

2016

Say Yes to Digital Surrogates: Strengthening the Archival Record in the Postcustodial Era

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Recommended Citation

Shein, Cyndi and Lapworth, Emily (2016) "Say Yes to Digital Surrogates: Strengthening the Archival Record in the Postcustodial Era," *Journal of Western Archives: Vol. 7 : Iss. 1 , Article 9.*

Available at: <https://digitalcommons.usu.edu/westernarchives/vol7/iss1/9>

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Cover Page Footnote

The authors would like to thank colleagues in UNLV's Special Collections division for reviewing and providing advice during the writing of this paper, and would particularly like to acknowledge Meghan Gross and Michelle Light. Meghan Gross, digitization specialist for both Documenting the African American Experience and the Southern Nevada Jewish Heritage Project, made invaluable contributions to the development of local practices related to creating, managing, and describing digital surrogates and also provided insight during the writing of this paper. Michelle Light, Head of Special Collections at UNLV University Libraries directed the development of policies related to loans for reproduction and supported efforts to document and share information about UNLV's scan-and-return experiences.

Say Yes to Digital Surrogates: Strengthening the Archival Record in the Postcustodial Era

Cyndi Shein
Emily Lapworth

ABSTRACT

Shein and Lapworth demonstrate how employing “scan-and-return” practices to strengthen and diversify archival collections is a creative and responsible way to provide researchers with equitable and ongoing access to a more inclusive and democratic historical record. The authors review some of the main archival theories and practices of the postcustodial era to show how their position is built on professional values and widely-accepted premises. They explain how and why UNLV Special Collections has joined a community of practice that validates stewardship of digital surrogates in support of the preeminent mandate of archives to preserve and provide broad access to cultural history. The theoretical discourse is followed by real-world examples and practical considerations related to collecting digital surrogates, including locally-developed guidelines and procedures, positive outcomes, and concerns that were raised and addressed along the way.

Introduction

There are many missing threads in the tapestry of human history. Sometimes the reason certain peoples or subjects are underrepresented in the archival record is because no relevant documentation about them exists. Other times the documentation exists but remains in private hands, resulting in no representation of the topic in a publicly accessible forum. In an effort to weave some of the missing threads back into the greater historical narrative, archives are collecting and providing access to digital surrogates of original items that are not held in their custody. A growing community of practice is successfully engaging in this non-custodial approach as a way to supplement physical collections or to proactively create an intentional body of records on a particular region, culture, experience, or event. These institutions are increasingly creating, collecting, and preserving digital surrogates in spite of the perception that surrogates are not “real” collection material since they are neither unique nor original by traditional definitions. User expectation

for online access, increased trust in digital records, and ever-improving ways to display and deliver digital materials are leading to changes in perceptions and increased use of digital surrogates by various audiences.

The practice of “scan-and-return,” one form of acquiring and stewarding digital surrogates, has proven instrumental in notable projects across the United States, and is a practice that is easily defensible within the context of the major archival theories of the postcustodial era. The University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV) University Libraries is part of this community of practice and has integrated scan-and-return processes into its collecting procedures. At UNLV University Libraries, scan-and-return refers to a practice in which original materials are, by agreement, loaned to the archives for digitization (scanning or digital photography) and then returned to the owners.¹ The results are referred to as digital surrogates because they stand in for the originals; however, they are treated with the same care that is afforded to born-digital materials—they are accessioned, processed, preserved, and made accessible to researchers in accordance with professional values and ethics.² The Special Collections division of UNLV University Libraries engages in this scan-and-return practice not in preference to collecting physical materials, but when material deemed valuable within its collecting scope and mission is unattainable in the original format.

As chronicled by notable projects at various institutions, the practice of collecting digital surrogates has proven instrumental in supporting the mandate of archives to preserve and provide access to cultural history, in strengthening the archival record by sharing otherwise inaccessible materials, and in building community relationships. While such projects are being implemented, promoted, and discussed in the archival community, the topic of collecting digital surrogates is not well-represented in professional literature. This paper is an attempt to bring the discussion out of the shadows, ground the practice in accepted theory, and transform the profession’s perception of digital surrogate creation and collecting. The authors of this paper argue that, in the postcustodial era, the practice of collecting digital surrogates is integral to achieving the profession’s mission to provide the broadest access to cultural heritage materials and that this practice is supported by ideas expressed in archival theory over the past 50 years, particularly:

- the primary purpose and mission of archives is to provide long-term access to records that hold meaning and value to humankind;
- the nature of the archival record is inclusive both in content and in format;

1. Unless stated otherwise, the concept of ownership is used in this paper in reference to physical ownership.
2. See Society of American Archivists. “SAA Core Values Statement and Code of Ethics,” Society of American Archivists, www2.archivists.org/statements/saa-core-values-statement-and-code-of-ethics (accessed January 26, 2016).

- archives and archivists have a responsibility to be active selectors and stewards of the archival record;
- the archival record should represent the diversity of humankind; and
- non-custodial stewardship of materials can be a vital component in fulfilling the primary mission of building a diversified record and providing access to it.

Review of relevant archival principles and theories

The purpose and mission of archives

The archives profession is often described or defined by the types of materials in its repositories or the tasks that archivists perform, when the emphasis belongs on the profession's mission and purpose.³ Archives are memory. Archival institutions provide trustworthy evidence of the past, which is used to influence, correct, or create historical narratives, culture, and identity. The fundamental purpose and defining characteristic of American archives was effectively articulated in 1956 by luminary T. R. Schellenberg, when he wrote, "The end of all archival effort is to preserve valuable records and make them available for use."⁴ This principle remains preeminent today, as revealed in the first of the Core Values of The Society of American Archivists (SAA), "Access and Use," which states, "Archivists promote and provide the widest possible accessibility of materials."⁵ Access is a priority that is central to the mission statements of most contemporary archives and special collections, whether large or small, public or private.⁶

SAA past president and fellow Mark Greene's writings consistently emphasize the primacy of access to historical records of and for all members of society: "Ultimately the archival mission is about meaning...meaning that transcends the immediate purpose for which the material was created and suggests the appropriateness of

3. See SAA's description of the archives profession at Society of American Archivists, "What Are Archives?," Society of American Archivists, <http://www2.archivists.org/profession> (accessed January 26, 2016).
4. T. R. Schellenberg, *Modern Archives: Principles & Techniques* (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2003): 224.
5. The Society of American Archivists, "SAA Core Values Statement and Code of Ethics."
6. See the U.S. National Archives and Records Administration's mission statement, "Our Vision and Mission," National Archives and Records Administration, <http://www.archives.gov/about/info/mission.html> (accessed January 26, 2016); and the American Library Association and The Society of American Archivists joint access guidelines, "ALA-SAA Joint Statement of Access: Guidelines for Access to Original Research Materials (August 1994)," Society of American Archivists, <http://www2.archivists.org/statements/ala-saa-joint-statement-of-access-guidelines-for-access-to-original-research-materials-au> (accessed January 26, 2016).

making it accessible for the long term.”⁷ Public access to material with transcendent meaning has risen in importance as the role of archives in Western society has changed over time, from one of an exclusively governmental support agency to a wider-ranging role as the steward of society’s cultural memory. In his thought-provoking 2001 article “Archival Science and Postmodernism” Canadian archivist and SAA fellow Terry Cook traced the path of archival theory and concluded:

There has been a collective shift during the past century from a juridical-administrative justification for archives grounded in concepts of the state, to a socio-cultural justification for archives grounded in wider public policy and public use...While the maintenance of government accountability and administrative continuity, and the protection of personal rights, are still rightly recognized as important purposes for archives, the principal justification for archives to most users...rests on archives being able to offer citizens a sense of identity, locality, history, culture, and personal and collective memory.⁸

Whereas there are some respected archivists who maintain a narrower perspective of the purpose of archives, prevalent theory is consistent with Cook’s conclusion.⁹ While institutions have different missions, collecting mandates, guidelines, and audiences, the profession as a whole is entrusted with preserving and providing access to cultural heritage. As Greene insisted in “The Power of Meaning,” “It is vital that archivists reclaim and reaffirm a broad conception of their professional purpose and an equally broad definition of what constitutes archival material. To do otherwise is to accept a truncated and sterile vision of our profession.”¹⁰ This broad conception of the purpose and nature of archives encourages the collecting of materials that are not only inclusive in content, but also in format.

7. Mark A. Greene, “The Power of Meaning: The Archival Mission in the Post-Modern Age,” *American Archivist* 65, no. 1 (2002): 50.
8. Terry Cook, “Archival Science and Postmodernism: New Formulations for Old Concepts,” *Archival Science* 1, no. 1 (2001): 18; Rachel Onuf and Thomas Hyry confirmed this in “Take It Personally: The Implications of Personal Records in Electronic Form,” in *I, Digital: Personal Collections in The Digital Era*, ed. Christopher A. Lee (Chicago: The Society of American Archivists, 2011), 242: “American archival tradition has been an amalgamation of the public archives tradition, which mandates archives to collect and preserve records created by their parent institutions; and the historical manuscripts tradition, which directs archives to collect materials for their broader cultural, societal and historical value.”
9. See also Sue McKemish, “Placing Records Continuum Theory and Practice,” *Archival Science* 1, no. 4 (2001): 358-359: “The records continuum worldview envisages an inclusive, multidimensional archival place... a place where it is acknowledged that individual, group, organisational, and societal purposes need to be addressed...”
10. Greene, “The Power of Meaning,” 42.

The nature of archival materials

Archives collect, arrange, describe, preserve, and provide access to materials of enduring value created by individuals, families, and organizations in the course of their affairs.¹¹ As the mandate of archives has evolved to become more inclusive, extending not just from public to private, but also from majority to minority groups, archivists have been required to reevaluate the essence and characteristics of the archival record. In 1956 Schellenberg recognized the need to adapt and evolve with the times: “The modern archivist, I believe, has a definite need to redefine archives in a manner more suited to his own requirements.”¹² The rise of technology and the broader collecting agendas of archives have expanded the nature of the materials cared for by archives, prompting the profession to not only redefine what *content* is considered archival, but also to widen its conception of what material *formats* are considered archival. Archivists face a growing range of recordkeeping and communication methods, from computer data to ephemeral arts, and everything in between. In her 2014 book, *Conceptualizing 21st Century Archives*, professor and theorist Anne Gilliland described the new inclusive nature of archives as follows:

Classically, archives would contain primarily, if not exclusively, original bureaucratic records. Increasingly, they include multiple versions and formats of those records, as well as a host of nonbureaucratic historical, documentary, and other nonpublished or primary materials, many of which do not come in traditional textual forms and whose status as records archivists widely debate. These might include oral and visual histories; scientific data such as satellite images, readouts from digital instrumentation, and digital lab notebooks; virtual re-creations of architecture or performances; and nontangible community records such as Indigenous stories, songlines, winter counts, and barks.¹³

These “multiple versions and formats” of records held by archives bring the notion of uniqueness into question. As versions of originals, digital surrogates test the traditional concept that archival materials are unique by nature—a concept which, beginning in the 20th century, has been eroded by the common use of typewriters, carbon copies, photocopiers, computers, and digital cameras in the creation of both personal and bureaucratic records.

11. See SAA glossary for alternative definitions, <http://www2.archivists.org/glossary> (accessed January 26, 2016).
12. Schellenberg, *Modern Archives*, 15.
13. Anne J. Gilliland, *Conceptualizing 21st Century Archives* (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2014): 46. Others also verify “archival sources have widened beyond written records to include... photographs, oral histories, videotapes, computerized statistical files, laboratory data, wiretap transcriptions, and architectural drawings.” Edwin Bridges et al., “Historians and Archivists: A Rationale for Cooperation,” *Journal of American History* 80, no. 1 (1993): 181.

In 1981 former SAA president F. Gerald Ham asked, “Does not the archivist’s emphasis on the uniqueness of his materials lose meaning when records can be easily duplicated, reformatted, and transmitted...?”¹⁴ Years later, historian and archivist James O’Toole voiced the complexities presented by multiple copies of archival records in his article “On the Idea of Uniqueness,” in which he identified four ways that archival materials can be considered unique: the uniqueness of records themselves (physical items), the uniqueness of the information contained within records, the uniqueness of the process and functions that produced the records, and/or the uniqueness of aggregations of records.¹⁵ Although digital surrogates may not be physically unique items, O’Toole argued that uniqueness is best understood in relative rather than absolute terms. He implored archivists to “inquire *how* [records] are unique (if they are) and, just as important, whether and why that matters.”¹⁶ This advice is useful in selecting materials for scan-and-return agreements—because often times, it is indeed the “whether and why” that really influence collecting decisions. When the original is held in private hands and the surrogate provides the only means of public access and study, the fact that the surrogate is not absolutely unique is irrelevant. Furthermore, uniqueness may not be a primary factor in the decision-making process when compelling reasons for creating and preserving digital surrogates are tied as closely to donor and community relations as they are to access.

