraries and museums, as cultural heritage institutions, are expected to fulfill this function, and are mandated to make available the disciplinary knowledge they have at their disposal. In Flanders, the government aims to create a network of cultural heritage organizations which addresses all aspects of preservation and access, and which negotiates the relationship between heritage communities and the general public.²⁷² The organizations within this network prepare and draft application files for inclusion in the Flemish ICH inventory and on UNESCO ICH lists and registers. As such, Flemish cultural heritage centers, organizations for popular culture, and nationally recognized museums and archives are required to share their knowledge and expertise with heritage communities, fulfill the aforementioned anchor function and develop activities that are culturally relevant for all of Flanders. There is an additional

²⁶⁹ The Government of Flanders, *Policy on Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage*, 168.

²⁷⁰ The Government of Flanders, *Policy on Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage*, 168.

²⁷¹ The Government of Flanders, *Policy on Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage*, 169.

²⁷² The Government of Flanders, *Policy on Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage*, 172.

international education and outreach mandate as well; these institutions are expected to elaborate ICH activities in an international context, provide heritage communities with access to international expertise and encourage the heritage community to develop best practices.²⁷³

To achieve these goals, the Government of Flanders has proposed creating an ICH database. This relational database would house inventories; place a central focus on interaction; allow for the exchange of knowledge and expertise; and emphasize individual elements as well as relationships between and among ICH elements. As it is currently conceived, data entry would fall to the heritage communities, assisted by cultural heritage organizations. Archives, libraries and museums are expected to support heritage communities' safeguarding decisions; establish links with experts; identify other elements with similar characteristics; and work with heritage communities to "transmit processes that belong to the same heritage group." At the same time, these institutions will be asked to define projects based on data in the database and ensure an appropriate clustering of elements and best practices. The database will be managed by a consortium ("whether or not with its own legal personality") and the Flemish Community has been designated as the owner of the database. This proposal is based on an existing, successful, model; *Archiefbank Vlaanderen* (Archives Database Flanders) is organized in this way; experience with this database offers sufficient evidence for the Government of Flanders that such a system of decentralized entry and joint management is effective. Nonetheless, the Flemish ICH policy still needs work. Definitions, notions and concepts need to be more clearly defined. For example, the relationship(s) among ICH, popular culture, ethnology, authenticity and tradition need to be more finely crafted. Translating these concepts in multiple languages is also a

²⁷³ The Government of Flanders, *Policy on Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage*, 169.

challenge for the Flemish. In Flemish, for example, there are four possible translations of the word “safeguarding,” each with different connotations.²⁷⁴

In the spirit of the Convention, the Government of Flanders works cooperatively with other nations to establish best practices in safeguarding intangible cultural heritage. One such cooperative relationship is with The Heritage Foundation in the province of Newfoundland and Labrador, Canada.

VI.D.2. Newfoundland and Labrador, Canada

VI.D.2.a. About Newfoundland and Labrador Like the United States, Canada has an historically complicated relationship with UNESCO. And, like the United States, Canada is not a signatory to the 2003 UNESCO ICH Convention. The reasons for Canada not being a Convention signatory are both political and practical. In part, the Canadian government has resisted signing the Convention due to concerns that it may interfere with ongoing and contentious Native land claims cases. Another possible historical reason that has been proffered for not ratifying the Convention is that the governmental department which held the original UNESCO ICH portfolio was largely run by archaeologists and architectural historians (as opposed to anthropologists or folklorists); government culture suggested a lack of practical knowledge about how to best steward Canada’s intangible cultural heritage.²⁷⁵

²⁷⁴ The Government of Flanders, *Policy on Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage*, 152. Currently the Flemish use ‘beschermen’ as translation of safeguarding, but there is some disagreement over this term versus the alternatives: ‘(waar)borgen’, ‘vrijwaren’ and ‘koesteren’.

²⁷⁵ Dale Jarvis, interview with author, 30 January 30, 2014.

Despite not being signatories to the Convention, the Canadian province of Newfoundland and Labrador has had an intangible cultural heritage office since 2008.²⁷⁶ The Heritage Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador is instead one of several NGOs that enjoys Observer status with UNESCO.²⁷⁷ The Heritage Foundation is a UNESCO-accredited NGO that works specifically on issues of intangible cultural heritage.²⁷⁸ Working in tandem with the Department of Folklore at Memorial University, The Heritage Foundation works to safeguard intangible heritage within the province. Similar efforts are underway in Quebec and Alberta, indicating grassroots movements for safeguarding ICH throughout much of Canada.²⁷⁹

VI.D.2.b. The Heritage Foundation: Deploying the Convention In 2006, The Heritage Foundation of the Canadian province of Newfoundland and Labrador held an intangible cultural heritage conference which was followed in 2008 by the establishment of an intangible cultural heritage office which established strategies for the preservation of living heritage. At the time, however, the initiative lacked the personnel to oversee and enact the new strategies. When Dale Jarvis, a folklorist in the province who is now the Intangible Cultural Heritage Development Officer, was installed in the ICH office of The Heritage Foundation, he established programming, workshops and community events to promote ICH in the province.²⁸⁰

²⁷⁶ Dale Jarvis, interview with author, 30 January 30, 2014.

²⁷⁷ Dale Jarvis, interview with author, 30 January 30, 2014. Jarvis expands on this, saing, “There’s a process, there’s language in the Convention whereby organizations that have ICH in their mandate can apply for Observer status. I think there are about 150 NGOs worldwide that have that kind of accreditation. It’s very lengthy, I think it took three or four years for us to get everything in place for that. The American Folklore Society in States has the same accreditation.”

²⁷⁸ Dale Jarvis, interview with author, 30 January 30, 2014.. Dale Jarvis serves on a consultative body for UNESCO on ICH issues as well.

²⁷⁹ Dale Jarvis, interview with author, 30 January 30, 2014.

²⁸⁰ Dale Jarvis, interview with author, 30 January 30, 2014.

Newfoundland and Labrador considers the work of safeguarding intangible cultural heritage “public sector folklore.” As such, the province has adopted a strategy for safeguarding that is aligned with the UNESCO ICH Convention, but remains unique to Newfoundland and Labrador. The strategy has four components: *inventorying*, as is mandated by the Convention and is effectively an act of records creation; *celebration*, such as festivals and other programs which draw attention to traditions and/or tradition-bearers; *transmission*, or projects that encourage the transmission of skills and knowledge between generations and within communities; and *cultural industry*, or building a sustainable environment for intangible cultural heritage. Each program that originates in the ICH office is designed to incorporate as many of these four elements as possible. A celebration, therefore, might also include an opportunity for skill-building and will be recorded as part of the province’s ethnographic record.²⁸¹

Among the successes of the Newfoundland and Labrador ICH program is an annual folklife festival, modeled after the Smithsonian Folklife Festival which takes place annually on the National Mall in Washington, D.C.²⁸² Similarly, The Heritage Foundation has established a festival centered on the Christmas tradition of Mumming. Mumming is a disguise tradition wherein celebrants travel door to door during the 12 days of Christmas in disguise, in the hopes of fooling their neighbors. Mumming was a popular tradition in rural Newfoundland and Labrador, the decline of which was spurred by population decline, an aging population and the effects of urbanization. The Heritage Foundation chose to reinvigorate this dying tradition through creating a festival. In the 1800s, Newfoundland and Labrador was known for their Mummer’s Parades; however, prior to this intervention, a parade had not been held in over a century. The decision was therefore made to run a month-long festival celebrating the Mummer

²⁸¹ Dale Jarvis, interview with author, 30 January 30, 2014.

²⁸² Dale Jarvis, interview with author, 30 January 30, 2014.

tradition including lectures, workshops, costume parties and, of course, a parade. ICH officer Dale Jarvis says of the event,

[I]t was participatory. It challenged people's assumption of what a parade was. We thought we'd be happy if we got 70-80 people. Mummering here is something that people are very passionate about people take very seriously so that first year we got closer to 600 people. It was always intended that it would be a one-year event, but it was so popular that we just kept going with it. And now they've formed their own Board of Directors. So my role was just to get things started and help [them] incorporate and they started fundraising and it's a yearly event. We partnered with The Rooms, which is a local museum. So last year, The Rooms, which has a capacity of 1700 or something, they had over 3000 people show up for this event. So we outgrew the venue and this year we had to go outdoors, and we brought in performers from Ireland. We completely reinvigorated a tradition.²⁸³

Despite successes, however, scope remains an issue; without national government buy-in, the ICH office in Newfoundland and Labrador remains small, as does their budget. They are, therefore, heavily reliant on community organizations and other heritage organizations. They maintain strong partnerships with umbrella groups such as the museums organization and the archives organization. Depending on the project, the nature of the collaboration might be with an individual archives, museum, historical society, town council, food security network or community center. If a community organization is interested in a living heritage project, The Heritage Foundation works in partnership with them, offering interventions and support as they are able.

Among the anxieties the Heritage Foundation expresses regarding performance is concern over the loss of micro-expressions and micro-variations of cultural expression:

Communities have a very strong folk dance tradition as well as musical traditions around the island. We have a great tradition of set dancing. So we have these communities with sort of a long history of folk dancing, these set dances, and then rock 'n' roll came in and those traditions started to disappear so communities are

²⁸³ Dale Jarvis, interview with author, 30 January 30, 2014.

concerned that these dances will disappear. They're all sort of derived from the same tradition and many of them have the same movements or the same figures but they have over generations become highly localized so the community dance in one community might be slightly different or have slightly different steps or movements than in another community. So we're worried that some of the micro-variations or micro-traditions might die out in an amalgamation to one single tradition.²⁸⁴

Similarly, traditional dancers across the province expressed dismay over the loss of dance heritage in Canada. To address these concerns, Heritage Foundation and the ICH office worked collaboratively with the Department of Ethnomusicology at Memorial University and with a local contemporary dance festival company to bring together dancers from a multitude of genres, including English and French country dance, traditional dance, jazz, contemporary dance, ballroom dance, belly dance, burlesque and hip-hop, to create Dance Newfoundland and Labrador (DanceNL). Now run by its own Board of Directors and operating under a mandate to safeguard dance and to make dance a part of the Newfoundland and Labrador educational curriculum, DanceNL is the first sectoral dance association for the province. Its stated mandate is to “preserve, promote and support all forms of dance and dance activities throughout the province.” In 2010 DanceNL conducted a survey which helped them build a “picture of the breadth of dance activity happening across the province and to understand what kind of work the dance community both wants and needs DanceNL to undertake on its behalf.”²⁸⁵

In Newfoundland and Labrador, in keeping with the spirit of the 2003 UNESCO ICH Convention, a high value is placed on the role of community in determining the ICH to be safeguarded and the means by which safeguarding is best accomplished. The challenge to this, however, is the specific mandates to which community organizations must adhere and whether or

²⁸⁴ Dale Jarvis, interview with author, 30 January 30, 2014.

²⁸⁵ DanceNL, “About,” <http://dancenl.ca/about-dancenl/> (accessed 30 April 2014)

not that mandate includes a facilitator role. For heritage institutions such as archives, libraries and museums, the Convention presents both problem and promise: there is a need to be more sustainable, to do outreach and to engage new audiences; ICH initiatives offer a means by which to accomplish all of these goals, but they often conflict with existing policies. One solution is for heritage institutions to more broadly interpret their mandates:

The thing about archives, especially small archives, town archives, is that they become all about maintaining a collection and they forget that their real role is to help communities understand themselves better. And a lot of times small museums, their staff become property maintenance specialists and it's a lot of 'How do we make enough money to keep the electricity on?' and 'How do we afford climate control?' and it becomes less about history and more about just maintenance. That's a real concern for a lot of museums and archives.²⁸⁶

Training is a significant aspect of the work of the Newfoundland and Labrador Heritage Foundation. The ICH office offers professional skills training in areas such as oral history, ethnographic documentation, audio recording equipment use, using Google Maps and digitization workshops in conjunction with a local archives association. In addition to this, they conduct training in more traditional or "folk" skills such as dance workshops or workshops on particular craft traditions, such weaving or making hobby horses for Christmas celebrations. The goal of these training programs is essential capacity-building within local community organizations. Like their colleagues in Flanders, the ICH personnel in Newfoundland and Labrador seeks to empower communities with the skills to inventory their own heritage and document themselves. Also like their colleagues in Flanders, they have established a central database where all of the ethnographic information is stored.²⁸⁷

²⁸⁶ Dale Jarvis, interview with author, 30 January 30, 2014.

²⁸⁷ Dale Jarvis, interview with author, 30 January 30, 2014.

