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# AMERICAN ARCHIVIST



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#### About the Cover

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In the cellar of the Race Institute in Frankfurt, Germany, Chaplain Samuel Blinder examines one of hundreds of “Saphor Torahs” (Sacred Scrolls), among the books stolen from every occupied country in Europe, July 6, 1945. In “National Archives and International Conflicts: The Society of American Archivists and War,” Douglas Cox seeks to fill gaps in the debate within the archival community about wartime preservation, controversies over the postwar return of archives, and the role of archivists in war. Highlighted are crucial questions about the tension between national and international interests in archives and the responsibility of archives and archivists during armed conflict. The article, which begins on page 451, is part of a special section celebrating SAA’s 75th Anniversary in 2011. *Photo by Army Technician Third Class Irving Katz. Courtesy of the National Archives. Item: 111-SC-209154, National Archives Identifier 531306, retrievable through Online Public Access at [www.archives.gov](http://www.archives.gov).*

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### General Information

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## FORUM

*With the exception of editing for conformity to capitalization, punctuation, and citation style, letters to the Forum are published verbatim.*

## To the Editor:

I am compelled to respond to the publication of Sonia Yaco's article "Balancing Privacy and Access in School Desegregation Collections: A Case Study" in the Fall/Winter 2010 issue of the journal, as well as to her related letter to the editor in the Spring/Summer 2011 issue, given that my name appears prominently in both pieces and I find myself held up to unwarranted personal criticism. I sincerely regret that I was never made aware of the existence of or invited to respond to either piece prior to publication. None of this unfortunate occurrence needed to be addressed in public.

In 2008, my supervisor at the Library of Virginia (LVA) instructed me to speak with Ms. Yaco as she had apparently contacted the library and I was at the time the archivist assigned to process the records of Virginia's defunct Pupil Placement Board. I vaguely recall being informed that the repository in which Ms. Yaco works contains a collection with related privacy concerns and she sought a conversation about what preliminary work I had done up to that point. I recall expressing wonder to my supervisor over the value of any remarks I could give in light of the fact that I had only made limited progress with the collection. Still, I was happy to speak with Ms. Yaco and share what I could. I am sorry to read that Ms. Yaco seems to have felt my contributions insufficiently detailed and cannot understand why she apparently chose not to seek clarification from LVA management if speaking with me left her unsatisfied. If she wanted the identities of the "unspecified other staff members" (p. 648) who made the high level policy decisions regarding the collection, she might have inquired. Similarly, if she found it unacceptable that I "did not cite which statute or guideline directed [me] to seal" certain applications (p. 649), she again might have inquired. Were I at the time under the impression that greater detail was required for our conversation, I would have had the information at hand and provided more than the procedural information I thought was wanted. However, had I known what I know now—that my initial conversation and any thereafter with Ms. Yaco were interviews instead of the unremarkable conversations I took them to be—I would have ended them immediately and not taken them up again until sharing her intent with LVA management. The LVA emphasized to all staff members on several occasions during my tenure that interviews must be approved by the library's

public relations officer, and I was never unclear on the point. It is difficult for me to see how both my supervisor and I could have made the same mistake.

My first and only introduction to Ms. Yaco's article took place when the Fall/Winter 2010 issue of the journal arrived in the mail last December. It left me dismayed to find that the journal now appears happy to publish personal criticisms of archivists who act in good faith and at the direction of their repositories when working on complicated and legally murky collections. Ms. Yaco's piece implies that I acted thoughtlessly, unilaterally, and with little concern for the proper reaction to the privacy "red flags" I identified while working with the records. This is simply not the case. I note that the journal's editorial policy allows for fact checking and am profoundly disappointed that the editor and peer reviewers apparently made either a failed attempt or no attempt whatsoever to reach either me or the management of the LVA for confirmation and comment. I could have informed the reviewers that I raised the issue of personal privacy concerns in the collection multiple times with my supervisor and suggested the need to obtain legal counsel. The LVA could have informed the reviewers that it eventually acted on the concerns I identified. At the very least, the LVA and I could have informed the reviewers that I am not now and have not been "the archivist for Pupil Placement Board Records" (as indicated in note 50) for over two years since leaving for an opportunity in another repository. Attempting to locate and contact me would not have proven overly taxing as my current employer and contact information were listed in SAA's membership directory until I allowed my personal membership to lapse earlier this year. I struggle to understand how the SAA journal staff could find a more stringent review unnecessary for an article that subjects a professional reputation to public scrutiny.