The present-day recognition of a wide variety of formats (and versions) as “archival” records, the focus of the archival mission on access, and the redefinition of archives to include the broader human experience, are part of a larger paradigm shift that essentially began with simultaneous movements in historiography and archival theory in the 1960s and 1970s—decades that experienced the revision of historical method as well as intense reexamination of the purpose and practices of the archives profession. In 1975 Ham issued a call to action in his presidential address in which he implored the profession to collaborate rather than compete for custody of archival materials, to turn away from its limited role as passive custodian of bureaucratic records, and to take on an active role in shaping a more diversified record of humankind.¹⁷ While Ham’s nontraditional ideas sparked criticism and controversy in many corners, they also sparked action.

The active role of the archivist

Ham’s call for archivists to take an active role in acquiring and selecting materials was revolutionary. Schellenberg laid the foundation for the concept of the active

14. F. Gerald Ham, “Archival Strategies for the Post-Custodial Era,” *American Archivist* 44, no. 3 (1981): 209.

15. James O’Toole, “On the Idea of Uniqueness,” *American Archivist* 57, no. 4 (1994): 633, 637-640.

16. *Ibid.*, 658.

17. F. Gerald Ham, “The Archival Edge,” *American Archivist* 38, no. 1 (1975): 5.

archivist when he advocated for institutional archivists to appraise records transferred to them from their own institutions,¹⁸ but Ham advanced the concept of the active archivist much further in his 1975 address and his 1981 article, “Archival Strategies for the Post-Custodial Era,” opposing the profession’s tradition of passivity in no uncertain terms. Ham’s writings struck a chord with late-20th century archivists, particularly those in postmodern circles who were pondering the complexities and limitations of human communication, accepting that humans are innately unable to be entirely impartial, and challenging the concept of universally accepted truth.¹⁹ This new postmodern viewpoint directly opposed modernism²⁰ and the age-old characterization of the archivist as little more than a simple, unobtrusive keeper of records.²¹ This legacy of the archivist as an unbiased and passive guardian of records was conceived within the context of ancient public recordkeeping, handed down through the centuries,²² and strongly reinforced in the early-20th century by renowned British archivist Sir Hilary Jenkinson, who argued that appraisal done by the archivist would compromise the impartial evidential nature of records.²³

By the mid-20th century, however, archivists began discussing and widely accepting their responsibility to be less passive. By the 1950s the reality of the enormous volume of contemporary materials made appraisal a practical necessity, as advocated by Schellenberg, who suggested that archivists use their historical knowledge to select records for disposal or retention.²⁴ Then, as today, finite physical space and resources precluded repositories from keeping an infinitely growing body of materials. Then president of the German Federal Archives Hans Booms, writing in 1972, articulated how the role of the archivist had changed from one of “collecting

18. Schellenberg discussed how originators can determine records’ “primary value” to the originating agency and provide insight in determining records’ values to secondary users, but that “...archivists should have final responsibility for judging the secondary values of records whether these are preserved as evidence of an agency’s organizational and functional development, or for their social, economic, or other information.” Schellenberg, *Modern Archives*, 30.
19. The influences of postmodern philosophy on archival theory have been traced back to Derrida and Foucault and widely discussed in archival literature. See both Terry Cook and Tom Nesmith for insightful discussions on postmodernism.
20. In his article, “Seeing Archives: Postmodernism and the changing Intellectual Place of Archives,” *American Archivist* 65, no. 1 (2002): 26, Tom Nesmith gave this quick, but effective, summary: “The modernist view, stemming from the rise of science and the Enlightenment, posited that rational, thus reliable, communication could be the basis of unlimited intellectual, material, and social progress.”
21. For more on the archival tradition of neutrality and the self-effacement of archivists as simple, mechanical, persons with no specific qualifications, see Nesmith’s discussion on Sir Hilary Jenkinson and Douglas Brymner. Nesmith, “Seeing Archives,” 27-28.
22. Luciana Duranti, “Archives as a Place,” *Archives and Manuscripts* 24, no. 2 (1995): 243-250. Duranti traced public archives from antiquity to the 20th century, from Justinian Code to Schellenberg.
23. *Ibid.*, 23.
24. Schellenberg, *Modern Archives*, 30.

and preserving more or less sparsely and randomly retained ‘leftovers’” to one of active selector—“as the volume of material with the potential of forming part of the documentary heritage began to exceed the limits of what could be physically incorporated into that documentary heritage, this function changed to comprise mainly the acquisition and preservation of material chosen more or less thoughtfully from out of an overabundant store.”²⁵

Many archivists strongly opposed breaking from the tradition of neutrality, which was a reflection of their commitment to protect the authenticity of the archival record by not interfering with it in any way.²⁶ While ethically holding neutrality as aspirational, other archivists, under the growing influence of postmodernism, began to understand a non-neutral role not only as acceptable, but as inescapable. When viewed through the lens of postmodernism, Jenkinson’s stance on the absolute impartiality of archivists and archives is untenable, as is the absolute truth or neutrality of the historical record itself. One collaborative team of historians and archivists working to improve education in history phrased it this way:

Confidence in ‘scientific’ methods of determining accuracy has been eroded by assertions that texts can be read in infinite ways. Our representations of the past are not retrieved, fully formed, from the past... Most historians no longer contend that views of the past that are constructed today, or even documents created contemporaneously with past events, are final statements.²⁷

This perspective denies the human capacity for complete neutrality and the existence of universally agreed upon truth—the nuanced reality of an event or culture cannot accurately be represented by a single voice, but is instead subject to interpretation by contemporary witnesses and future historians. As Cook explained it, “Nothing is neutral... Everything is shaped, presented, represented, re-presented, symbolized, signified, signed, constructed by the speaker, photographer, writer, for a set purpose.”²⁸

This view on neutrality and the inexactness of historical records has been voiced by historians and archivists alike. In 1970 activist and historian Howard Zinn wrote

25. Hans Booms, “Society and the Formation of a Documentary Heritage: Issues in the Appraisal of Archival Sources” *Archivaria* 24, Summer (1987): 76.

26. The staunchest defenders of archival neutrality hail from the arena of public records, where neutrality and unbroken physical custody can be key factors in upholding authenticity and integrity. The authors of this paper recognize the value of neutrality and physical custody, particularly in the public records sector, but contend that rigid adherence to those precepts can limit and even impede documenting the broader history of society.

27. Bridges et al., “Historians and Archivists,” 180.

28. Cook, “Archival Science and Postmodernism,” 7.

that historiography is “value-laden, whether we choose or not”²⁹ and later went so far as to state that the archivist’s “supposed neutrality is...fake.”³⁰ Since the 1970s archivists have continued to add their voices to postmodernism’s denial of absolute neutrality,³¹ including Greene, who insisted that “Postmodernism demands that archivists acknowledge the extent to which their decisions, including those of what to acquire for future preservation, are thoroughly subjective...”³² Gradually, the greater archives profession has come to accept its part in records selection, in spite of the serious implications expressed earlier by Booms: “Archivists, therefore, in fulfilling their role in the formation of the documentary heritage, hold the monopoly on an activity which dictates what kind of cultural representation of society, insofar as this is reflected by the public record, will be handed down to future generations.”³³ As archivists acknowledged the enormity of this responsibility,³⁴ they decided to use their power for good; they began to develop very deliberate approaches to collecting, the timing of which dovetailed with the history discipline’s late 1960s-1970s movement to diversify the historical record.

The diversification of the historical record

Near the time that mid-20th century archivists began to shed their traditional roles as passive guardians of archives, both historians and archivists began to question the definition of archives as limited to “documents which formed part of an official transaction and were preserved for official reference.”³⁵ Shifts in archival

29. Howard Zinn, *The Politics of History* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1970), 36.

30. Howard Zinn, “Secrecy, Archives, and the Public Interest,” *Midwestern Archivist* 2, no. 2 (1977): 20.

31. See the writings of Tom Nesmith, Adrian Cunningham, and Terry Cook, as referenced elsewhere in this paper, as well as Angelika Menne-Haritz, “Appraisal or Documentation: Can We Appraise Archives by Selecting Content?” *American Archivist* 57, Summer (1994): 541.

32. Mark Greene, “Into the Deep End: One Archivist’s Struggle with Diversity, Community, Collaboration, and Their Implications for Our Profession,” in *Through the Archival Looking Glass: A Reader on Diversity and Inclusion*, ed. Mary Caldera and Kathryn M. Neal (Chicago: The Society of American Archivists, 2014): 34.

33. Booms, *Society and the Formation of a Documentary Heritage*, 78.

34. “History is not what happened in the past, but rather what is *communicated* about the past. And what is communicated about the past is shaped by what survives and is deemed valuable enough to preserve.” Mary Caldera and Kathryn M. Neal, ed., *Through the Archival Looking Glass: A Reader on Diversity and Inclusion* (Chicago: The Society of American Archivists, 2014): xi. For more information on the power of archives in shaping the historic record see Randall C. Jimerson, *Archives Power: Memory, Accountability, and Social Justice* (Chicago: The Society of American Archivists, 2009); Mark A. Greene, “The Power of Archives: Archivists’ Values and Value in the Postmodern Age (with an introduction by Dennis Meissner),” *American Archivist* 72, no. 1 (2009): 13-41; Joan M. Schwartz and Terry Cook, “Archives, Records, and Power: The Making of Modern Memory,” *Archival Science* 2, no. 2 (2002): 1-19; Verne Harris, *Archives and Justice: A South African Perspective* (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2007).

35. Hilary Jenkinson, *A Manual of Archive Administration* (London: Percy Lund, Humphries, 1937): 4.

thought and historical methodology called for documenting everyday people, not just bureaucratic functions. In his 1975 speech Ham argued that the most important task of the archivist is “to make an informed selection of information that will provide a representative record of human experience in our time.”³⁶ He called for archivists to develop strategies for documenting society, because if the archivist is “passive, uninformed, with a limited view of what constitutes the archival record, the collections that he acquires will never hold up a mirror for mankind. And if we are not holding up that mirror, if we are not helping people understand the world they live in, and if this is not what archives is all about, then I do not know what it is we are doing that is all that important.”³⁷

Two years later, in an article addressed to the archival profession, Zinn reinforced Ham’s argument by insisting that archivists “take the trouble to compile a whole new world of documentary material, about the lives, desires, needs of ordinary people.”³⁸ Zinn accused passive acquisition policies of resulting in a skewed historical record that focused on the richest and most powerful elements of society and ignored the “impotent and the obscure.”³⁹ This echoed his own 1970 appeal to historians in which he urged them to abandon the idea of objectivity and take a side, preferably the side of victims of injustice:

Society has varying and conflicting interests; what is called objectivity is the disguise of one of these interests—that of neutrality. But neutrality is a fiction in an unneutral world. There are victims, there are executioners, and there are bystanders. In the dynamism of our time, when heads roll into the basket every hour, what is ‘true’ varies according to what happens to your own head—and the ‘objectivity’ of the bystander calls for inaction while other heads fall.⁴⁰

Zinn’s conviction was reflective of the times. Riding on the crest of civil rights movements, anti-war protests, and labor union demonstrations, Western society and scholarship witnessed significant change in the mid-1960s through the 1970s. A major change in historical thinking began in the years following World War II—governmental records were no longer viewed as the only authority on history. A

36. Ham, “The Archival Edge,” 5.

37. *Ibid.*, 13.

38. Zinn, “Secrecy, Archives, and the Public Interest,” 25.

39. *Ibid.*, 20-21.

40. Zinn, *The Politics of History*, 40. For more on activist archives see Andrew Flinn, “Archival Activism: Independent and Community-led Archives, Radical Public History and the Heritage Professions,” *InterActions: UCLA Journal of Education and Information Studies* 7, no. 2 (2011); Francis X. Blouin and William G. Rosenberg, *Processing the Past: Contesting Authority in History and The Archives* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 135.

movement to capture “social history” began in the postwar years, gaining momentum in the 1960s, and a broader socially-constructed definition of history and archives began to emerge. As described by historian Francis Blouin, historical study that had previously focused on the archives of institutional entities shifted its focus in the 1970s to the “political, social, and cultural forces that challenged those institutions” and historians of the time made notable efforts “to discover and recover the lives of the ordinary and ignored.”⁴¹ However, in order for coming generations to “put previously marginalized groups back into history,”⁴² sources of information about those marginalized groups had to be created or gathered and made accessible.⁴³ So while archivists such as Schellenberg, Booms, and Ham had proposed much-needed strategies to cope with an abundance of records on governmental activities, which were arguably over-documented, archivists now also turned their attention to areas of history that were under-documented and began seriously thinking of ways to collect materials that would fill gaps in the record. One inspiring and ambitious answer to this challenge was offered by a practice that became known as documentation strategy.

While documentation strategy was discussed and defined as early as 1984 by SAA,⁴⁴ archivist Helen Willa Samuels is viewed as the first to effectively explain and popularize the idea. Samuels presented documentation strategy as an inter-institutional effort to document “an ongoing issue, activity, or geographic area”—a strategy accomplished only through collaboration with records creators, administrators, and users.⁴⁵ In her 1986 article, “Who Controls the Past,” Samuels built upon Ham’s ideas, emphasizing the importance of the archivist’s role as appraiser and collector, and echoing his appeal for repositories to work together to augment the record where incomplete. Rather than simply accepting whatever records are donated to or deposited with the archives, as Jenkinson prescribed, documentation strategy recommends that archivists take an active role in collecting, appraising, and even creating records.⁴⁶

By actively collecting material from underrepresented communities, archivists increase access to a wider breadth and depth of information. Proactively collecting

41. Francis X. Blouin Jr., “The Evolution of Archival Practice and the History-Archival Divide,” in *Controlling the Past: Documenting Society and Institutions: Essays in Honor of Helen Willa Samuels*, ed. Terry Cook (Chicago: The Society of American Archivists, 2011), 322-323.