In Newfoundland and Labrador, the ICH office works collaboratively with the archives association (The Association of Newfoundland and Labrador Archives – ANLA). Recently ANLA conducted a collections survey which uncovered unexpected ethnographic material, including oral history and video collections. The ICH office worked with ANLA to develop a workshop that they titled “Boxes Under the Bed.” The central idea behind the workshop was that archives “had these boxes of stuff that they had collected over time that had been just gathering dust, no one was actually seeing it.” For Dale Jarvis, whose mantra was that in order for stories to live they “can’t just be in archives, they need to be back out in the community,” this level of access was insufficient.²⁸⁸

So we went out to communities and the archives association talked about archival procedures – how you catalog and inventory and preserve your physical objects, you know what you do with those videotapes ... and how you get your collections ready – and we talked about digitization and access and making those projects accessible back to the community. And along with that, we took on several digitization projects to help get some of the materials back out into the public.²⁸⁹

Digitization is the primary means of preservation and access that countries report undertaking to safeguard the archival detritus of ICH expressions. The Heritage Foundation’s most recent collaboration with ANLA, one that is just now beginning, involves offering community workshops on scanning still images. These workshops begin with the most basic of skills – turning on the scanner – and extend to intellectual and physical control and provisions for access.²⁹⁰

²⁸⁸ Dale Jarvis, interview with author, 30 January 30, 2014.

²⁸⁹ Dale Jarvis, interview with author, 30 January 30, 2014.

²⁹⁰ Dale Jarvis, interview with author, 30 January 30, 2014. The forthcoming workshop focuses specifically on recipes as part of a series on local community knowledge and knowledge practices. Recipes function as the hook: the hope is that community members will bring old, handwritten recipe cards, vintage cookbooks and/or annotated cookbooks to foster a dialogue about local cuisine and food ways/traditional foods while teaching digitization skills as a preservation technique. The materials will be digitized and a small online collection around local community food practices will be created. This

VI.D.3. Trinidad and Tobago

VI.D.3.a. About Trinidad & Tobago

*“[W]hat I do is because of the community. **I am because we are.** Everything I do is because of the community.”²⁹¹*

The Republic of Trinidad and Tobago comprises two islands in the southernmost part of the Lesser Antilles islands, bordered on one side by the Caribbean Sea and by the Atlantic Ocean on the other. Located seven miles off the coast of Venezuela, Trinidad and Tobago was a Spanish colony which changed hands several times before eventually falling under colonial British rule in the earliest part of the 19th century. Trinidad and Tobago gained independence in 1962 and became a Republic in 1976, two hundred years after the United States declared its independence from British colonialism.

The destabilizing cultural marks of colonialism are still apparent in Trinidad and Tobago, making the country a unique case for understanding the complexities of the ICH Convention and the attendant complications of a national government’s relationship with an international organization such as UNESCO. Trinidad still operates under a Parliamentary government, another residual effect of colonization; as such, in Trinidad and Tobago, the care of intangible cultural heritage falls under the purview of the National Ministry of the Arts and Multiculturalism.

workshop will be offered twice: once in the capital city of St. John and once in a smaller, rural community (Cupid) where the focus is on training the “archivists” – those working in historical societies and small archives who lack formal archival training – in digitization and other technical skills. To culminate the Cupid workshop, a community tea and recipe swap will be held to bring the archivists together with the community. At the culminating community tea, scanners will be set up for immediate use allowing archivists to acquire new materials for the recipe collection and demystifying the archival process for the community.

²⁹¹ Lutalo Massimba interview with author, November 1, 2013.

Trinidad and Tobago has interpreted the Convention to mean that they must create an “enabling environment” in which intangible cultural heritage can flourish. For them, ratifying the Convention, agreeing to the provisions of the Convention and creating this enabling environment are all synonymous: by signing the Convention they have agreed to create this “enabling environment” for individuals and communities and groups for the continuity of their intangible cultural heritage.²⁹²

VI.D.3.b. The Remember When Institute: Deploying the Convention Faced with the knowledge that existing records such as documents and recordings are underpublicized and the public unaware of their existence, Trinidad and Tobago’s Cultural Research Unit, housed within the Ministry of the Arts and Multiculturalism, has proposed an institute—The Remember When Institute—to make provisions for public access to the country’s intangible cultural heritage. The Remember When Institute is intended to be an instrument that will reflect Trinidad and Tobago’s intangible cultural heritage; as such, its creators sought to model it after an existing international policy, consulting with cultural resource managers at the Smithsonian Institute in Washington, D.C. and the Jamaican Memory Bank in Kingston, Jamaica. The goal is for the Institute to be semi-autonomous, although it will remain under the purview of the Ministry of the Arts and Multiculturalism.²⁹³

Although the physical entity has not yet been established, the proposed Institute will work in partnership with the country’s other cultural establishments: the National Library (NALIS), the National Museum, the National Art Gallery, the National Carnival Commission, The Carnival Institute of Trinidad and Tobago and the National Archives. The Remember When

²⁹² Alicia Blake, interview with author, October 31, 2013.

²⁹³ Alicia Blake, interview with author, October 31, 2013.

Institute is intended to function as a “repository for the memories of Trinidad and Tobago;” in its current incarnation (a website), it holds information about the Cultural Research Unit’s extensive audio-visual library which contains audio recordings, video recordings and oral histories.²⁹⁴ The National Culture Council was responsible for creating the recordings, of which there are thousands, now housed in the offices of the Ministry of the Arts and Multiculturalism, rounding out what the Cultural Research Unit calls their “cultural archive.” These recordings are slowly being digitized. The process is one of real time transfer, however, and only one employee can be dedicated to this digitization work. The recordings, which date to 1971, were placed in a hot storage facility (one lacking environmental controls) in the valley village of Diego Martin.

Trinibagonians are now just getting the importance of preserving cultural heritage and preserving records and such. You would see a piece of paper or a recording and you would just throw it away. So in storage in Diego Martin a lot of the recordings were damaged. But what we saved, those are here and that’s what we are digitizing. And after [our] National Culture Council disbanded, this research unit was created to continue the work. And we are under the Ministry of the Arts and Multiculturalism.²⁹⁵

Trinidad and Tobago ratified the Convention in 2010 and began their National Inventories Project (also known as the We’re Trinibagonian Project) on 2 June 2012.²⁹⁶ The community-based inventorying project was a joint collaboration sponsored by the Ministry of the Arts and Multiculturalism, the National Commission for UNESCO in Trinidad and Tobago, and the UNESCO Kingston (Jamaica) cluster office.

Their first inventorying task was to create a website through which the public could submit nominations of ICH elements to include in the inventory. To solicit submissions the Cultural Research Unit used social media, print media and radio. The call for submissions and an

²⁹⁴ Alicia Blake, interview with author, October 31, 2013.

²⁹⁵ Alicia Blake, interview with author, October 31, 2013.

²⁹⁶ Alicia Blake, interview with author, October 31, 2013.

electronic submission form were posted on the Remember When website. The data from the form was ingested into a database which, despite frequent technical glitches, is still publicly viewable on the Remember When Institute webpage.²⁹⁷ Following the creation of the National Registry of ICH, a selection of experts comprised of local specialists was convened to review the submissions. This panel consisted of representatives from the national cultural agencies including the National Archives, faculty from the University of the West Indies and other Trinidadian universities and representatives from other stakeholder organizations who reviewed and added details to the existing inventory.²⁹⁸

In one of their first acts of safeguarding, in 2013 the Cultural Research Unit of the Ministry of the Arts and Multiculturalism sponsored an interactive exhibit focused on the country's intangible cultural heritage. The exhibit included live drumming, storytelling, instruction in traditional game play (such as Ring-Around-The-Roses and Brown-Gal-in-the-Ring), information about popular folktale characters and childhood stories, displays about secular and sacred rituals with accompanying information about how to participate when appropriate, among other attractions. This interactive exhibit, in form and function, is the model for Trinidad and Tobago's proposed Remember When Institute. Working in partnership with cultural heritage organizations (including the National Archives), the Institute is intended to function as an interactive learning space where performed cultural memory endures.²⁹⁹

In addition to the inventory, UNESCO mandates that States Parties conduct a pilot project. In Trinidad and Tobago, this pilot project was a festival called La Davina Pastora (The

²⁹⁷ Alicia Blake, interview with author, October 31, 2013. See also: <http://www.culture.gov.tt/rememberwheninstitute/projects.html>

²⁹⁸ Alicia Blake, interview with author, October 31, 2013.

²⁹⁹ Alicia Blake, interview with author, October 31, 2013.

Black Mother or The Black Mary).³⁰⁰ In documenting La Davina Pastora, the Cultural Research Unit surveyed community members about what was important to preserve about the festival and offered classes to stakeholder heritage communities on how to use video equipment. The goal of deploying the Convention in all of the countries in this study is always, in part, to empower communities to maintain their own heritage elements and identities.³⁰¹

People have been coming to the Ministry asking us to document. I think that is what is beautiful about Trinidad and Tobago, there's an eagerness to share your culture. There are certain aspects of religions that people might say, 'Well we don't want you to document this,' because it's sacred. For instance, they might say this aspect is private, but other aspects you can document. For Divali, the organizations come and request that we document.³⁰²

To safeguard Divali, the Hindu festival of lights, the Cultural Research Unit sponsored and curated a Divali exhibit at Piarco Airport in Port-of-Spain in October and November 2013. Prior to that, they sponsored and curated, in collaboration with the Trinbago Unified Calypsonians' Organisation [*sic*] an exhibition on Calypso History Month focusing on Calypsonians who won the Carnival Calypso competition from 1939-2013.³⁰³

Calypso is part of the Carnival tradition. Because Carnival is such a complex mix of religious, musical, parade, dance and costume traditions, for the Cultural Research Unit to undertake a safeguarding project might require breaking Carnival down into constituent parts: the Steel Pan, the Mas (masquerade) and the Calypso; adding a layer of complexity, in southern Trinidad, Carnival is celebrated differently than in the capital city, Port-of-Spain. Mas, or the

³⁰⁰ One of Trinidad and Tobago's unique cultural qualities is the shared religious practices of two disparate devotional communities. The Hindu and Christian traditions exist mostly in parallel in Trinidad and Tobago; the festival of La Davina Pastora, however, is one of several areas of true intersection.

³⁰¹ Alicia Blake, interview with author, October 31, 2013.

³⁰² Alicia Blake, interview with author, October 31, 2013.

³⁰³ Alicia Blake, interview with author, October 31, 2013.

masquerade tradition in Carnival as a practice is replete with tangible artifacts such as costumes and masks. This makes safeguarding Mas as a Carnival practice even more complex: the 2003 Convention stipulates that the tangible may not be separated from the intangible. Because safeguarding practices are based on how the heritage community views the element, it is possible that it would be preferable to Carnival communities to document the tradition as a whole. Separate from Carnival itself are the Carnival Arts, which comprise making costumes, making instruments, making foods, etc. Whether or not to inscribe these elements as part of one large Carnival tradition is a question with which the Cultural Research Unit and heritage communities in Trinidad and Tobago are struggling.³⁰⁴

Like other musical traditions in Trinidad and Tobago (Soca, Rapso), Calypso is not religious, despite its penchant for Biblical references. Commentary Calypso grew out of the history of Carnival; one will, for example, hear references in Calypso of familiar Carnival characters including the Midnight Robber, the Pierrot Guinnard and the Chanteuelle.³⁰⁵ In Trinidad, the Calypso headquarters are headed by Rapso artist Lutalo Massimba, also known as Brother Resistance. Brother Resistance self-identifies as a “promoter of the Word;” writing and performing poetry is his life’s work. Seated during the 2013 local elections, Massimba oversees the The Trinbago Unified Calypsonians’ Organisation (TUCO). His organization has administrative responsibility for Calypso as an art form, particularly where Carnival is concerned (including Calypso competitions and Calypso tents during Carnival). Outside of Carnival, the organizations’ first responsibilities are to their members because it is a member organization.³⁰⁶

³⁰⁴ Alicia Blake, interview with author, October 31, 2013.

³⁰⁵ Lutalo Massimba interview with author, November 1, 2013.

³⁰⁶ Lutalo Massimba interview with author, November 1, 2013.

