"First there is the creative decision, then there is the dollar decision": Information-Seeking Behaviors of Filmmakers Using Moving Image Archives

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ABSTRACT

Despite being passionate users of and advocates for moving image archives, filmmakers are an understudied demographic within archival literature. This study seeks to broaden archivists' awareness of the search behaviors and information needs of filmmakers engaged in archival research to understand how moving image archives can better serve these researchers from outside the academy who are interested in using archival content in creative and/or commercial works. We hope the framework used will inspire the development of further studies on the topic. The data presented are drawn from ten phone interviews with filmmakers about their search behaviors, barriers they encounter when attempting to access and license archival content, and their general impressions of using archives versus for-profit stock footage companies.

KEY WORDS

Access, Advocacy, Audiovisual archives, Cataloging, Description, Film and moving images, Reference

Whether using rare footage to provide visual evidence to support their narratives or more conventional stock footage to illustrate a specific place or time, documentary filmmakers have long relied on archival moving images to enrich their work. However, the heavy use of unique archival moving imagery in recent high-profile documentaries, including the 2017 Academy Award winner *OJ: Made in America* and nominee *I Am Not Your Negro*, may signal a growing trend of grounding documentary storytelling more fully in archival footage.

With the recent recognition of archivally grounded films such as these and the proliferation of nonfiction programming available on streaming media platforms, more archivists may find themselves in the unfamiliar position of working with filmmakers. These unconventional users of archives have goals, behaviors, and timelines that are often incompatible with archival institutions' established practices and priorities. Moving image collections create particular challenges in that the materials are often minimally described, have complicated and sparse available rights information, and must frequently be digitally reformatted for access due to preservation concerns involved in allowing access to original materials.

Although there are numerous potential obstacles for archivists working with filmmakers and archival moving image collections, the cultivation of a productive relationship between archivists and filmmakers is mutually beneficial. We encourage archivists to reconsider this relationship as a creative partnership that will allow them not only to uphold their professional mission to provide access, but also to support discovery of unique materials hidden within their moving image collections, improve collection- and item-level description, promote materials to a wider audience, and potentially earn revenue for digitization and preservation of these materials. To achieve a more harmonious partnership, archivists must endeavor to better understand the needs, behaviors, and expectations of the filmmaking community. Although filmmakers are likely among the most frequent users of archival moving image collections, they have not been the subject of substantive investigation in previous information-seeking and user behavior studies. Their processes and workflows, including the ways they formulate their research questions and discover and reuse the materials, may differ significantly from other more studied users.

This article presents the results of an examination of the information-seeking needs and behaviors of filmmakers, including directors, producers, and footage researchers. We hope that the results of this research will serve as a framework for archivists interacting with filmmakers (and others in creative professions) and encourage archivists to explore the needs of their entire user community.

Through interviews with members of the filmmaking community, we sought to answer the following questions about their information-seeking behaviors:

- How do filmmakers discover, access, engage with, and reuse archival moving image collections?
- What are the primary challenges filmmakers face in working with moving image archives?
- How can archivists better serve filmmakers engaging with archival moving image collections?
- How can archivists better promote the use of their archival moving image collections?

Literature Review

Since Elise T. Freeman's 1984 challenge that archivists learn "systematically and not impressionistically" about their users,[1] many authors have discussed the value of user studies in the assessment of existing and potential archival practices, processes, and standards.[2] However, the 2010 OCLC Survey of Special Collections and Archives reported that more than 60 percent of respondents were unable to categorize their users by type or identify their primary user population.[3]

Extant user and information-seeking studies largely focus on the use of analog and digital documents, which limits our understanding of how other archival materials, including moving image collections, are used.[4] Karen Gracy found that few institutions holding moving image collections were "analyzing usage [of their moving image collections] in any systematic way . . . which means they had an incomplete picture of who was accessing archival moving image materials made available online, or in what ways those viewers were using the materials."[5]