42. Ibid.

43. Ibid.; Blouin and Rosenberg, *Processing the Past*, 73 and 135.

44. Documentation strategy: “A methodology that guides selection and assures retention of adequate information about a specific geographic area, a topic, a process, or an event...” See SAA Glossary, <http://www2.archivists.org/glossary> (accessed January 26, 2016).

45. Helen Willa Samuels, “Who Controls the Past,” *American Archivist* 49, no. 2 (1986): 115.

46. Ibid., 112, 116.

materials that are diverse in content and varied in form (including digital surrogates) is sound practice that aligns with forward-thinking archival theory. The priority of documentation strategy is to ensure that adequate and available documentation on the target subject exists somewhere in some form—not necessarily as traditionally-defined records in the custody of an archives. One of the hallmarks of documentation strategy is that its goal to build and maintain records for the common good does not depend on physical custody of the material. This strategy fortifies the role of archivists as stewards rather than custodians, and places a responsibility on archivists to ensure that subjects within the scopes of their missions are documented, preserved, and accessible—whether within the walls of the archives or beyond.

The question of custody

Digital material and online access have redefined archives—in material format, in practice, and in defining archives beyond a brick-and-mortar place. Archives are no longer exclusively held in physical spaces, and taking physical custody of materials is not the only way to provide continued access. Archives are well into the digital age, an age in which physical custody is not always necessary or practical—an age that has already left our purely custodial tradition in the past and has therefore been called the “postcustodial era” of archives.

Ham raised the question of custody in 1975 and later introduced the term “post-custodial” in “Archival Strategies for the Post-Custodial Era.” He noted that until that time (1981) archives had been focused on acquiring and maintaining custody of records. He then pointed out that given the volume of modern records, archives could not physically store and preserve them all—archives were entering a time in which they would need to turn their attention away from custody in order to achieve their missions. Ham suggested that archives should concentrate on collaborating to selectively preserve and provide access to records, regardless of whether or not the archives was in physical possession of them. This revolutionary idea received mixed reactions from the community, most of which staunchly adhered to the model of the archives as a place and the archivist’s identity as custodian of records, while others began to cultivate a broader understanding of what it might mean to be an archivist in this new postcustodial era.

Ham’s 1981 strategies called for outreach that extends archival training and support to non-professional archives, building technical infrastructure and expertise in the archival profession, leveraging technology to provide access, increased appraisal, and “new tools, new methodologies and theories.”⁴⁷ The breadth of Ham’s vision for the postcustodial era has indeed inspired archival theory and practice in many of these areas. Since its introduction, however, the term “postcustodial” has been appropriated by authors emphasizing non-custodial practices, almost exclusively in the context of institutional electronic records management, resulting in

47. Ham, “Archival Strategies for the Post-Custodial Era,” 211-215.

a distortion of the term's original meaning and intent.⁴⁸ The authors of this paper emphasize that postcustodial theory endorses non-custody in that it recognizes *some* circumstances in which it is appropriate for archives to support and steward materials not held in their physical custody, however, it in no way mandates non-custody in all cases nor suggests that non-custody is preferable to taking custody of originals as a general practice. Postcustodialism does not equal non-custody, nor should it be limited to the realm of bureaucratic records; non-custody is but one potential component of a postcustodial approach, an approach versatile enough to encompass personal and community records as well as institutional records.⁴⁹

Beginning in the 1990s the term “non-custody” has been used interchangeably with the term “distributed custody” in Canada, Australia, and the United States. The terms appear as equivalents in definitions, literature, and government policy, and are almost exclusively applied to the management of bureaucratic electronic records.⁵⁰ Distributed custody/non-custody is described as an approach in which the originating office temporarily or indefinitely retains custody of some or all of its own records of enduring value, while the archives assumes the responsibility of caring for and providing continued access to the records without taking custody of them. The authors of this paper have found the reality of distributed custody to be broader and more nuanced than the available literature suggests. In practice, there are examples outside the institutional records environment in which archives are taking custody of and responsibility for a version of a record or object while the original item (physical or digital) remains in the custody of the creator, collector, community archives, or other third party. The term non-custody is used throughout this paper to describe various circumstances in which an archives does not take custody of an original record, but stewards and provides access to a version of that record (such as a digital surrogate); since versions of the record are dispersed between the archives and

48. The “postcustodial theory of archives” is currently defined in the SAA Glossary (<http://www2.archivists.org/glossary>) as “The idea that archivists will no longer physically acquire and maintain records, but that they will provide management oversight for records that will remain in the custody of the record creators”—a misleading definition that focuses on non-custody and omits the many other relevant strategies Ham proposed for the postcustodial era.

49. Cal Lee and Terry Cook are among those who have pointed out that postcustodialism is not limited to non-custody, nor does it dictate non-custody. Christopher A. Lee, ed., *I, Digital: Personal Collections in The Digital Era* (Chicago: The Society of American Archivists, 2011), 237. Terry Cook, “Electronic Records, Paper Minds: The Revolution in Information Management and Archives in the Post-Custodial and Post-Modernist Era,” *Archives & Social Studies: A Journal of Interdisciplinary Research* 1, no. 0 (2007): 418.

50. See Philip C. Bantin, “Strategies for Managing Electronic Records: A New Archival Paradigm? An Affirmation of Our Archival Traditions?” *Archival Issues* 23, no. 1 (1998): 22; Adrian Cunningham, “Waiting for The Ghost Train: Strategies for Managing Electronic Personal Records before It Is Too Late,” *Archival Issues* 24, no. 1 (1999): 57-58; Jeannette Allis Bastian, “A Question of Custody: The Colonial Archives of the United States Virgin Islands,” *American Archivist* 64, no. 1 (2001): 97; National Archives of Australia, “Distributed Custody Policy,” (November 2015), <http://naa.gov.au/about-us/organisation/accountability/operations-and-preservation/distributed-custody.aspx> (accessed February 6, 2016).

others, the authors consider the phrase distributed custody to be equally applicable in these situations.

In opposition to non-custody, archival science professor Luciana Duranti has presented the most compelling argument, insisting that an archives' custody of a record is essential to ensuring its authenticity, security, and stability.⁵¹ In 1995 she advocated for the "archives as a place" by tracing the history of archives back to Roman law and the tradition of depositing materials in the archives "so that they remain uncorrupted... provide trustworthy evidence... [and serve as] continuing memory of that to which they attest."⁵² The authors of this paper contend that, if created, acquired, and stewarded according to emerging best practices, digital surrogates reflect the authenticity and maintain the integrity of the original, and that an archives' custody of a digital surrogate addresses Duranti's concerns. Responsible stewardship⁵³ of digital surrogates by a third party (the archives) avoids conflict of interest, impropriety, or alterations by the persons/organizations documented by or held accountable by the records. If the original record from which the surrogate was derived is lost or altered (intentionally or accidentally), the surrogate serves as trustworthy evidence (which can be confirmed by digital forensics).⁵⁴

The issue of custody still sparks controversy in some circles, but non-custodial approaches are increasing in practice, and other components of Ham's postcustodial strategy—such as actively selecting records, extending outreach to non-professional archives, and leveraging technology to provide access—have become widely accepted. While conceived within the context of government records,⁵⁵ the time has come for the profession to re-contextualize postcustodial theory within a framework that supports all types of materials. Practice has outpaced professional theories—the postcustodial model has been implemented, not only in institutional records management, but also in the broader documentation of humankind.⁵⁶ Several archives have successfully made cultural heritage materials accessible without taking custody of the originals. By concentrating on collaboration rather than custody, such

51. For an additional viewpoint opposing non-custody, see Linda J. Henry, "Schellenberg in Cyberspace," *American Archivist* 61, no. 2 (1998): 309-327.

52. Duranti, "Archives as a Place," 243.

53. The authors use "responsible stewardship" in the same spirit as in SAA's Core Value "Responsible Custody," Society of American Archivists, <http://www2.archivists.org/statements/saa-core-values-statement-and-code-of-ethics#.Vx6qmDARl2w> (accessed February 6, 2016).

54. See below for further discussion on integrity and authenticity.

55. Ham was Wisconsin State Archivist from 1964 to 1989, during which time he developed his postcustodial strategies.

56. As lamented first by Cunningham and later by Onuf and Hyry, literature on electronic records has largely been devoted to corporate records and there is far less written about managing personal digital records.

work embodies Ham's vision for the postcustodial era in its purest interpretation and epitomizes the archivist as steward rather than custodian. Joel Wurl, Senior Program Officer for the National Endowment for the Humanities Division of Preservation and Access, eloquently described stewardship as:

characterized by partnership and continuity of association between repository and originator. In a stewardship approach, archival material is viewed less as property and more as cultural asset, jointly held and invested in by the archive and the community of origin... The goals of stewardship are preservation and access to information, wherever it might be physically held, while intentions or claims of possessing the largest or most valuable yield of material for a given community are both irrelevant and hollow.⁵⁷

From this perspective, preservation and access clearly supersede custody and the limited notion of archives as an exclusively physical space. In consonance with this perspective, Cook urged the profession to view "archives not as buildings where old records are stored, but as access hubs..."⁵⁸ Admirable initiatives are underway to do just that—repositories are successfully acting as access hubs for digital archives.

Landscape review

A brief review of the landscape reveals multiple examples of archives collaborating to provide access to materials that they do not physically possess. John Whaley Jr.'s 1994 paper, "Digitizing History," provides one of the earliest examples of a repository collecting digital surrogates of materials that remained in the hands of private individuals. The article describes how Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) built its *MultiCultural Archives* database, beginning with scans of physical documents borrowed from the African-American community. Scan-and-return was a way for "document owners to share the information contained in the documents without having to relinquish their ownership."⁵⁹ Digitization also allowed VCU to share the resources with other repositories, turning competitors into partners and garnering much-needed support for the project. Despite challenges related to digital preservation, privacy, and copyright, Whaley presented digitization as a potential method to preserve history and make it more widely accessible, urging archives to adopt the "access over ownership" rationale.⁶⁰ The *MultiCultural Archives* project pre-dated widespread use of the Web by cultural heritage institutions; the case study states that VCU planned to distribute the scans via CD-ROM to schools and libraries

57. Joel Wurl, "Ethnicity as Provenance: In Search of Values and Principles for Documenting the Immigrant Experience," *Archival Issues* 29, no. 1 (2005): 72.

58. Cook, "Electronic Records, Paper Minds," 430.

59. John H. Whaley, Jr., "Digitizing History," *American Archivist* 57, no. 4 (1994): 664.

60. *Ibid.*, 672.

in the community. In the two decades since VCU's *MultiCultural Archives* project, a number of other repositories have prioritized access over physical custody, opening public research to thousands of items held by community partners and individuals.

One such project, the *Plateau Peoples' Web Portal*, sponsored by Washington State University (WSU) in collaboration with the local community, brings together digital surrogates of materials related to indigenous peoples of the Northwest Plateau. The portal provides access to collections focused on specific groups, each of which is directly curated by a representative from the group documented therein. "The collections represented here have been chosen and curated by tribal consultants working in cooperation with University and Museum [WSU Museum of Anthropology] staff."⁶¹ While the sponsoring repository has custody of some materials, more than half of the material represented online remains in hands of others.⁶² This project demonstrates how leaving the responsibility to moderate description and access in the hands of the community builds trust between the community and the repository, empowering the community to restrict culturally sensitive material, while sharing other aspects of its history publicly. Also of note is that the portal was one of the first cultural heritage sites to include interactive features, enabling comments and exchange between the general public and the tribal communities, "allowing for multiple and overlapping narratives to exist and thus expanding the collections materials and its educational and research value."⁶³

Five years later the Utah Academic Library Consortium collaborated with the Mountain West Digital Library to create *Pioneers in Your Attic*, a virtual collection of primary resources (letters, photographs, diaries, etc.) on the overland migration of pioneers to the Western United States in the 1800s. Nearly forty participating libraries and historical societies sponsored scanning days, collecting digital surrogates (with descriptions and contextual information) from individuals. As stated on the project website, "By scanning these items and providing online access, the Legacy Project will allow individuals to retain their original items, yet preserve and share the intellectual and historical content of these valuable documents."⁶⁴ The *Pioneers in Your Attic* portal provides access to over 1,600 digital surrogates that tell the personal stories

61. Washington State University Museum of Anthropology, *Plateau Peoples' Web Portal (PPWP)*, <http://plateauportal.wsulibs.wsu.edu/html/ppp/index.php> (accessed January 27, 2016).