The organization operates under a mandate to ensure the continuation of Calypso as a cultural tradition. Says Brother Resistance,

Calypso is still the music which have given credence and provided the glue, really, that keeps us together as a nation. Calypso will come to you in so many different ways, it's a part of the life rhythm of the nation.³⁰⁷ Rapso is the, sort of defined as 'the power of the word,' 'the rhythm of the word.' It is essentially the poetry of Calypso, or for the younger people, the consciousness of Soca. Essentially it is the voice of the people, articulating their struggle for true independence, their struggle for self-determination and self-definition. So it, when they say Rapso it's more than an art form, actually, it's an attitude in the struggle for self-definition and making a statement in the world ... the rhythms come from the power of the drums. The drums represent the foundation, so when we synchronize the rhythm of the voice with the rhythm of the drums, that fullness is the Rapso music or the Rapso rhythm.³⁰⁸

As of November 2013 TUCO is working toward creating a Museum of Calypso History. Their hope is to have a virtual museum with digitized materials made available for public access. After working collaboratively with the Ministry of the Arts and Multiculturalism on the Calypso History Month exhibit, TUCO members felt that the Ministry could embrace Calypso with more vigor and do more work to promote Calypso as an art form in the Carnival tradition.³⁰⁹ Here one sees the downside of collaborative efforts: collaboration can be difficult even among the country's heritage officers because of competing politics, community desires and functional needs. To promote Rapso and Calypso, TUCO runs community-based writing workshops.³¹⁰ There are few tangible resources for Rapso and Calypso artists who want to learn about this aspect of their cultural heritage:

[T]hey didn't have no books. I had to talk to the elders, talk to the old drummers. People like Shabba who are now deceased. I talk to them and get a sense of understanding about what they're talking about. They had a different time, a

³⁰⁷ Lutalo Massimba interview with author, November 1, 2013.

³⁰⁸ Lutalo Massimba interview with author, November 1, 2013.

³⁰⁹ Lutalo Massimba interview with author, November 1, 2013.

³¹⁰ Lutalo Massimba interview with author, November 1, 2013.

different experience. And they mightn't even want to talk to you too much because they feel you're prying. Because the published word was so scarce, you know, maybe J.D. Elder who had a doctoral thesis, and more recently, Dr. Hollis Liverpool. *Rituals of Power and Rebellion* is a seminal work. Generally they didn't have much published works. It was always a searching. There's a network [of people] but you have to look for it. [Calypso] is so anti-the establishment. It is in fact a revolutionary action. Through the masquerade, through the power of the drums, through the rhythm there is this rebelliousness, this revolution. And because it is against the system, you'll find that the system will not recognize it or even give it a space to come through.³¹¹

Documentation efforts have been minimally successful to date. As such The Trinbago Unified Calypsonians' Organisation [*sic*] is creating a Research and Education Unit that, with a Memorandum of Understanding already in place with the University of the West Indies (St. Augustine Campus, Trinidad and Tobago), will operate in partnership with the National Archives and the National Carnival Institute. Brother Resistance laments that while a relationship exists with archivists and collectors of artifacts, recording and photographs, TUCO lacks the expertise to bring these groups together. Again invoking the Smithsonian, Massimba expressed dismay at TUCO's lack of documented history and the Trinidad government's failure to step in and assist.³¹² The National Archives in Trinidad and Tobago's primary holdings are government records and historical newspapers. They have an entire department whose sole responsibility is the conservation of historical newspapers. As such, the relationship between the National Archives and other cultural heritage institutions is a complex one. With no mandate beyond government records, safeguarding performance has not been a national priority until now. The National Archives in Trinidad and Tobago are not well-equipped to function in an advisory role for performed cultural heritage.

³¹¹ Lutalo Massimba interview with author, November 1, 2013.

³¹² Lutalo Massimba interview with author, November 1, 2013.

Like their counterparts in Newfoundland and Labrador, ICH workers in Trinidad and Tobago work with local schools to transmit knowledge and information about the nation's intangible cultural heritage. They have roving exhibitions that they send out to schools. This is one outreach effort among many that the Cultural Research Unit has undertaken.³¹³ Nonetheless, outreach, as well as access, remain a challenge in Trinidad and Tobago. The Cultural Research Unit struggles with the limitations of their website because they share server space with the entire country's Culture Division. When they have a standalone URL and a dedicated staff person to upload data to the website, they expect their web presence to be stronger.³¹⁴

V.I.E. THE ARCHIVE AND THE REPERTOIRE

UNESCO's model is one of both global cooperation and decentralization. The language of the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage states explicitly that it is designed to promote global partnerships, encouraging and fostering "all forms of international cooperation aimed at safeguarding intangible cultural heritage." How does the relationship between archives and repertoires function on a global scale? That is to say, if one takes into account global partnerships and decentralized archival practices, how does the nature of relationship shift?

One of the primary ways that safeguarding practices are engaged on a global scale is through inclusion on one of UNESCO's ICH lists. Inclusion on a UNESCO list is akin to codifying Dunham Technique: inclusion carries with it the weight of legitimacy. When a nation

³¹³ Alicia Blake, interview with author, October 31, 2013.

³¹⁴ Alicia Blake, interview with author, October 31, 2013.

or “State Party” ratifies the 2003 Convention, they may nominate intangible cultural heritage elements to the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding, the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity and/or the list of Programmes [*sic*], Projects and Activities for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage Considered to Best Reflect the Principles and Objectives of the Convention. Inclusion on one of these lists has economic and touristic potential for States Parties, and decisions about which elements from which countries will be included on these lists are politically fraught. Despite the Government of Flanders assertion that, “Above all, [inclusion on a list] should increase the probability to transmit intangible cultural heritage,” and that “[i]nventories and international lists are thus not a target in themselves, but a means of achieving the Convention’s objectives,” the lists remain a point of both national pride and international contention as politics play a crucial role.³¹⁵ For many countries ratifying the Convention, the focus on legislative infrastructures and the prestige of inclusion on a UNESCO list has marred the path to actual safeguarding activities. As Alicia Blake noted in Trinidad, “I think people were so concerned about getting on the list that they forgot that they were supposed to be safeguarding and including the community. They missed the purpose which is to ensure the continuity of the element. They aren’t putting measures in place to ensure that this will still be around in ten years.”³¹⁶

Because of the preoccupation with the list and attention to legislative intervention to meet the mandates of ratification, there is little actual safeguarding activity on which to report in many countries. In theory, the archives that support heritage communities in safeguarding activities are expected to take on an outreach role as well as acting in an advisory capacity. Working closely with government units and within specific policy guidelines, archives are being asked to serve a

³¹⁵ The Government of Flanders, *Policy on Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage*, 147.

³¹⁶ Alicia Blake, interview with author, October 31, 2013.

broader function than is typically seen in Western archival institutions. These archives will serve not only an information stewardship role and act as agents for the public good, but will also be expected to operate as training facilities, structural entities and collaborators in safeguarding repertoire practices. Data—particularly interview data—from Trinidad and Canada suggests that the existing relationship between archive and repertoire is nuanced and complex, bringing to light practical and political issues around mandates, intellectual property, ownership and stewardship.

In addition to these complexities, UNESCO's concept of intangible cultural heritage is so broad that performative practices are rarely isolated from other ICH elements. Rather, there is a theoretically holistic approach that ratifying nations share. Similar in theory to Canada's "Total Archives" concept, the data supports ICH officers' contentions that multi-faceted elements—like Carnival in Trinidad and Tobago—are best protected by describing them as a whole, then subsequently safeguarding their component parts. The concept of Total Archives, a "strategy to document the historical development and all segments of a community by acquiring both official administrative records as well as related personal papers and corporate records," emerged in the 1980s as a response, in part, to concerns about cultural loss as the result of colonialism.³¹⁷ For a complex series of reasons, among them lack of community trust in archival repositories and the impracticality of collecting at such a large scale, Canada has since retreated from the notion of Total Archives. While the Total Archives concept of holistic documentation has proved imperfect at best, the spirit of the idea is an inspiring one when documenting and preserving/safeguarding performed acts. In a 1980 report to the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, The Consultative Group on Canadian Archives explains Total

³¹⁷ SAA Glossary, "Total Archives," <http://www2.archivists.org/glossary/terms/t/total-archives>.

Archives as an “attempt to document all aspects of historical development, seeking the records not just of officialdom or of a governing elite but of all segments of a community.”³¹⁸ Although it may not be possible to document all aspects of a performative practice in equal measure, attempts should be made to document the heritage community’s vision of their cultural practice in as much depth and breadth as possible.

Because the Convention dictates that the tangible and the intangible cannot be separated, Trinidad and Tobago continues to struggle with decisions about Carnival. As previously mentioned, Carnival comprises many individual elements and, at the same time, can be seen as one unified element. As Blake explains, “You can choose how you want to handle the element. So with Carnival we might not get too specific, we might just cover the element and not get into all of the different aspects. But we’ve been warned that the more general the element, the less likely it is to get on the Representative List.”³¹⁹ Countries do have the option of proffering joint nominations to the list. However, the cooperative relationships between and among countries becomes complicated when political alliances come to bear. This is true not only for the lists, but also for the UNESCO ICH Fund. Through the Fund UNESCO supports projects from countries with less administrative power. In 2008, the General Assembly of UNESCO approved a series of ICH operational directives. The operational directives define the rules, procedures and criteria for inscription on the lists and the register and for receiving contributions from the Fund of the Convention.³²⁰ Since 2008, immediately following the approval of the operational directives by the UNESCO General Assembly, the Government of Flanders has contributed about 15,000 € annually to the Fund. Countries that ratify the Convention may seek funding assistance from

³¹⁸ Consultative Group on Canadian Archives, *Canadian Archives, Report to the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada* (Ottawa: SSHRC, 1980): 63-64.

³¹⁹ Alicia Blake, interview with author, October 31, 2013.

³²⁰ The Government of Flanders, *Policy on Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage*, 151.

UNESCO to aide in getting ICH initiatives off the ground. Regular assistance [from UNESCO] for which countries must apply is about US \$25K. Emergency assistance, if the element is in urgent need of safeguarding may be more substantial.³²¹ UNESCO provides training assistance as well. Of note, Japan offers independent assistance to other countries for ICH initiatives through the Japan Funds-in-Trust Program.³²² The program gives monetary assistance to countries to assist in inventorying efforts. Trinidad and Tobago received assistance from the Kingston Cluster Office (Kingston, Jamaica) to offer an eight-day workshop in June 2013 on conducting a national inventory, sharing best practices and garnering community engagement.³²³

Reporting is done annually to UNESCO about progress on ICH initiatives. Toward this end, most reporting nations indicate digitization and database construction among their most common safeguarding methods. The databases are preliminary infrastructures for tracking and managing cultural heritage artifacts. They also serve as tangible records of intangible practices. Concerns about levels of and provisions for access remain an issue for many. For example, The Heritage Foundation in Newfoundland and Labrador is bridging the gap between archives and community by providing broader access to archival materials through digitization efforts and outreach. Dale Jarvis reported being “in conflict” with archives over concerns about access and asserted his belief that everything should be freely available. As such, The Heritage Foundation uses Creative Commons for copyright; Jarvis confirms that it is part of their metadata

³²¹ Reporting is done annually to UNESCO. The Director of Culture in Trinidad and Tobago is an Executive Member on the National Council for UNESCO, however, and in this role facilitates ongoing conversation between UNESCO and the Ministry of Arts and Multiculturalism. Another way that the Ministry of Arts and Multiculturalism stays abreast of changes and amendments to the Convention is directly from UNESCO. Several times per year, UNESCO sends bulletins to States Parties. These updates are also available for download from the UNESCO website.

³²² Permanent Delegation of Japan to UNESCO, “Japanese Funds-In-Trust,” <http://www.unesco.emb-japan.go.jp/htm/jpfundsintrust.htm>.

³²³ Alicia Blake, interview with author, October 31, 2013.

protocol.³²⁴ In Trinidad and Tobago, staff at the Cultural Research Unit posit that issues of access begin with debates about documentation.

In Brazil they had a major thrust where they would go and inventory and interview, but the government was so involved that, I don't want to say they lost their authenticity, but it was more research oriented than communities really ... When the thrust comes from the people they don't necessarily go about inventorying the 'right way' and there are some things that they just aren't going to want to show. [Interviewer: Levels of access?]. Yes. When researchers come they want to expose all aspects of the element even if that's not appropriate. There's a problem with the dialectic there. They have the element, we, as the Government have the education. We need to educate them and not interfere. And yet they need to pass through us to get certification so that UNESCO can recognize it as a national element. It forces the two parties (the government and the communities) to work together, but it also creates this terrible catch-22. The government can say they want to include it and the community can say no. You have to have community approval. Signed community approval. There's a form. In certain communities there's an obvious hierarchy like the First Peoples of Trinidad and Tobago (the Carib, the Arawak – the indigenous people of these islands). On the other hand, for a case in Ireland where they were looking at this national festival: it was one big national festival and different communities celebrate it differently. It's very difficult because these communities are less formalized. Neighborhoods. Who do you go to for 'permission' to 'document'?³²⁵

Similarly, UNESCO speaks specifically to access in its examination of reports from States Parties, noting that,

access to intangible cultural heritage documentation is provided for researchers, other specialists, the general public and the cultural communities, with special arrangements being made in some cases for information relating to 'their' intangible heritage. In many cases, this access is provided through making the archival collections (housed in national archives and libraries, national, regional and local museums, the archives of the cultural heritage protection body, etc.) open for public consultation. In other cases documentation is made available in digital form through electronic databases, web portals, etc.³²⁶

For example, the Europeana.eu database is one such resource, containing 12,000 digital records from Bulgaria, including recordings of traditional songs, and approximately 90,000 records from

³²⁴ Dale Jarvis, interview with author, 30 January 30, 2014.

