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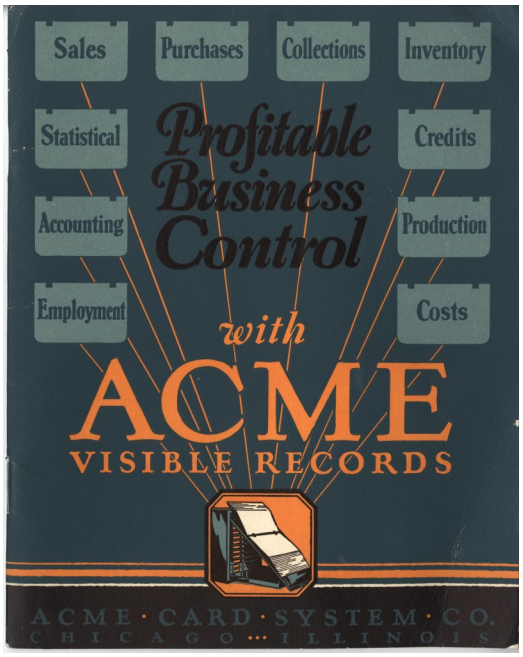

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"Profitable Business Control," Acme Card System Company. Catalog, 1930. From the Richard Pollay Acme Advertising Collection, Rare Book, Manuscript, and Special Collections Library, Duke University.

DOs and DON'Ts: A Primer for User-Friendly Finding Aid Design

by Joyce Celeste Chapman

Introduction

A decade ago an archivist would have been hard-pressed to find observational studies on users' interactions with archival finding aids. Today, over a dozen finding aid usability studies have been conducted and the findings published (see appendix A for a bibliography of user studies and related readings). These studies' findings provide a meta-view of finding aid usability that can serve as a road map for archivists interested in enhancing the user experience. This article takes the major obstacles identified across multiple studies and provides a set of suggestions for how to improve the user experience. While most usability studies have been conducted using online finding aids, many of the findings are applicable to both print and electronic guides.

Most archives have finding aids for at least a percentage of their holdings, but many do not have electronic finding aids. Of those who do have online displays powered by Encoded Archival Description (EAD) and eXtensible Stylesheet Language Transformations (XSLT), certainly not everyone has an information technology department (IT) at their beck and call. This article has a little bit of something for everyone: tips for improved finding aid display are categorized into "tech-lite" and "tech-heavy" categories, with most of the emphasis on tech-lite solutions. Some of the tech-lite tips apply to both print and electronic finding aids; however, all of the advanced tips apply only to HTML

finding aid displays. Implementation of tech-lite solutions for online displays will require someone who can make simple modifications to the XSLT stylesheet, such as adding a paragraph of text or a link in the HTML output. Implementation of tech-heavy solutions would require programming support. Regardless of whether an institution has the resources to implement changes in finding aid displays, the article will lay the groundwork for understanding how users approach finding aids and what aspects of finding aids present the greatest obstacles to users.

Many of the finding aid usability studies conducted to date have identified similar problem areas. This article first reviews some basic usability principles for website design and then focuses on four common obstacles for users of finding aids: what/where/how/who, archival jargon, navigation, and search.

Review of basic usability for website design

There are a number of simple modifications that can be made to the Cascading Style Sheets (CSS) file for finding aids that can vastly improve the user experience. Below are some of the most basic, which are recommended by Web usability expert Jakob Nielson:

- Use a sans-serif font for online text display. Verdana is a safe font because it is installed on most computers.[1]
- Font sizes should never be smaller than 10 points. Do not code absolute font sizes in your CSS; instead, use percentages. Relative font sizes allow users to increase or decrease font size as they wish in the browser. This is particularly important for elderly and visually impaired users.[2]

- Because it is much more difficult for the human eye to read on screen than on paper, high contrast between text and background greatly improves legibility. Use a dark color for text and a "cool" color that is not highly saturated for background.[3]
- Links should be identifiable as links. Underlining and bolding are both generally understood visual cues for links. The font color of links should always be different from that of body text. Blue remains the most universally identifiable link color. While it is not necessary to use blue for your links, make sure not to use a blue font for non-linking text.[4]
- One of the most common Web usability issues is linking text that does not change color after it has been visited. Usability is improved when users understand "where they've been, where they are, and where they can go."[5] Modify the CSS to change visited linking text to a color different from both the body text and unvisited linking text.
- Make sure there is sufficient white space on your pages. Check white space between items in lists, lines in paragraphs, or between paragraphs themselves. White space has been proven to help people process information into manageable units. Insufficient white space makes it difficult for users to read web pages and causes eye strain.[6]

Simple changes can be made in the way metadata is encoded in EAD or in a print finding aid that improve "scanability," the ease with which a user can quickly read or skim a given body of text. While archivists might wish that users would always read finding aids carefully, the reality is

that scanning is a common method of interaction for a researcher's first contact with a finding aid when she is determining whether or not the collection is relevant to her work.[7] To increase discovery in both online and paper finding aids through scanability, consider the following points as you encode.

- Vertical lists are far easier for users to read than inline lists buried in blocks of narrative text. In fact, studies comparing the two show that vertical/bulleted lists can improve usability by 47%.[8] Preliminary findings from a 2010 usability study show that advanced archival researchers were able to find information in finding aids 42% faster when it was displayed in a bulleted list rather than an inline list. Follow-up interviews with the researchers documented a strong preference for information to be displayed in vertical lists rather than inline.[9] Consider beginning to incorporate lists more frequently in parts of the finding aid like scope and content notes and arrangements.
- Having more short paragraphs is far better for readability than fewer long paragraphs. This technique not only improves scanability, which is aided by shortening information into smaller chunks surrounded by sufficient whitespace, but also improves general readability and makes information seem less daunting, thereby increasing the chances that people will actually read the information you have put so much effort into gathering.[10]
- On a similar note, abstracts should be brief by definition. Some users are annoyed by very long abstracts, and usability test participants have shown the tendency to stop reading before they reach the end of long abstracts. While

> the abstract is meant to duplicate the most important or general content from the collection-level scope and content note, it was found that when the abstract duplicates all or almost all of the scope and content note some users become confused and incorrectly come to believe that their contents are always fully duplicative. This can lead to a learned behavior in which users read the abstract but never the scope and content note, thereby missing valuable information when the scope and content note is more extensive.[11]

What/where/how/who?

Finding aid users have trouble figuring out how to access collections.[12] Points of confusion include whether or not the materials are digitally available on the Web, where physical items are located and who owns the items, the process by which one requests to view materials, and for novice finding aid users, the very nature of the materials described in the finding aids. To help users, finding aids should try to clarify the answers to the following four questions on the opening screen of each finding aid:

- "What am I looking at?"
- "Where are these materials located?"
- "How can I view these materials?"
- "Who owns this web page and who owns these materials?"

While users of print finding aids have most likely arrived at the finding aid via the reading room, it is important to remember that users of online finding aids may arrive at the page via a number of routes, including Google, a link on an external website, or the archives' homepage. While users

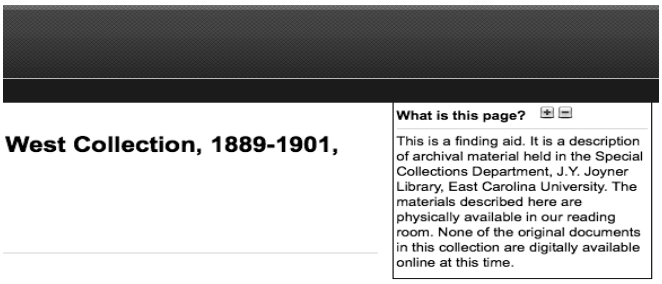
who enter through the archives' homepage or the reading room are probably already aware of the context for "who" and "what" surrounding the finding aid, those entering via any other route may lack any context whatsoever.