It is with deepest regret that I believe the legacy of this article will be a chilling effect on the willingness of archivists to assist others outside of their immediate repositories if this is the result to be expected. It is my sincere hope that the SAA journal staff will now find reason to revise their editorial standards. I would suggest a consistently implemented fact-verifying process for those articles critical of individuals if the SAA journal staff continues to find value in the unnecessary and unprofessional personal criticism of archivists.

Christopher Abraham

*Editor's note: The Editorial Board thanks Mr. Abraham for expressing his concerns about the accuracy of an article in the American Archivist and the role of the board in ensuring accuracy. At its recent meeting in Chicago on 24 August 2011, the board discussed Mr. Abraham's letter and that of Sandra Gioia Treadwell from the Spring/Summer 2011 issue. The article by Sonia Yaco was reviewed by four reviewers, the editor, and a lawyer prior to publication. We do not think that the article contains personal attacks; we believe that it focuses on institutional policies. The Editorial Board also considered its role in reviewing content for the journal and noted that it relies on a rigorous double-blind peer review. The board affirmed its existing policy that information and opinions in articles are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the editor or the Society of American Archivists. The information box at the end of the table of contents states: "The American Archivist and the Society of American Archivists assume no responsibility for statements made by contributors." Letters to the Editor allow readers to share their views and, if necessary, to take issue with an author. The Editorial Policy notes that fact checking is limited to occasional checking of the accuracy of citations, not to information or opinions presented in an article. In addition, our authors sign a publishing agreement "warranting that the content of the Work is accurate . . . does not violate any copyright, proprietary, or personal rights of others . . . [and] that the Work does not contain any materials which are slanderous, libelous, or otherwise illegal." These elements together have aided production of the journal for nearly seventy-five years.*

Mary Jo Pugh  
Editor



## FROM THE EDITOR

Mary Jo Pugh

## Seventy-Five and Six

This year SAA celebrates its seventy-fifth anniversary. This issue leads off with four articles that engage this noteworthy occasion. The *American Archivist* Editorial Board issued a call for papers and chose papers by authors who explore four different areas of archival history. Brien Brothman muses about the continuities of the last seventy-five years and how new technologies essentially replay old challenges in new forms through the period in “The Society of American Archivists at Seventy-Five: Contexts of Continuity and Crisis, A Personal Reflection.” Kathryn A. Scanlan examines in some detail one of the watershed events of the last seventy-five years, the split between archivists and records managers in “ARMA v. SAA: The History and Heart of Professional Friction.” In his paper, “National Archives and International Conflicts: The Society of American Archivists and War,” Douglas Cox investigates how archivists have responded to the challenges of war and its effects on records and archives. Finally, Paul Conway and William E. Landis elucidate more recent history in their article “Open Access Publishing and the Transformation of the *American Archivist* Online.”

In 2008, at the conference Archive Fervour/Archive Further held at Aberystwyth, Wales, I heard Terry Cook deliver a keynote address contrasting new scholarship on the Archive (frequently capitalized and singular as a concept in critical theory) in a wide number of disciplines and archives (lowercase and plural—our repositories and profession) familiar to most readers of the *American Archivist*. First, he noted that the discourse of historians and other scholars addressing the Archive rarely engages with archivists or our professional literature. He hypothesized that these other disciplines think that nothing happens in archives; that for all their postmodernism, they have a very traditional view of archives, repositories of power to be sure, but essentially unchanged and unchanging. When he published the longer version of this paper, he outlined a research agenda for archival history, stating that “archivists need an intellectual history of their own profession.” Although his examples are

Canadian, they could easily be from the United States, as Richard Cox has pointed out in a number of articles, most notably in "The Failure or Future of American Archival History: A Somewhat Unorthodox View."<sup>1</sup>

I requested his paper for the *American Archivist* (actually I begged and pleaded), but he decided to publish the expanded version in the *Canadian Historical Review*, difficult for many American archivists to retrieve. With the agreement of the Editorial Board and the kind permission of Terry Cook, I decided to republish it in part as a call for the work that American archivists need to do to understand our own past and its consequences for our theory and practice, especially relevant in this year when we celebrate the seventy-fifth anniversary of the Society.

Archival theory and practice can both benefit from and contribute to the work of other disciplines. Several of the papers in this issue take a cross-disciplinary approach to enrich our understanding of our work and to show how archival concepts can inform the work of other disciplines. In his paper, "Of Provenance and Privacy: Using Contextual Integrity to Define Third-Party Privacy," Steven Bingo draws on literature in the fields of computer science and information ethics to examine the privacy of digital information. He introduces Helen Nissenbaum's theory of contextual integrity to explore how archivists can approach appraisal and access to digital information proactively. Joshua Sternfeld, in "Archival Theory and Digital Historiography: Selection, Search, and Metadata as Archival Processes for Assessing Historical Contextualization," introduces archivists to the field of digital history. He proposes a new methodology and theory for digital historians, which he labels *digital historiography*, and demonstrates that it demands the use of archival concepts to fulfill its promise.