62. "MASC and National Anthropological Archives @ the Smithsonian material added: 82 pieces total; 63 from WSU special collections and Museum of Anthropology; 19 images from NAA...The tribes are still adding materials to the portal..." See Kimberly Christen, "NWACC Final Report: Plateau Peoples' Web Portal," NorthWest Academic Computing Consortium, http://nwacc.org/programs/grants/final_reportso8/christen_final.pdf (accessed January 27, 2016).

63. Ibid.

64. Mountain West Digital Library, "Pioneers in Your Attic," Mountain West Digital Library, <http://mwdl.org/portals/pioneers.php> (accessed January 27, 2016).

behind the Westward Expansion of the 19th century, and illustrates how the non-custodial approach of community scanning days can meaningfully supplement materials held by archival repositories.

More recently, the University of Texas (UT) at Austin Libraries sponsored initiatives to create virtual collections, the *Genocide Archive of Rwanda* and the *Guatemalan National Police Historical Archive* (AHPN),⁶⁵ both of which follow non-custodial models. The UT Austin Libraries partnered with organizations in Rwanda and Guatemala to provide ongoing access to their records without ever taking custody of the materials. Although the projects were conceived within a scan-and-return framework, UT Austin found partner organizations unwilling to let materials go, even briefly for the purpose of digitization, forcing UT Austin Libraries to revise their approach. Rather than performing the scanning in Texas as originally planned, UT Austin Libraries provided partners with the direction and resources to build local capacity for digitization, description, and preservation of their own cultural records. The partner organizations created and submitted digital surrogates to UT Austin Libraries, which is providing long-term stewardship of and access to over ten million digital objects with potential use in research, teaching, legal cases, and human rights advocacy. In their own words, “The University of Texas Libraries’ development of the postcustodial model through the HRDI [Human Rights Documentation Initiative] projects stands at the forefront of broader efforts to redefine the role and identity of the research library as a central component of teaching, scholarship, and resource to 21st century learners.”⁶⁶

The *MultiCultural Archives*, *Plateau Peoples’ Web Portal*, *Pioneers in Your Attic*, *Genocide Archive of Rwanda*, and *Guatemalan National Police Historical Archive* represent a small sampling of projects reflecting different times, scopes, and scales. The variety of tactics taken by these projects is inspiring, and this variety appears to be a key component of their successes. As noted by UT Austin Libraries’ project coordinators “...part of the success of applying the post-custodial archival model relies on an institution’s ability to utilize it not as a prescriptive or static approach, but as one that is scalable, adaptable, and replicable in the pursuit of sustainability.”⁶⁷ By leveraging the latest technologies, cooperating on documentation strategies, supporting communities in the preservation their own cultural patrimony, and elevating access above custody, these projects are variations on the themes found in

65. Genocide Archive of Rwanda, <http://genocidearchiverwanda.org.rw> (accessed January 27, 2016); Digital Archive of the Guatemalan National Police Historical Archive, <https://ahpn.lib.utexas.edu/> (accessed January 27, 2016). These projects are components of UT Austin Libraries’ larger Human Rights Documentation Initiative (HDRI), <https://www.lib.utexas.edu/hrdi> (accessed January 27, 2016).

66. The University of Texas at Austin, “From Custody to Collaboration: The Post-Custodial Archival Model at the University of Texas Libraries,” 3, <https://library.stanford.edu/sites/default/files/Univ%20of%20Texas.pdf> (accessed January 27, 2016).

67. *Ibid.*, 11-12.

Ham's strategies for the postcustodial era—they are each a realization of the potential of Ham's vision to contribute to education and the greater good.

Inspired by the innovation and impact of these and other projects, and motivated by donors' insistence on retaining their original materials, University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV) Special Collections examined its own *ad hoc* non-custodial procedures to determine a more sustainable means of collecting and describing digital surrogates. When faced with the choice of scanning and returning originals or leaving a gap in the archival record, UNLV Special Collections decided to say "Yes!" to digital surrogates.

Saying yes to digital surrogates at University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Background

The Special Collections division of the UNLV University Libraries documents the region's history through its special collections and its two research centers, the Center for Gaming Research and the Oral History Research Center. The mission of UNLV Special Collections is to support researchers worldwide in the interdisciplinary study of Las Vegas, Southern Nevada, and gaming by "building world-class collections, fostering discovery and access, safeguarding collections for future generations, creating new knowledge, and promoting scholarship and lifelong learning."⁶⁸ As a central unit in a minority-serving institution,⁶⁹ building diversified services and collections is a priority to the Libraries. To that end, Special Collections selectively collects, preserves, and provides access to digital surrogates documenting regional history. The practice of creating and collecting surrogates at UNLV began as early as 1980 and has proven to be an integral piece of significant initiatives and collections in recent years.

Joe Andre Papers

One of the earliest documented examples of creating surrogates at UNLV occurred in 1980, before digital reproduction technologies were commonly available, when UNLV Special Collections accepted a "Temporary Loan with rights for reproduction" of the personal papers and photographs of Joe Andre, a professional musician.⁷⁰ During an oral history interview, Mr. Andre shared photographs and scrapbooks to illustrate the story of his life, but was unwilling to part with the original materials. Andre's papers depict several under-documented small towns in

68. The mission of UNLV Special Collections is outlined on the division's website: "Mission of Special Collections," <https://www.library.unlv.edu/speccol/about/mission> (accessed January 27, 2016).

69. Of UNLV's 28,500 students, over half self-identify as minorities, over half are women, and 83 percent are Nevada residents. "Facts and Stats," <https://www.unlv.edu/about/glance/facts> (accessed January 27, 2016).

70. See Appendix A: Joe Andre Temporary Loan Agreement, 1980/1981.

Nevada during the 1920s and 1930s and offer a rare glimpse into the region's entertainment industry at that time (one of Special Collections' collecting areas is entertainment). In 1980 and 1981 Special Collections photocopied Mr. Andre's scrapbooks, photographed his photographic prints, and then returned all his materials to him. While clearly identified and described as reproductions, these surrogates were accessioned and processed as if they were originals.

Andre's original papers were later inherited by family members, who, some 35 years after the temporary loan, found a description of "Uncle Joe's papers" on UNLV's website. The heirs contacted Special Collections and donated the original materials from the 1980 loan as well as additional related materials. This acquisition of reproductions in 1980 was a herald of things to come in the digital era, and it serves to illustrate three benefits of scan-and-return practices:

- *Access*: The material was available (onsite) to the public for 35 years prior to the recent donation of the originals.
- *Preservation*: Some of the surrogate photographs created in 1980-1981 are clearer or more complete than the original photographs from which they were derived (due to wear and tear or the less favorable conditions in which the originals were kept in the intervening years).
- *Donor/community relations*: By responsibly stewarding the surrogates, UNLV earned the trust of the family who then initiated donation of the originals in 2015.

Culinary Workers Union Photographs

More recently, a small scan-and-return project gave UNLV the opportunity to demonstrate to an important local organization that it could trust UNLV as a steward of its history. Founded in 1938, the Culinary Workers Union Local 226 is the largest local chapter of the nationwide organization UNITE HERE and represents over 55,000 hotel, food service, and hospitality workers in Southern Nevada. Very few primary resources on Southern Nevada's labor history have been preserved for public access and study, and the Culinary Union's records represent a significant body of materials about the Las Vegas hospitality industry, local workers' historic contributions to the labor movement, and workers' central role in the region's economy. In the past few years, the UNLV University Libraries and the Department of History have been building a relationship with the Union to preserve and provide access to its history. Faculty and graduate students within UNLV's Public History Program began by surveying, organizing, and preserving thousands of historical artifacts on site at the Culinary Union. They proposed an exhibit of this material for display in the UNLV University Libraries, and Special Collections was called in to consult about the vast photographic archive (especially to assist in scanning images for the exhibit) and to conduct oral histories. Special Collections took this opportunity to make a case for the Culinary Union to donate the photographs to UNLV for long-term preservation

and access. There were several steps in building this trust, but key to the process was a pilot scan-and-return project.

The Culinary Union located three carousels of glass slides from the 1950s and 1960s, and asked Special Collections if they might be useful for the planned exhibit. UNLV's Digital Collections (a department of the Special Collections division) cleaned, scanned, described, and returned the slides safely. Special Collections then offered to provide online access to the images after the Culinary Union reviewed the content. The professional scanning, detailed metadata, and willingness to involve the Union in decisions about how its history would be represented online paved the way for the Union's donation of 34 linear feet of photographs in 2015. The bulk of the photographs depict the 1990s, highlighting the monumental Frontier Strike, which lasted over six years and was one of the longest labor strikes in U.S. history.

Community Documentation Projects

In 2012 UNLV's Oral History Research Center (a unit of the Special Collections division) began collaborating with community partners and cultural heritage organizations on *Documenting the African American Experience in Las Vegas*,⁷¹ an active campaign to document, preserve, and provide access to the heritage of Las Vegas' black community. Often, community participants were not willing to donate their historical records to UNLV, so Digital Collections staff researched and implemented "scanning days," events during which historical records were scanned for inclusion in UNLV's digital collections and then returned to community members on the spot. This marked the beginning of a more formalized scan-and-return procedure within UNLV Libraries, which further evolved during the *Southern Nevada Jewish Heritage Project*.

In June 2014, in collaboration with partners throughout the Las Vegas Valley, the UNLV Special Collections division began ongoing work on the *Southern Nevada Jewish Heritage Project*.⁷² The goal of the project is to collect primary sources and oral histories that document the history of the Jewish community of Southern Nevada and to make these resources available online. UNLV Libraries received a grant through the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) funded by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) and administered by the Nevada State Library and Archives to fund year one of the *Southern Nevada Jewish Heritage Project*. The project is now in its second year and is relying on private fundraising to sustain it.

At the start of the project and the grant period, curators discovered that many primary sources documenting the Jewish community in Southern Nevada have

71. UNLV University Libraries, "Documenting the African American Experience," <http://digital.library.unlv.edu/aae> (accessed January 27, 2016).

72. UNLV University Libraries, "Southern Nevada Jewish Heritage Project," <http://digital.library.unlv.edu/jewishheritage> (accessed January 27, 2016).

already been lost or destroyed. The Las Vegas economy is supported by a dynamic culture or “cult of the new,”⁷³ which demands that the city constantly reinvent itself to remain viable. While Vegas has its share of local museums, “[p]reservation and progress make disagreeable bedfellows”⁷⁴ as indicated by its continuing tradition of imploding historic architecture to make way for more relevant and profitable endeavors.⁷⁵ It is challenging to document the history of a city that is little more than a century old and composed of residents so forward-thinking that, while imagining and building the future, they have retained very little of their communal past.

While some residents have roots in the city, much of the population is transient, and many members of the Jewish community are relatively new to the area.⁷⁶ Local Jewish organizations have moved from building to building and experienced multiple changes in leadership, along with intermittent periods of inactivity. Though founded in 1905, Las Vegas only became a real boomtown in 1931—the same year that Nevada legalized gambling, construction began on the nearby Hoover Dam, and the local residency requirements for divorce were reduced to six weeks.⁷⁷ Around that time, residents of Jewish heritage came together as a community, meeting at the back of a store or in someone’s home to pray and teach their children Judaism.⁷⁸ There are not many Las Vegas residents alive today with direct ties to the founding members of the community and none of them has substantial documentation of it. Because of the informal nature of the Jewish community’s establishment in Las Vegas, it is unlikely

73. David G. Schwartz, “The Last Days of The Riviera: The Curious Endurance and Final Bow of The Strip’s First High-Rise,” *Vegas Seven*, May 2015, <http://vegasseven.com/2015/05/07/last-days-riviera/> (accessed January 27, 2016).
74. Kristen Peterson, “Losing Our History: To Implode or to Not Implode on The Las Vegas Strip,” *Las Vegas Weekly*, September 2, 2015, <http://lasvegasweekly.com/ae/2015/sep/02/losing-riviera-preservation-implosion-las-vegas/> (accessed January 27, 2016).
75. The Riviera, the first high-rise built in Las Vegas (1955), is slated for demolition in 2016. In “The Last Days of The Riviera” Schwartz noted, “The culprit of the Riviera closure isn’t the old management or the new buyers, but the very American, very Vegas cult of the new. We spend on what’s shiny. Sentiment rarely pays the bills.” Chris Kudialis listed thirteen hotel/casinos that have been imploded since 1993, including iconic structures by significant mid-century architects. “Clarion Prepares to Crumble into History,” *Las Vegas Review Journal*, February 8, 2015, <http://www.reviewjournal.com/news/las-vegas/clarion-prepares-crumble-history> (accessed January 27, 2016).
76. Ben Botkin, “Latest Census Numbers Reflect Las Vegas’ Transient Ways,” *Las Vegas Review-Journal*, February 9, 2014, <http://www.reviewjournal.com/news/latest-census-numbers-reflect-las-vegas-transient-ways> (accessed January 27, 2016); Kristen Peterson, “Is Las Vegas Really as Transient as We Think?” *Las Vegas Weekly*, February 25, 2015, <http://lasvegasweekly.com/as-we-see-it/2015/feb/25/las-vegas-transient-cities-america-residents/> (accessed January 27, 2016).
77. Mary Manning and Andy Samuelson, “A Gamble in The Sand,” *Las Vegas Sun*, May 15, 2008, <http://lasvegassun.com/news/2008/may/15/mammoths-mobsters-infinte-amounts-money/> (accessed January 27, 2016).
78. Temple Beth Sholom, “Mission,” <http://www.bethsholomlv.org/#!mission-history/c1qhp> (accessed January 27, 2016).

that formal records of its earliest years ever existed. Those persons that do hold evidence of the early days possess it in the form of photographs or documents that they created or inherited from a family member only one or two generations removed. Their personal connections to the materials make people unwilling to turn them over to an archival repository.