For those who have never encountered archival materials before, one of the most basic and important messages to convey is that the materials described on the page are physically available in a reading room and not digitally available on the Web.[13] Even for researchers familiar with the process of viewing materials in archives, clearly indicating how to access materials is important; each archives has its own rules and regulations, and when the time comes to access materials, researchers need to know who to call and where to go. [14]

Tech-lite solutions

Consider the addition of a simple statement on the opening page of each finding aid explaining what a finding aid is and how users can access materials. Recently a number of North Carolina archives have added such statements to finding aids, including the Forest History Society, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC-CH), and East Carolina University (ECU) (Fig. 1). Usability testing has shown the statement to be extremely helpful to novice finding aids users.[15]

Fig. 1. "What is this page" statement. ECU Joyner Library's finding aids. Far right of image.



On the opening screen of each finding aid, provide prominent links to help pages and contact information. If your finding aids have fixed navigation (meaning that navigation information remains on the screen no matter where a user is in the finding aid), include links to help and contact information there so that they are available to users at all times.[16] Another small but important way you can help users is by providing multiple routes to help information. For example, the opening screen of UNC-CH finding aids have five links to help/contact information: four in the top navigation bar ("How to View Materials," "Contact," FAQ," and "Duplication Policy") and one in the statement below the collection title ("FAQ") (Fig. 2). Three of these links lead to the same help page, but they either use different labels ("How to View Materials" and "FAQ") or are located in different areas of the page (the two "FAQ" links). In this way, users are provided with a number of opportunities to notice and access help information.

Fig. 2. Multiple access points to help information. UNC-CH finding aids.

If you do not have help or FAQ pages, now is the time to create them! If you have help pages, now is the time to improve them! In an age in which a large percentage of users arrive at our finding aids via Google or other search engines, help pages provide an unparalleled orientation service.[17] Help pages and other orientation information should seek to serve both advanced researchers and novice users who may never have heard of finding aids or archives before. Archival help pages may have been created under the assumption that users start out with more knowledge than they do and that users have already seen specific other pages (such as the homepage) before arriving at the current page. Therefore, consider eradicating localized references from your pages: always provide users with the full context. For example, do not refer to "the reading room" on the help page without also mentioning that said reading room is located in the state of North Carolina at a specific institution found in a specific city. Basic orientation questions for which an institution could consider providing answers on help pages

include:

- What is a repository?
- What are archival materials?
- What are finding aids?
- Are materials digitally available?
- Where are the physical materials?
- How can I view materials?
- What are your opening hours and do I need to make an appointment?
- How can I contact you by phone and by email; what is your address?
- What are the duplication policies?
- How do I cite materials?

More advanced help materials could include an overview of the different sections of the finding aid and what type of metadata one can expect to find there, a glossary of specialized terms used in finding aids, explanations of use and access restrictions, and explanations of copyright. Attempt to phrase everything in your help pages in plain English without using terms that have specialized meaning within the context of the archival profession. Archival jargon will be covered more thoroughly in the next section.

With the understanding that a large percentage of users are not directed to finding aids from the institutional homepage but rather through Web searches, it is important to prominently display institutional branding on the opening page of each finding aid. Information about the institutions with which a finding aid is affiliated is important to users in terms of accessing the materials. If relevant, remember to provide branding not only for your immediate institution (for

example, “Special Collections Research Center”) but also for your umbrella institution (“North Carolina State University Libraries”).

Tech-heavy solutions

None!

Archival jargon

Specialized terminology used by the archival profession in finding aids has proven confusing to users in almost every usability test ever conducted.[18] To a great extent, archival jargon is made up of words that are familiar to users but whose meaning is unclear in the archival context. Examples include “series,” “arrangement,” “scope and content,” “container,” and “repository.” While usability testing has shown that users can circumvent unfamiliar terminology when provided with enough context, jargon or lack of clarity in section labels and series titles are particularly problematic for users.[19] And while archivists tend to focus on the types of materials and formats within a collection when labeling series, users are mostly interested in the subject matter of collections.[20] Some testing has shown that series titles lacking information related to the subject of materials can greatly frustrate users.[21]

Tech-lite solutions

Take some time to inspect your finding aids from the perspective of a non-archivist, or ask a friend or colleague outside of archives to help in this exercise. Can someone who has never seen a finding aid look at the section labels and make guesses about what would be found in that section? For those section titles that cause problems,

consider implementing more basic and intelligible terms for labels. For example, one study found that the label "Administrative Information" confused users, while another found that users did not have trouble with the same section when it was labeled "Information for Users."[22] Another way to deal with the issue of confusing section labels is with explanatory hover-captions (see Tech-heavy solutions).

Take a look at a sampling of series titles in your finding aids. If users were to browse series titles without reading series scope and content notes, would they have a reasonable idea of what would be found in the series? Usability testing at UNC-CH in 2009 found users to be extremely frustrated with series titles like "Volumes," which did not inform them of the subject matter of materials in the series and also failed to convey clear meaning about the format of materials (were they published volumes? diaries? scrapbooks?).[23] When creating finding aids in the future, consider crafting series titles to convey the most helpful information possible to users. Also, be sure to put series date spans alongside series titles. Some studies have shown that dates are quite important to advanced archival researchers conducting certain types of information-finding tasks.[24]

Review your institution's restriction, copyright, and access statements. Consider whether the current wording might confuse users into thinking that they do not have access privileges or that unrestricted materials are restricted. If possible, simplify the wording to make the meaning clearer. In particular, if you have generic restriction statements that appear on every finding aid, make sure that these are actually helping users instead of scaring them away. One recent study found that a generic statement meant to provide people with useful information about accessing

materials was instead confusing most of them. The restriction warned users that a listening or viewing copy of audiovisual materials might need to be created before the materials could be accessed. A number of novice users and advanced archival researchers alike had no idea what the statement meant, and a number of study participants believed that it meant there were more obstacles to accessing the materials than there actually were.[25]

Tech-heavy solutions

If your display provides a linked table of contents of finding aid sections, consider implementing "hover captions," which further explain what kind of information users will find if they navigate to that section. A hover caption is a caption that appears only when users positions their cursor on top of the link. Finding aid users have found such captions useful in helping to understand what content is located in which section of the finding aid.[26]

Navigation

The structure of a finding aid is not intuitive to novice users.[27] In fact, it is not particularly intuitive to any user, and the hierarchical nature of the container list causes particular problems for many.[28] While advanced researchers often become familiar with the layout of finding aids at particular archives where they conduct most of their research, there is evidence that they become easily confused by new layouts or labels used in finding aids to which they have not previously been exposed.[29] It is in the archivist's best interest to design finding aids in a way that makes it as easy as possible for users—whether novices or advanced researchers—to move efficiently within the finding aid and

to understand where they are in a finding aid at any given time.

Tech-lite solutions

Implement a "back-to-top" button at the bottom of every section of the finding aid so that users can avoid the need for endless scrolling when navigating. This is particularly important if you provide a fixed navigation menu at the top of the finding aid. If you provide fixed navigation, back-to-top buttons are less necessary but remain useful. Back-to-top buttons are particularly handy at the end of series and subseries in the Container List in very long finding aids. To create a back-to-top button, create an anchor tag at the top of the finding aid and then insert a link leading to that anchor at the bottom of each section.

