

History 526
SELECTION AND APPRAISAL

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COURSE OBJECTIVES

Building upon the understanding of archives and records management gained in previous classes, this course examines the essential archival functions of acquisition, selection, and appraisal, as well as special considerations for visual, sound, and electronic records. Each student should gain from this a more detailed understanding of archival theory, methodology, and practice regarding these functions and formats. Selection and appraisal encompass the intellectual and physical demands of identifying, evaluating, and managing archival materials. Although textual records have been the focus of traditional archival practice – and hence much of the professional literature – archivists also manage a wide spectrum of records in visual, audio, cartographic, and electronic media. Readings and class discussions will examine some of these formats and the applicability of archival theory and methodology.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

[**Note:** Assignments are listed in the syllabus on the date **DUE**. They are described in more detail in an Assignments section at the end of this syllabus.]

Oral presentations and class exercises: Each student will make several group and individual presentations in class. (**See January 13, February 10, and March 3**).

Analytical essays: Students will prepare two analytical essays (5-6 pages) evaluating issues raised in any class readings. (**January 27 and February 24**).

Prospectus and bibliography: Each student will write a prospectus (1-2 paragraphs) and prepare a bibliography of articles, books, papers, web sites, or other sources relevant to the final research paper. The list should be extensive and include the relevant sources within the archival literature, but may include works from other fields including library and information science, museum studies, records management, law, history of photography, cartography, or other related disciplines that apply to your topic. (**Due: February 3**.)

Research paper: An original research paper is due **March 16**. The paper should examine a significant problem or issue in archival selection/appraisal, either one addressed in this course or another topic that you may propose. A prospectus and outline along with bibliography is due **February 3**. The paper should be 10-15 pages, with notes and bibliography. Students will present summaries of their research papers or proposals for discussion during the final exam week class, **March 16-18 (TBA)**.

GRADING

Course grades will be calculated on the following basis:

- Class presentations, 10 %
- Analytical essays, 20 % each (40%)
- Prospectus and Bibliography 5%
- Research paper, 30%
- Class/discussion participation, 15 %

CLASS SCHEDULE AND READINGS

Jan. 10 Introduction to Selection and Appraisal

Presentation/discussion:

- Jenn Newby: Minimal processing

Read:

- Terry Cook, "Documenting Society and Institutions: The Influence of Helen Willa Samuels," in Cook, ed., *Controlling the Past*, pp. 1-28.
- Helen W. Samuels, "Who Controls the Past," in Randall C. Jimerson, ed., *American Archival Studies: Readings in Theory and Practice* (Chicago: SAA, 2000), 193-210.
- Karen Benedict, *Ethics and the Archival Profession: Introduction and Case Studies*, (SAA, 2003), Ch.1, 2.

Jan. 17 Selection and Acquisition of Manuscripts

Read:

- Frank Boles, *Selecting and Appraising Archives and Manuscripts* (SAA, 2005, Chapters 1 and 3, and Appendix 1 (accessioning).
- Faye Phillips, "Developing Collecting Policies for Manuscript Collections," *American Archivist* (AA) 47 (1984): 30-42.
- Lawrence Dowler, "Deaccessioning Collections: A New Perspective on a Continuing Controversy," in Nancy E. Peace, ed., *Archival Choices: Managing the Historical Record in an Age of Abundance* (1984), 117-32. **[E-reserve]**

- Timothy L. Ericson, "At the 'rim of creative dissatisfaction': Archivists and Acquisition Development," in Randall C. Jimerson, ed., *American Archival Studies: Readings in Theory and Practice* (Chicago: SAA, 2000), 177-192.
- Elena Danielson, *The Ethical Archivist* (SAA, 2010), pp. 47-85. [E-reserve]
- Frank Boles, "'Just a Bunch of Bigots': A Case Study in the Acquisition of Controversial Material" *Archival Issues* 19/1 (1994): 53-65.
- Menzi L. Behrnd-Klodt, *Navigating Legal Issues in Archives*, ch. 4. [E-reserve]
- Karen Benedict, *Ethics and the Archival Profession*, Case Studies 1-5.

DUE Jan. 17 Collection Development Policies Assignment

Critique the following collection development policies on the internet for discussion in class. No written report required.