³²⁵ Cultural Research Unit Staff, interview with author, October 31, 2013.

³²⁶ UNESCO, *Examination of the Reports of States Parties*, 18.

Hungary. The Glob@l Libraries - Bulgaria Programme likewise aims to “improve access to information, knowledge, communications, digital content and community services through a network of public libraries in towns and villages country-wide.”³²⁷ In Senegal, there is a plan to establish databases of local cultural heritage—once an inventory has been undertaken—in regional community centers which are expected to greatly aid local communities’ access to documentation.³²⁸ Continuing their analysis of the current state of access, UNESCO asserts:

[a]n important issue relating to communities’ access to documentation remains the means by which the access of remote bearer communities to their and others’ intangible heritage can really be ensured, especially if they do not have Internet access. In this regard, the movement towards establishing documentation centres in local museums and cultural centres, some custom built for specific elements, could be considered a positive move. Another issue that needs to be borne in mind relates to the treatment of secret and/or sacred heritage held in publicly accessible archives. In Côte d’Ivoire, certain elements have a sacred character and access to them is limited by customary practices that are respected in research studies as well as safeguarding policies and measures.

Concerns about levels of access are not new to information stewards. Archivists in Canada and the United States, among other nations, have been contending with levels of access in relation to Native American Protocols. Several examples of this exist, but one notable example is the Plateau People’s Web Portal, a joint collaboration between the Plateau Center for American Indian studies at Washington State University and tribal consultants from the Umatilla, Coeur d’Alene and Yakama nations. The portal acts as a gateway to Plateau people’s cultural materials in the Washington State University’s Libraries, Manuscripts, Archives and Special Collections as well as the Museum of Anthropology and several national donors including The National Anthropology Archives at the Smithsonian Institution. All of the materials included in the portal were selected and are curated by the tribal nations. In addition to providing the digital portal for

³²⁷ UNESCO, *Examination of the Reports of States Parties*, 15.

³²⁸ UNESCO, *Examination of the Reports of States Parties*, 19.

access to tribal content, the project aims to reimagine existing paradigms for the “curation, distribution and reproduction of Native peoples’ cultural materials.”³²⁹ When materials are uploaded to the portal, tribal administrators may add additional knowledge, edit published information, tag materials or flag them as culturally sensitive. Private collections, when added, can be set at differing levels of access, ensuring adherence to tribal codes and ethical standards. Because each tribe adds their own content and develops their own descriptive subcategories, the resulting representation is not filtered through a Western lens; rather, it provides a layered narrative and a rightfully complex foundation for understanding the history of the Plateau peoples.

Prior to Christen’s work on the Plateau People’s Web Portal, she was involved in an Australian initiative called Mukurtu. Like the Plateau People’s Web Portal, Mukurtu was designed to allow indigenous people to preserve their cultural property on their own terms. Mukurtu is, in essence, a web-based curation suite—or content management system—that allows tribal community members to define unique permissions on multiple levels that determine who can and cannot access the cultural materials housed on the Mukurtu servers. The Mukurtu project began in the remote Central Australian town of Tennant Creek with the creation of the Mukurtu Wumpurrarni-kari Archive. The project was born from the needs of the Warumungu Aboriginal community who “wanted a system to archive and organize their digital cultural materials in line with their cultural protocols.”³³⁰ Despite the United States’ and Canada’s complicated relationships with UNESCO, assisting UNESCO nations with infrastructures which

³²⁹ Plateau People’s Web Portal, “Project Overview,” <http://plateauportal.wsulibs.wsu.edu/html/ppp/index.php>.

³³⁰ Mukurtu CMS, “Mukurtu’s History,” <http://www.mukurtu.org/index.html>.

allow varying levels of access is one area where U.S. and Canadian practices may support global safeguarding activities at the intersection of the tangible and the intangible.

As has been discussed, performed events resist easy capture and documentation because of their temporal nature. Additionally, for efforts at safeguarding or preserving performance to succeed on a global scale, there must be political will. Governments must be invested because the money for safeguarding endeavors can rarely be found elsewhere. Indeed, Virtual Vaudeville was funded by the National Science Foundation, a government agency. Similarly, when Katherine Dunham's State Department support ended after the performances of *Southland* in Chile and Paris, the Dunham Company lacked the resources to continue performing. Without financial and political will, global efforts to marry the archive and the repertoire may fail. Nonetheless, grassroots efforts have seen results in safeguarding and preserving performance. From these international community-based efforts the threads of solution begin to knit: collaborative efforts between heritage institutions and heritage communities within and among nations have yielded the most success.³³¹

VI.F. SUMMARY

³³¹ For example, like Canada's province of Newfoundland and Labrador, Hungary employs county-level intangible heritage coordinators who act as a bridge between local communities and Government, while in Senegal ICH work is done through Regional Cultural Centers (CCRs) situated in the country's 14 regions that serve as the interface with local communities. Likewise, in Turkey there are regional Intangible Cultural Heritage Boards and Expert Commissions in each of the country's 81 administrative units which function as a coordinating mechanism. Finally, Bulgaria also undertakes much of its safeguarding through nearly three dozen Community Cultural Centers. See: UNESCO, "Examination of the reports of States Parties on the implementation of the Convention and on the Current Status of Elements Inscribed on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity," (*Report of the 8th Session of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage*, Baku, Azerbaijan, December 2013).

Deploying the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage takes as many forms and formats as nations involved. As UNESCO attests, “[States] Parties are safeguarding intangible cultural heritage within a great variety of contexts, according to their differing social realities, geographical conditions and other factors.”³³² Intangible cultural heritage is put under pressure as a result of globalization. The lack of sufficient resources to safeguard ICH or insufficient attention to the richness of ICH elements also contribute to this. In all three cases in this chapter, interviewees argue that for reasons of political will, placing *value* on intangible cultural heritage increases its chances of being safeguarded. In this case globalization can be seen as an opportunity rather than a threat as increasing cultural globalization facilitates access to knowledge about and increases international opportunities to become acquainted with intangible cultural heritage in the world.³³³

Despite tendencies—as evidenced in this chapter—to centralize ICH policy making and implementation, one striking aspect of many national policies in creating ICH institutions and centers is a tendency toward decentralization. In Trinidad and Tobago, this decentralization or distribution takes the form of the Remember When Institute, whereby many cultural groups and organizations come together under one institutional umbrella but maintain their autonomy. Similarly, Belgium applies a bottom-up approach through networking and relying heavily on heritage communities and NGOs. Many of the nations who have ratified the Convention have specialized “documentation institutions” comprised of some or all of the following: a national archives and/or library, museums (national and/or local), the national authority responsible for

³³² For example, there are more than eighty different nationalities (ethnically distinct groupings) in Ethiopia. The wide geographical distribution of peoples and the diversity of ethnic groups with diverse languages and cultures have made the task of identifying, inventorying and safeguarding Ethiopia’s intangible cultural heritage a slow and challenging one.

³³³ The Government of Flanders, *Policy on Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage*, 152.

intangible heritage or Ministry of Culture, research institutes, universities, regional or local libraries and resource centers, and some specialized NGOs or other associations. In Belgium, Canada and Trinidad and Tobago a large number of institutions and other bodies (many of them NGOs) collect and/or hold documentation on intangible cultural heritage and a network of these bodies is being developed.

Performance is only one type of intangible cultural heritage that UNESCO has identified for safeguarding initiatives. Nevertheless, previous assertions about archival custody hold true. Those who have deployed the convention have found novel, collaborative ways of documenting and safeguarding performance as intangible cultural heritage. With particular attention to tangible infrastructures such as national inventory databases, and collaborative relationships with archives and other cultural heritage institutions, ratifying nations and their concomitant heritage communities have come to similar agreements on best practices even when operating in relative isolation or without the benefit of archival intervention. This renegotiation of the archival paradigm raises questions about the most appropriate role for archives where performance is concerned. The Comparative Analysis of this dissertation seeks to answer these questions and proposes a series of possible realignments in thinking about the liminal space between archive and repertoire.

VII. COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

In order to answer questions about the role archives play in safeguarding and preserving performative acts as a means of cultural expression, the preceding chapters explore and analyze contemporary archivy through an examination of the Virtual Vaudeville prototype; the Katherine Dunham archives and Dunham Technique; and the 2003 UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage. This chapter offers a comparative analysis of the preceding cases to identify key issues in performance-based archivy and to address the second research question: *How might existing archival theories and practices need to shift to more effectively attend to event-based cultural heritage?* This discussion draws on data from an array of sources including interviews, archival records, historical newspapers, internal project documents, national and international grant proposals, international policy documents and a host of secondary sources.

Each case study raises concerns about ownership and custody; negotiates correspondences between the tangible and the intangible; and interrogates the nature of collaboration. This comparative analysis therefore emphasizes shifting notions of archival custody; tangible infrastructures for intangible cultural heritage; and thriving cultures of collaboration.

VII.A. HERITAGE COMMUNITIES AND ARCHIVAL CUSTODY

In each of the cases selected for this study, archival institutions maintain a portion of the record while the community or community of practice retains another: the repertoire of embodied practices that form the remainder of the complete record. This study has evidenced that the traces of performance that remain in archival repositories are those which can be read as fixed text or fixed images; the repertoire, by contrast, is a living and mutable archive of the identifying characteristics and, often, the cultural inheritances of a given community. For some communities these inheritances may come in the form of narrative or music traditions. For others, it may be a traditional dance. For others still, the inheritance may be a “low art” form of variety theater that allows for an escape on a Friday afternoon. Regardless of the form of the cultural inheritance, these communities, who perform, operate without traditional archival intervention. Nonetheless, they have found solutions to problems that archivists consider uniquely archival. Issues such as preservation and provisions for access are at the center of discussions about the “repertoire” in each of the three case studies. These issues are, indeed, archival. They require a re-negotiation of a traditional archival paradigm: archival custody.

Fifteen years ago, in 1999, Jeannette Bastian, then a doctoral candidate in Library and Information Science at the University of Pittsburgh, wrote a dissertation that interrogated issues of archival custody and access in the Danish West Indies. Bastian noted then, at the turn of the 20th century, that for colonized people, ownership of their records assists in negotiating identities and forming collective memories. Extending this argument to address concerns generated by what was already an escalation in the production of electronic records, Bastian concluded, in part, that “solutions to [dilemmas of archival custody] depend on redefining the principle of custody itself in broader more inclusive terms that will accommodate societal needs for access to

collective memory.”³³⁴ This study, building on Bastian’s work, further suggests that not only are provisions of access to the records of one’s past critical to developing stable social and cultural societal structures, the act of ownership itself is closely linked to some communities’ experiences of agency and justice.

In the United States, for example, slavery remains an issue fraught with complex feelings and deeply held beliefs. It is an undisputed fact, nonetheless, that slaves were property and as such, could not themselves own property. When freed, African-Americans were legally enabled to exist politically and economically; one of the ways this new freedom was expressed was through the simple act of ownership. Owning things was a means by which to prove one’s existence, to work against the notion that a person could have so little economic control as to effectively disappear.

Discussions about ownership, custody and access converge in archival thinking where definitions of “archival” mandate the physical custody of records in an archival repository. Custody, in United States archivy, means the assumption by archival repositories of both physical possession (physical custody) and legal responsibility (legal custody) of records from the records-creators. Despite debates over the appropriateness of custodial archival relationships in the face of mounting pressures to manage an ever-increasing influx of electronic records, this custodial standard persists in North American archivy.

Electronic, digital and digitized records are not the only record-type, however, that resist traditional custodial solutions. Performed acts—whether they be traditional performing arts,

³³⁴ See also: Jeannette Bastian, *Owning Memory: How a Caribbean Community Lost its Archives and Found its History* (Westport, Connecticut: Libraries Unlimited, 2003); Jeannette Bastian, “A Question of Custody: The Colonial Archives of the United States Virgin Islands” *The American Archivist*, 64, (2001): 96-114; and Jeannette Bastian, “Taking Custody, Giving Access: A Postcustodial Role for a New Century. *Archivaria*, 53 (2002): 76-93.

expressions of intangible cultural heritage or other modes of performance—also resist the custodial paradigm. In part as a result of the temporal nature of performance, determining which part(s) of the record should cross the archival threshold becomes a complex negotiation between record-creator and archivist. How, for example, does one decide which is the true representation of any given performance?