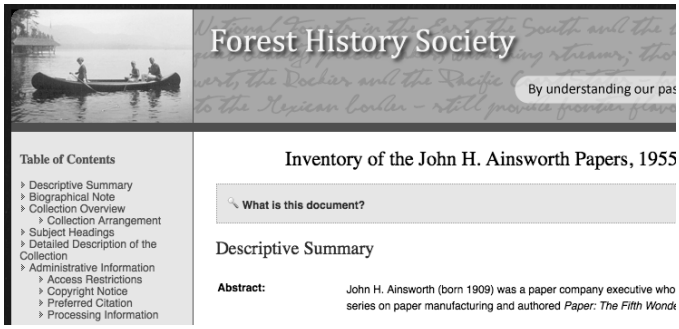
Tech-heavy solutions

Within the Container List, make sure a container number is on the screen or printed page at all times by repeating container information at fixed intervals by modifying your XSLT stylesheet. Missing container information arises as a usability issue when there is so much material listed within a single box or folder that the original listing of the container information is no longer visible on screen as the user scrolls downward.[30]

A few usability studies have shown that navigation menus replicating a table of contents linked to different sections of the finding aid are successful.[31] Studies by both Christopher Prom and Elizabeth Yakel found support for left -hand navigation menus, and advanced users have voiced preference for navigation menus that are fixed in place over non-fixed navigational menus.[32] Consider implementing a

linked table of contents listing all of the sections of the finding aid. The Forest History Society provides left-hand navigation in which each section label links to the section in the finding aid with the same name (Fig. 3). If possible, fix this navigational menu in place so that it is available to the user at all times.

Fig. 3. Linked table of contents. Forest History Society's finding aids. Far left of image.



A second table of contents that can be helpful to users when navigating finding aids is specific to the container list. This table of contents provides hyperlinks to the collection's series and subseries. Many institutions may already have something similar in the arrangement section of the finding aid, though it may not be hyperlinked. Some institutions choose to incorporate the series links into the table of contents for the entire finding aid (available in navigation appearing at the top of the finding aid), while others insert it at the top of the container list or bottom of the collection-level scope and content note. Regardless of the location, the key to a series-specific hyperlinked table of contents is that it provides users with a quick and simple way

to jump around the Container List. If users become lost, they can easily return to the list of series.[33]

Search

Evidence from multiple studies shows that within a finding aid, users want to be able to keyword search.[34] Two studies discovered that a surprising number of participants—ranging from 40% to 50%—did not know how to keyword search a Web page without a search box because they were unfamiliar with the built-in browser function "find" or its keyboard short-cut equivalent, (ctrl-F).[35] For institutions that provide advanced searching over all their finding aids with hits in context (where the location of the desired word within each search result are highlighted to aid the user), the inability of users to keyword search using the browser function is not terribly important. However, for institutions that do not have the technical support for such advanced features, it becomes a significant issue. Even if an institution provides advanced search options that can guide a user to a particular finding aid by keyword, this is not the same as the ability to search and view hits within a page. With long finding aids, a user could spend significant time combing through the container list to find the occurrence of a keyword if there is no mechanism by which its location is pointed out.

Studies also have shown that users value finding aid subject headings most when they are hyperlinked to a search over all archival materials containing that subject heading.[36] This tells us something about the search and discovery functions for which researchers use subject headings: researchers may rely on and value subject headings when attempting to locate or filter a set of entities related to search criteria from a larger set (the Functional Requirements for

Bibliographic Records (FRBR) user task "find"), but subject headings may not be a highly valued component of metadata when attempting to confirm that a particular entity described corresponds to their research need (the FRBR user task "identify").[37]

Tech-lite solutions

There is an easy solution to the issue of searching within a finding aid, though to date no one has quantified its success rate: provide users with instructions on how to use the built-in browser function "find" or (ctrl-F) on the finding aid (Fig. 4). Not only does this solution avoid the work of implementing a complex technological solution, but each user who was previously unaware of the browser function learns a transferrable skill that can aid them in all future research they perform on the Web.

Fig. 4. Instructions on how to search in page. Minnesota Historical Society finding aids. Lower right of image.

Tech-heavy solutions

The complex solution to providing users with a mechanism to search within a finding aid is to add a search box to your page. Currently, there is not much in the way of

off-the-shelf options freely available on the Web. The eXtensible Text Framework (XTF) out of the California Digital Library is an open source tool that supports index, display, and search, and offers a search-in-page function along with many other excellent features. However, XTF's off-the-shelf search-in-page function has usability flaws that a programmer would need to modify to increase usability. In its off-the-shelf state, the search-in-page function only searches for full words and cannot search punctuation other than a full stop.[38] This is problematic because it functions differently from either a Google search or the built-in browser function (ctrl-F), which are the norm of today's searching. In fact, user testing shows that many users would like for all searches to function the same way as major search engines, such as Google. A maxim of Web usability states that one should strive to build an "expected search," rather than a "good search," because deviating from a search that functions the way users expect almost certainly guarantees problems with usability.[39]

Hyperlinking subject headings to search results for all finding aids containing the specified subject headings falls somewhere between a tech-lite and tech-heavy solution, but it is not difficult to do if your Library catalog provides a search that can be limited to archival materials and that can search for a phrase within subject headings. If this is the case, conduct several searches in the catalog specifying only archival materials and a subject. Take a look at the URL of the search results and identify the parts of the string that you would need to incorporate into an HTML linking attribute. This string should be the same for every search, with the exception of the actual search term. Then modify your XSLT to provide links for each subject heading, inputting the

contents of the subject heading node as the search term in the URL.

Conclusion

By suggesting easy tips to increase usability, this article seeks to help those with little programming support to evolve their finding aid displays to meet user needs. Even small changes can drastically improve the user experience, which can lead to more collections usage and happier patrons. Small changes to improve finding aid usability can improve library staff's job experience as well: for example, improving help pages or adding clarifying information to finding aids about how to view materials or whether items are available digitally may decrease the number of patrons that contact public services staff with such questions. Regardless of whether or not an institution has the resources to implement changes in finding aid display, developing an awareness of the problems users encounter when interacting with finding aids helps to lay the groundwork for future efforts to enhance the user experience in archives.

Joyce Celeste Chapman is a Libraries Fellow at North Carolina State University Libraries, where she works on data visualization and projects aimed at increasing efficiency in metadata workflows. As a graduate student, she worked at the Southern Historical Collection at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, where she conducted finding aid usability testing and led the 2009 redesign of the finding aid display. She earned her master's degree in Information Science at UNC-Chapel Hill in 2009.

Appendix A: Usability Studies

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July 2009. <http://www.orbiscascade.org/index/cms-filesystem-action?file=nwda/reports/usability testing, phase ii, round 2.doc>.

Northwest Digital Archives (NWDA), "Executive Summary: NWDA Usability Testing Round 3." (2007). Accessed 7 July 2009. < http://www.orbiscascade.org/index/cms-filesystem-action?file=nwda/reports/usability%20testing,%20phase%20ii,%20round%203.doc>.

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NOTES

1. Jakob Nielsen and Hoa Lorenger, *Prioritizing Web Usability* (Berkeley: New Riders Press, 2006), 232.
2. Ibid, 221.
3. Ibid, 240.
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5. Ibid, 60-63.
6. Ibid, 247.
7. Joyce Chapman and Maggie Dickson, “EAD-ROI Usability Study with Advanced Archival Researchers.” North Carolina State University Libraries (2010). Currently unpublished. Contact authors for information on findings. Scanning was found to be the most common method with which users interacted with finding aids to determine whether they were relevant to their research. While this does not imply that researchers do not carefully read finding aids once the have determined a particular collection to be relevant to their work, it underscores the importance of understanding that researchers may erroneously discard a collection as irrelevant if an initial scan does not prove fruitful. One user explained that she is required to make “discriminations under time constraints. I want to be able to move through it that much faster.”
8. Nielsen and Lorenger, *Prioritizing Web Usability,* 247.
9. Chapman and Dickson, “EAD-ROI Usability Study with Advanced Archival Researchers.”
10. Nielsen and Lorenger, *Prioritizing Web Usability*, 282.
11. Chapman, “What Would Users Do?” 42-43; Chapman and Dickson, “EAD-ROI Usability Study with Advanced Archival Researchers.” In the first study, one user criticized lengthy abstracts, saying “[it] would be nice if the abstract weren’t more than 150 words…I’m losing the will to live, reading [this], I’m afraid! An abstract needs to be brief." Both studies found at least one advanced researcher who did not read scope and content notes because they believed them to be identical to abstracts. The second study found that in 64% of the cases in which the advanced researcher test participants read the abstract

to complete an information finding task, they did not read the scope and content note at any point afterward.