Sherry L. Xie, "Building Foundations for Digital Records Forensics: A Comparative Study of the Concept of Reproduction in Digital Records Management and Digital Forensics," engages the field of digital forensics as used in the fields of law and law enforcement. The paper reports on part of a larger research project at the University of British Columbia that explores the boundaries and possibilities for a new interdisciplinary field, digital records forensics (DRF), and how archival concepts and theories can enrich law and law enforcement uses of digital records. At the same time, however, she also demonstrates that archivists and records managers are far behind in acquiring the abilities needed to understand and authenticate digital records from the perspective of forensics. The DRF project is based on the premise that records custodians can only serve as expert witnesses by acquiring additional skills from the field of digital forensics.

Jean Dryden presents part of her dissertation research and asks whether Canadian archivists are guilty of "copyfraud," that is, controlling the downstream

<sup>1</sup> *Libraries and Culture* 35 (Winter 2000).

uses of archival holdings under the pretext of protecting copyright. Do archivists have legitimate concerns about controlling further uses of online archival holdings? Again, although her research population was Canadian, the same issues confront archivists in the United States, as Peter Hirtle observed in his presidential address in 2003.<sup>2</sup>

Two case studies are very distinct. In “Using GIS to Manage Philadelphia’s Archival Photographs,” Deborah Boyer, Robert Cheetham, and Mary L. Johnson illustrate how geographic information systems (GIS) applications are used to provide access to maps and photographs through the Web and on mobile applications. In contrast, Valerie Harris and Kathryn Stine provide a cautionary case study in “Politically Charged Records: A Case Study with Recommendations for Providing Access to a Challenging Collection.” The Special Collections Department of the University of Illinois at Chicago became embroiled in presidential politics in 2008 because it held records of the Chicago Annenberg Challenge (CAC), within which the media sought to investigate the relationship between Barack Obama and William Ayers. The university withdrew the collection from public use for two weeks to address issues of ownership, privacy, and confidentiality and, in doing so, set off a firestorm in the media. The controversy became one of the top library stories of 2008. The authors share their experience and lessons learned.

In “China’s Archival Higher Education: Its Features, Problems, and Development,” authors Qiu Xue, Xiaojuan Zhang, and Ju Qiu trace the history of archival education in China during the twentieth century and assess its status and problems in the twenty-first. Many of their problems will resonate with our readers.

The *American Archivist* Editorial Board is grateful to Kathleen Fear and Paul Conway for analyzing the results of its readership survey and presenting them in their report, “Valuing the *American Archivist*: An Interpretation of SAA’s First Readership Survey.”

Amy Cooper Cary, the journal’s reviews editor, and Danna Bell-Russel, associate reviews editor, present five book reviews in this issue. They also announce the opening of the *American Archivist* Reviews page on the SAA website. This site will provide earlier access to book reviews that will be published in the *American Archivist* and links for purchasing items reviewed. Some specialized publications will be reviewed only on the website. The website will also present citations of publications of interest and some brief reviews of other resources such as reports, software, exhibitions, and the content of other journals.

<sup>2</sup> Peter B. Hirtle, “Archives or Assets,” *American Archivist* 66 (Fall/Winter 2003): 235–47.

## And Six

And for six years it has been my honor to serve as editor of the *American Archivist*. This issue is the last that I have taken through production. As you read this, I will be sending the papers for the spring 2012 issue to the copy editor so that the content will be ready on 1 January for my successor Gregory S. Hunter to take through production for publication in May 2012.

The success of any journal ultimately depends on the quality of its content. I could not have done the work without the help of others. By the time you read this, my database of papers submitted for possible publication will approach three hundred contributions. Each paper is read by a member of the Editorial Board and by at least one subject specialist. Hundreds of colleagues gave generously of their time to read and recommend action in the review process, and most of these reviewers made substantive constructive comments and editorial notes that improved the papers that were published and educated the authors of papers that were not. Eleven members served on the Theodore Calvin Pease Award committee. Each year the committee consists of the vice chair of the Education Committee and one member appointed by the president.<sup>3</sup> The prize depends on faculty nominating papers and I thank them for doing so.