Each of the cases in this study detail a relationship between the archive and the repertoire and suggest a scholarly need to critically disrupt issues of archival custody. In the case of Virtual Vaudeville, the project team found it difficult to locate archival materials because capturing popular entertainment was not an archival priority in the United States during the vaudeville era. Project team members differentiate vaudeville as “popular” theater rather than “legitimate” theater, further suggesting that at the turn of the century vaudeville would not have been considered important enough to cross an archival threshold.³³⁵ That the Virtual Vaudeville team, with the benefit of hindsight, would recognize the breadth and depth of cultural expression inherent in vaudeville performances as an educative tool in a culturally charged moment (the United States “culture wars” of the 1990s) could never have been predicted by turn-of-the-century American archivists—of whom there were few and whose mandate was largely the care of historical manuscripts and government records. Vaudeville performers, likewise, were too busy traveling and performing—*creating art*—to be concerned with preserving their work for future generations. Vaudeville, then, is effectively a lost cultural moment, the value of which took a million dollars in federal and state funding to reclaim and reinvigorate.

Similarly, Katherine Dunham’s anthropological recordings and the origination of the Dunham Technique are one woman’s efforts to avoid the same cultural obsolescence for an

³³⁵ Susan Kattwinkel, interview with author, August 7, 2013.

underserved community. Dunham's attempts to educate African-Americans in the United States about their own cultural inheritances through performative practices were, in effect, her efforts at creating an archive. Although Diana Taylor's framework relegates Dunham Technique to the realm of repertoire, in the absence of archival intervention the Dunham Technique functions effectively as a repository of cultural knowledge: each codified, culturally informed movement contributes to a gestural language that, with the proper visual literacy, can be read, understood and transmitted. The more recent addition of the Dunham archives adds an additional layer of documentation and codification; the Dunham Technique, however, is the primary repository. This repository exists outside the framework of traditional archivy. There is no custodial relationship between dancers' bodies and archives, nor is a relationship such as this necessary for the continuation of the Dunham Technique. Rather, Dunham Masters (those certified to train others in Dunham Technique) work collaboratively with archivists to maintain the Dunham archives which *support the continuity* of the Dunham Technique.

This non-custodial, advisory arrangement is echoed in the countries that have deployed the Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage. In each of the sites in this study (Belgium, Newfoundland and Labrador and Trinidad and Tobago) national and private archives work to provide advisory support to heritage communities in safeguarding their own traditions. The detritus of these traditions already appear infrequently in archival repositories; working collaboratively with heritage communities increases the scope of traditional archival documentation and, at the same time, provides crucial professional expertise in information management and stewardship to communities who lack this knowledge. For example, the Heritage Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador works closely with communities to teach basic technical skills such as digitization while in Trinidad and Tobago, the Ministry of Arts and

Multiculturalism offers training in conducting oral histories and video documentation. This new documentation contributes substantially to the archival record and helps to address existing gaps and vagaries.

Non-custodial agreements do not necessarily require archives and archivists to abandon notions of public access. In each of these three cases, provisions of access were paramount to the communities working with performed acts. For Virtual Vaudeville, improving education about the socio-cultural aspects of vaudeville and providing for broader access to more performance-based archival materials were among the most important project goals. For Katherine Dunham, creating the Dunham Technique was, in large part, about providing future generations of African-Americans with access to their own cultural inheritance. Finally, for UNESCO, ensuring access to intangible cultural heritage is embedded in the language of the Convention itself.³³⁶ How, then, do archivists, cultural resource managers and other information scientists provide this support and ensure access without maintaining physical custody? This study suggests that one solution is for information scientists to provide tangible infrastructures for performed acts and other intangible cultural heritage.

VII.B. TANGIBLE INFRASTRUCTURES FOR INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE

Understanding how cultural knowledge is produced, transferred and maintained is not only the purview of archival studies, but is also closely tied to the broader information profession. One

³³⁶ Article 13 of the 2003 Convention to Safeguard the Intangible Cultural Heritage mandates: (ii) ensuring access to the intangible cultural heritage while respecting customary practices governing access to specific aspects of such heritage; [and] (iii) establishing documentation institutions for the intangible cultural heritage and facilitating access to them.

way that cultural knowledge is transferred and maintained is through human interaction. Seminal historian and philosopher Walter Ong suggests that valuable cultural information is available in sound, bodies and performances through fixed, formulaic phrasings that aid memory. Ong asserts that the knowledge stored in bodies was passed from generation to generation through performance; he further maintains that the way a culture stores and retrieves its valuable information is specifically tied to how individuals in that culture think.³³⁷

In the case of Virtual Vaudeville, the sensors used to create a visual representation of a past art form were placed on a human actor, who was then responsible for breathing life into vaudeville as a performed art. Without the benefit of a human actor's corporeal knowledge of the large, broad movements associated with vaudeville acts, the archival data that the team collected could not have been translated to a format that effectively reanimates a rich and diverse cultural tradition.

Ong's assertions become particularly apparent when considering the ways that the Dunham Technique—as it continues to be codified both in bodies and in more fixed formats such as DVDs—creates an infrastructure of both cultural knowledge acquired by Katherine Dunham and of her distinctive dance work. Dunham's dance work requires the same visual literacy to be read as cultural information as does a similar dance form—ballet. Each dance form consists of a series of specific, codified gestures that can be combined and re-combined to tell a history. For Dunham, these movements combine to create physical narratives of stored cultural information important to restoring cultural identity for African- and Caribbean-Americans.

Similarly, heritage communities partnering with States Parties who have ratified the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage are charged with finding best

³³⁷ Ong, *Orality and Literacy*, 32.

practices for safeguarding their performed acts. For many of these performed traditions the primary safeguarding tool is human transmission with institutional support providing a necessary, but secondary, tangible infrastructure. Ensuring that a tradition is passed from one generation to the next and understanding how this transmission occurs is one way information professionals help sustain and protect human-rooted cultural knowledge or intangible cultural heritage.

Cultural knowledge is transferred and maintained through systems and structures that capture that knowledge and through the information stewards who maintain those systems and structures. Importantly, archivists and other information professionals are qualified to define, build and develop policies for tangible infrastructures to support the preservation and safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage. Information professionals and information scholars tend to work specifically within contexts that are substrate-bound, tied to underlying systems and structures. Providing this structure for performers and heritage communities allows for performed acts and other intangible cultural heritage to shift and change as necessary while still offering frameworks within which they can function and be preserved.

In the case of Virtual Vaudeville, sensors were used to capture human movement which was then stored as data points for future manipulation and animation. This motion capture data, the archival data and the Gamebryo game engine were used in combination to create the Virtual Vaudeville prototype. These stores of data and the mediated, visualized data that comprise the prototype's website are not currently being managed by an information steward and are considered at risk for loss by project team members. Information stewards and data curators have already created systems that would help the project team manage and preserve this data. Here,

there is an opportunity for intervention: information professionals can and should be called upon to create a tangible infrastructure for the preservation of this data artifact.

The Library of Congress provides this necessary infrastructure for the Dunham Technique. Codification of Dunham Technique takes two concurrent and corresponding forms: the archive and the repertoire. The institutional structures of the archives offer a stable environment for the tangible detritus of Dunham's work. Dunham's dancers, however, work closely with the Library of Congress to provide crucial supporting cultural information in the form of metadata, personal narratives, choreology, photographs and moving images.

Similarly, national databases of intangible cultural heritage elements around the world offer a stable system in which an accounting of the ICH can take place. That countries have identified digitization as a primary means of preservation is a problematic notion in archival studies and the broader information fields. Here, too, is an opportunity for intervention. Information stewards are equipped to assist States Parties in finding more suitable methods for preserving and safeguarding intangible cultural heritage. Heritage communities around the globe have begun conducting oral histories and recording instances of performed cultural heritage as another safeguarding tool. With the benefit of institutional support and advice, these communities are successfully navigating the spaces between the tangible and the intangible.

As such, cultural knowledge is also transferred and maintained through the institutions that support culture bearers, information systems and the information professionals who manage those systems. From the Library of Congress to UNESCO and the cultural heritage institutions that partner with States Parties, institutions play a significant role in safeguarding performed acts and intangible cultural heritage. It was, for example, an initiative by the National Science Foundation that created the opportunity for Virtual Vaudeville to exist. Without physical archival

spaces, such as those at the Library of Congress and Southern Illinois University, aspects of Dunham Technique might not be legible to future generations. Finally, national archives, libraries and museums create a vital and tangible infrastructure for the world's intangible cultural heritage.

This study, in part, elucidates the ways that people, systems and institutions form tangible infrastructures that support the longevity of performed acts and other forms of intangible cultural heritage. Similarly, the networks created by these infrastructures among heritage communities and heritage institutions such as archives, museums and libraries illuminate existing cultures of collaboration.

VII.C. CULTURES OF COLLABORATION

Information professionals increasingly work with communities to manage large and disparate data sets. Policy as well as best practices impact how those data sets are managed. Nonetheless, at the center of each of these interactions is a culture of collaboration. Each of the cases in this study exemplifies a distributed model where nodes of knowledge come together under a single policy umbrella. Sometimes the policy itself is responsible for creating these nodes, such as 2003 UNESCO Convention, which is effectively a policy instrument. Sometimes the nodes create policy, as with Virtual Vaudeville. The Virtual Vaudeville case study is an example of different centers of knowledge—both across the country and across disciplines—working collaboratively to create a single, unified vision of a vaudeville act. Similarly, Katherine Dunham's dancers collaborated with her and now work with archivists to codify Dunham Technique and to make

arrangements for its continuation. It is the UNESCO case study, however, that is the best example of how cooperative work requires and leads to cultures of collaboration.

As with Virtual Vaudeville, the UNESCO case study is an example of how performed culture, no matter how distributed, comes together in a unified narrative through collaborative means. Two clear illustrations of this convergence can be found in Trinidad and Tobago's Remember When Institute kickoff and Newfoundland and Labrador's folk dance safeguarding initiatives. In both cases, teams collaborated across disciplines and geographical distance to create and implement a safeguarding plan that included tradition and/or culture bearers, archival repositories, museums, government organizations and non-governmental organizations. Through events designed to be both collaborative and celebratory, the knowledge and expertise of each group was collocated, allowing a robust presentation of the ICH element and an opportunity to transmit collective cultural knowledge to younger Trinibagonians and Canadians.

VII.D. SUMMARY

The cases in this study bring to light cultures of collaboration that are worthy of deeper investigation and interrogation than is possible here. Examining and analyzing these collaborative networks for safeguarding performed and event-based art and intangible cultural heritage is one possible area of future study. A deeper analysis of collaborative cultures may address itself to systemic inequities, to the genesis of more tangible infrastructures or to conditions of collaborative possibility.

This dissertation challenges inherent tensions between the archives and the repertoire and argues that these tensions, while complex, are mitigable. Although archives and performance

operate at opposite ends of temporal spectrums, the spaces between them are full of potential. These liminal spaces offer information professionals and performers compelling opportunities for creative engagement and collaboration. This study sets the proverbial stage for these future undertakings.

VIII. FUTURE RESEARCH

Throughout the course of conducting this study many questions were raised that fell outside the scope of the project. This section identifies three of these questions and frames them as areas for future research. Each of the proposed future studies is comparative in nature as research for this dissertation uncovered a gap in comparative, global and empirical research on the topic of archives and intangible cultural heritage.

VIII.A. MEDIATION AND INFORMATION VISUALIZATION

There is some division among performance studies scholars and educators about appropriate levels of mediation when (re)presenting a live performance—is the appropriate level no mediation? The mediation of the script? Are photographs and film acceptable mediations?³³⁸ One of the interventions the Virtual Vaudeville team hoped to make was the recreation of historical performances in virtual reality environments. As such, the Virtual Vaudeville project offers the opportunity to explore an early example of performance data or information visualization. Indeed, several factors rendered early American vaudeville a particularly unique case to test hypotheses about performance visualization. Key among them, that the availability of

³³⁸ Dr. Susan Kattwinkel, interview with author, August 7, 2013.

text-based archival material, which, when considered in the aggregate was actually quite substantial, was adequate to form the basis of an accurate simulation. Also of import to the Virtual Vaudeville team was that much of this archival material had not been rigorously analyzed in any scholarly fashion.³³⁹ Virtual Vaudeville offered a new way of visualizing the research data so that scholars could then engage with an art form about which so little visual information exists.³⁴⁰ An empirical comparative study of projects which visualize archival data is one way to engage with the question of appropriate levels of mediation in performance visualization and “restaging.”

VIII.B. LIVING ARCHIVES

People who lack archival knowledge and/or training and work without the benefit of archival oversight or intervention must create their own ways for their performed heritage and traditions to endure. One such way is the notion of living archives, which seems to emerge from communities that stand outside the institutional infrastructures from within which archives function. While conducting research for this dissertation, several examples of “living archives” appeared in search results related to the archive and the repertoire. A future study might interrogate the concept of living archives, comparing examples and defining a frame within which to better understand what it means to be or have a living archive. A simple Google search confirms that the concept of Living Archives does not originate here on these pages. Rather, it is a notion with which artists (particularly performance artists) have been grappling for some time,

³³⁹ Saltz, “Virtual Vaudeville: Scholarly Implications,” 2.