12. OAC, "OAC Second Round Usability Test Findings" (2009), <http://www.cdlib.org/inside/assess/evaluation_activities/docs/2009/oac_usability_april2009.pdf>; Wendy Duff and Penka Stoyanova, "Transforming the Crazy Quilt: Archival Displays from a Users' Point of View," *Archivaria* 45 (1998): 61; Rosalie Lack, "The Importance of User-Centered Design: Exploring Findings and Methods," *Journal of Archival Organization* 4.1/2 (2006): 77; Archives of American Art (AAA), "Web Usability Study Report: Round 1, Subject Experts" (2008). E-mailed to the author, 12 June 2009; OAC, "OAC First Round Usability Test Findings" (2008), <http://www.cdlib.org/inside/assess/evaluation_activities/docs/2008/oac_usability_aug2008.pdf>; Susan Pauley, "Collection Guides (Finding Aids) - Novice Users Group: Findings Report" (2010), <http://www.lib.ncsu.edu/userstudies/studies/2010_collectionguidesnovice/Collection%20Guides%20novice%20study%20report%202010.doc>.
13. OAC, "OAC Second Round Usability Test Findings,"
16; Lack, "The importance of User-Centered Design," 77.
14. Duff and Stoyanova, "Transforming the Crazy Quilt," 61.
15. Joyce Chapman, "Observing Users: An Empirical Analysis of User Interaction with Online Finding Aids," *Journal of Archival Organization* 8.1/2 (2010): 12-13.
16. These concepts were implemented in the 2009 UNC-CH finding aid redesign after reviewing the NWDA's usability findings and gathering input from public services staff about the areas in which patrons were having difficulties. They were found to be successful in

the subsequent usability study, see Chapman, “What Would Users Do?” 18-23.

17. Various institutions have informally shared their Web analytics data with the archival community. On the EAD-listserv, University of Maryland at College Park recently reported that 58% of traffic was directed from search engines and Duke University reported that 61% of their traffic was from search engines (see “Re: Google Analytics,” Jennie Levine Knies, June 22 2010 and “Re: Google Analytics,” Noah Huffman, June 22 2010). Google Analytics data at North Carolina State University shows that 65% of finding aid traffic (January-June 2010) comes from search engines.
18. AAA, “Web Usability Study Report; Lack, “The importance of User-Centered Design” 69-85; Cory Nimer, “What Do You Mean It Doesn't Make Sense? Redesigning Finding Aids from the User's Perspective,” *Journal of Archival Organization* 6.4 (2008): 216-232; NWDA, “Executive Summary: Usability Testing Round 4,” 7; Christopher J. Prom, "User Interactions with Electronic Finding Aids in a Controlled Setting," *American Archivist* 67.2 (2004): 234-68; Wendy Scheir, “First Entry: Report on a Qualitative Exploratory Study of Novice User Experience with Online Finding Aids,” *Journal of Archival Organization* 3.4 (2005): 49-85; Elizabeth Yakel, “Encoded Archival Description: Are Finding Aids Boundary Spanners or Barriers for Users?” *Journal of Archival Organization* 2.1/2 (2004): 63-77.
19. Chapman, “Observing Users,” 17-18; Nimer, “What Do You Mean It Doesn't Make Sense?” 229; Scheir, “First Entry,” 72; Andrea Rosenbusch, “Are Our Users Being Served? A Report on Online Archival Databases,”

Archives and Manuscripts 29.1 (2001): 50; Duff and Stoyanova, “Transforming the Crazy Quilt,” 52; NWDA, “Executive Summary: Usability Testing Round 4,” 7; Nimer, “What Do You Mean It Doesn't Make Sense?” 229.

20. Jennifer Schaffner, "The Metadata is the Interface: Better Description for Better Discovery of Archives and Special Collections" (2009), <www.oclc.org/programs/publications/reports/2009-06.pdf>
21. Chapman, “Observing Users,” 18-19.
22. NWDA, “Executive Summary: Usability Testing Round 4,” 7. Findings related to the label “Information for Researchers” were not reported in published findings but were found in unpublished research data for Chapman, “Observing Users.”
23. Joyce Chapman, “What Would Users Do? An Empirical Analysis of User Interaction With Online Finding Aids” (MA thesis, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 2009): 33-34, 77.
24. Ibid, 45, 50; Chapman and Dickson, “EAD-ROI Usability Study with Advanced Archival Researchers.”
25. Chapman, “What Would Users Do?” 36-38.
26. Ibid, 24.
27. Scheir, “First Entry” 75.
28. Burt Altman and John R. Nemmers, "The Usability of On-line Archival Resources: The Polaris Project Finding Aid," *American Archivist* 64.1 (2001): 126; Yakel, “Encoded Archival Description: Are Finding Aids Boundary Spanners or Barriers for Users?” 68; OAC, “OAC Second Round Usability Test Findings,” 15.
29. Chapman and Dickson, “EAD-ROI Usability Study with Advanced Archival Researchers.”

30. This feature is not available in the EAD cookbook; XSLT programming skills are required.
31. Chapman, “Observing Users,” 13; OAC, “OAC Second Round Usability Test Findings,” 15; Scheir, “First Entry,” 74.
32. Christopher J. Prom, “The *EAD Cookbook*: A Survey and Usability Study,” *American Archivist* 65.2 (2002): 264; Yakel, “Encoded Archival Description,” 75; Chapman, “Observing Users,” 13.
33. Instructions for how to automate the implementation of a hyperlinked table of contents (even without previously encoded arrangement sections with lists of series) can be downloaded from the EAD Helper Tools and Files page: http://www.archivists.org/saagroups/ead/tools.html.
34. Prom, "User Interactions with Electronic Finding Aids in a Controlled Setting," 257; Scheir, “First Entry,” 60; Nimer, “What Do You Mean It Doesn't Make Sense?” 228; OAC, “OAC First Round Usability Test Findings,” 9; Chapman, “What Would Users Do?” 18.
35. Pauley’s 2010 study of novice finding aid users at NCSU found that 50% did not know how to use the built-in browser function, while Chapman’s 2009 study of novice and advanced finding aid users at UNC-CH found that 42% were unfamiliar with the search method.
36. NWDA, “Executive Summary: Usability Testing Round 4,” 7; Chapman, “What Would Users Do?” 28.
37. To read more about the Functional Requirements for Bibliographic Records (FRBR) user tasks, see http://archive.ifla.org/VII/s13/frbr/frbr3.htm. Several advanced researchers discussed the higher value of subject headings for finding and filtering records rather than identifying that a particular record met their research needs in

Chapman and Dickson, "EAD-ROI Usability Study with Advanced Archival Researchers."

38. Jason Ronallo, e-mail to author, May 24, 2010.
39. Nielsen and Lorenger, *Prioritizing Web Usability*, 140.

A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to Interactivity: A Case Study of "Enhancing" Finding Aids

by Richard Collier

Abstract

Efforts to add enhanced functionality to the finding aid for the Richard Pollay Acme Advertising Collection met with a series of unforeseen challenges, some technical and others institutional. The challenges, problems, solutions, and ongoing issues highlight the degree to which even relatively modest changes to finding aid structure, style, content and functionality can point to the need for more thoroughgoing changes to the technological and institutional infrastructure of a research library.