The reviews department, for five years under Jeannette Bastian and this last year under Amy Cooper Cary and Danna Bell-Russel, ran smoothly under their care. I never had to give special attention to the reviews department, which was consistently thorough and thoughtful. Locating books and other resources for review and identifying and monitoring the reviewers are major jobs and jobs well done.

The best and the brightest serve on the Editorial Board, both those I inherited and those I nominated. I delegated work freely to them, eighteen colleagues in these six years, and all justified my faith in them.<sup>4</sup> Getting the journal online, perhaps the signal accomplishment of my tenure as editor, was not my work, but the work of many, led by Paul Conway and Bill Landis. Bill Landis also originated and carried through the idea of occasional supplemental issues that will appear only online. He is editing the first online supplement, which will compile the contributions to the seventy-fifth anniversary sessions from the 2011 Annual Meeting. The board led the work of revamping the process for the Theodore Calvin Pease Award, conducting the first-ever survey of readers, and writing guidelines for writing research articles, book

<sup>3</sup> Pam Hackbart-Dean, Amara Edwards, Kris Kiesling, William Joyce, Katherine Anne Salzmann, Christopher J. Prom, Lori Lindberg, Jennifer Johnson, Jennifer Meehan, Susan Irwin, and Cecilia Salvatore.

<sup>4</sup> David Carmicheal, Amy Cooper Cary, Anne J. Gilliland, Susan Hamburger, Karen Jefferson, Jennifer Marshall, Helen Tibbo, Nancy A. Lenoir, Bruce Bruemmer, Paul Conway, William Landis, Su Kim Chung, Peter Gottlieb, Brien Brothman, Michelle Light, Christopher (Cal) Lee, Christopher J. Prom, and Jennifer Meehan.

reviews, case studies, and Web reviews. Peter Hirtle and the Intellectual Property Working Group worked with the board to clarify and expand the rights of authors with a Creative Commons license and helped with copyright issues related to *American Archivist Online*.

The production of the journal is also a joint endeavor. Meg Moss, our copy editor, master of the *Chicago Manual of Style*, does much more than correct the style of papers. She asks substantive questions of me and the authors and has smoothed many papers, especially those written by authors whose primary language is not English. Janet Russell brought a level of professionalism to the annual index. The staff in Chicago, especially Teresa Brinati and Jenny Schooley, work with the graphic designer and printer, and that work, again, is accomplished smoothly and efficiently, issue after issue.

Council has generously supported the work of producing the *American Archivist* throughout my tenure. For three years, I was an ex-officio member of the Program Committee so that I could identify possible papers for the journal. Council also supported my outreach activities in other conferences such as the NEDCC conference in Tucson in December 2006; the DigCCurr Conference in 2007; four conferences of the Association of Canadian Archivists in 2007 and 2009 through 2011; the International Conference on the History of Records and Archives (ICHORA) in Boston in 2007; and the Archive Fervour/Archive Further conference in Wales in 2008. I attended conferences on my own, including the annual meetings of the California Society of Archivists; the March 2007 conference, "The Curious Lives of Documents," University of California Davis; and the Association of Recorded Sound Collections at Stanford University, where I heard a presentation of the first recorded sound made in 1861. Council also supported working midyear meetings for the Editorial Board for several years. I was fortunate that Nancy Beaumont, executive director, is experienced in journal publishing. She offered wise counsel any number of times.

A number of organizations recognized the relevance of the content of the *American Archivist* beyond the archival profession. Two trusted digital repositories will ensure the long-term preservation of and access to digital versions of the *American Archivist*. In April 2009, SAA signed an agreement with JSTOR to add the *American Archivist* to its newly developing Arts and Sciences VII Collection, "Library and Information Sciences," which is a component of its extensive digital collection of more than a thousand journals across the humanities, social sciences, and sciences. JSTOR (short for Journal Storage) was established in 1995 to build a trusted digital archive of scholarly output. The organization digitized the back run of the *American Archivist* to its well-established specifications in 2010 and added it to its research platform, promoting enhanced discovery and use of the entire journal corpus. JSTOR's commitment to the *American*

*Archivist* recognizes the long-standing importance of archival thought to a wide range of disciplines. Our license with JSTOR will make the *American Archivist* visible to many academic researchers who might not otherwise find it.

The HathiTrust Digital Library is a digital preservation repository launched in October 2008 by a group of U.S. research universities, including the Committee on Institutional Cooperation (the Big Ten universities and the University of Chicago) and the University of California system. HathiTrust is administered at the University of Michigan, but is supported by base funding from all fifty-two of its institutional partners. In addition to the *American Archivist*, it includes dozens of SAA publications now out of print, an extensive run of the *SAA Newsletter*, and early editions of the Archival Fundamental Series, all of which were digitized by Google through its partnership with U.S. research libraries.