The goal of the *Southern Nevada Jewish Heritage Project* is to collect documentation of a community for which very little documentation exists, and what does exist is in the hands of private owners who are not willing to relinquish it. This dilemma faces many cultural heritage institutions wishing to preserve and make available the history of local communities. The communities may be eager to see themselves represented in the archival record, but are less willing to give up physical control of family heirlooms. Given the historical imbalances of power that some peoples and communities have experienced, this perspective is very understandable and should be respected. In response to these circumstances, UNLV Special Collections collects materials via the scan-and-return method. Through this non-custodial approach, it acquires digital surrogates of rare photos and documents and then opens them for public use. Although this may be traditionally viewed as less desirable than acquiring the originals, it is far better than the alternative—acquiring nothing, and leaving the community’s history inaccessible.

UNLV Special Collections invested significant time and resources to create and implement new workflows, procedures, and policies to ensure that the scan-and-return practices were carried out according to emerging best practices. For the *Southern Nevada Jewish Heritage Project*, the primary objectives are to document the history of the community, provide online access to primary sources, and build lasting relationships. When considered within this context, scan-and-return has been very instrumental in achieving project goals; to date, the benefits outweigh the costs of developing and implementing the new policies and procedures.

Developing scan-and-return policies and procedures at UNLV

Although many repositories create digital surrogates of their own holdings for access purposes, professional guidelines for implementing non-custodial scan-and-return methods do not exist. UNLV has framed tentative local guidelines for the appraisal and description of digital surrogates, which the authors offer here, not as exemplary, but in the interest of transparency and in the hope that sharing procedures might move both UNLV and the profession forward in this area.

Appraisal and collecting guidelines for the *Southern Nevada Jewish Heritage Project* were created to address both the overall collecting scope of the project and the general nature of materials considered appropriate for scan-and-return donation.⁷⁹

79. See Appendix B: Guidelines for the Southern Nevada Jewish Heritage Project.

The first part of the document contains information about the project and its goals and the second part focuses on scan-and-return, emphasizing that it is best to donate originals, but if donors are unwilling to donate originals, “Special Collections will carefully select a few items of great historical importance...to digitize and include in the Southern Nevada Jewish Heritage Project.” The document also gives appraisal guidelines addressing the content (relevance, creation, ownership, potential use, and uniqueness) and physical characteristics (age, format, quantity) of materials appropriate for the scan-and-return procedure. Project managers reviewed these guidelines with staff, provided them as handouts to potential donors, and posted them on the project blog.⁸⁰

When evaluating materials for scan-and-return, UNLV strives to strike a balance between the research and historical value of the materials, the institutional resources required to create and steward the digital surrogates, and the positive community relations that may result from the interaction. For scan-and-return agreements UNLV Special Collections only accepts items that are: primary sources, relevant to a specific project, owned by the person loaning them for scanning, and of historical or cultural value. UNLV guidelines also cite relative uniqueness and age as a means for evaluating materials. UNLV Digital Collections staff found that documents and loose papers or photographs are the easiest to scan; and fragile or complex objects like scrapbooks require more resources to digitize and are more difficult to faithfully convey online. Furthermore, the guidelines limit the quantity of materials to five to ten items per loan, ensuring that institutional resources are spent only on the best representation of available materials. Persons with large collections are strongly encouraged to donate the originals. During the decision-making process these criteria are considered and adjusted based on the relative value of the materials and UNLV's community building goals.

UNLV Libraries uses a loan reproduction agreement for scan-and-return acquisitions instead of a traditional deed of gift.⁸¹ By signing this agreement, the lender gives UNLV temporary custody of items “to be considered for reproduction” and also grants permissions “to store, use, and distribute the reproductions...” without committing up-front to digitization or long-term stewardship. This allows time for staff to perform risk analysis of materials for which the lender does not hold copyright.⁸² The donor relations aspect of scan-and-return also means that items are frequently offered for loan “in the heat of the moment” and accepted by project staff in the field. Rather than complicate the process with hastily made appraisal decisions in the field or additional paperwork, the loan reproduction agreement makes the scan

80. Emily Lapworth, “What’s in Your Garage?” February 2, 2015, <http://digital.library.unlv.edu/jewishheritage/blog/whats-your-garage> (accessed January 27, 2016).

81. See Appendix C: UNLV Loan Reproduction Agreement.

82. A discussion of copyright is beyond this paper's scope. UNLV's digitization program, including its scan-and-return practice, is based on the principle of fair use for education and research purposes.

-and-return transaction simple for the lender while also allowing Special Collections staff time and flexibility to exercise professional judgement related to the proposed loan.

Before the start of the *Southern Nevada Jewish Heritage Project*, UNLV Special Collections decided to manage digital surrogates as manuscript collections, as opposed to managing them solely as digital objects (as was previous practice). Materials accepted on loan for digitization are assigned a collection number, which is incorporated into the metadata associated with the digital surrogates, and an accession record is created to record the provenance of each discrete donation of surrogates. Before digital surrogates are created, the digitization specialist and archivist collaborate to decide how to group and describe items within CONTENTdm (UNLV's digital asset management system), which supports the creation of single or compound objects. Digital Collections staff then creates digital surrogates from loaned materials by following the same protocols used to digitize and preserve originals held in the permanent custody of UNLV.⁸³

Most of UNLV Libraries' digital collections in CONTENTdm are thematic and comprised of multiple manuscript collections. Since CONTENTdm organizes and displays material at the level of the digital object, the provenance of each digital object is provided by citing the manuscript collection name and number in the source field of the digital object and, with some exceptions, also by basing the digital ID on the manuscript collection number. CONTENTdm is not ideal for visually displaying complex hierarchical relationships between all components of an archival collection, but creating a compound object allows the context of a subset of the collection to be made easily apparent to the user. Individual items within compound objects, however, are not immediately apparent when searching or browsing. Bringing significant items to the surface for users therefore requires thoughtful decisions during digitization related to the relative value of individual items, the importance of context, and, ultimately, the user experience.

Describing digital surrogates for which UNLV does not own the original was new terrain for members of the project team. A finding aid is created for each collection to provide background on the creator, context of the material's creation, and a

83. UNLV's Digital Collections department has adapted national and international guidelines and best practices based on requirements of specific equipment and various material formats. The following resources have been helpful in determining local digitization practices: Federal Agencies Digitization Guidelines Initiative (FADGI) *Digitization Guidelines*, (used locally for photographs), <http://www.digitizationguidelines.gov/> (accessed January 27, 2016); Biomedical Computation Review, *BCR's CDP Digital Imaging Best Practices*, June 2008 (previously used locally for text and images), http://mwdl.org/docs/digital-imaging-bp_2.0.pdf (accessed January 27, 2016); The Library of Congress, *Technical Standards for Digital Conversion of Text and Graphic Materials* (used locally for text and images), <https://memory.loc.gov/ammem/about/techStandards.pdf> (accessed January 27, 2016); and The Association for Library Collections & Technical Services, *Minimum Digitization Capture Recommendations*, June 2013, (used locally for multimedia), <http://www.ala.org/alcts/resources/preserv/minimum-digitization-capture-recommendations> (accessed January 27, 2016).

hierarchical description of relationships between items in the collection. Descriptive metadata is created and reused across three departments by the archivist (finding aid for the collection), the digitization specialist (metadata associated with digital objects), and the cataloger (catalog record for the collection). In all three descriptions, it is noted that the materials are digital surrogates and that the donor retained the original items. After consideration of lengthy, formal phrasing, the division decided to convey the nature of these materials to the user as simply as possible.⁸⁴ Efficient processing methods are applied wherever appropriate and, in most cases, if described at the folder level in the finding aid, the material from that folder is described and represented as a compound digital object. It would be ideal to map digital objects in CONTENTdm to their corresponding descriptions in the finding aid, but this goal is currently impeded by a lack of persistent identifiers and underdeveloped access tools at UNLV. Special Collections improvises by adding URLs in finding aids and MARC records that point to the digital materials at the collection-level. The *Southern Nevada Jewish Heritage Project* team also created a Web portal to bring together digital surrogates, finding aids, and other contextual information related to the Jewish community.

Although UNLV's digital preservation program is still under development, Special Collections aims to preserve digital surrogates by applying the same techniques used for born-digital materials—saving masters and use copies to a digital vault (the content of which is replicated off site), generating manifests, conducting periodic integrity checks to assure records remain unaltered, etc. By accessioning and creating descriptions of these materials in the local collection management system, digital surrogates are accounted for and managed alongside other collection materials. By implementing workflows that increase access to and understanding of digital surrogates, UNLV has also addressed some of the concerns that researchers have voiced in relation to digital surrogates. In managing non-custodial collections similarly to traditional manuscript collections (in addition to managing them as digital objects), Special Collections creates online catalog records and finding aids for collections of digital surrogates, which act as additional access points that potentially increase discovery of the materials. The greatest improvement in the researcher experience may be that the provenance and context of individual digital objects are now communicated clearly through finding aids and metadata, enabling greater understanding of digital objects and their relationships to one another within a collection.

Positive outcomes

Improved discovery and access

Newly-developed scan-and-return methods at UNLV Special Collections have proven successful in providing access to items that are physically scattered among

84. See Appendix D: Descriptive Records of the Burt and Wilma Bass Photographs and Programs: Compound Digital Object Metadata, Collection-level Catalog Record, and Finding Aid.

different owners throughout the community; the resulting virtual collection combines with UNLV's physical collection to paint a more complete historical picture. Collecting digital surrogates allowed Special Collections to preserve and provide access to historical records that would otherwise be unavailable to the public. To date, approximately 480 digital surrogates of items owned by individuals and organizations (450 images and 30 documents, amounting to hundreds of pages) have been added to the *Southern Nevada Jewish Heritage Project* digital collection, and to the permanent assets of UNLV Special Collections. These items include photographs, event programs, correspondence, essays, newsletters, and more, which document community leaders, congregations, organizations, events, business, and development within the larger context of the history of Southern Nevada. One fascinating example of materials accessioned as digital surrogates is the correspondence between Congregation Ner Tamid and a representative of entertainer Frank Sinatra regarding Sinatra's \$30,000 donation for the construction of a new temple in Las Vegas. Another valuable addition to UNLV Special Collections is the digital surrogate of a scrapbook created by real estate developer Mark Fine, which includes photographs and ephemera from his work on the master-planned community of Green Valley in Henderson, Nevada. Fine also donated research-rich paper records documenting the development of the Las Vegas Valley. Providing the option to create digital surrogates of a few items that the donor is not yet ready to relinquish opens research to valuable materials related to the physical collection, while respecting the donor's wish to hold on to the cherished items for the time being.

Even if not the traditional, or perhaps ideal, format of archival materials, digital surrogates present new opportunities for using technology to improve discovery, access, use, and reuse of primary sources. Digital surrogates can be discovered and accessed via the Internet; multiple people can use them at the same time (separately or collaboratively); and data can be more easily extracted, analyzed, and reused (for example, using technology such as optical character recognition, or OCR, to enable full text searching).⁸⁵ As technology becomes even more intertwined with the research process, digital surrogates will increasingly serve as a powerful means for researchers to analyze and utilize primary sources; archives will be expected to provide access through digital surrogates in order to remain relevant.

Improved preservation of the historical record

Preservation of records should be undertaken as soon as they are identified as possessing enduring value. When records cannot be physically acquired, archives can pursue creation and preservation of digital surrogates to ensure that the records will be available in some form in the future. In light of concerted digital preservation research and efforts in the archival profession, digital surrogates preserved according

85. Mark Mudge, Michael Ashley, and Carla Schroer, "A Digital Future for Cultural Heritage," (paper presented at the International Committee for Documentation of Cultural Heritage (CIPA) Symposium, Athens, Greece, October 1-6, 2007).

to emerging best practices stand a reasonable chance of surviving indefinitely. Repositories are currently performing creation and preservation of digital surrogates to the best of their abilities. Distributing custody between the repository (which holds the surrogates) and the community (which holds the originals) also increases the likelihood of survival of this documentary heritage. As mentioned above, the surrogates of the Joe Andre papers housed at UNLV Special Collections were better preserved than the originals, which were kept by the family and donated 35 years later. While engaging with community members during the scan-and-return process, archives can advise the owners of loaned materials about practical preservation measures that they can undertake to better care for their materials, thereby preserving the historical record, whether or not the materials are donated to an archives.