At Duke University's Rare Books, Manuscripts, and Special Collections Library, there have been many conversations over the past few years about the evolution of finding aids, including "next generation" finding aids, alternative formats, enhanced functionality, and interactivity. What follows is a description of one attempt to create an "enhanced" finding aid, and some of the challenges and surprises met along the way.[1] In 2008, Professor Richard Pollay, of the Sauder School of Business at the University of British Columbia (UBC), donated several collections he curated from the History of Advertising Archives (HAA) at UBC to Duke University Libraries' Hartman Center for Sales, Advertising & Marketing History. Pollay, a noted expert on tobacco marketing who has testified before several Congressional panels and in a number of court cases,

donated his tobacco-related files, a collection of books and some smaller collections, the most intriguing of which was the Acme Advertising Collection.

The Acme Advertising Collection is, as the name suggests, a collection of artifacts and advertisements from companies using the "Acme" name. Professor Pollay began collecting these items upon making two basic observations. First, enterprises with the "Acme" name are characteristically small ventures that represent the grass roots of local and regional economies. Pollay recognized that this was an important economic sector to document because smallish local businesses are typically underrepresented in collections relating to advertising and marketing. Second, the ubiquity of the "Acme" brand name has resulted in its entry into popular culture as an icon for independent business in general. "Acme" is featured in print cartoons from artists such as Gary Larson (*The Far Side*) and G.B. Trudeau (*Doonesbury*), and especially in the Warner Brothers animated *Road Runner* features.

Items in the Acme collection, approximately three thousand in all, date between the 1850s and the 2000s, and originally came from a variety of sources. Many items were donated to Dr. Pollay, but he acquired the majority himself over several decades. In earlier years he found the items in shops, flea markets, and antique stores across North America. In recent years most items were purchased through the eBay internet auction site.

The collection came to the Hartman Center accompanied by a database in which each item was cataloged with unique numbers and organized into twenty-eight different categories of dizzying range. Categories included broad groupings such as "Kitchen Collectibles,"

"Office and School Supplies," "Sales Oddities," and "Match Covers," along with groupings for individual businesses such as Acme Beer, Acme Bail Bonds, and Acme Trucks. During processing, I had no intention of tampering with such "original order," cumbersome as it was, but I did want to describe things in a format other than the database that accompanied the collection. I mined the database for basic descriptive information and entered it into a spreadsheet, eliminating fields I felt were no longer pertinent, such as the name and date of the student doing the original data entry and item location at the HAA.

The collection documentation also included digital thumbnail images, both in JPEG and Bitmap formats, for about a third of the collection. I thought it would be useful to have thumbnail images for every item, and embed them into the finding aid so that image and description would reside together as in a printed catalog for an antiques or museum show. A student library employee assisted me in the task of scanning or photographing the collection and loading the images into a set of folders that would correspond to the categorical scheme already in place. While this process was taking place, it was my intent to edit the metadata and begin writing the finding aid in EAD/XML. It was a simple plan to start, but one that quickly became complicated.

The first set of complications could be described as technological challenges or obstacles. While for the most part scanning and digital photography went smoothly, some objects were frustratingly difficult to capture. Andrew Pickering, in his book *The Mangle of Practice* (1995), uses the term "material agency" to describe the ways that objects resist our efforts to control, shape, or alter them.[2] This was

the first force of resistance we encountered in our efforts to capture images of the items in the Acme collection. Some items would not scan well and required hours of tweaking scanner setups to produce a useable image. Large posters could be photographed only from atop a tallish ladder. Some cast iron items simply refused to be photographed at all, rendering a smudgy blur no matter what camera we tried. Other items were so unwieldy that we could photograph only a portion of the item, like a small pocket logo on a large shirt. In addition, each image needed some kind of preliminary editing to reduce the file size so that the image would fit on the computer screen, and to rotate the images so that the writing appeared as it should. After two semesters of work, though, we had captured and processed digital images of all but a handful of items.

The second set of challenges involved what might be called "institutional agency." Duke University takes pride in its entrepreneurial energy, but in my opinion that energy flows in tension with what Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari have called "apparatuses of capture."[3] Innovation and experimentation are actively encouraged, but there is a simultaneous tendency at Duke to channel, organize, and manage that energy along fairly rigid departmental or "corporatist" lines. Duke seems to formalize relationships and centralize efforts and resources such that there can be significant obstacles to making even small changes to the status quo. In a way, it sometimes appears that it is easier at Duke to undertake a large-scale innovative project than to make small, localized improvements. Pickering described this kind of institutional dynamic as a tension between "big science" and "small science" models of organization.[4] Our project encountered these obstacles almost from the outset.

As my student assistant busily scanned and saved Acme images to temporary folders, I began to receive fairly regular email complaints about my use of server space from the library's Systems Support Department "police." This was a persistent issue that rightly or wrongly I assigned a low priority to remedy. When I got around to it, I would edit the images and move them from a temporary folder to a folder on a different server. Eventually all the images were migrated off the "wrong" server.

The institutionally "correct" procedure probably would have been to ask for formal permission or approval to experiment with a large image file, and use only the allocated authorized server space. What mitigated against that course of action was largely my own resistance to the centralizing tendencies of Duke's organizational model. I did not want my little project to be taken over by somebody else's big department and turned into something other than what I had set out to accomplish.

After all the images had been captured, I turned my attention to the creation of a "next generation" finding aid, but soon ran into more institutional agency. Duke's tendency to "corporatize" working relationships and functions into departments frequently means that one person's or group's ambitions sooner or later encounter another person's or group's workflow. At the time that I was ready to experiment with a new digital dimension for the Acme finding aid, most of the library's digitization activities had been centralized into a Digital Production Department with its own priorities, plans, and procedures already in place. My initial inquiries about how to implement my vision of the Acme finding aid led to a series of meetings that grew in size and scope over time.

At first I had a series of informal discussions with some Systems staff who were personally interested in exploring new dimensions of the finding aid format. Those conversations led to an expanding network of contacts, all of whom had their own ideas about the limits and conditions of what was possible in regard to finding aid enhancements. Increasingly formal meetings followed, and at one such meeting the attendees included representatives from Technical Services, Collection Development, Systems Support, the Digital Production Center, both of my bosses (from Technical Services and the Hartman Center), and one or two interested bystanders. The conversation took shape around the possibility of creating a large-scale digitization project for the Acme images.

What I had imagined as a small-scale innovation—a finding aid in which the metadata and the image thumbnails would appear together automatically—had morphed into an entirely different animal. There was discussion of creating a digital gallery similar to previous large-scale digital projects, such as Ad*Access and Medicine and Madison Avenue. In my opinion, the conversations focused on making Acme into a large digital project because that model best suited the existing Systems and Digital Production departmental functions and procedures. To my thinking, the basic mindset was to make one kind of digital project because there had not been enough experience to envision alternatives. Today, it would be much easier to discuss alternate models of digital projects, but at the time digitization practices embraced a single workflow and scale model.

I had several very specific reasons for not wanting to proceed with a large-scale digitization project. I did not

want to relinquish ownership of the Acme project and turn it over to the Digital Production staff, at which point it would become their project. I also resisted the notion that I had to subsume my own entrepreneurial agency to the institutional agency of the digital projects departments. I am not satisfied merely to turn over a project for digitization and leave its design to others; I want to know enough about digital projects to be able to control some of that process even when it leaves my hands. At the same time, I was trying to use this experiment to help rethink the way I approached finding aids, with the goal of enhancing access to our collections. Hartman Center collections are becoming increasingly complex and entail multiple media formats, and I wanted to be able to work with those media. Finally, I had a pragmatic reason for wanting to keep the project small. We already had thumbnail images of a large portion of the collection, and scanned and photographed images of the bulk of the remainder. A large-scale digitization project would mean that every item would have to be re-scanned to meet the standards of the digitization practices, which would drag out the project for several more months.