Studies have also largely neglected amateur or commercial users of archives, such as filmmakers. With the exception of Anne J. Gilliland-Swetland and Wendy M. Duff and Catherine A. Johnson,[6] early studies of archival users favored the scholarly user, such as the academic historian. This perspective has persisted despite growing empirical evidence that genealogists, amateur historians, and filmmakers also frequently use archives.[7] Although existing research does not identify who the primary users of moving image archives actually are, it does suggest a low level of interest in and use of audiovisual materials as primary sources by academic historians. Studies of information seeking by academic historians consistently point to an overall lack of interest in and use of moving images as primary sources, even by those specializing in the twentieth

century.[8] Alexandra Chassanoff's 2018 study of historians interacting with digitized archival photographs provides insight into how historians engage with and critically evaluate digitized *visual* materials as primary sources.[9] However, the focus remains on scholarly users who likely differ from filmmakers and other commercial users in their information needs, goals, and timelines. Paul Conway's 2010 study of experienced users' interactions with digitized photographic archives likewise emphasizes how expert users critically evaluate, engage with, and make meaning from digitized visual materials.[10] Although Conway classifies his research participants as "nonacademic in their orientation toward their work," the end results of their archives research—four books, one dissertation, a "dynamic" website, and a database—would appear to differ from the requirements of typical products created by filmmakers working with archival moving images.[11] Understanding a user's "field of view" and his or her requirements from digitized still images may be useful in understanding how filmmakers select potential materials for their projects.[12] However, the current body of research still lacks information on the earliest stages of filmmakers' research process, including how they formulate their research questions and discover materials.

The expansion of online discoverability of moving image collections does not appear to have significantly increased the number of scholarly users seeking permission to cite or license moving image collections. However, cultural heritage institutions *do* report increased interest from a broad user base, including more inquiries from the public.[13] These findings are supported anecdotally by our experiences as the custodians and licensing agents of the NBC-5/KXAS (WBAP) Television News Collection. Since the collection was donated to the University of North Texas Libraries in 2013, only one of the fifty-nine reference requests for the collection received to date came from a scholarly researcher; the majority of requests are from practitioners, most commonly filmmakers.[14] However, filmmakers, whether they are seeking moving or still images, remain unacknowledged in publications on archival practice. Anthony Cocciolo's *Moving Image and Sound Collections for Archivists*, a recently published comprehensive guide aimed at nonspecialists, mentions filmmakers *only* as potential donors rather than as patrons.[15] Heather Barnes's 2008 exploration of the personal archiving strategies of independent documentary filmmakers begins an important discussion of how archivists can proactively work with filmmakers on preservation and integrate born-digital moving images into archival processes, but the focus remains on filmmakers as potential donors rather than as archives patrons.[16]

The neglect of moving image collections and their users within information-seeking research has persisted despite the large amount of moving image material held by cultural heritage institutions and the growing recognition of the value of preserving and providing access to these materials. The 2005 *Health*

Heritage Index (*HHI*) found that United States cultural institutions held approximately 40.2 million moving image items and that 86 percent of archives and 78 percent of libraries surveyed hold moving image collections.[17] The 2010 OCLC survey of special collections and archives found that members of five academy and research library organizations held a total of 700,000 moving image items in their collections.[18] Compared to a 1998 study by the Association of Research Libraries (ARL), Dooley and Luce found ARL members had a 300 percent mean increase in the number of audiovisual items in comparison to a 50 percent increase for printed volumes and archival collections.[19] However, the current state of much of this moving image material is unknown, and much of it has no access point for users. Approximately 43 percent of the 40.2 million moving image items identified in the *HHI* were in an "unknown condition," meaning these items had not been "recently accessed by staff for visual inspection and/or condition is unknown."[20] Only 25 percent of the visual and audiovisual materials identified in the OCLC survey were reported as having online catalog records.[21] Compared to the 1998 ARL study, online records for visual, audiovisual, and moving image materials held by ARL members had actually decreased, possibly due to the growth in collection sizes.[22]

The limited research investigating the behaviors of users of moving image archives has focused on analysis of reference requests for the purposes of refining and improving the efficiency of digital video indexing and information retrieval systems.[23] For example, Kirkegaard Lunn conducted in-depth interviews with a known user group of an archives—media studies students and scholars—to explore preferred metadata elements for searching and assessing the relevance of television news archives and constructing more effective information retrieval systems for television broadcasts.[24] Meng Yang and Gary Marchionini interviewed communication studies and art scholars, a video librarian, and a video editor to better understand categories of relevance judgment criteria for digital video and to create an early taxonomy for video search judgment criteria.[25] Bouke Huurnink et al. reviewed transaction logs and online orders at the Netherlands Institute for Sound and Vision to provide insight into the research behaviors of footage researchers, editors, journalists, producers, and directors.[26] Although such studies are valuable for systems design and have provided insight into the types of search terms favored by users seeking visual materials, the focus on electronic reference requests provides limited information about the larger research process and experience. Research that begins with analysis of search behaviors neglects the decisions researchers make *before* they contact an archives, including how they contemplate their assignments, select their research topics, interact with archives staff, and experience archival tools and procedures—in other words, before they reach what Carol Collier Kuhlthau has termed "search closure."[27]

