



2007 Research Forum

“Building Bridges between Research and Practice”

The first annual SAA Research Forum was held Tuesday, August 28, 2007, from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at the Fairmont Hotel, Chicago.

9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. **Poster set-up**

10:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. **Planning Session** – Discovering the Future: SAA Research Forum Development

11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. **Lunch/Posters**

12:30 p.m. – 2:00 p.m. **Part 1**, Chair: Nancy Y. McGovern, ICPSR

FOSTERING RESEARCH

1. *Teaching (and Learning) in the Research Seminar*

John Fleckner, Smithsonian Institution

Skills and experience in conducting research on archival topics are among the expectations for the graduate education of professional archivists. This presentation draws on two years of experience leading a seminar on archival research in the Archives, Records, and Information Management Program at the University of Maryland’s College of Information Studies. The presenter hopes to spark discussion about how educators can stimulate interest in research (and skill in conducting it) within the archival education curriculum. The presentation will place the seminar in the context of the academic program and its students, and discuss the goals and purposes for the course, teaching style and methods, and course structure and assignments.

2. *Documenting Institutional History through Teamwork: Student-Faculty Collaborative Research at Rollins Archives*

Wenxian Zhang and Rachel Todd, Rollins College

Archivists can be more than simply a bridge between users and historical collections. In an academic setting, archivists should also promote the use of the unique collections in support of the teaching and research missions of the institution. With rich resources under our domain,

academic archivists need to team with teaching faculty in joint efforts to help students learn to approach history actively, creatively, and critically. Through a student-faculty collaborative research program over the recent years, the college archivist has worked with several teams of students engaging original research on the history of liberal arts education at Rollins.

ENGAGING IN RESEARCH

3. Understanding On-line Use through Web Analytics

Christopher J. Prom, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign

For years, archivists have conducted user surveys, gathered reference statistics, and consulted informally with the users of archival records and manuscript collections. However, online archival databases, image repositories, and other electronic sources have opened our collections to new audiences and have provided traditional users a way to access materials without an archivist's mediation. Furthermore, Web analytics tools provide a means to study user behaviors in an unobtrusive fashion, by allowing archivists to gather anonymous statistical information about users and the actions they take while using our web sites. Used in conjunction with other, more traditional information points, web analytics can serve as a jumping off point for a new understanding of users and user behaviors. This paper will present results of web analytics trials and the application of those results.

4. Critical Race Information Theory: Applying a CRITICAL Race Lens to Information Studies

Anthony W. Dunbar, University of California-Los Angeles Information Studies Program

The proposed new theoretical concept, critical race information theory (CRIT) is grounded in the notion that every aspect of information, the form, use, management, storage, structure, and infrastructure reflect and represent the beliefs, values, practices, and politics of our society. If we then accept the notion that information as content and records/documents are carriers, then the applicability of CRIT to the archival discourse is less subtle. The discussions, however, of issues and dynamics related to archives and records management affecting individuals and groups that are traditionally positioned and, in turn, commonly understood as marginalized or disenfranchised in society are underdeveloped. This presentation will not only layout the assumptions of a "CRITICAL" framework but it will also discuss the significant terminology, objectives, and research agenda involved in this endeavor.

5. Beyond Image Retrieval: Bridging Digitization Processes and End-User Judgments in a Large-Scale Image Digital Library

Paul Conway, School of Information, University of Michigan

Rich collections of digitized content are increasingly common features of the environment of scholarship across all disciplines on an international level. Scholars create and share image collections for their own specific uses; librarians, archivists, social science data curators and other interested parties create general purpose digital image collections and promote their use within and beyond the academy. The research issues associated with the creation and use of image digital libraries (IDL)—as archival collections—are profound and as yet largely

unexplored. The project will explore the relationship between building and using digital libraries by utilizing the resources of the Library of Congress's premier digital library program: American Memory. The point of departure for the proposed experimental research is a model developed to reflect the relationship between the process of digitizing (selection, scanning, metadata) analog image collections and decision-making by end users about the quality, integrity, and value (QIV) of image collections. The research will assemble a unified data set that could permit a statistically valid assessment of subtle relationships between digitization processes and user judgments.

2:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m. **Break with Posters**

2:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. **Part 2**, Chair, Helen R. Tibbo, University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill

6. Collection Completeness and Appraisal

Pat Galloway, University of Texas-Austin

This paper will present results from research projects on email messages using network analysis to consider implications for managing a completely born-digital corpora of records.

NHPRC RESEARCH FELLOWS:

7. Global XML Data Model - New Mexico Public Records

Daphne Arnaiz-DeLeon, Nevada State Library and Archives

The Global XML Data Model – New Mexico Public Records will test the extensibility of the Global Judicial XML Data Model. Through an examination of the common New Mexico state government records as described in the general retention and disposition schedules for administrative (1.15.2 NMAC), personnel (1.15.6 NMAC) and financial (1.15.4 NMAC) records, information needs for the appropriate management of these electronic records will be distilled. A comparison between the identified information needs of the general records and the data structure and elements defined in the Global Judicial XML Data Model will be conducted. The project goal is to create a XML data model for common government records based on the Global Judicial XML Data Model.