It took multiple meetings and exchanges of emails, but eventually everyone agreed to my original modest proposal for thumbnail images to accompany metadata in what otherwise resembled a "traditional" online finding aid. When all of the other parties backed away I found someone in Systems to convert my scans into thumbnails. I wrote hyperlinks to the images in the EAD/XML code for the finding aid and began troubleshooting.

The original EAD encoding scheme used the <daogrp><daoloc> tags to allow the image to appear automatically in the online finding aid along with the item

description:
<c02><did>
<unittitle>100-17-049. Acme Super Markets. Embroidered patch, undated</unittitle>
<daogrp><daoloc role="thumbnail" href="M:\Processed\Pollay\Images\Acme scans\100-17-49.jpg"/></daogrp> </did><scopecontent>
Embroidered patch. White background with red and blue lettering. <emph render="doublequote">Acme Super Markets.</emph> White background discolored. </scopecontent></c02>
<c02><did>
<unittitle>100-17-050. Acme-Western Ambulance Service. Embroidered patch, undated</unittitle>
<daogrp><daoloc role="thumbnail" href="M:\Processed\Pollay\Images\Acme scans\100-17-50.jpg"/></daogrp> </did><scopecontent>
Round embroidered patch. Red and green background with gold lettering. <emph render="doublequote">Acme-Western Ambulance Service--San Leandro.</emph> </scopecontent></c02>

100-17-049. Acme Super Markets. Embroidered patch, undated. Embroidered patch. White background with red and blue lettering. "Acme Super Markets." White background discolored.

100-17-050. Acme-Western Ambulance Service. Embroidered patch, undated. Round embroidered patch. Red and green background with gold lettering. "Acme-Western Ambulance Service—San Leandro."

Fig. 1

The finding aid displayed as I intended (Fig. 1), but this non-traditional approach created other unanticipated problems. These challenges again were technological and entailed both material and institutional agencies. The chief material agency was usability that was significantly inhibited by page load time. With three thousand images, even small

thumbnails, the finding aid took several minutes to load onto a web browser, and every time a user paged down or jumped to an image using the series links, the whole finding aid would have to refresh and reload. In addition, whenever the computer itself auto-refreshed, the finding aid would have to reload. With text-only finding aids, the refresh happens so quickly one doesn't notice, but with so many images there was a lot of waiting.

The second material agency involved our PDF stylesheet for EAD, which was not set up for graphic information and did not recognize the XML tags for external links, such that only the metadata displayed in the online PDF version. This in turn meant that although we had a catalog-like finding aid that displayed well online, it did not print out as elegantly on paper.

This material agency led directly to the chief institutional agency. Systems Support staff were not inclined to prioritize a substantial revision to both the HTML and PDF style sheets that would have stabilized the display of finding aids with a substantial amount of embedded digital images. Secondary institutional agencies concerned where the images would reside and under whose domain, and these too had to be worked out before the finding aid could be published.

My solution to the central material agency was to change the XML tagging for all three thousand images so that the links to the images would still be there, but the image would only appear on demand, one at a time. To do this, I switched the <daogrp><daoloc> tags in the EAD coding to:

<dao><daodesc>:
<c02><did>

<unittitle>100-17-049. Acme Super Markets. Embroidered patch, undated</unittitle>

<dao role="link" href="http://library.duke.edu/digitalcollections/images/acme/100-17-49.jpg">

<daodesc> View thumbnail </daodesc></dao>

</did><scopecontent> Embroidered patch. White background with red and blue lettering. <emph render="doublequote">Acme Super Markets.</emph> White background discolored. </scopecontent></c02>

In the online finding aid, the item metadata appeared, with a "View thumbnail" prompt. Clicking on the prompt displayed the image on a separate page (Fig. 2).

100-17-049. Acme Super Markets. Embroidered patch, undated : View thumbnail Embroidered patch. White background with red and blue lettering. "Acme Super Markets." White background discolored.

Fig. 2

In my view, this was a suboptimal solution, but it did provide the finding aid with a degree of interactive functionality, albeit inadvertent. It also provided access to

the images of the items in the collection, making it possible for researchers and the curious to view the images remotely.

The finding aid eventually was published online, but that did not signal the end of our work. Researchers had their own ideas of how to use the collection, and some of them still wanted access to the physical objects. We are now in the process of revising the finding aid to identify the physical location of each item so that there will be virtual, intellectual, and physical access to the materials in the collection.

So, what have I learned through this experience? First, sometimes modest innovations or changes to presentation or display of online content, such as archival finding aids, encounter resistance at multiple levels. Just as we found that some of the Acme materials resisted our attempts to scan or photograph them, the current technical state of our finding aid style sheet templates and of our web browser platforms could not provide a stable environment for the completed finding aid that I had envisioned. Like all other features of library infrastructure, templates and tools for accessing and displaying finding aids and digital images are historical documents designed to support requirements that are already known or anticipated at the moment of their creation. Once that moment has passed, new and unanticipated requirements or anything that might be considered an innovation may strain the capabilities of an already-aging infrastructure. It takes considerable labor and skill to redesign style sheets, configure servers, etc., and this is where enhancements or practices that vary from the parameters envisioned when existing systems were constructed encounter a space of socio-technological complexity.

For all the discourse and encouragement of "next generation" finding aids and enhanced functions for the display (and thus access and usability) of online content, such ambitions enter into conversation with a complex web of competing priorities, plans, budgetary considerations, and departmental workflows. In one direction, small innovations can cause a ripple effect and expose the shortcomings of an aging system (and every system has them necessarily; it is a condition of all historic constructions). In another direction, the daily management of a complex institution of systems, people, and practices can generate (perhaps unavoidably) an inertial tendency that acts as a brake on the kinds of experimentation that leads to innovation. The main lesson here may be a cautionary one—that while it may be relatively easy to envision something new, it will confront something older and somewhat set in its ways, and implementation will need to negotiate material, technological, and institutional agencies that by nature resist enhancements or innovations to existing structures. At the same time, those very challenges can help point the way for ways to rethink material practices, models of organization, and infrastructure that in turn will support the entrepreneurial energies of an institution.

Richard Collier received a doctorate in Cultural Anthropology from Duke University in 2004 and is a Certified Archivist. He has served as Technical Services Archivist for John W. Hartman Center for Sales, Advertising & Marketing History Collection at Duke University Libraries since 2005.

NOTES

1. My observations on how things work in Duke Libraries, or at Duke University generally, are solely my opinion and do not represent the institutional view of operations; in other words, my perceptions might not mirror the authorized forms of "reality" and others might remember things differently.
2. Andrew Pickering, *The Mangle of Practice: Time, Agency and Science* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 22f.
3. Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), 427f.
4. Pickering, 43-44.

REVIEWS

Kate Theimer. *Web 2.0 Tools and Strategies for Archives and Local History Collections*. New York: Neal-Schuman Publishers, 2010. 246p. Appendixes, bibliography, and index. $79.95.