Improved relationships with the community

Scan-and-return donation is an opportunity to build a relationship of mutual understanding, respect, and trust between the repository and an individual, family, or community. Building relationships of trust and understanding can be difficult given the political and power differences between communities and established repositories, which is why some communities establish and maintain their own archives. Community-run archives often lack trained staff and resources, which may adversely affect preservation of and access to materials. Offering the resources of an established repository to employ scan-and-return stewardship of and access to digital surrogates provides a way for communities to retain physical possession of their cultural patrimony while simultaneously improving preservation and public access. When a community experiences the advantages and added value of sharing its history widely via an established archives, and understands that the preservation of that history depends on the continued existence and funding of the archives, they may also become strong advocates for the archives. Increasing the public's understanding of the archives may lead to increased use of the primary sources therein, which is, after all, the main reason for its existence. Finally, as in the example of the Joe Andre papers and the Culinary Union photographs, by preserving and providing access to surrogates, an archives can prove its trustworthiness and value over time and inspire eventual donations of originals.

The *Southern Nevada Jewish Heritage Project* has provided UNLV University Libraries with a valuable opportunity to engage the local Jewish community. Oral history interviews are often the starting point of relationship-building within this project, and individuals who hear about the project are usually eager to share any documentation they possess. Given the scarcity of such documentation, participants want to share their personal and communal histories by loaning items for digitization rather than donating them. Scan-and-return allows Special Collections to educate community members about what kinds of materials it collects, how an archives works, and the importance of preserving and providing access to primary sources for the long term. By directly involving participants in the preservation of the region's history and teaching them about the Libraries' role in the community, the project has

generated new friends for the UNLV University Libraries and spread a deeper understanding of the archival profession.

Concerns

While collecting digital surrogates at UNLV has yielded positive outcomes, the practice also raises legitimate concerns that must be taken into account and addressed when weighing the costs and benefits of this collecting strategy. Archival administrators and staff may experience concerns about investing institutional resources on material that is not owned by the institution; the unknown long-term effects of current digital preservation efforts breed skepticism regarding the profession's ability to ensure the future technical integrity and authenticity of digital objects; and humans generally prefer to work with physical originals, casting doubt on whether digital surrogates will be accepted and used by researchers.

Commitment of resources

Given the financial and staffing commitments associated with researching, planning, creating, and implementing aspects of the scan-and-return method, along with the long-term preservation costs associated with digital materials, one may ask, is it worth it? Every institution has different needs, goals, and resources to weigh when making decisions, and attempts to balance these factors in unprecedented situations can be catalysts for new and creative approaches. Archives may find it challenging to convince those who control the resources that scan-and-return offers a good return on their investment. This is a valid concern. In the years to come, will capturing, maintaining, and providing access to collections of digital surrogates be of greater cost than for similar analog collections? Will it be of greater or lesser benefit to users? Financial resources, time, staff, and equipment are required to safeguard and provide access to any collection—physical or digital. Digitally capturing images of fragile, irregular sized, or complex archival collections is very labor-intensive, just as it is to care for their analog equivalents. An ongoing commitment of resources is required to maintain servers, conduct periodic health checks, migrate, and display digital objects, just as storage and care of analog materials requires special enclosures, continuous climate control, maintenance of facilities, and staffing of a reading room. Given the ever-changing variables it is difficult to predict comparative costs and benefits off-the-cuff. “Asks” for funding would be more successful if backed by quantitative studies comparing the creation and stewardship of digital surrogates with the processing and care of physical materials to determine if they are equally resource-intensive. Objections to scan-and-return practices based on collecting scope, competing priorities, lack of infrastructure, or insufficient resources are understandable. However, if the content is worth collecting, resources are available, and appropriate rights are transferred to the archives, it goes against the ethics of both archivists and educators for an institution to refuse to commit to digitizing items and stewarding surrogates simply because it does not own the originals.

Long-term preservation

Digital materials present preservation challenges of a more complex nature than paper-based collections. Informal conversations with colleagues across the United States revealed to the authors that archivists' greatest concern in collecting digital surrogates is their inability to guarantee digital preservation with the same level of confidence that they guarantee preservation of analog materials. While great strides in digital preservation have been made in the profession as a whole, many archival repositories, UNLV included, still lack expertise, technical infrastructure, and well-developed policies and procedures in this area—but that must not prevent archives from acquiring digital surrogates or born-digital materials. There will be trial and error. There will be loss, some of it perhaps irrecoverable. Ultimately, however, archives will build capacity to selectively preserve and steward digital material, because they must. Otherwise humankind will completely lose the decades of history during which its cultural heritage was created in a digital environment.

In spite of known technical hurdles, duplicating materials as a preservation or access strategy has long been practiced in archives—first through microfilm, and increasingly through digitization. In 2001 author Nicholson Baker published the book *Double Fold: Libraries and the Assault on Paper*, condemning libraries for disposing of original books and newspapers after they were microfilmed.⁸⁶ Richard Cox and SAA's responses to *Double Fold* are an important reminder that although most librarians and archivists share Baker's appreciation of physical originals, the realities of limited resources and competing priorities necessitate compromise.⁸⁷

Digitization is a legitimate preservation strategy for some materials; it was officially recognized by the Association of Research Libraries as a preservation reformatting method in 2004.⁸⁸ A digital access copy can reduce handling and thereby extend the lifespan of fragile original materials, or it can provide a backup copy of materials for which eventual deterioration cannot be prevented, such as analog audiovisual recordings. The influx of born-digital materials into archives has necessitated the research and development of digital preservation methods—methods that are equally applicable to digital surrogates. If surrogates are created according to accepted standards, they will actually be more dependable and easier to

86. Nicholson Baker, *Double Fold: Libraries and the Assault on Paper* (New York: Random House, 2001).

87. Richard J. Cox, "Don't Fold Up: Responding to Nicholson Baker's *Double Fold*," Society of American Archivists, April 18, 2001, <http://www.archivists.org/news/doublefold.asp> (accessed February 1, 2016); Council of the Society of American Archivists, "SAA Council's Response to Nicholson Baker's *Double Fold*," Society of American Archivists, May 7, 2001, <http://www2.archivists.org/statements/saa-councils-response-to-nicholson-bakers-double-fold> (accessed February 1, 2016).

88. Association of Research Libraries, "Recognizing Digitization as A Preservation Reformatting Method," June 2004, <http://www.arl.org/storage/documents/publications/digitization-preservation-reformatting-2004.pdf> (accessed January 27, 2016).

maintain than born-digital materials created under non-standardized conditions by individuals who then donate them to archives many years after creation.

Digital preservation is multifaceted, and chief among its goals is the assurance of integrity and authenticity. In much the same way that the human eye can discern the basic integrity of a paper document by detecting if pages are incomplete or words have been erased, algorithms can determine the completeness and fixity of a digital object. At the most basic level, archivists can validate the integrity of digital objects by generating checksums to detect whether or not the zeros and ones remain unchanged compared to the time of capture or acquisition. Determining technical authenticity for digital objects is also fairly straightforward. Just as a historian is able to validate the authenticity of an analog object's provenance, date, or handwritten signature, digital forensics can verify an object's creator, date of creation, computing environment, and other factors that help authenticate it and trace its history. The issue of authenticity, however, goes beyond bits and bytes. The object not only has to withstand technical proofs—it also has to measure up to human expectation. For a digital surrogate, digital forensics can only trace provenance back to its creation by the archives; the authenticity of the surrogate has an extra layer of complexity that rests heavily on the original and on user perception—is the object an accurate representation of the original? Is the original document authentic? Is the digital surrogate acceptable to users as a trustworthy source of information?

Use of digital surrogates

There are many characteristics of primary sources that make them valuable to users. By examining these characteristics archivists can better understand why original records might be preferred over copies, and determine whether and how to create more usable and authentic digital surrogates. Originals have evidential value if they “attest to the *originality*, *faithfulness* (or authenticity), *fixity*, and *stability* of the content.”⁸⁹ Other reasons to preserve an original include: age, aesthetic value, scarcity, associational value, market value, and exhibition value.⁹⁰ The value of a record corresponds to the ways it can be useful to certain audiences; original, primary sources have already proven their worth, which is why archives exist in the first place. Digital surrogates can also be useful to researchers, but are they worth creating and preserving if users cannot also access the original materials?

Whether processing digital files or physical materials, according to ISO 15489 it is the archivist's duty to preserve the authenticity, reliability, usability, and integrity of records to the best of her ability.⁹¹ These guidelines were created to ensure that

89. Stephen G. Nichols and Abby Smith, *The Evidence in Hand: A Report of the Task Force on the Artifact in Library Collections* (Washington, D.C.: Council on Library and Information Resources, 2001), vi.

90. *Ibid.*, 9.

91. *ISO 15489: Information and documentation - Records management* provides detailed guidelines for preserving these characteristics.

records preserved by archives are trusted and usable by a variety of audiences well into the future. However, each audience uses records differently and therefore has different ideas about which characteristics of a document are essential to preserve, and what makes a record authentic.

The notion of authenticity has been critically reexamined in archival literature in the past two decades, mainly in response to the difficulty of providing long-term access to digital materials exactly as they were created. While the paper records that archives have dealt with for centuries are relatively stable, electronic records exist in a rapidly-changing and highly-unstable technological environment. In 2000 the Council on Library and Information Resources (CLIR) convened a group of experts from several different fields to discuss “Authenticity in a Digital Environment” and found that there are many different perspectives regarding what makes a document authentic and what characteristics must be preserved throughout its lifespan. The resulting report concluded that “‘Authenticity’ in recorded information connotes precise, yet disparate, things in different contexts and communities.”⁹²

Viewed from a postmodern perspective, authenticity, whether in art, literature, law, or libraries, is “a social construction that has been put into place to achieve a particular aim.”⁹³ Unanimous agreement on what makes a document authentic may never exist. Therefore, as Heather MacNeil and Bonnie Mak pointed out, “The procedures that librarians and archivists establish for preserving the authenticity of digital resources are thus merely a starting point in a socially negotiated and historically situated process of assessment.”⁹⁴ In sum, authenticity is not an absolute characteristic that belongs only to original physical documents; it is a negotiated level of trust in which a community accepts a document as usable for its specific purposes. Considerations of authenticity and usability are critical in relation to the scan-and-return method of collecting. When creating a digital surrogate, one must evaluate whether or not the essential characteristics of the original record will be preserved, and if the record will still be usable, especially if researchers cannot access the original.

The creation of standards is one way that stakeholders negotiate and codify requirements or expectations for preserving and/or establishing the authenticity of records. Standards related to the stewardship of physical and digital materials and the creation of digital surrogates already exist and continue to be developed.⁹⁵ In order to

92. Council on Library and Information Resources, “Authenticity in a Digital Environment” (Washington, D.C.: Council on Library and Information Resources, 2000), vi, <http://www.clir.org/pubs/reports/pub92/pub92.pdf> (accessed January 27, 2016).

93. Heather MacNeil and Bonnie Mak, “Constructions of Authenticity,” *Library Trends* 56, no. 1 (2007): 28.

94. *Ibid.*, 47.

95. For more information about standards, see Jamie A. Patrick-Burns, “Archives as Artifacts: Authenticity, Preservation, and Significant Properties in Microfilm and Digital Surrogates,”

maintain the public's trust in archives and the records they care for, it is important for archives to be transparent and collaborative in the creation and application of standards and local practices.⁹⁶ The role of archives as a trustworthy and inclusive keeper of memory, culture, history, and identity necessitates transparency and communication about the intentions and decisions related to the authority and authenticity of the materials in their care. The importance of user perception was underscored by MacNeil and Mak:

If the process of preservation is made visible, users are better equipped to make an informed decision about whether the materials meet their specific requirements for authenticity. Users play a critical role in assessing the nature and degree of trustworthiness that these materials ought to be accorded in particular circumstances; this is because their assessment is based on a wider range of considerations than are typically taken into account by the preserver.⁹⁷

Survey data shows that the use of digital surrogates has increased significantly in the past decade and that increased transparency and communication of standards is a way to further develop users' trust in digital surrogates. A Canadian survey of historians conducted from 2001 to 2002 found that only 21 percent of respondents used digital reproductions in their research and 90 percent preferred original over copies because they are "utterly reliable" or "accurate, undistorted and complete," the "best stimulus to the historical imagination," and "the most fun."⁹⁸ However, reproductions were recognized as a useful alternative to originals if a researcher was unable to travel to the archives, or for conducting deeper research and analysis after a researcher returned home. The survey also reported that many of the problems researchers had with reproductions were the result of human error rather than with the actual format itself.⁹⁹ A more recent study published in 2013 by Alexandra

Provenance, Journal of the Society of Georgia Archivists 33, no. 1 (2015): 54. Examples include James A. Jacobs and James R. Jacobs, "The Digital-Surrogate Seal of Approval: A Consumer-Oriented Standard," *D-Lib Magazine* 19, no. 3/4 (2013), <http://dx.doi.org/10.1045/march2013-jacobs> (accessed January 27, 2016); Federal Agencies Digitization Guidelines Initiative (FADGI), <http://www.digitizationguidelines.gov/> (accessed January 27, 2016); the Open Archival Information System (OAIS) reference model (ISO 14721:2012); the Audit and Certification of Trustworthy Digital Repositories (ISO 16363); the International Research on Permanent Authentic Records in Electronic Systems (InterPARES), <http://www.interpares.org/> (accessed January 27, 2016).