- Connecticut State Archives: <http://www.cslib.org/collect.htm>
- LSU Special Collections:
<http://www.lib.lsu.edu/collserv/colldev/policies/louisianalowmis.html>
- The University of Pennsylvania:
<http://www.library.upenn.edu/collections/policies/spec-manuscript.html>
- Archives of Women in Science and Engineering:
<http://www.lib.iastate.edu/spcl/wise/miss.html>
- Dartmouth University <http://www.dartmouth.edu/~cmdc/cdp/arch.dchist.html>
- National Museum of American History/Archives Center:
<http://americanhistory.si.edu/archives/b-1.htm>
- University of Connecticut, Thomas Dodd Research Center:
http://www.lib.uconn.edu/online/research/spec/lib/ASC/collections/cd/cd_policy_2008.htm
- Daughters of the American Revolution:
<http://www.dar.org/americana/scope.cfm>

Jan. 24 Donor Agreements and Donor Relations

Read:

- Barbara J. Kaiser, "Problems With Donors of Contemporary Collections" *The American Archivist* Vol. 32, No. 2 (1969): 103-107.
- Trudy Huskamp Peterson, "The Gift and the Deed" *The American Archivist* Vol. 43 No. 1 (1979): 61-66.
- Judith Schwartz, "The Archivist's Balancing Act: Helping Researchers While Protecting Individual Privacy" *The Journal of American History*, Vol. 79, No.1 (Jun., 1992): 17-189. [E-reserve]
- Michael E. Stevens, "Voices from Vietnam: Building a Collection from a Controversial War" *The American Archivist*, Vol. 64 (2001): 115-120.
- Laura Uglean Jackson and D. Claudia Thompson, "But you Promised: A Case Study of Deaccessioning at the American Heritage Center, University of Wyoming" *The American Archivist*, Vol. 73 (2010): 669-685.
- Geoff Wexler and Linda Long, "Lifetimes and Legacies: Mortality, Immortality, and the Needs of Aging and Dying Donors" *The American Archivist* Vol. 72 (Fall/Winter 2009): 478-495.

Jan. 31 Selection and Appraisal in Institutional Archives

Read:

- Richard J. Cox, "Technology's Promise, the Copying of Records, and the Archivist's Challenge," in Cook, ed., *Controlling the Past*, pp. 131-149.
- Bruce H. Bruemmer, "Brown Shoes in a World Of Tuxedos," in Cook, ed., *Controlling the Past*, pp. 151-170.
- Frank Boles and Julia Marks Young, "Exploring the Black Box: The Appraisal of University Administrative Records," in Jimerson, *American Archival Studies*, 279-300.
- Jennifer A. Marshall, "Toward Common Content: An Analysis of Online College and University Collecting Policies," *AA* 65 (Fall/Winter 2002): 231-256.
- Karen Benedict, *Ethics and the Archival Profession*, Case Studies 6-10.

DUE: First analytical essay

Feb. 7 Archival Appraisal Theory

Read:

- Frank Boles, *Selecting and Appraising Archives and Manuscripts*, Ch. 2, 4, appendix 2.
- James M. O'Toole, "On the Idea of Uniqueness," in Jimerson, *American Archival Studies*, 245-277.
- Luciana Duranti, "The Concept of Appraisal and Archival Theory," *AA* 57 (1994) 328-44.
- Frank Boles and Mark Greene, "Et Tu Schellenberg? Thoughts on the Dagger of American Appraisal Theory," *AA* 59 (Summer 1996): 298-310.
- Mark Greene, "The Surest Proof: A Utilitarian Approach to Appraisal," in Jimerson, *American Archival Studies*, 301-344.
- Caryn Wojcik, "Appraisal, Re-Appraisal, and Deaccessioning," *Archival Issues*, 27:2 (2002) 151-160. [E-reserve]

DUE: Research Paper Prospectus and Bibliography

Feb. 14 Towards an Appraisal Model: Documentation Strategies

Read:

- Frank Boles, *Selecting and Appraising Archives and Manuscripts*, Ch. 5.
- Helen W. Samuels, "Improving Our Disposition: Documentation Strategies," *Archivaria* 33 (Winter 1991-92): 125-40. [E-reserve]
- Larry J. Hackman and Joan Warnow-Blewett, "The Documentation Strategy Process: A Model and a Case Study," *AA* 50 (Winter 1987): 12-47.