Carl Sagan once wrote, “We live in a society exquisitely dependent on science and technology, in which hardly anyone knows anything about science and technology.”[1] To me, this statement could apply to the discussion of Web 2.0 implementations in archives (sometimes simply called "Archives 2.0"). And, I should note, I include myself in this indictment. Sagan’s words call to mind what archivists have quickly come to understand about Archives 2.0: it is a phenomenon that is not only defined by the recent sea changes in web technology, but one that is governed by social forces. There is no doubt that Web 2.0 technology will evolve quickly; the question is how quickly we archivists will evolve with it. Are we facing an impossible task? Kate Theimer doesn't think so. In her new book, *Web 2.0 Tools and Strategies for Archives and Local History Collections*, Theimer argues that archives can continue to “move with the times,” as long as archivists continue to educate themselves and take risks. This is certainly not a new idea for Theimer. Over the past few years, Kate Theimer has built up a reputation as a leading advocate for the paradigm shift from "Archives 1.0" to "Archives 2.0." She is the author of the popular blog ArchivesNext (www.archivesnext.com), a lively discussion forum on the use of Web 2.0 in archives. She is also the creator and manager of the Archives 2.0 wiki

(www.archives2point0.wetpaint.com), a directory of Web 2.0 implementations in archives and other cultural heritage institutions. She has published many articles, reviews, and essays on the topic of Archives 2.0 and is currently editing a volume on the use of technology for advocacy (forthcoming from the Society of American Archivists). Theimer has campaigned for Web 2.0 tools and services in various presentations, workshops, and speeches at the national and regional level. She also serves as co-chair of SAA's Issues and Advocacy Roundtable. So, it was a welcome surprise to learn that Theimer would turn much of her knowledge and passion for Archives 2.0 into a full-length project on the subject.

Web 2.0 Tools and Strategies for Archives and Local History Collections is designed to demonstrate how institutions with archival and manuscript collections can use social media to share their activities and collections with new audiences on the Web. To do this, Theimer provides descriptions of all the current major Web 2.0 tools—from blogs and wikis to video-sharing sites and podcasting—as well as practical advice on many of the social factors involved with implementing Web 2.0 in an archives: policy issues, audience, staff resources, publicity, evaluation, and many others. Presented in a clear, concise, and non-technical manner, this book will serve as a useful guidebook to anyone who is investigating the use of Web 2.0 at his or her institution. The book is organized with eight central chapters that describe various Web 2.0 tools and services, bookended by introductory and concluding chapters, front matter, and appendices that provide context, background, and additional information. Chapter 1 covers a few key concepts behind Web 2.0 and discusses some of the myths and

misconceptions about social media. Have you ever heard anyone in your organization say of Web 2.0, "It's just a fad," or "If I give my content away, people will misuse it"? This chapter offers reassurance and advice to calm these and other common anxieties. Chapter 2 describes how to evaluate your current "Web 1.0" presence and how to set goals for new Web 2.0 implementations. This chapter encourages the reader to take a broader view of their institution's web presence and to focus on how it serves the organization's strategic priorities. The book concludes with two chapters (Chapters 11 and 12) that discuss the importance of evaluation and setting policies for your new social media implementation. These chapters raise critical issues such as getting institutional buy-in, defining tasks, setting expectations among various constituencies, and managing workloads.

The eight central chapters (Chapters 3 through 10) focus on various Web 2.0 tools and services: blogs, podcasts, image-sharing sites (such as Flickr), video-sharing sites (such as YouTube), microblogging (Twitter), wikis, Facebook, mashups, widgets, online chat, and Second Life. Each of these chapters follows a common structure—a brief overview of the technology, followed by a description of how archival institutions are using the tool or service, and then concluding with a list of steps that are needed for implementation. Each chapter also presents interviews with people who have successfully implemented the tool or service in question. Overall, these interviews are the most interesting passages in the book because they provide inspiration and ideas from fellow archivists in their own words. They also remind the reader that they are not alone and that others have faced many of the same challenges that

they might face in implementing a new Web 2.0 project. In the Acknowledgments for this book, Theimer points out the importance of this social aspect for Web 2.0 in the archival field: “a friend joked that this would be a crowd-sourced book, and in some ways, it is. The world of Web 2.0 is too large for anyone to keep up to date on everything that’s happening."[2] I appreciate the author’s willingness to add so many voices to the discussion. But her statement about the overwhelming nature of the world of Web 2.0 brings up a potential limitation in the format of this project: it’s a book—a format that is inherently limited in its ability to change—about web technology, something that changes daily.

At times, I found myself wondering if the wealth of information found in this book would have been better served had it been presented through one of the Web 2.0 tools that the book describes. For example, this book could have been presented very successfully as a wiki. Doing so would have allowed additional contributions from other practitioners of Web 2.0 tools and services. It also would have allowed the text to adapt to small changes in Web 2.0. For example, although this book was published in 2010, I note that the book does not reflect several recent changes that have been made to Facebook. Finally, a wiki (or some other open Web 2.0 presentation) would make this important information even more accessible to a broader audience. At a cost of $79.95, this book is not exactly in a format that lends itself fully to the free exchange of ideas—one of the key principals of Web 2.0. These criticisms aside, Theimer’s efforts are to be commended. Her enthusiasm for the subject shines through and the resulting work will certainly go along way to close the gap in our field between the technology and our collective knowledge about how to implement it.

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NOTES

1. Carl Sagan, "Why We Need to Understand Science," *PARADE* (10 September 1989): 9.
2. Theimer, xvii.

Mary Lynn Ritzenthaler. *Preserving Archives and Manuscripts, 2d ed.* Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2010. 525p. Appendixes, bibliography, illustrations, , and index. $63 (nonmember); $45 (member).

With the publication of the second edition of *Preserving Archives and Manuscripts*, the Society of American Archivists brings to a close the series of books called the Archival Fundamental Series II. As with the previous edition, Mary Lynn Ritzenthaler wrote this updated edition of a seminal work on archival preservation. Since the publication of the first edition in 1993, I have used Ritzenthaler's work heavily over the years, both in my own position and as a suggested resource to other professionals, volunteers, and students seeking to gain a greater understanding of preservation in an archival setting. Because the first edition lived up to the title of fundamental, I eagerly anticipated the second edition. However, with the ubiquity of preservation resources online today, I wondered if a printed resource on preservation would seem as current and useful as the first edition did seventeen years ago.

Many aspects of this second edition seem very familiar. The intended audience remains "persons who have administrative, custodial, or curatorial responsibility for

archival and manuscript holdings" (xviii). Ritzenthaler still seeks to demonstrate the importance of a diverse and cohesive preservation program for repositories with archival collections. The chapter titles match those in the first edition. The core elements of a preservation program are discussed again. She covers a broad variety of archival materials and discusses practical methodologies for developing preservation programs for those collections. As before, the robust footnotes and appendixes add value to the volume. Before someone is tempted, however, to stick with the first edition of this volume, there are important additions to this updated one. Ritzenthaler enlarges several key portions of the book to address modern challenges faced by archivists when developing and implementing a preservation program integrated into all archival functions.

Key chapters of this edition are strengthened with discussions on ways to utilize newer technologies available for preservation programming. In the chapter on creating a preservation environment, she includes information not just on environmental monitoring, but also on tools such as the Preservation Calculator and the Climate Notebook software developed by the Image Permanence Institute. Tools such as these go beyond a previous discussion on the importance of environmental monitoring and introduce the reader to the modern concept of using environmental monitoring data to analyze the long term impact of conditions on the longevity of archival materials. The chapter on integrating preservation and archival management now includes new materials on emergency preparedness and response, a key component of a preservation program. The copying and reformatting chapter is expanded to discuss modern thinking on reformatting programs, previously limited in the 1993

edition to microfilming and photocopying. One of the biggest strengths in the first edition, the appendixes, are enlarged this time to include online resources, websites, and discussion list descriptions. Surprisingly, one seemingly minor change in this edition, the formatting of the text, proved to be a positive change. Ritzenthaler retains her flowing style of writing in this edition, but the layout now includes more sub-headings and bulleted lists. The topics within the chapters are broken down under sub-headings, making the text more accessible if the reader is searching within a larger heading or chapter for a specific topic.