³⁴⁰ Dr. Susan Kattwinkel, interview with author, August 7, 2013.

each convinced upon thinking of a “living archive” that s/he has invented the proverbial wheel. One such example is the “Living Archive of Teresita de Campaneda.” Another can be found in the “Living Archives of Gomez-Pena.”³⁴¹ Such a study might consider questions about how living archives work. Do they function through modes of repetition, codification, transmission like the Dunham Technique (or, in archival terms: duplication, authority, access)? Through other modes? Are living archives oppositional narratives?

VIII.C. CONDITIONS OF POSSIBILITY

Trinidad and Tobago considers it their responsibility to provide an “enabling environment” for the survival of intangible cultural heritage in their society. What are the conditions of possibility for such an enabling environment? What information infrastructures need to be in place for this enabling environment to exist and succeed? What technological and other tangible infrastructures must be in place? A future study might undertake an international and comparative analysis of these conditions of possibility, using them to create a structural plan for future endeavors. A study such as this stands to benefit UNESCO ICH States Parties specifically, helping them in the early planning stages of deploying the 2003 Convention and shortening the time between ratification and the commencement of actual safeguarding activities.

³⁴¹ See Burton, Antoinette. *Archive Stories: Facts, Fictions, and the Writing of History*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2005. See also: “The Living Archives of Gomez Pena,” <http://visitor.benchmarkemail.com/c/v?e=43D976&c=EDCB&l=5613C96&email=pAEjKYJxQ4xe%2Bzd6bNiw8t4bTfzD%2Fgg1&reid=C6EC164>.

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APPENDIX A

**UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL**



University of Pittsburgh *Institutional Review Board*

3500 Fifth Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15213
(412) 383-1480
(412) 383-1508 (fax)
<http://www.irb.pitt.edu>

Memorandum

To: Tonia Sutherland

From: Sue Beers, Vice Chair

Date: 5/13/2013

IRB#: [PRO13030504](#)

Subject: The Role of Contemporary Archives in Safeguarding and Preserving Performance as Event-Based Cultural Heritage

The above-referenced project has been reviewed by the Institutional Review Board. Based on the information provided, this project meets all the necessary criteria for an exemption, and is hereby designated as "exempt" under section

45 CFR 46.101(b)(2)

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Please note the following information:

- If any modifications are made to this project, use the "**Send Comments to IRB Staff**" process from the project workspace to request a review to ensure it continues to meet the exempt category.
- Upon completion of your project, be sure to finalize the project by submitting a "**Study Completed**" report from the project workspace.

Please be advised that your research study may be audited periodically by the University of Pittsburgh Research Conduct and Compliance Office.

APPENDIX B

INTRODUCTION TO THE RESEARCH STUDY

The Role of Contemporary Archives in Safeguarding and Preserving Performance as Intangible Cultural Heritage

Introductory Text

My name is Tonia Sutherland and I am a doctoral candidate in Library and Information Science at the University of Pittsburgh. I am conducting a research study for my dissertation on the role of archives in preserving performance. My research focuses on safeguarding performances and giving historical voice to underrepresented cultures in archives. As an artist and archivist myself, I am trying to understand how/if the memory we carry in our bodies is similar to or different from the memories we unearth in archival repositories.

To this end, I am investigating the dancer/choreographer Katherine Dunham's dance legacy, the United Nation's Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)'s 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, and the Live Performance System's Virtual Vaudeville prototype. I am hoping to conduct a series of interviews with scholars, professional archivists and performers about how archives can safeguard performance as intangible cultural heritage.

Would you be willing to speak with me, either formally or informally, about one of my case studies? If you choose to participate, and I must stress that *participation is entirely voluntary*, the interviews will require no more than an hour of your time and can be conducted over the telephone. There is no compensation for participating in this study, and all responses may be kept confidential at your request by the removal and separation of personally identifiable information. I want to stress that this project is for research and educational purposes (not commercial purposes) and will be cleared through the University of Pittsburgh's Institutional Review Board (IRB).

Thank you so very much in advance for your kind consideration; I am enormously grateful. I will follow up with you in a few days, but if you'd like to speak with me in the interim, please feel free to contact me at 412.251.0084 or at tns10@pitt.edu. I look forward to speaking with you.

APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW PROTOCOLS

The questions listed below apply to all subparts of the study. All three subparts will utilize archival pre-existing materials in addition to the questions below.

The questions below are meant to be structural guideposts for the conversation, not strict points of inquiry.

Virtual Vaudeville Protocol: Case Study 1, The Live Performance Simulation System’s Virtual Vaudeville Prototype

- What is your name?
- What is your job title?
- How did you become involved in the Live Performance Simulation System?
- What was your role in creating the Virtual Vaudeville Prototype?
- What sources/resources did you use to create the prototype?
- In what ways was the project successful? In what ways was it unsuccessful?
- Can you describe the process of creating the prototype?
- Can you describe the archival impact of creating the prototype?
- Can you describe other methods the Live Performance Simulation System considered in trying to “archive a live performance”?
- Is there anything else you’d like to share with me about the Prototype?
- Is there anything else you’d like to share with me about Live Performance Simulation System?
- Are there others involved in the project to whom I should speak?
- Do you have questions for me?
- Is it alright if I follow-up with you if I have any other questions?
- Would you like a chance to review your responses when I have transcribed these interviews?

Records Creator Interview Protocol (for dancers): Case Study 2, Katherine Dunham

Background, Demographics and Training

- What is your name?
- How old are you?
- Where do you currently live?
- In what style of dance are you trained?

Dunham

- When did you first learn about Katherine Dunham?
- How long did you dance with/for Ms. Dunham?
- Can you describe her teaching method for me?
- Can you please describe the Dunham Technique (as you understand it)?
- Can you describe how Ms. Dunham defined the Dunham Technique?
- What is unique about the Dunham Technique?
- Did you learn anything other than dance from Ms. Dunham as part of your work with her?
- What, if anything, did Ms. Dunham teach you about African and Caribbean culture?
- What tangible things do you associate with Dunham Technique?
 - How are these items preserved (if they are preserved)?

- What music or musical traditions are associated with Dunham Technique?
- What costumes or dress-codes are associated with Dunham Technique?
- What other stylistic elements are important to Dunham Technique?
- Are you a Grand Master/Teacher of Dunham Technique?
- If so, how did you become a Grand Master or Master Teacher?
- How long was the process of becoming a Grand/Master Teacher?
- Are you or other Grand/Master teachers training new Grand/Master Teachers of Dunham Technique?
 - Is it important for others to become Grand/Master Teachers of Dunham Technique?
 - If yes, why?
- Is there anything else about your experiences with Ms. Dunham that you'd like to share?
- Do you have any questions for me?
- Are there others involved in the project to whom I should speak?
- Is it alright if I follow-up with you if I have any other questions?
- Would you like a chance to review your responses when I have transcribed these interviews?

Records Custodians Protocol (for archivists): Case Study 1, Katherine Dunham

- What is your name?
- What is your job title?
- Are you responsible for making appraisal decisions?
- Are you responsible for making preservation decisions?
- Are you responsible for access and use policies?
- How did the Katherine Dunham archives come to be at your repository?
- Are you the archivist/custodian who brought the Dunham materials to the repository?
- Is there a hanging file on the collection?
- When were the materials donated?
- By whom were the materials donated?
- Can you speak to any specifics about the donor agreement?
- What appraisal decisions were made about the Katherine Dunham collection?
- Are these appraisal decisions documented?
- What can you tell me about the collection?
- Is there a finding aid for the collection?
- Is the collection used? How?
- What do you consider the benefits of the Dunham collection?
- Are there holes or gaps in the collection?
 - What are they?
 - Why do you think they exist?
- When researchers inquire about related materials, what do you suggest?
- Have you ever been in contact with teachers of Dunham Technique?
 - What additional information about Dunham or Dunham Technique have they provided?
- Have you ever been in contact with students of Dunham Technique?
 - What information about Dunham Technique did they seek?
- How is the Dunham Technique represented in the collection?
- If you could create the perfect collection of materials for a student of Dunham Technique what would it include?
- What do you consider the main struggles archivists face when dealing with intangible artifacts?
- Is there anything else you'd like to share with me about the Katherine Dunham archives?
- Is there anything else you'd like to share with me about performance-based archivy?

- Are there others involved in the project to whom I should speak?
- Do you have questions for me?
- Is it alright if I follow-up with you if I have any other questions?
- Would you like a chance to review your responses when I have transcribed these interviews?

UNESCO Protocol: Case Study 3, Convention to Safeguard the Intangible Cultural Heritage

- What is your name?
- What is your job title?
- Are you familiar with the 2003 Convention to Safeguard the Intangible Cultural Heritage?
- How is the Convention being deployed?
- How does this differ from country to country?
- What is the nature of the relationship between UNESCO and the cultural heritage institutions that are safeguarding the world's intangible cultural heritage (ICH)?
- What traces are evident in the UNESCO archives related to ICH?
- Is there anything else you'd like to share with me about the Convention?
- Is there anything else you'd like to share with me about ICH?
- Are there others involved in the project to whom I should speak?
- Do you have questions for me?
- Is it alright if I follow-up with you if I have any other questions?
- Would you like a chance to review your responses when I have transcribed these interviews?

APPENDIX D

DATA ANALYSIS EXAMPLE

This appendix serves to demystify the data collection and analysis processes for this research study. As data was collected for this project, it was logged into a Data Collection spreadsheet in Microsoft Excel. Notes about the type of data, the date of collection and the existence of corresponding field notes were made for each unit of data. For interviews, notes regarding consent and the existence of recordings and transcripts were also included. (See example below.)

Case	Data Type	Date	Consent	Recording	Transcript	Field Notes
Dunham	Data Type	Date	Consent	Recording	Transcript	Field Notes
Interview: Albirda Rose	Informal Interview	26-Nov-13	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Interview: Ron Hutson	Informal Interview	2-Oct-13	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Library of Congress Video Clip #38: Katherine Dunham on the Need for Dunham Technique	Unobtrusive Data / Archival Source	(last access) 01 Jun 14			Yes	Yes
Interview: Halifu Osumare	Informal Interview	2-May-14	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Figure 1: Example of Data Sources

Relevant data was then extracted from each source, including attendant field notes, and coded according to emerging themes. (See **Appendix E: Codes.**) Themes were pulled directly from the data, as exemplified below.

Case	Source	Data	Code	Theme
Dunham	Albirta Rose Interview	[If we don't train new dancers and teacher in Dunham Technique] the legacy will be lost. Miss Dunham's legacy will be lost. The Technique is a great tool for training dancers and children. For children there is value in terms of form and function, socialization through the arts and inter-cultural communication.	AA	Asserting the need for Dunham Technique.
Dunham	Ron Hutson Interview	That was what she wanted to do. She wanted to teach Black people about their culture, that it was not something to be avoided, but it was something to be <i>embraced</i> . As Americans that's something you should know about. Other Americans, whether they're Chinese Americans or Italian Americans, they are steeped in their culture and whatever their former culture is <i>as well</i> . But so many of us [African Americans] we want to forget about that part because we're ashamed of it and we're all, well, 'We're <i>Americans</i> .' And actually I think that we are encouraged to do that. [Interviewer: We are. It's too true.] We need to encourage ourselves to say, 'Yes, I'm American. But I'm African American, I'm Jamaican American or Trinidadian American and so I need to know about that side of myself too.' And Dunham encouraged that. It made us feel proud of that aspect of our heritage. Feeling proud of it made you want to learn more about it. As a result, I learned about drumming, I've become a skilled gourd maker.	AA	Asserting the need for Dunham Technique.
Dunham	Katherine Dunham on the need for the Dunham Technique (Video Clip #38, Library of Congress)	"The techniques that I knew and saw and experienced were not saying the things that I wanted to say. I simply could not, with purely classical ballet, say what I want to say. I could do a story, of course, ballet as you know, so much ballet is just a narrative, but to capture the meaning in the culture, in the life of the people, I felt that I had to take something directly from the people and develop that."	AA	Asserting the need for Dunham Technique.

Figure 2: Coded Data Sample

When all of the data collection was complete, the data was sorted by case and then by theme and placed in a Microsoft Word document for further analysis. Narrative construction, as demonstrated below, was vital in data analysis. In this example, although three separate data sources asserted the need for Dunham technique, the words of Katherine Dunham herself were selected as part of the final narrative. The other sources were used to support the construction of this narrative; Dunham's words were chosen in part because she was the subject of the case study and could best speak to the inciting needs for Dunham Technique, and in part because her assertion explicated the point most clearly and directly. (See narrative example from page 100 below.)