8. Developing Processing Practices and Workflows for Electronic Archival Records

Don Chalfant and Kathy Jordan, Library of Virginia

The Library of Virginia is focused on developing workflows that will facilitate the processing and management of archival electronic records collected by our state, local, and private papers departments. This project will involve Archives processing staff in the workflow design, development, and testing stages to ascertain important procedural improvements and to evaluate any tools useful to the processes. In addition, the project will afford us an opportunity to explore the necessary technical, administrative, preservation, and descriptive metadata required to manage our digital content. A relational database will be created to serve as a processing tool for the 107 gigabytes of electronic records recently accessioned from the prior Governor's

administration. The database design should provide us a simplified and controlled means to open, view, and make decisions about individual electronic records and to assist staff in the preparation of digital objects for ingest into DigiTool, the Library's Digital Asset Management system. The database should also provide a means to generate reports to help us better understand the nature of processing digital records.

9. A Recordkeeping Framework for Social Scientists Conducting Data-Intensive Research

Erin O'Meara, University of Oregon

The volume of data being created at research institutions is increasing at rapid rates. Social scientists are not always allocating resources for recordkeeping throughout their projects. A framework is needed for effectively managing researchers' work as an interconnected body of knowledge, not just stand alone segments of information. Archivists and records managers need to be involved as specialized consultants in research projects before the records creation stage in order assist in the design of systems that address issues of authenticity, long-term preservation, description and access. In order to effectively create a framework that addresses the needs of faculty at a mid-size university, I will be working with several faculty members in developing a scalable set of guidelines and processes. The primary product of this project will be an intellectual framework and technical prototype that provides core guidelines for faculty, relating to the management of their research papers.

10. Implications of the Bioterrorism Act of 2002 on Electronic Record Keeping in the Wine and Grape Industries

Kari Smith, History of Art Department, University of Michigan

Recordkeeping in the wine and grape industries is increasingly electronic. Using both commercial and homegrown systems, wineries and vineyards need to keep track of a substantial amount of production and sales data. The Bioterrorism Act of 2002 stipulated new record keeping requirements and retention periods for these records for wineries and vineyards. Compliance of the Act is necessary as of the summer of 2006 and will require wineries to document the lifecycle of their winemaking process from the growing of grapes through two years after their wine is shipped. Using a case study methodology, this researcher will investigate the record keeping requirements of the Bioterrorism Act of 2002 pertaining to the wine and grape industry, conduct a survey of current practice among winemakers of their use of electronic record keeping systems and records management procedures, investigate how software developers are incorporating the requirements of the Act into their systems, and complete a case study on the use of specific winemaking electronic systems to track the required data for the Act. The outcomes of the project will include recommendations to wineries and vineyards about electronic record keeping as well as recommendations to archives and records managers about retention and access to this information. The case study will have implications for record keeping in other industries that have been impacted by recent Homeland Security and related legislation.

11. Transforming Preservation Research into Production Persistent Archives

Reagan Moore, San Diego Supercomputing Center

The preservation research conducted at the San Diego Supercomputer Center (SDSC) is driven by two perspectives:

- Preservation is communication with the future. We know that future preservation environments will use new technology. A major research challenge is managing the incorporation of new technology into the preservation environment. We note that at the point in time when new technology becomes available, both the old and new technologies are present. Thus the problem is equivalent to that of infrastructure independence, how to manage preservation properties independently of the choice of technology. At SDSC, we use the Storage Resource Broker (SRB) data grid to manage infrastructure independence for production persistent archives.
- Preservation is management of communication from the past. In order to make assertions about authenticity, integrity, chain of custody, and respect des fonds, we need to be able to evaluate prior preservation management policies. We are conducting research on the mapping of management policies to rules that control the execution of micro-services that implement preservation capabilities. We query persistent state information to determine whether a management policy has been successfully applied. The technology is being implemented in the integrated Rule-Oriented Data System (iRODS) and will be tested in collaboration with the NARA Transcontinental Persistent Archive Platform.

The transition of research ideas into production systems is facilitated by testbeds that allow each concept to be evaluated on collections that comprise hundreds of millions of files and petabytes of data, to ensure the technology will be relevant for future preservation environments.

4:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m. **Posters**

POSTERS:

A. Getting a Seat at the Table to Leverage Other People's Money

Mark Conrad, National Archives and Records Administration (NARA)

The challenges of long-term preservation of digital objects belong to society as a whole - not just archivists and records managers. Raising societal consciousness and leveraging other relevant research is an efficient approach to addressing archival and records management issues in this area. NARA is building the Electronic Records Archives (ERA) system. ERA's Chief Technologist now serves on a number of White House committees. This opens new avenues for electronic records research funding. This presentation will focus on how the ERA Research program has leveraged other folks research and raised the consciousness of the Federal government about the critical need to address electronic records issues. It will include a discussion of the use of key partnerships and how other archivists and records managers might be able to leverage this work to get a seat at the table with their resource providers.