- Richard Cox, "The Documentation Strategy and Archival Appraisal Principles: a Different Perspective." In Jimerson, *American Archival Studies*, ch. 10.
- Larry Hackman, "The Origins of Documentation Strategies in Context: Recollections," *American Archivist* 72 (Fall/Winter 2009), 436-59.
- Tom Nesmith, "Documenting Appraisal as a Societal-Archival Process," in Cook, ed., *Controlling the Past*, pp. 31-50.
- Gregory Sanford, "Travelling in a Hellenic World," in Cook, ed., *Controlling the Past*, pp. 51-68.

DUE Feb. 14	Documentation Strategy Assignment (in class)
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In a group project, create a written outline for a documentation strategy for one of the following issues:

1. Art produced by Pacific Northwest artists is suddenly of significant interest to scholars, dealers, and consumers of art. The records generated by these artists are considered an important and identifiable regional resource. Use Hackman and Warnow-Blewett's model to create a strategy to document the arts in the Pacific Northwest. Define the topic (what forms of art are appropriate for documentation), define the region, survey regional institutions which include art and artists in their collection policy. Determine what artistic expressions are well represented and if any categories are overlooked; select advisors and establish site for strategy; select and place the documentation.
2. Bellingham's Centennial celebration (2003) has highlighted the fact that documentary evidence relating to Bellingham and Whatcom Country history is scattered and fragmented. As a result, much of the accepted history is based on hearsay rather than primary sources. Using your readings, create a documentation strategy to rectify this situation. Choose participants (archivists, records managers, records creators, museum curators, librarians, academics); define areas for coverage; structure the inquiry and examine the form and substance of available documentation; select and place the materials.
3. Using functional analysis as described by Samuels and others, identify specific functions which should be documented in one of the following societal institutions: hospitals, churches, or museums. Create a macro-appraisal model which identifies functions within these institutions, isolates the key records and record creators, and provides a general plan for records disposition.

Feb. 21	Macro-Appraisal
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Read:

- Terry Cook, "Mind over Matter: Towards A New Theory of Appraisal." In Barbara Craig, ed., *The Archival Imagination: Essays in Honour of Hugh Taylor*. Ottawa: ACA 1992. **[E-reserve]**
- Catherine Bailey, "From the Top Down: the Practice of Macro-appraisal," *Archivaria* 43 (Spring 1997): 89-128. **[E-reserve]**
- Brian P.N. Beaven, "Macro-Appraisal: From Theory to Practice," *Archivaria*, 48 (Fall 1999): 154-198. **[E-reserve]**

- Terry Cook, “Remembering the Future: Appraisal of Records and the Role of Archives in Constructing Social Memory,” in *Archives, Documentation and Institutions of Social Memory*, ed. Francis X. Blouin, Jr. and William G. Rosenberg (Ann Arbor: Univ. of Michigan Press, 2006): 169-181. [E-reserve]
- Verne Harris, *Archives and Justice: A South African Perspective* (Chicago: SAA, 2007): 87-100. [E-reserve]

DUE: Second analytical essay

Feb. 28 Selection and Appraisal of Audio-Visual Collections

Read:

- Mary Lynn Ritzenthaler and Diane Vogt-O’Connor, *Photographs: Archival Care and Management* (SAA, 2006), chapters 1, 3, 4.
- Elisabeth Kaplan and Jeffrey Mifflin, “‘Mind and Sight’: Visual Literacy and the Archivist,” in Jimerson, *American Archival Studies*, pp.73-97.
- Joan M. Schwartz, “ ‘Records of Simple Truth and Precision’: Photography, Archives, and the Illusion of Control.” *Archivaria* 50 (Fall 2000): 1-40. (Also in Blouin and Rosenberg, *Archives, Documentation, and Institutions of Social Memory*.)
- Frank Boles, *Selecting and Appraising Archives and Manuscripts*, Ch. 6.
- Joan M. Schwartz, “The Archival garden: Photographic Plantings, Interpretive Choices, and Alternative Narratives,” in Cook, ed., *Controlling the Past*, pp. 69-110.
- Nancy Bartlett, “The Complication of Color in an Academic Archive,” in Cook, ed., *Controlling the Past*, pp. 111-130.
- Paul Conway, “Modes of Seeing: Digitized Photographic Archives and the Experienced User,” *American Archivist* 73 (Fall/Winter 2010), 425-62.
- Ellen D. Swain, “Oral History in the Archives: Its Documentary Role in the Twenty-first Century,” *American Archivist* 66 (Spring/Summer 2003): 139-158.