The Editorial Board worked to ensure that the *American Archivist* is included in online indexing and abstracting services as another way to make other disciplines aware of our contributions to intellectual discourse. MetaPress, the service that presently hosts *American Archivist Online*, exposes descriptive metadata for each article for harvesting by Web search services such as Google, so we are already seeing the benefit of wider exposure to American archival literature. Although we were disappointed that the *Social Science Citation Index* has declined for now to index the journal, Elsevier will add the *American Archivist* to its citation database, Scopus, as a source journal sometime after the spring 2011 issue. Scopus is the world's largest abstract and citation database of research literature and quality Web sources, covering nearly eighteen thousand titles from more than five thousand publishers.<sup>5</sup> Scopus is adding the full back run of the *American Archivist* to its database, so our articles and citations will be tracked and visible to other scholars. Citations to articles in the *American Archivist* can be seen in Scopus now if they are used by authors in covered journals, but they are not analyzed quantitatively to show either the publications that use *American Archivist* articles, or the citations used by authors in the *American Archivist*. I look forward to the day when researchers begin to assess the impact of the *American Archivist* on scholarship.

In March 2010, the Australian Research Council, a government agency, rated 20,712 unique peer-reviewed journals published worldwide from January 2003 through December 2008. It ranked the *American Archivist* in the top 20 percent of scholarly journals in library and information studies. The Australian Council evaluated 148 worldwide LIS journals on a four-step scale of A+, A, B, and C. The *American Archivist* received an A rating, one of only thirty in the LIS field receiving either an A or A+ rating. Only six journals (4%) received the A+

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.scopus.com/home.url>

**Table I.** Papers and Pages 2006–2011

Year	Papers submitted	Papers published	Pease Award nominations	Pages in Spring issue, excluding SAA minutes	Pages in Fall issue, excluding SAA minutes	Total for volume	Notes
2006	48	10	7	234	289	523	Excludes papers inherited from previous editor, Phil Eppard. Fall issue published the A*Census of 237 pages.
2007	52	15	9	201	234	435	
2008	39	19	10	272	270	542	
2009	49	19	5	253	241	494	
2010	58	20	13	288	323	611	
2011	31	27	11	364	365	729	Papers received through 30 Sept. 2011.
Total	277	110	55	1612	1722	3334	

ranking. Among the thirteen archival journals on the list, only *Archival Science* and *Archivaria* ranked higher than the *American Archivist*. The Council noted that, for journals ranked A,

the majority of papers. . . will be of very high quality. Publishing in an A journal would enhance the author's standing, showing they have real engagement with the global research community and that they have something to say about problems of some significance.<sup>6</sup>

The SAA is working to build a "culture of publishing" in the archival profession, both in the journal and in monographs. During my tenure as editor, the journal has seen growth in the number of submissions and the number of pages published. Bill Landis proposed and led, with Brien Brothman and SuKim Chung, the first brown bag discussion on an article at the Annual Meeting in Washington, D.C., in 2010.

New tools make new opportunities. The time has come to apply new tools for facilitating conversations among authors and readers around *American Archivist* content. The Editorial Board is excited about the prospects for new communication venues through the online journal. We hope to see the *American Archivist* and its associated Web-based publications function as an archival commons supporting robust and timely discussions of archival theory and practice.

<sup>6</sup> The database of rankings is available at Australian Government, Australian Research Council, "ERA," [http://www.arc.gov.au/era/era\\_journal\\_list.htm](http://www.arc.gov.au/era/era_journal_list.htm), accessed 26 July 2011.

The online networked environment also allows for layering content and supplying extra detail for those who want it, while providing context and conclusions for a wider audience. Links within formal *American Archivist* articles could lead readers to supporting documents, photographs, raw data, and other unfolding layers beyond the publication itself. Just as footnotes refer readers to a broader network of contextual information from a wide range of communities that bear on interdisciplinary archival topics, so, we hope, an *American Archivist Online* article might serve as a portal to further information in context for readers who want to follow those links.

I thank you for the honor of serving as your editor for the last six years. It has been the capstone of my career. I commuted from my coffeepot to my computer, but from there into the intellectual life of the archival profession. Finally, I dedicate this issue to Teresa Brinati, director of publishing, my mainstay not only for these years but for decades of writing and editing. The Society rightly honored her service in San Francisco in 2008. She is a charged particle, energetic, optimistic, creative, original, intelligent, and supportive. To quote E. B. White, "It is not often that someone comes along who is a true friend and a good writer."



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