In asserting the need for Dunham Technique, Dunham said, "The techniques that I knew and saw and experienced were not saying the things that I wanted to say. I simply could not, with purely classical ballet, say what I want to say. I could do a story, of course, ballet as you know, so much ballet is just a narrative, but to capture the meaning in the culture, in the life of the people, I felt that I had to take something directly from the people and develop that."²¹²

Dunham traveled to Haiti, Martinique, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, Mexico and Brazil to better understand the cultural significance of movement. While there, she used a video camera to capture the ceremonies she was permitted to view. Of this experience Dunham said,

And of course it was rather difficult for me because already I was infringing on some of their taboos by being there. Some of the time I was where women were

Figure 3: Narrative Analysis

APPENDIX E

CODES

Codes and Themes

- A. Engaging multiple disciplines.
- B. Identifying challenge of representing past performances. [Identifying the problem.]
- C. Asserting inadequacy of existing methods.
- D. Proposing a solution.
- E. Stating objectives.
- F. Working in multiple modes.
- G. Envisioning broader applications.
- H. Testing hypotheses about virtual environments.
- I. Invoking transmission.
- J. Invoking archives.
- K. Probing cultural norms.
- L. Establishing vaudeville as an appropriate unit of study.
- M. Negotiating the role of the spectator.
- N. Preserving context.
- O. Engaging the digital humanities
- P. Identifying technical requirements.
- Q. Identifying challenges.
- R. Creating performance from archival research.
- S. Providing historical context.
- T. Assessing success.
- U. Engaging the evidence.
- V. Invoking performance as Intangible Cultural Heritage
- W. Establishing codification as a means of preservation.
- X. Contextualizing Dunham.
- Y. Defining Dunham Technique.
- Z. Explicating cultural context.
- AA. Asserting the need for Dunham Technique.
- BB. Establishing dance as a gestural language / invoking visual literacy.
- CC. Explaining country's ICH process
- DD. Suggesting digitization as a means of preservation.
- EE. Defining relationship with UNESCO.
- FF. Identifying country's ICH.
- GG. Differentiating ICH work from other nations' work.
- HH. Identifying best practices.
- II. Invoking "the list."
- JJ. Asserting the need for "political will."
- KK. Unpacking the Convention.
- LL. Establishing the importance of community.
- MM. Invoking colonization.
- NN. Navigating UNESCO.
- OO. Asserting the need for ICH policy.
- PP. Defining ICH.
- QQ. Challenging notions of authority.

APPENDIX F

2003 CONVENTION FOR THE SAFEGUARDING OF INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE

The Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage

Resources

IN THE TEXT OF THE CONVENTION

- I. - General provisions
- II. - Organs of the Convention
- III. - Safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage at the national level
- IV. - Safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage at the international level
- V. - International cooperation and assistance
- VI. - Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund
- VII. - Reports
- VIII. - Transitional clause
- IX. - Final clauses

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The General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization hereinafter referred to as UNESCO, meeting in Paris, from 29 September to 17 October 2003, at its 32nd session,

Referring to existing international human rights instruments, in particular to the Universal Declaration on Human Rights of 1948, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights of 1966, and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights of 1966,

Considering the importance of the intangible cultural heritage as a mainspring of cultural diversity and a guarantee of sustainable development, as underscored in the UNESCO Recommendation on the Safeguarding of Traditional Culture and Folklore of 1989, in the UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity of 2001, and in the Istanbul Declaration of 2002 adopted by the Third Round Table of Ministers of Culture,

Considering the deep-seated interdependence between the intangible cultural heritage and the tangible cultural and natural heritage,

Recognizing that the processes of globalization and social transformation, alongside the conditions they create for renewed dialogue among communities, also give rise, as does the phenomenon of intolerance, to grave threats of deterioration, disappearance and destruction of the intangible cultural heritage, in particular owing to a lack of resources for safeguarding such heritage,

Being aware of the universal will and the common concern to safeguard the intangible cultural heritage of humanity,

Recognizing that communities, in particular indigenous communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals, play an important role in the production, safeguarding, maintenance and re-creation of the intangible cultural heritage, thus helping to enrich cultural diversity and human creativity,

Noting the far-reaching impact of the activities of UNESCO in establishing normative instruments for the protection of the cultural heritage, in particular the Convention for the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage of 1972,

Noting further that no binding multilateral instrument as yet exists for the safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage,

Considering that existing international agreements, recommendations and resolutions concerning the cultural and natural heritage need to be effectively enriched and supplemented by means of new provisions relating to the intangible cultural heritage,

Considering the need to build greater awareness, especially among the younger generations, of the importance of the intangible cultural heritage and of its safeguarding,

Considering that the international community should contribute, together with the States Parties to this Convention, to the safeguarding of such heritage in a spirit of cooperation and mutual assistance,

Recalling UNESCO's programmes relating to the intangible cultural heritage, in particular the Proclamation of Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity,

Considering the invaluable role of the intangible cultural heritage as a factor in bringing human beings closer together and ensuring exchange and understanding among them,

Adopts this Convention on this seventeenth day of October 2003.

I. General provisions

Article 1 – Purposes of the Convention

The purposes of this Convention are:

- (a) to safeguard the intangible cultural heritage;
- (b) to ensure respect for the intangible cultural heritage of the communities, groups and individuals concerned;
- (c) to raise awareness at the local, national and international levels of the importance of the intangible cultural heritage, and of ensuring mutual appreciation thereof;
- (d) to provide for international cooperation and assistance.

Article 2 – Definitions

For the purposes of this Convention,

1. The "intangible cultural heritage" means the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills – as well as the instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces associated therewith – that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage. This intangible cultural heritage, transmitted from generation to generation, is constantly recreated by communities and groups in response to their environment, their interaction with nature and their history, and provides them with a sense of identity and continuity, thus promoting respect for cultural diversity and human creativity. For the purposes of this Convention, consideration will be given solely to such intangible cultural heritage as is compatible with existing international human rights instruments, as

well as with the requirements of mutual respect among communities, groups and individuals, and of sustainable development.

2. The “intangible cultural heritage”, as defined in paragraph 1 above, is manifested inter alia in the following domains:

- (a) oral traditions and expressions, including language as a vehicle of the intangible cultural heritage;
- (b) performing arts;
- (c) social practices, rituals and festive events;
- (d) knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe;
- (e) traditional craftsmanship.

3. “Safeguarding” means measures aimed at ensuring the viability of the intangible cultural heritage, including the identification, documentation, research, preservation, protection, promotion, enhancement, transmission, particularly through formal and non-formal education, as well as the revitalization of the various aspects of such heritage.

4. “States Parties” means States which are bound by this Convention and among which this Convention is in force.

5. This Convention applies *mutatis mutandis* to the territories referred to in Article 33 which become Parties to this Convention in accordance with the conditions set out in that Article. To that extent the expression “States Parties” also refers to such territories.

Article 3 – Relationship to other international instruments

Nothing in this Convention may be interpreted as:

- (a) altering the status or diminishing the level of protection under the 1972 Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage of World Heritage properties with which an item of the intangible cultural heritage is directly associated; or
- (b) affecting the rights and obligations of States Parties deriving from any international instrument relating to intellectual property rights or to the use of biological and ecological resources to which they are parties.

II. Organs of the Convention

Article 4 – General Assembly of States Parties

1. A General Assembly of the States Parties is hereby established, hereinafter referred to as “the General Assembly”. The General Assembly is the sovereign body of this Convention.

2. The General Assembly shall meet in ordinary session every two years. It may meet in extraordinary session if it so decides or at the request either of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage or of at least one-third of the States Parties.

3. The General Assembly shall adopt its own Rules of Procedure.

Article 5 – Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage

1. An Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, hereinafter referred to as “the Committee”, is hereby established within UNESCO. It shall be composed of representatives of 18 States Parties, elected by the States Parties meeting in General Assembly, once this Convention enters into force in accordance with Article 34.
2. The number of States Members of the Committee shall be increased to 24 once the number of the States Parties to the Convention reaches 50.

Article 6 – Election and terms of office of States Members of the Committee

1. The election of States Members of the Committee shall obey the principles of equitable geographical representation and rotation.
2. States Members of the Committee shall be elected for a term of four years by States Parties to the Convention meeting in General Assembly.
3. However, the term of office of half of the States Members of the Committee elected at the first election is limited to two years. These States shall be chosen by lot at the first election.
4. Every two years, the General Assembly shall renew half of the States Members of the Committee.
5. It shall also elect as many States Members of the Committee as required to fill vacancies.
6. A State Member of the Committee may not be elected for two consecutive terms.
7. States Members of the Committee shall choose as their representatives persons who are qualified in the various fields of the intangible cultural heritage.

Article 7 – Functions of the Committee

Without prejudice to other prerogatives granted to it by this Convention, the functions of the Committee shall be to:

- (a) promote the objectives of the Convention, and to encourage and monitor the implementation thereof;
- (b) provide guidance on best practices and make recommendations on measures for the safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage;
- (c) prepare and submit to the General Assembly for approval a draft plan for the use of the resources of the Fund, in accordance with Article 25;
- (d) seek means of increasing its resources, and to take the necessary measures to this end, in accordance with Article 25;
- (e) prepare and submit to the General Assembly for approval operational directives for the implementation of this Convention;

- (f) examine, in accordance with Article 29, the reports submitted by States Parties, and to summarize them for the General Assembly;
- (g) examine requests submitted by States Parties, and to decide thereon, in accordance with objective selection criteria to be established by the Committee and approved by the General Assembly for:
- (i) inscription on the lists and proposals mentioned under Articles 16, 17 and 18;
- (ii) the granting of international assistance in accordance with Article 22.

Article 8 – Working methods of the Committee

1. The Committee shall be answerable to the General Assembly. It shall report to it on all its activities and decisions.
2. The Committee shall adopt its own Rules of Procedure by a two-thirds majority of its Members.
3. The Committee may establish, on a temporary basis, whatever ad hoc consultative bodies it deems necessary to carry out its task.
4. The Committee may invite to its meetings any public or private bodies, as well as private persons, with recognized competence in the various fields of the intangible cultural heritage, in order to consult them on specific matters.

Article 9 – Accreditation of advisory organizations

1. The Committee shall propose to the General Assembly the accreditation of non-governmental organizations with recognized competence in the field of the intangible cultural heritage to act in an advisory capacity to the Committee.
2. The Committee shall also propose to the General Assembly the criteria for and modalities of such accreditation.

Article 10 – The Secretariat

1. The Committee shall be assisted by the UNESCO Secretariat.
2. The Secretariat shall prepare the documentation of the General Assembly and of the Committee, as well as the draft agenda of their meetings, and shall ensure the implementation of their decisions.

III. Safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage at the national level

Article 11 – Role of States Parties

Each State Party shall:

- (a) take the necessary measures to ensure the safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage present in its territory;
- (b) among the safeguarding measures referred to in Article 2, paragraph 3, identify and define the various elements

of the intangible cultural heritage present in its territory, with the participation of communities, groups and relevant non-governmental organizations.

Article 12 – Inventories

1. To ensure identification with a view to safeguarding, each State Party shall draw up, in a manner geared to its own situation, one or more inventories of the intangible cultural heritage present in its territory. These inventories shall be regularly updated.

2. When each State Party periodically submits its report to the Committee, in accordance with Article 29, it shall provide relevant information on such inventories.

Article 13 – Other measures for safeguarding

To ensure the safeguarding, development and promotion of the intangible cultural heritage present in its territory, each State Party shall endeavour to:

- (a) adopt a general policy aimed at promoting the function of the intangible cultural heritage in society, and at integrating the safeguarding of such heritage into planning programmes;
- (b) designate or establish one or more competent bodies for the safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage present in its territory;
- (c) foster scientific, technical and artistic studies, as well as research methodologies, with a view to effective safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage, in particular the intangible cultural heritage in danger;
- (d) adopt appropriate legal, technical, administrative and financial measures aimed at:
 - (i) fostering the creation or strengthening of institutions for training in the management of the intangible cultural heritage and the transmission of such heritage through forums and spaces intended for the performance or expression thereof;
 - (ii) ensuring access to the intangible cultural heritage while respecting customary practices governing access to specific aspects of such heritage;
 - (iii) establishing documentation institutions for the intangible cultural heritage and facilitating access to them.

Article 14 – Education, awareness-raising and capacity-building

Each State Party shall endeavour, by all appropriate means, to:

- (a) ensure recognition of, respect for, and enhancement of the intangible cultural heritage in society, in particular through:
 - (i) educational, awareness-raising and information programmes, aimed at the general public, in particular young people;
 - (ii) specific educational and training programmes within the communities and groups concerned;
 - (iii) capacity-building activities for the safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage, in particular management and

scientific research; and

(iv) non-formal means of transmitting knowledge;

(b) keep the public informed of the dangers threatening such heritage, and of the activities carried out in pursuance of this Convention;

(c) promote education for the protection of natural spaces and places of memory whose existence is necessary for expressing the intangible cultural heritage.