96. Mudge, Ashley, and Schroer, "A Digital Future for Cultural Heritage"; Patrick-Burns, "Archives as Artifacts," 50, 55.

97. MacNeil and Mak, "Constructions of Authenticity," 47.

98. Wendy Duff, Barbara Craig, and Joan Cherry, "Historians' Use of Archival Sources: Promises and Pitfalls of the Digital Age," *The Public Historian* 26, no. 2 (2004): 18-19.

99. *Ibid.*, 19-20.

Chassanoff reported that 93 percent of historians surveyed used digitized materials in their research.¹⁰⁰ Twenty-nine percent of respondents indicated that they also pursued in-person access to originals, citing concerns about the quality and completeness of digital surrogates, and/or a desire to see the original context of the materials.¹⁰¹ The academic historians that Chassanoff surveyed also responded that they accessed formats such as “works of art, oral histories, photographs, sound recordings, film recordings, and video recordings more frequently online than in person.”¹⁰²

In 2016 Anastasia S. Varnalis-Weigle conducted a small scale study to explore the differences in user interactions with physical objects and their digital surrogates. The study found that users engaged more with the content than the object in the digital environment and that “Physical objects offered a higher level of emotional intensity and engagement for the user based upon the level of interest and complexity of the object.”¹⁰³ Varnalis-Weigle concluded that complex objects were difficult to represent accurately in digital form, although participants accepted digital images of simple physical objects (photographic prints and buttons) as accurate surrogates. This suggests that, given inevitable advancements in technology, a more accurately represented complex object may also be an acceptable surrogate to users in the future (depending of course, on a user's specific requirements regarding authenticity). The biggest difference that this study revealed between experiencing a physical object and its digital surrogate was that “the numinous affect of transformation, such as loss, death, mortality, and hope, was experienced only at the physical level.”¹⁰⁴

Although interacting with digital surrogates does not replicate the emotions inspired by physically handling primary sources, it is critical that the loss of that one characteristic does not overshadow the benefits of creating digital surrogates, foremost being access to representations of records that may not be otherwise available to users. In the book *Processing the Past*, Francis X. Blouin and William G. Rosenberg noted that there are occasionally research needs that can only be addressed by closely examining originals, but expect that soon “the corpus of digital surrogates is likely to assume the same role as their paper-based predecessors and prove fully adequate to authenticate most research...”¹⁰⁵ Furthermore, researchers’

100. Alexandra Chassanoff, “Historians and the Use of Primary Source Materials in the Digital Age,” *American Archivist* 76, no. 2 (2013): 470.

101. *Ibid.*

102. *Ibid.*, 469.

103. Anastasia S. Varnalis-Weigle, “A Comparative Study of User Experience between Physical Objects and Their Digital Surrogates,” *Journal of Contemporary Archival Studies* 3, article 3 (2016): 15.

104. The numinous affect refers to “arousing an epiphanic experience between the user and the object.” *Ibid.*, 4, 16.

105. Blouin and Rosenberg, *Processing the Past*, 204.

trust in and use of online digital archival collections will grow as transparency increases, standards evolve, and other improvements are made, such as online presentation and description that more effectively communicate provenance, context, and relationships between digital objects.

Conclusion

Over the past century, archival theory and practice have evolved in response to the changing role of archives in American society, the expansion of whom archives document and serve, the increasing volume and varied nature of the materials for which archives are responsible, and the ever-changing technologies available for managing and delivering materials. Postmodernism prompted self-reflection in the historical and archival communities and an acknowledgement of the powerful influence of archives on society. It is now widely accepted that the archivist must make active, thoughtful, and transparent choices in collaboration with stakeholders regarding what to collect and how to make it available. Today's public expects archives to serve and document all of society, and to make that documentation as widely available as possible. Studies indicate that users of archival resources are not only increasingly accepting and using digital surrogates, but are greatly relying on them to conduct scholarly research. Institutions must determine how best to meet these needs and expectations while abiding by the profession's core values and their own institutional missions and goals.

As the stewards of cultural memory for all facets of society, American archives provide access to a wide range of personal, historical, and bureaucratic records in an increasing variety of digital and physical formats. Each institution contributes to the greater mission of the profession in a unique way, and many sound strategies have been developed to create, collect, preserve, and provide access to the nation's cultural heritage. The authors contend that the scan-and-return method of collecting and stewarding digital surrogates is not only acceptable, but, in many circumstances, necessary to increase the diversification of the archival record. There are costs and benefits that must be weighed when considering any type of collecting initiative, but collecting digital surrogates has proven effective in preserving and providing access to valuable historical records that would otherwise remain unavailable to the public. As evinced by a number of highly-acclaimed initiatives that collect, steward, and provide online access to digital surrogates,¹⁰⁶ as well as by smaller scale, less-publicized practices, such as those at UNLV, an undeniable shift has occurred in archival thought and practice. These projects and practices have moved postcustodial theory to new ground, demonstrating its relevance beyond the original context of governmental records by successfully applying it to the documentation of events, communities, and individuals. The time has come for professional literature to acknowledge the influence of postcustodial archival theory on personal papers,

¹⁰⁶ Such as the aforementioned *Pioneers in Your Attic*, *Plateau People's Web Portal*, and the *Human Rights Documentation Initiative*.

historical manuscripts, community archives, and the other myriad types of materials managed by 21st century archives.

Theory and practice have a symbiotic relationship—one advances, the other follows, converging, inspiring, disproving, or validating one another along the way. Ultimately, each leapfrogs upon the other to propel the profession forward. The confluence of inductive and deductive reasoning and the reciprocal relationship between conceptual theory and working practice has been expressed by many authors, including Bucci, Gilliland, and Cook.¹⁰⁷ Built upon traditional archival values, current efforts are expanding both theory and practice into new territory—territory that has yet to be charted in archival literature. Given the ever-changing world in which archives operate, the wisdom of F. Gerald Ham will continually ring true:

If our literature is an index to our profession's development, then we need a new body of writings because our old catechisms are either inadequate or irrelevant when they deal with contemporary archives and the theory and practice related to their acquisition. And without needed conceptual and empirical studies, archivists must continue to make their critical choices in intellectual solitary confinement.¹⁰⁸

To free themselves from this so-called solitary confinement, archivists must once again infuse academic theory with practical knowledge by exchanging ideas and experiences. In spite of positive publicity on a number of substantial and successful non-custodial projects, theoretical justification and professional guidelines for implementing scan-and-return methods do not exist, and they will not exist until more repositories in this community of practice share their processes and outcomes. Only when *ad hoc* approaches across the profession are made known will patterns of successful policies and procedures emerge to serve as *de facto* best practices; these practices can then serve as a foundation for developing profession-wide scan-and-return guidelines that better address existing concerns. The authors of this paper share their working policies and procedures to that end.

In closing, the authors summarize how non-custodial stewardship of historical records through the creation of digital surrogates is a proven method of strengthening the archival record in the postcustodial era—a method that is firmly grounded in professional values and theories:

107. Oddo Bucci, "The Evolution of Archival Science and its Teaching at the University of Macerata," in *Archival Science on the Threshold of the Year 2000*, ed. Oddo Bucci and Rosa Marisa Borraccini Verducci (Macerata: University of Macerata, 1992), 18, 34-35 and preface, as quoted by Terry Cook. Cook is quoted urging archivists to "reintegrate the subjective...with the objective...in their theoretical constructs," in "Archival Science and Postmodernism," 16; as well as Gilliland's discussion on how theory and practice build upon one another, 7, 30.

108. Ham, "The Archival Edge," 13.

- The primary mission and purpose of archives is to provide equitable access to records of enduring value that represent the diversity of human experience—digital surrogates fulfill this mission by providing trustworthy preservation masters and deliverables of materials that may be otherwise lost or inaccessible.
- The nature of materials considered archival in the 21st century includes records in an increasing variety of formats and in multiple versions, many of which are not tangible or absolutely unique—digital surrogates are thereby legitimate archival records.
- The postmodern archivist plays an active role in shaping history through her selection of materials—which may include proactive acquisition or creation of digital surrogates.
- Including the broadest representation of the human experience in the archival record can only be achieved through collaboration with stakeholders and records holders in the community—diversity of accessible archival records is increased when established archival repositories support community members in publicly sharing digital surrogates of their materials.
- Taking physical custody or ownership of materials is secondary to preserving and providing access to them—responsible stewardship of digital surrogates of materials not held in the archives' physical custody embodies the core values and fulfills the primary mission of archives.

The principles and intent of postcustodial theory and documentation strategy coalesce to support the practice of collecting digital surrogates as a means of building the archival record and meeting the needs of 21st century users. By selectively acquiring and conscientiously managing digital surrogates, archivists should not feel they are compromising their professional mission—they are, in fact, fulfilling it. Rather than quietly slipping digital surrogates into collections through the back door, archivists should embrace the 21st century conception of archives as inclusive in content and format, develop policies and procedures to guide the collecting of digital surrogates, and pave the way for digital surrogates to enter respectably through the front door.

Appendix B. Guidelines for the Southern Nevada Jewish Heritage Project



Southern Nevada Jewish Heritage Project

Donating Materials to the UNLV University Libraries

The UNLV University Libraries Special Collections are actively seeking donations of historical materials about the Jewish community in Southern Nevada. We are dedicated to ensuring the *long-term* preservation of and access to historical, primary source materials about our region.

What we are looking for:

- Organizational records: annual reports, meeting minutes, letters, etc.
- Personal papers: Letters, diaries, scrapbooks, speeches, etc.
- Photographs and videos that depict important events, people, buildings, or activities of the Jewish community, especially photos from before 1970.

We want evidence of:

- The history of the local Jewish community: How did it grow and develop? How did members interact? What is the Jewish community of Southern Nevada? Is there evidence of activities, beliefs, values, and culture? What is the typical experience of a Jewish person in Southern Nevada?
- The functions and history of a Jewish organization: How did it start? Who was involved? What did it do? How did it change?
- The impact of an individual: What important and lasting impacts have Jewish individuals made in the Jewish community, or on the development Southern Nevada?

What happens to donated materials?

- Materials are grouped into collections based on who created or donated them (e.g. the Jay Sarno papers or the Jewish Federation records). Materials are carefully organized, rehoused, and described.
- A collection guide is written to describe the collection and its creator. The collection guide is posted online so researchers may discover the collection.
- Selected materials from the collection are digitized and uploaded into our online content management system. The items are cataloged so they are widely discoverable on the Internet.
- Digitized materials will be included in the Southern Nevada Jewish Heritage Project web portal, and will be discoverable within context of related historical content about Southern Nevada Jewish history. The web portal will be organized by themes, people, congregations, and organizations.

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Scanning and Returning Materials to Donors

We digitize materials to make them accessible online. It is a labor-intensive process. Digitization is not always a viable method of long-term preservation for many kinds of materials, however. The best way to ensure that an item will be usable more than 100 years from now is to donate the physical original to Special Collections. We understand that not all donors are willing to donate original, physical items to Special Collections yet. In these cases, Special Collections will carefully select a few items of great historical importance from donors to digitize and include in the Southern Nevada Jewish Heritage Project. Donors will still be encouraged to donate their collections in the future so Special Collections may help preserve their legacies more comprehensively for future generations to study and appreciate.

Guidelines for selecting materials to scan

Part 1: Content		
Relevance	Does it document the local Jewish community, a local Jewish organization, or a local Jewish person?	Must be specific to Southern Nevada. Topics such as: Education, religious life, and social life within the Jewish community. Involvement of Jewish people and organizations in politics, activism, philanthropy, business, gaming, arts and entertainment, media, etc.
Creation	Is this item a primary source?	Primary sources provide first-hand testimony or direct evidence about a topic under investigation. They are created by witnesses or recorders who experienced the events or conditions being documented. Often these sources are created at the time when the events or conditions are occurring. ¹
Ownership	Does the donor own the item?	Materials and/or rights to the materials must be owned by the donor. Photocopies or other types of reproductions are not accepted. Copyrighted materials only accepted on a case by case evaluation of risk.
Potential use	Do you think a researcher, student, or community member will want to see this?	While an item may be valuable or special to an individual, it may not be appropriate to add to Southern Nevada Jewish Heritage Project. Materials of broad relevance to the region are of most interest.

¹ "What are primary sources?" *Yale University*. Accessed April 28, 2015.
http://www.yale.edu/collections_collaborative/primarysources/primarysources.html



Uniqueness	How rare or unique is this item? Is it accessible elsewhere?	The project focuses on capturing primary sources that are not preserved or made accessible elsewhere. Newspaper clippings are usually not accepted because many libraries already hold these newspapers in their entirety.
Part 2: Physical Characteristics		
Age	How old is the item?	Preferably before 2005. The older the better. We especially want things from before 1970 because we don't have much documentation from that time period.
Format	Document, photo, scrapbook, etc.	Loose papers are the easiest to scan. If an item is extremely fragile or deteriorating, it may not be appropriate for digitization.
Quantity	How many items?	5-10 items is a general guideline for scanning and returning items to donors. Format must also be considered when determining how many items we can process via the "scan and return" method. With limited resources, we hope to digitize a diverse representation of material.