Even when Ritzenthaler delivers rich detail on the composition of archival materials as physical objects and sources of their deterioration, she devotes too few pages to a couple of topics. She deliberately stays away from details on digitization programs and electronic records, citing the need for readers to look in the "growing body of specialized literature" (xix) on electronic media. I agree that these fields are rapidly evolving, and I appreciate the bibliographic references in the appendix. However, between 1993 and 2010 enough has been written on basic fundamentals for archival digitization programs and preservation of digital images for her to include more information in the main text on the basics of digital preservation and digitization programs. She also seems to shy away from detail on the handling and storage of microfilm. Given the magnificent detail on particular types of papers and inks, the lack of detail on the storage conditions for different types of microfilm seems odd. While digitization programs may be supplanting preservation microfilming programs, many archival repositories still maintain a large film collection. She also discusses the possibility of hybrid microfilm

digitization programs that convert film images to digital ones while ignoring a hybrid of another kind, digital to film.

Lack of detail on digitization and electronic records aside, the second edition of *Preserving Archives and Manuscripts* should prove to be as valuable as the first edition. All of the same strengths of the first edition remain with valuable additions that address the current state of record keeping. Her writing remains accessible to both the student and the seasoned preservation professional. She provides readers with measures of a successful preservation program, as well as tools and methodologies to achieve one. By her admission the book functions as a survey text for many preservation and conservation topics, introducing them and weaving them together into a larger picture of archival preservation. She succeeds again in this edition at providing not only this woven together picture of preservation in the modern archival setting, but also a resource, via footnotes and detailed appendixes, that serves to point readers toward more specialized information. Because this volume presents archivists with tangible and practical ways to link archival preservation theories with practices, I believe archivists in any sized institution will find this a useful work. With all the details of the first edition combined with expanded information in key aspects of preservation programming, I suggest that archivists add this volume to their libraries, along with the others in the fundamentals series.

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Jeanette A. Bastian and Ben Alexander, eds. *Community Archives: The Shaping of Memory*. London: Facet, 2009. 286p. Bibliography, illustrations, and index. $135

Archives and records are of undeniable importance to historians, archivists and community members. The essays in *Community Archives: The Shaping of Memory* attempt to clarify and define community and records and their role in the collective preservation of memory and to highlight the role archivists and historians play in that preservation. Bastian and Alexander stress the interaction between record keeping and memory in communities. The first task is to define the record. The definition must be fluid, not finite, as we acknowledge the expanding view of the record--formats as varied as printed documents, graphics and images to oral histories, music, performances, cultural events, parades, community festivals, and records that are "born" digital. Handbills, flyers, meetings, exhibitions, concerts, plays and other forms of gray literature also have a role in creating a social memory and can be legitimate records. What determines a community? While the definition is subjective, there is a commonality--political, cultural, geographical, ethnic, religious--that defines the community as a group entity. Interaction, collective memory and shared history form a link between a community and its records.

Gene Kelly belongs to a native aboriginal group called the Noongars, and as a member of the Native Title Representative Body was instrumental in facilitating the representation of native title claims. Tribal records were essential to substantiating these claims. Kelly used both written and oral records: those created by settlers, farmers,

explorers, and journals, newspapers and police records were routinely accepted to be true. Native welfare records created by the government were suspect. These "case cards," records of blood quantities used to determine if a child could be classified as native, contained detailed information regarding work record, movement within the community, and length of time in place. While Kelly found the records "incredibly offensive and full of official lies" (58), they were used to help establish the sovereignty of the society and to establish a continuing physical connection to the land.

Patricia Galloway discusses the importance of oral culture. She describes the oral traditions of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, where their histories are repeated by the elders, in their Choctaw dialect. While thousands of the tribe speak Choctaw, most are not literate in that language. The U.S. government requires that all their documents be recorded in English, so the MBCI has created recordings and materials that are now a growing part of Choctaw education. Galloway states that "the oral cultural materials have a robust history that is important to the identities and even to the well-being of those who participate in their creation and reproduction, and on them may hinge not only the documentation but perhaps the survival of the culture of subculture itself" (77).

There are many situations where a community's history has been suppressed for legal, religious or political reasons. Marcel Barriault discusses the history of homosexuality in Canada. Before the 1970s, homosexuality was a criminal offense in the eyes of the law, a "pathological perversion" in the medical community, and an "abomination to God" in the religious community (99). In 1971, *The Body Politic* ("the leading Canadian queer news magazine") (99)

was formed, and the Gay Liberation Movement Archive was established in their building. In a 1977 police raid on *The Body Politic*, following publication of an article deemed pornographic, materials from the GLMA were also seized. The court case dragged on until 1983 when the court finally ruled in favor of the publication, and in 1985 the records were ordered returned to the GLMA. Archivists and historians took steps to ensure that the GLMA become a professional and legal organization. Until then, the heritage of the community was jeopardized through loss of records and identity.

Eric Ketelaar discusses the use of community records in the punishment of human rights abusers in the former Yugoslavia. Through these proceedings thousands of records of survivor accounts, transcripts, recordings, videos and telecommunications have been recovered and archived. The Tribunal has indicted 161 persons who had committed heinous human rights violations. Not only are these records vital to that process, they helped to establish a precedent for future human rights commissions.

Andras Riedlmayer and Stephen Naron give two strong examples of creating community on the Internet. Both have arisen because "genocide and forced exile has been the 20th century's terrible and constant companion" (151). Yizkor books were traditional codexes – lists of the dead and remembrances of the physical communities destroyed during the Holocaust. Most were begun in displaced persons camps and were immediate records of loss based on eyewitness accounts. Now communities use the Internet to call for information. Images, drawings, and maps are added electronically to create a virtual archive of memories. The successor to the Yizkor book is the video interview, now

archived as the Fortunoff Video Archive for Holocaust Testimonies accessible through Yale's online database catalog. From 1992 to 1995, more than one half of Bosnia-Herzegovina's population became refugees and 100,000 people were killed. These refugees began using the Internet immediately, tracking information for scattered survivors including the fate of community members and churches, maps, photographs, necrologies and directories of current locations and addresses of fellow survivors. They are recreating their histories in these virtual logs and the webmasters are the online archivists.

David Wallace discusses how the recreation of the Grateful Dead sound archives came about. From 1965 to 1995 the Grateful Dead performed 36,000 songs at 2317 concerts in over 300 cities (170). The band was recorded illicitly by Deadheads from the very beginning. Over the years the Dead became tolerant of illicit recordings to the point of creating separate areas for the "tapers," and eventually ignored the non-commerical trading of the recordings. The band's lenient policy toward taping proved to be a godsend. Because the band failed to keep a proper archive of the authorized professional recordings of their performances, hundreds of recordings were lost. The taper and trading community filled the gaps and through their records created several complete and detailed online archives and the Internet Archive's Grateful Dead Collection and Live Music Archive.

Community Archives: The Shaping of Memory makes a strong case for the diversity of records and the importance of preserving memory in any format. As archivists and historians, an understanding of the ever-changing and fluid concept of records and communities is

vital. Anyone presented with the task of creating a new physical archive or evaluating an existing one would benefit from the information on new methods of obtaining information and assessing it. Being informed in our area of concentration is important and an awareness of the change in communities and their record keeping is vital to good practice. There are, however, no how-tos, helpful hints or standards of practice here. There are no suggestions for long -term preservation, an issue troubling to all of us. Yet the book provides a readable and interesting look at a wide range of community archives and their challenges. What a person can take away from this series of essays is the knowledge that records are key to creating a community archive, however that community is defined.

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