March 7 Selecting and Appraising Electronic Records

Read:

- Robert Horton, “A Cautionary Tale About Laws, Records, and Technology,” in Cook, ed., *Controlling the Past*, pp. 171-19.
- Rick Barry, “Keeping Records in Changing Organizations,” in Cook, ed., *Controlling the Past*, pp. 195-216.
- Richard N. Katz and Paul B. Gandel, “The Tower, the Cloud, and Posterity,” in Cook, ed., *Controlling the Past*, pp. 217-38.
- David Bearman, “Structural Formalisms in Documentation,” in Cook, ed., *Controlling the Past*, pp. 241-56.
- Philip Bantin, [“Electronic Records Management - A Review of the Work of a Decade and a Reflection on Future Directions”](#) [click for hyper-link]

- Anne J. Gilliland-Swetland, [Enduring Paradigm, New Opportunities: The Value of the Archival Perspective in the Digital Environment](#) (Washington, D.C.: Council on Library and Information Resources, February 2000)
- Adrian Cunningham, "Digital Curation/Digital Archiving: A View from the National Archives of Australia," *American Archivist* 71 (Fall/Winter 2008).
- Richard Pearce-Moses, "Janus in Cyberspace: Archives on the Threshold of the Digital Era," *American Archivist* 70 (Spring/Summer 2007): 13-22. (Also available at SAA website: <http://www.archivists.org/governance/presidential/pearce-moses.asp>.)
- Luciana Duranti, "From Digital Diplomats to Digital Records Forensics," *Archivaria* 68 (Fall 2009), 39-66. [E-reserve]

DUE March 7 Oral Presentation on Electronic Records Issues .

All students will briefly review the websites below.

Students will choose one of the projects listed below (under either A or B) for a detailed report. Your presentation should review and analyze the major strategies proposed or undertaken by the project to manage electronic records. In addition, you should provide a detailed discussion of the findings and recommendations and evaluate the contributions of the project or strategy. How and what does the project or strategy contribute to archival knowledge and electronic records management.

(A) Electronic Records Management: Research and Implementation Projects

- National Archives, Electronic Records Archives, <http://www.archives.gov/era/> Be sure to discuss the relationship with the Lockheed Martin Corp.
- International Research on Permanent Authentic Records in Electronic Records (INTERPARES) Project at <http://www.interpares.org/> Focus on Phase II, but provide background information about Phase I.
- Records Continuum Research Project <http://www.sims.monash.edu.au/research/rcrg/index.html>
- Victoria (Australia) Electronic Records Strategy <http://www.prov.vic.gov.au/vers/>
- Center for Technology in Government <http://www.ctg.albany.edu/> (Focus on the electronic records projects and e-government strategies)

(B) Electronic Records and E-Mail Policies:

- National Archives, <http://www.archives.gov/records-mgmt/initiatives/erm-overview.html>
- Delaware at http://www.state.de.us/sos/dpa/govsvcs/records_policies/electronic%20mail.shtml
- Maine at <http://www.state.me.us/sos/arc/general/admin/email.htm>

March 14

The Future of Selection and Appraisal

Read:

- Elizabeth Yakel, "Who Represents the Past?" in Cook, ed., *Controlling the Past*, pp. 257-78.
- Brien Brothman, "Designs for Records and Recordkeeping," in Cook, ed., *Controlling the Past*, pp. 279-316.
- Francis X. Blouin, Jr., "The Evolution of Archival Practice and the History-Archival Divide," in Cook, ed., *Controlling the Past*, pp. 317-28.
- James M. O'Toole, "The Archivist's Perspective," in Cook, ed., *Controlling the Past*, pp. 329-44.
- Verne Harris, "Ethics and the Archive," in Cook, ed., *Controlling the Past*, pp. 345-62.
- Catherine O'Sullivan, "Diaries, On-line Diaries and the Future Loss..." *American Archivist* 68 (spring/summer 2005): 53-73.
- Michael E. Stevens, "Voices from Vietnam," *American Archivist* 64 (spring/summer 2001): 115-120.

March 18-20 (TBA)

Exam week: Student presentations

DUE: Student research papers and oral reports