B. *Research Using Primary Sources*

Joanne Archer, Ann Hanlon and Jennie Levine, University of Maryland

The use of primary source materials poses a unique challenge to researchers, requiring the acquisition of specialized skills. This poster session will report initial results from a user study of 23 undergraduate and graduate students that took place at the University of Maryland in the spring of 2007, using an online research guide entitled "Research Using Primary Sources" (<http://www.lib.umd.edu/special/research/>). The study goes beyond questions of navigability towards a deeper understanding of research behaviors. Initial results indicate that researchers often overcomplicate their search strategies based on behaviors learned for traditional library research. These preliminary results indicate that a more concerted effort at user education within the archival profession - both in person and online - could significantly improve research strategies for our patrons.

C. *Ephemeral Music: A Survey of Electronic Music Collections in the U.S.*

Adriana P. Cuervo, Sousa Archives and Center for American Music

Libraries and archives are preserving the creations of 20th and 21st century composers as a significant part of their collections. Electroacoustic music, created in a digital environment without using traditional notation on paper, relies on the use of technology for its interpretation and performance. The widespread use of this compositional technique challenges archivists to guarantee the long-term preservation and access to the original sonic experience of these works. Composers often rely on commercial software and home-grown hardware to create electroacoustic compositions, and performance becomes the only avenue of experiencing the work as a whole. This music will disappear into oblivion if standards for its long-term access are not developed.

D. *'We Actually Could Not Believe Ourselves to Be in Chicago': Digitizing an Early 20th-Century Iowa Girl's Travelogue Scrapbook*

Jen Wolfe, University of Iowa Libraries

Mass digitization efforts such as the Google Books Library Project have many institutions rethinking their approach to digitizing primary source materials. Instead of web exhibits featuring artifact highlights, more libraries are aspiring to create comprehensive digital collections that can serve as tools for scholarly research. Iowa schoolgirl Helen Grundman's documentation of her 1930 4-H trip to Chicago illustrates some of the challenges and opportunities in presenting a scrapbook in its entirety on the web.

E. *Easier EAD Data Entry*

Chatham Ewing, University of Mississippi

Explores another method of easing data entry into EAD instances. This poster looks at Infopath forms ease and speed creation, maintenance, and standardization of information in finding-aids. Paired with our old friends the XSLT scripts, InfoPath can be used to create and revise EAD finding aids.

F. EAD Stylesheets

Chatham Ewing, University of Mississippi

Reviews a method to modify the stylesheets from the EAD cookbook to address presentation and printing needs using XSLT to automatically generate XHTML files that used .CSS classes and CSS stylesheets rather than tables. This approach offers the flexibility of using the .CSS display property to have finding-aids print and display on multiple platforms.

G. Transferring Research Skills to the Grassroots

Gwen Patton, Trenholm State Technical College Archives

This poster presents exemplars and a model for engaging users in research using archival sources.

NHPRC ELECTRONIC RECORDS RESEARCH FELLOWS:

Note: See paper abstracts above for NHPRC Fellows.

H. Global XML Data Model – New Mexico Public Records

Daphne O. DeLeon, Nevada State Library and Archives [NHPRC Research Fellow]

I. Processing Practices and Workflows for Electronic Archival Records

Don Chalfant and Kathy Jordan, Library of Virginia [NHPRC Research Fellow]

J. A Recordkeeping Framework for Social Scientists Conducting Data-Intensive Research

Erin O'Meara, University of Oregon [NHPRC Research Fellow]

K. Implications of the Bioterrorism Act of 2002 on Electronic Record Keeping in the Wine and Grape Industries

Kari Smith, University of Michigan [NHPRC Research Fellow]

L. Do We Know How We Differ?: University/Science Archives Across Nations

Susanne Belovari, Tufts University

A member of the ICA-SUV steering committee, Susanne Belovari developed this research project to answer the above question and its two assumptions: in so far as we differ and differ across nations, how is that reflected in our national, institutional, legal, and professional contexts, practices, and challenges. The multi-phase project includes: 1) a panel discussion of four archivists from the far South to the far North, ICA-SUV, Dundee, August 2007; 2) a presentation at the 3rd Meeting of Scientific Archives, Brazilian Archivists, September 2007; 3) a possible panel at the ICA Congress on Archives, Kuala Lumpur, 2008; 4) the development of a cross-national survey, subsequently implemented by ICA-SUV; 5) and an edited volume by the author of descriptive/historical articles on traditions, practices, and situations across the globe.

4:30 p.m. **Close**