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Appendix C. UNLV Loan Reproduction Agreement



I, _____, agree to loan to the University of Nevada, Las Vegas University Libraries the following items to be considered for reproduction. If the UNLV Libraries determines that the reproductions will be added to its collections, I grant permission for UNLV to store, use, and distribute the reproductions without restriction and into perpetuity to further and support the educational, teaching, scholarship and research mission of UNLV, including use for exhibition or commemorative purposes, display on the Internet, broadcast in any medium, or use in publications and other media. I understand that I will receive no compensation for this permission. I understand that UNLV may use its sole and absolute discretion in making, retaining or disposing of the reproductions. I understand that the UNLV University Libraries prefers donations of original items and that this agreement does not preclude the donation of original items to the UNLV University Libraries at a later date.

Donor's Signature

Date

Items borrowed for reproduction: (attach other sheets as necessary)

Items received by the UNLV University Libraries

UNLV University Libraries Representative

Date

Items returned in good condition:

Donor Signature

Date

Appendix D. Descriptive Records of the Burt and Wilma Bass Photographs and Programs: Compound Digital Object Metadata, Collection-level Catalog Record, and Finding Aid

The screenshot displays the Southern Nevada Jewish Heritage Project website interface. At the top, the logo for the project is shown, featuring a stylized star in orange and blue, followed by the text "Southern Nevada Jewish Heritage Project" and "UNLV University Libraries". Below the logo is a navigation bar with links for "Home", "Browse All", "Log in", "Favorites", "Help", and "English". A search bar is located on the left, and a "Results 8 of 14" indicator is on the right. The main content area shows the title "Programs and photographs of Sisterhood of Temple Beth Shalom presents Ladies in Politics: If We Ruled the World, 1976". Below the title are options for "Reference URL", "Add tags", "Comment", "Rate" (with five stars), and "Save to favorites". A secondary title "Program for fashion show, April..." is visible. The page includes "View Description", "Download", and "Print" buttons. A "PDF" and "Text" viewer is present, showing a red document with a large black outline of lips and the letters "L I P" inside. To the right, a "Thumbnails" section displays four small images: a yellow program cover, a yellow document, a black and white photograph of actors on stage, and another black and white photograph of actors on stage. Below the thumbnails is an "Object Description" section with the following details:

Rating	☆☆☆☆☆ Based on 0 rating(s)
Digital ID	MS-00716_001
Title	Programs and photographs of Sisterhood of Temple Beth Shalom presents Ladies in Politics: If We Ruled the World, 1976
Description	Group of photographs and ephemera for the Sisterhood of Temple Beth Shalom's production of If We Ruled the World, a play written, produced and directed by members of the Sisterhood, in March 1976. A program for a related fashion show is also included.

Identified Individuals	Bass, Wilma
Identified Corporate Bodies	Temple Beth Shalom (Las Vegas, Nev.) @LoC
Source	MS-00716, Burt and Wilma Bass Photographs and Programs
Note	This collection has been digitized by the UNLV Libraries. The donor retained the original physical materials.
Original Collection	Burt and Wilma Bass Photographs and Programs
Original Date	1976
Item Subject (FAST)	Jewish women--Societies and clubs
Graphic Elements (TGM)	Actresses Theatrical productions
DC Type	Text Still Image
Genre (LC TGM)	Documents Photographs
Language	eng
Rights	This material is made available to facilitate private study, scholarship, or research. It may be protected by copyright, trademark, privacy, publicity rights, or other interests not owned by UNLV. Users are responsible for determining whether permissions are necessary from rights owners for any intended use and for obtaining all required permissions. Acknowledgement of the UNLV University Libraries is requested. For more information, please see the UNLV Special Collections policies on reproduction and use (https://www.library.unlv.edu/speccol/research_and_services/reproductions/) or contact us at special.collections@unlv.edu .
Digital Publisher	University of Nevada, Las Vegas
Digital Collection	Southern Nevada Jewish Community Digital Heritage Project
Master Extent	241,176,933 bytes; 9 images
Description	
Digital ID	MS-00716_001-002
Title	Program for fashion show, April 23
Source	MS-00716, Burt and Wilma Bass Photographs and Programs
Rights	This material is made available to facilitate private study, scholarship, or research. It may be protected by copyright, trademark, privacy, publicity rights, or other interests not owned by UNLV. Users are responsible for determining whether permissions are necessary from rights owners for any intended use and for obtaining all required permissions. Acknowledgement of the UNLV University Libraries is requested. For more information, please see the UNLV Special Collections policies on reproduction and use (https://www.library.unlv.edu/speccol/research_and_services/reproductions/) or contact us at special.collections@unlv.edu .
Digital Publisher	University of Nevada, Las Vegas
Digital Collection	Southern Nevada Jewish Community Digital Heritage Project
Tags (0)	
Comments (0)	



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University Libraries

Keyword Entire UNLV Collection

2 results found. Sorted by relevance | [date](#) | [title](#)

AUTHOR **Bass, Burt (Burton), photographer, compiler,**
 TITLE **Burt and Wilma Bass photographs and programs**

Record: [Next](#)

Click here to
[View digital images online](#)
[Connect to an online guide to this collection](#)

LOCATION	CALL #	STATUS
UNLV Special Collections, 3rd Floor	MS-00716	LIBRARY USE ONLY

SUBJECT [Dalitz, Morris](#)
[Temple Beth Shalom \(Summerlin, Nev.\) Sisterhood](#)
[B'nai B'rith Youth Organization, Mountain Region -- Photographs](#)
[Las Vegas \(Nev.\) -- History](#)
[Jews -- Nevada -- Las Vegas -- History](#)
[Jewish women -- Nevada -- Las Vegas -- Societies, etc](#)
[Photographs.](#)

GENRE/Form DESCRIPTION NOTES
 1 online resource
 Collection is open for research. Collection is available online
 Preferred citation: **Burt** and **Wilma Bass** Photographs and Programs, 1976-1987 and undated. MS-00716. Special Collections, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Las Vegas, Nevada
 Materials in this collection may be protected by copyrights and other rights. See Reproductions and Use on the UNLV Special Collections website for more information about reproductions and permissions to publish: https://www.library.unlv.edu/speccol/research_and_services/reproductions
 Text is in English

NOTES
 Finding aid is available online

BIO/HISTORICAL DATA
Burt Bass (1932-) is a photographer and owner of Burton Studio in Las Vegas, Nevada. He grew up in Brooklyn, New York and practiced photography from the time he was a child. **Bass** opened his first professional photography studio in 1962, shortly after he married **Wilma Frank** in 1960. In 1974 the couple moved to Las Vegas, Nevada where **Bass** worked for his brother-in-law Ed Frank's check cashing businesses. In 1979 **Bass** opened his own photography business, Burton Studio. He later added services such as fingerprinting, background checks, and photographs for identification cards. His business partner, Larry Burton, became manager of the business after **Bass** retired
Wilma (Frank) Bass (1939-) is a retired Las Vegas, Nevada jewelry salesperson. Born and raised in New York, New York, **Bass** graduated from high school around 1958. She married **Burt Bass** in 1960 and the family moved to Las Vegas in the 1974. **Wilma Bass** was involved in theater from the time she was ten years old, and when she moved to Las Vegas she put her talents to use writing, directing, and producing shows for the Sisterhood of Temple Beth Shalom and ORT (a Jewish education and vocational training organization founded in Russia in 1880, originally named Obshchestvo Remeslennogo zemledelcheskogo Truda)

NOTES
 This collection is comprised exclusively of digital surrogates. The donor retained the original items

SUMMARY
 The **Burt** and **Wilma Bass** photographs and programs (1976-1987 and undated) mainly document **Burt Bass**' work as a photographer and **Wilma Bass**' involvement with the Sisterhood of Temple Beth Shalom. The collection includes undated photographs taken by **Burt Bass** depicting Moe Dalitz and awards given to Moe Dalitz. Also present are two photographs and two programs from the Sisterhood of Temple Beth Shalom 1976 annual fashion show luncheon, which included the original musical comedy "Ladies in Politics: If We Ruled The World," written, produced, and directed by **Wilma Bass**, Judy Frank, and Jean Weinberger. Other photographs depict **Burt Bass** and Rita Rudner (undated) and a Mountain Region convention of B'nai B'rith Youth Organization (approximately 1977). Materials are entirely digital

ADDED AUTHOR [Bass, Wilma, compiler.](#)



Bass (Burt and Wilma) Photographs and Programs

This finding aid was produced using ArchivesSpace on July 13, 2015.

English

Describing Archives: A Content Standard

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Bass (Burt and Wilma) Photographs and Programs

Table of Contents

Summary Information	3
Biographical Note for Burt Bass	3
Scope and Contents Note	4
Arrangement	4
Administrative Information	5
Controlled Access Headings	5
Collection Inventory	6

Bass (Burt and Wilma) Photographs and Programs

Summary Information

Repository:	University of Nevada, Las Vegas. University Libraries. Special Collections Division.
Creator:	Bass, Burt (Burton)
Contributor:	Bass, Wilma
Title:	Burt and Wilma Bass Photographs and Programs
ID:	MS-00716
Date [inclusive]:	1976-1987 and undated
Physical Description:	28 Digital Files transferred electronically; no physical carrier
Language of the Material:	English
Abstract:	The Burt and Wilma Bass photographs and programs mainly document the Bass' involvement in the Jewish community of Las Vegas, Nevada, as well as their personal and professional lives. Images date from 1976 to 1987 and are entirely digital.

Preferred Citation

Burt and Wilma Bass Photographs and Programs, 1976-1987 and undated. MS-00716. Special Collections, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Las Vegas, Nevada.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Biographical Note for Burt Bass

Burton Bass (1932-) is a photographer and owner of Burton Studio in Las Vegas, Nevada. He grew up in Brooklyn, New York and practiced photography from the time he was a child. Bass opened his first professional photography studio in 1962, shortly after he married Wilma Frank in 1960. In 1974 the couple moved to Las Vegas, Nevada where Bass worked for his brother-in-law Ed Frank's check cashing businesses. In 1979 Bass opened his own photography business, Burton Studio. He later added services such as fingerprinting, background checks, and photographs for identification cards. His business partner, Larry Burton, became manager of the business after Bass retired.

Bass (Burt and Wilma) Photographs and Programs

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Biographical Note for Wilma Bass

Wilma (Frank) Bass (1939-) is a retired Las Vegas, Nevada jewelry salesperson. Born and raised in New York, New York, Bass graduated from high school around 1958. She married Burt Bass in 1960 and the family moved to Las Vegas in the 1974. Wilma Bass was involved in theater from the time she was ten years old, and when she moved to Las Vegas she put her talents to use writing, directing, and producing shows for the Sisterhood of Temple Beth Sholom and ORT (a Jewish education and vocational training organization founded in Russia in 1880, originally named Obshestvo Remeslennogo zemledelcheskogo Truda).

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Scope and Contents Note

The Burt and Wilma Bass photographs and programs (1976-1987 and undated) mainly document Burt Bass' work as a photographer and Wilma Bass' involvement with the Sisterhood of Temple Beth Sholom. The collection includes undated photographs taken by Burt Bass depicting Moe Dalitz and awards given to Moe Dalitz. Also present are two photographs and two programs from the Sisterhood of Temple Beth Sholom 1976 annual fashion show luncheon, which included the original musical comedy "Ladies In Politics: If We Ruled The World," written, produced, and directed by Wilma Bass, Judy Frank, and Jean Weinberger. Other photographs depict Burt Bass and Rita Rudner (undated) and a Mountain Region convention of B'nai B'rith Youth Organization (approximately 1977). Materials are entirely digital.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Arrangement

Materials are arranged chronologically.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Bass (Burt and Wilma) Photographs and Programs

Administrative Information

Publication Statement

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Access

Collection is open for research. Collection is available at: <http://d.library.unlv.edu/cdm/search/searchterm/MS-00716>

Publication Rights

Materials in this collection may be protected by copyrights and other rights. See [Reproductions and Use](#) on the UNLV Special Collections website for more information about reproductions and permissions to publish.

Acquisition Note

In 2015, Burt and Wilma Bass donated digital surrogates, but retained the original items; accession number 2015-032.

Existence and Location of Originals

This collection is comprised exclusively of digital surrogates. The donor retained the original items.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Controlled Access Headings

- Jews -- Nevada -- Las Vegas -- History
- Jews -- Nevada -- Las Vegas -- Societies,

- Page 5-

Bass (Burt and Wilma) Photographs and Programs

- Bass, Burt (Burton)
- Bass, Wilma
- Dalitz, Morris

Collection Inventory

Title/Description	Instances
Programs and photographs of Sisterhood of Temple Beth Shalom presents "Ladies In Politics: If We Ruled The World" annual fashion show luncheon and original musical comedy, 1976	
Photograph of Mountain Region Convention of B'nai B'rith Youth Organization, approximately 1977	
Photograph of Shelley Berkley and Al Gore at an event for Gore's 1988 presidential campaign, probably 1987	
Photograph of Moe Dalitz, undated	
Photographs of awards presented to Moe Dalitz, undated	
Photograph of Burt Bass and Rita Rudner, undated	