

THE AMERICAN ARCHIVIST

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Thoughts of Spring

Gregory S. Hunter

Welcome to volume 76, number 1, the spring/summer 2013 issue of *The American Archivist*. As I write this, I am watching what I hope is the final snow of the winter give way to the promise of spring. It has been a difficult fall and winter on the East Coast, with Hurricane Sandy followed by a series of unnamed nor'easters. We have been awaiting a new season, a season of change.

This is also a season of change for *The American Archivist*. With this issue, we introduce a redesign of the journal that has been in process for a couple of years. The redesign had three goals. First, we sought a cleaner, more contemporary look. To this end, you'll notice a new typeface and more white space in the graphic design. Second, we wanted each article to be able to stand on its own when accessed in the future. Therefore, the footer of each article contains enhanced citation information so an individual article can be associated more easily with the journal. Also, instead of a separate Gallery of Contributors at the start of the issue, you'll find author biographies and photos at the end of each article.

Third, we wanted to prepare the journal for delivery as an ePublication. *The American Archivist* already is available online through SAA's MetaPress site and JSTOR. SAA recently introduced books in an ePub format, including the first volume in a new series, *Trends in Archives Practice*. We are moving toward the day when you will be able to download the latest issue of the journal to your e-reader, knowing that a "record copy" is available in PDF format on the other two sites whenever you need it in the future.

One of the benefits of an e-reader is that you can vary the size of the text appearing on the screen. As I get older, I appreciate the enlarged type more and more. However, such user variation of type size makes it impossible to “fix” journal layout to a “page” as we have done in the past. When a reader varies the size of the font, footnotes no longer remain associated with a particular page. Therefore, I am going to have to be the editor to switch citations from footnotes to endnotes. I’ve always preferred footnotes and wish we could continue them in an ePub format. However, I think the greater good is for the journal to reach members and subscribers in the time, place, and format they desire.

With the start of a new volume, I also have made three editorial changes to bring the journal up to date. First, citations that include hyperlinks will no longer have an “accessed on” date. Citations with hyperlinks are so pervasive that the same “accessed on” information may appear dozens of times in an article. Our copyeditor, Meg Moss, always verifies that hyperlinks are “live” at the time of her review; it seems redundant to include an “accessed on” date. Second, I think the journal is more readable when dates are expressed as “month-day-year” rather than “day-month-year.” With this issue, we are making the change in date format. Finally, I have changed the tense used when referring to previous scholarship. We now will use past tense (“Jenkinson said . . .”) rather than what I would call “historical present” (“Jenkinson says . . .”). Of course, as required by the *Chicago Manual of Style*, references to timeless knowledge will remain in present tense (“The Constitution includes . . .”).

While this is a time of change and growth for the journal, the same is true of the profession at large. This issue contains eleven articles that reflect the ways in which the archival profession is changing and evolving:

- We begin with Gregor Trinkaus-Randall’s presidential address delivered last August in San Diego. In “The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly: The Archival Profession and Future Challenges,” Trinkaus-Randall recommends that we reach beyond our individual repositories to collaborate with other archivists as well as colleagues in related disciplines. He believes there is no other way to meet the challenges facing the profession.
- Next is this year’s winner of the Theodore Calvin Pease Award by Pamela H. Mayer, a student at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Her article, “Like a Box of Chocolates: A Case Study of User-Contributed Content at Footnote,” addresses one of the changes in the profession: the increasing reliance upon users to enhance description of archival materials.
- Christine Anne George analyzes an issue currently in the news. Her article, “Archives Beyond the Pale: Negotiating Legal and Ethical Entanglements after the Belfast Project,” discusses Boston College’s

collection of oral histories related to the “Troubles” in Northern Ireland. To make the article of greatest value to archivists, she has updated the discussion of legal issues so it is complete through March 1, 2013.

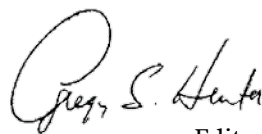
- Three distinguished archivists, educators, and researchers (Wendy M. Duff, Elizabeth Yakel, and Helen Tibbo) present a model for “Archival Reference Knowledge.” Based upon surveys and other data-collection methods, they seek to categorize the knowledge reference archivists need to meet the demands of present and future researchers.
- Tracy B. Grimm and Chon A. Noriega present a case study about documenting regional Latino arts and culture. They discuss the challenges and opportunities of using a collaborative, community-oriented approach in documentation efforts.
- Next is Michelle Caswell’s article, “Rethinking Inalienability: Trusting Nongovernmental Archives in Transitional Societies.” She uses Cambodia as a case study to explore when it is not only defensible, but preferable for nongovernmental archives to claim custody of records documenting state-sponsored human rights abuses.
- Daniel J. Caron and Richard Brown bring us up to date on recent developments at Library and Archives Canada (LAC). Their article, “Appraising Content for Value in the New World: Establishing Expedient Documentary Presence,” discusses the theories, strategies, methodologies, and processes formerly employed and now emerging at LAC to facilitate the disposition of government information resources.
- Jane Zhang and Dayne Mauney discuss the relationship between archival description and descriptive metadata of digital objects. After analyzing several sources of data, they develop a typology of digital archival representation.
- Elizabeth A. Novara presents a case study about designing and building a special collection at the University of Maryland, College Park. Her article, “Documenting Maryland Women State Legislators: The Politics of Collecting Women’s Political Papers,” examines the complexities inherent in documenting women and other underrepresented groups in the American political landscape.
- Margaret Procter brings us back to the roots of the archival profession in the United States. She traces the professional and personal relationships in a network of British and American “historical workers” a century ago. Her article is entitled “‘A Smart Parchment-rooter’: Hubert Hall, British Archives and American Scholarship, 1880–1940.”
- Finally, Donghee Sinn presents a case study of archival education. In the article “Collaborative Education between Classroom and Workplace for Archival Arrangement and Description: Aiming for Sustainable

Professional Education,” Sinn discusses the relationship between theory and practice when teaching arrangement and description.

The issue concludes with reviews of seven recent books covering the following subjects: the State Library and Archives of Texas; private ownership of public documents; tribal libraries, archives, and museums; documenting feminist and queer activism; preserving local writers; managing processing; and administering special collections.

As I've said before, *The American Archivist* is your journal. I welcome your involvement as an author or peer reviewer. One way to take a first step this spring is by contributing to the anniversary celebration of the journal on SAA's website. Rather than having the editor or the Editorial Board determine the most significant articles from the first seventy-five years of the journal, we want to hear from our members and subscribers. Which article has influenced you the most? Which article has stayed with you even years after you read it in graduate school? Which article has changed your practice as an archivist? I have already submitted my entry; I look forward to reading yours.

Best wishes for the spring and summer!

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Greg. S. Hunter". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Greg." and last name "Hunter" clearly legible.

Editor

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