Article 15 – Participation of communities, groups and individuals

Within the framework of its safeguarding activities of the intangible cultural heritage, each State Party shall endeavour to ensure the widest possible participation of communities, groups and, where appropriate, individuals that create, maintain and transmit such heritage, and to involve them actively in its management.

IV. Safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage at the international level

Article 16 – Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity

1. In order to ensure better visibility of the intangible cultural heritage and awareness of its significance, and to encourage dialogue which respects cultural diversity, the Committee, upon the proposal of the States Parties concerned, shall establish, keep up to date and publish a Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.

2. The Committee shall draw up and submit to the General Assembly for approval the criteria for the establishment, updating and publication of this Representative List.

Article 17 – List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding

1. With a view to taking appropriate safeguarding measures, the Committee shall establish, keep up to date and publish a List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding, and shall inscribe such heritage on the List at the request of the State Party concerned.

2. The Committee shall draw up and submit to the General Assembly for approval the criteria for the establishment, updating and publication of this List.

3. In cases of extreme urgency – the objective criteria of which shall be approved by the General Assembly upon the proposal of the Committee – the Committee may inscribe an item of the heritage concerned on the List mentioned in paragraph 1, in consultation with the State Party concerned.

Article 18 – Programmes, projects and activities for the safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage

1. On the basis of proposals submitted by States Parties, and in accordance with criteria to be defined by the Committee and approved by the General Assembly, the Committee shall periodically select and promote national, subregional and regional programmes, projects and activities for the safeguarding of the heritage which it considers best reflect the principles and objectives of this Convention, taking into account the special needs of developing countries.

2. To this end, it shall receive, examine and approve requests for international assistance from States Parties for the preparation of such proposals.

3. The Committee shall accompany the implementation of such projects, programmes and activities by disseminating best practices using means to be determined by it.

V. International cooperation and assistance

Article 19 – Cooperation

1. For the purposes of this Convention, international cooperation includes, inter alia, the exchange of information and experience, joint initiatives, and the establishment of a mechanism of assistance to States Parties in their efforts to safeguard the intangible cultural heritage.

2. Without prejudice to the provisions of their national legislation and customary law and practices, the States Parties recognize that the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage is of general interest to humanity, and to that end undertake to cooperate at the bilateral, subregional, regional and international levels.

Article 20 – Purposes of international assistance

International assistance may be granted for the following purposes:

(a) the safeguarding of the heritage inscribed on the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding;

(b) the preparation of inventories in the sense of Articles 11 and 12;

(c) support for programmes, projects and activities carried out at the national, subregional and regional levels aimed

at the safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage;
(d) any other purpose the Committee may deem necessary.

Article 21 – Forms of international assistance

The assistance granted by the Committee to a State Party shall be governed by the operational directives foreseen in Article 7 and by the agreement referred to in Article 24, and may take the following forms:

- (a) studies concerning various aspects of safeguarding;
- (b) the provision of experts and practitioners;
- (c) the training of all necessary staff;
- (d) the elaboration of standard-setting and other measures;
- (e) the creation and operation of infrastructures;
- (f) the supply of equipment and know-how;
- (g) other forms of financial and technical assistance, including, where appropriate, the granting of low-interest loans and donations.

Article 22 – Conditions governing international assistance

1. The Committee shall establish the procedure for examining requests for international assistance, and shall specify what information shall be included in the requests, such as the measures envisaged and the interventions required, together with an assessment of their cost.
2. In emergencies, requests for assistance shall be examined by the Committee as a matter of priority.
3. In order to reach a decision, the Committee shall undertake such studies and consultations as it deems necessary.

Article 23 – Requests for international assistance

1. Each State Party may submit to the Committee a request for international assistance for the safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage present in its territory.
2. Such a request may also be jointly submitted by two or more States Parties.
3. The request shall include the information stipulated in Article 22, paragraph 1, together with the necessary documentation.

Article 24 – Role of beneficiary States Parties

1. In conformity with the provisions of this Convention, the international assistance granted shall be regulated by means of an agreement between the beneficiary State Party and the Committee.
2. As a general rule, the beneficiary State Party shall, within the limits of its resources, share the cost of the safeguarding measures for which international assistance is provided.

3. The beneficiary State Party shall submit to the Committee a report on the use made of the assistance provided for the safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage.

VI. Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund

Article 25 – Nature and resources of the Fund

1. A “Fund for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage”, hereinafter referred to as “the Fund”, is hereby established.

2. The Fund shall consist of funds-in-trust established in accordance with the Financial Regulations of UNESCO.

3. The resources of the Fund shall consist of:

(a) contributions made by States Parties;

(b) funds appropriated for this purpose by the General Conference of UNESCO;

(c) contributions, gifts or bequests which may be made by:

(i) other States;

(ii) organizations and programmes of the United Nations system, particularly the United Nations Development Programme, as well as other international organizations;

(iii) public or private bodies or individuals;

(d) any interest due on the resources of the Fund;

(e) funds raised through collections, and receipts from events organized for the benefit of the Fund;

(f) any other resources authorized by the Fund’s regulations, to be drawn up by the Committee.

4. The use of resources by the Committee shall be decided on the basis of guidelines laid down by the General Assembly.

5. The Committee may accept contributions and other forms of assistance for general and specific purposes relating to specific projects, provided that those projects have been approved by the Committee.

6. No political, economic or other conditions which are incompatible with the objectives of this Convention may be attached to contributions made to the Fund.

Article 26 – Contributions of States Parties to the Fund

1. Without prejudice to any supplementary voluntary contribution, the States Parties to this Convention undertake to pay into the Fund, at least every two years, a contribution, the amount of which, in the form of a uniform percentage applicable to all States, shall be determined by the General Assembly. This decision of the General Assembly shall be taken by a majority of the States Parties present and voting which have not made the declaration referred to in paragraph 2 of this Article. In no case shall the contribution of the State Party exceed 1% of its contribution to the regular budget of UNESCO.

2. However, each State referred to in Article 32 or in Article 33 of this Convention may declare, at the time of the deposit of its instruments of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession, that it shall not be bound by the provisions of paragraph 1 of this Article.

3. A State Party to this Convention which has made the declaration referred to in paragraph 2 of this Article shall endeavour to withdraw the said declaration by notifying the Director-General of UNESCO. However, the withdrawal of the declaration shall not take effect in regard to the contribution due by the State until the date on which the subsequent session of the General Assembly opens.

4. In order to enable the Committee to plan its operations effectively, the contributions of States Parties to this Convention which have made the declaration referred to in paragraph 2 of this Article shall be paid on a regular basis, at least every two years, and should be as close as possible to the contributions they would have owed if they had been bound by the provisions of paragraph 1 of this Article.

5. Any State Party to this Convention which is in arrears with the payment of its compulsory or voluntary contribution for the current year and the calendar year immediately preceding it shall not be eligible as a Member of the Committee; this provision shall not apply to the first election. The term of office of any such State which is already a Member of the Committee shall come to an end at the time of the elections provided for in Article 6 of this Convention.

Article 27 – Voluntary supplementary contributions to the Fund

States Parties wishing to provide voluntary contributions in addition to those foreseen under Article 26 shall inform the Committee, as soon as possible, so as to enable it to plan its operations accordingly.

Article 28 – International fund-raising campaigns

The States Parties shall, insofar as is possible, lend their support to international fund-raising campaigns organized for the benefit of the Fund under the auspices of UNESCO.

VII. Reports

Article 29 – Reports by the States Parties

The States Parties shall submit to the Committee, observing the forms and periodicity to be defined by the Committee, reports on the legislative, regulatory and other measures taken for the implementation of this Convention.

Article 30 – Reports by the Committee

1. On the basis of its activities and the reports by States Parties referred to in Article 29, the Committee shall submit a report to the General Assembly at each of its sessions.

2. The report shall be brought to the attention of the General Conference of UNESCO.

VIII. Transitional clause

Article 31 – Relationship to the Proclamation of Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity

1. The Committee shall incorporate in the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity the items proclaimed “Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity” before the entry into force of this Convention.

2. The incorporation of these items in the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity shall in no way prejudice the criteria for future inscriptions decided upon in accordance with Article 16, paragraph 2.

3. No further Proclamation will be made after the entry into force of this Convention.

IX. Final clauses

Article 32 – Ratification, acceptance or approval

1. This Convention shall be subject to ratification, acceptance or approval by States Members of UNESCO in accordance with their respective constitutional procedures.

2. The instruments of ratification, acceptance or approval shall be deposited with the Director-General of UNESCO.

Article 33 – Accession

1. This Convention shall be open to accession by all States not Members of UNESCO that are invited by the General Conference of UNESCO to accede to it.

2. This Convention shall also be open to accession by territories which enjoy full internal self-government recognized as such by the United Nations, but have not attained full independence in accordance with General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV), and which have competence over the matters governed by this Convention, including the competence to enter into treaties in respect of such matters.

3. The instrument of accession shall be deposited with the Director-General of UNESCO.

Article 34 – Entry into force

This Convention shall enter into force three months after the date of the deposit of the thirtieth instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession, but only with respect to those States that have deposited their respective instruments of ratification, acceptance, approval, or accession on or before that date. It shall enter into force with respect to any other State Party three months after the deposit of its instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession.

Article 35 – Federal or non-unitary constitutional systems

The following provisions shall apply to States Parties which have a federal or non-unitary constitutional system:

(a) with regard to the provisions of this Convention, the implementation of which comes under the legal jurisdiction of the federal or central legislative power, the obligations of the federal or central government shall be the same as for those States Parties which are not federal States;

(b) with regard to the provisions of this Convention, the implementation of which comes under the jurisdiction of individual constituent States, countries, provinces or cantons which are not obliged by the constitutional system of the federation to take legislative measures, the federal government shall inform the competent authorities of such States, countries, provinces or cantons of the said provisions, with its recommendation for their adoption.

Article 36 – Denunciation

1. Each State Party may denounce this Convention.
2. The denunciation shall be notified by an instrument in writing, deposited with the Director-General of UNESCO.
3. The denunciation shall take effect twelve months after the receipt of the instrument of denunciation. It shall in no way affect the financial obligations of the denouncing State Party until the date on which the withdrawal takes effect.

Article 37 – Depositary functions

The Director-General of UNESCO, as the Depositary of this Convention, shall inform the States Members of the Organization, the States not Members of the Organization referred to in Article 33, as well as the United Nations, of the deposit of all the instruments of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession provided for in Articles 32 and 33, and of the denunciations provided for in Article 36.

Article 38 – Amendments

1. A State Party may, by written communication addressed to the Director-General, propose amendments to this Convention. The Director-General shall circulate such communication to all States Parties. If, within six months from the date of the circulation of the communication, not less than one half of the States Parties reply favourably to the request, the Director-General shall present such proposal to the next session of the General Assembly for discussion and possible adoption.

2. Amendments shall be adopted by a two-thirds majority of States Parties present and voting.
3. Once adopted, amendments to this Convention shall be submitted for ratification, acceptance, approval or accession to the States Parties.
4. Amendments shall enter into force, but solely with respect to the States Parties that have ratified, accepted, approved or acceded to them, three months after the deposit of the instruments referred to in paragraph 3 of this Article by two-thirds of the States Parties. Thereafter, for each State Party that ratifies, accepts, approves or accedes to an amendment, the said amendment shall enter into force three months after the date of deposit by that State Party of its instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession.
5. The procedure set out in paragraphs 3 and 4 shall not apply to amendments to Article 5 concerning the number of States Members of the Committee. These amendments shall enter into force at the time they are adopted.
6. A State which becomes a Party to this Convention after the entry into force of amendments in conformity with paragraph 4 of this Article shall, failing an expression of different intention, be considered:
 - (a) as a Party to this Convention as so amended; and
 - (b) as a Party to the unamended Convention in relation to any State Party not bound by the amendments.

Article 39 – Authoritative texts

This Convention has been drawn up in Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish, the six texts being equally authoritative.

Article 40 – Registration

In conformity with Article 102 of the Charter of the United Nations, this Convention shall be registered with the Secretariat of the United Nations at the request of the Director-General of UNESCO.

DONE at Paris, this third day of November 2003, in two authentic copies bearing the signature of the President of the 32nd session of the General Conference and of the Director-General of UNESCO. These two copies shall be deposited in the archives of UNESCO. Certified true copies shall be delivered to all the States referred to in Articles 32 and 33, as well as to the United Nations.

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