Kathleen Epp is one of the few researchers to explore relationships between archivists and filmmakers with the intention of improving interaction and collaboration between these two groups.[28] She found a disconnect between how archivists and filmmakers view their relationship: while most of the surveyed archivists found the relationship to be strained or frustrating, filmmakers were unanimous in their praise of archivists for their ability to make the archival process understandable, locate materials, and navigate rights issues. When asked how archives could improve, filmmakers' responses focused on increased online access to materials, a more complete picture of archival holdings, and a quicker turnaround for image reproduction.

Outside of Epp's research, publications discussing the intersection of filmmaking and archival work are largely written by the filmmaking community and focus on how to navigate archival processes and workflows. The International Documentary Association (IDA) explores the relationship between archivists and filmmakers in its serial publication, *Documentary Magazine*, and through continuing education workshops. In a 2013 blog post on the IDA website (documentary.org), "6 Essential Tips for Using Archival Footage," KJ Relth advises filmmakers to start early by presenting archivists with a list of desired content to "help to start a relationship based on respect, trust and cooperation."[29] Both Sheila Curran Bernard and Kenn Rabin's *Archival Storytelling*[30] and Kelly Anderson, Martin Lucas, and Mick Hurbis-Cherrier's *Documentary Voice and Vision*[31] introduce filmmakers to the benefits, processes, and challenges of working with archives and libraries to locate archival footage. Anderson, Lucas, and Hurbis-Cherrier describe archival research as a "spiral or a series of concentric circles, getting both deeper (gathering more detail) and wider (learning new aspects related to your topic) as you explore the territory. You will find yourself constantly returning to older sources armed with new perspectives that can take you closer to your goal."[32] Both texts recommend that filmmakers follow footnotes in print sources and credits in other productions, reach out to their professional networks, and consult with archivists and librarians—in particular praising archives for their knowledgeable personnel and unique resources. Anderson, Lucas, and Hurbis-Cherrier advise readers that a great deal of archival material is not discoverable online and that often a librarian is the only one who has detailed knowledge of the collections: "Speaking with her can open doors to visual evidence and information that speak to the heart of your story."[33] Curran Bernard and Rabin contrast commercial footage houses with cultural heritage institutions, indicating that commercial companies may have lower fees and quicker turnaround times but do not have the benefit of "skilled, long-term archivists who know a collection inside out."[34] Curran Bernard and Rabin also advise readers that archives experience pressures related to finances,

preservation, and technological shifts requiring format migration, which might conflict with filmmakers' desire for easy and economic access.[35]

Though sparse, scholarship on library and archival use by the creative community at large implies that cultural heritage resources are in demand as support for creative work, which perhaps should not be a surprise given the rising interest in "maker" culture.[36] Laurel Littrell's study of undergraduate art students and faculty at Kansas State University led her to conclude that the library should be promoted to artists as "a place where ideas are born and brought to fruition," as opposed to a place for "traditional" research.[37] In her ethnographic study of an artists-in-residence program in a city archive, Kathy Michelle Carbone cites contemporary art's "archival turn" over the past twenty years—that is, artists' tendency to reference, incorporate, and engage with archival sources in their work.[38] One of the artists Carbone studied described her research process as following "threads," or themes, that she witnessed in the archival record.[39] Playwright Amanda Kemp uses her research in the large surviving archives of historical figures like Benjamin Franklin to reconstruct the marginalized voices of people of color.[40] Amalia G. Sabiescu et al. found that amateur crafters are interested in integrating archival sources into their work as a catalyst for creative expression, and the "maker faire" programs implemented at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London and the British Museum, among others, are an effort to respond to this excellent outreach opportunity for cultural heritage institutions.[41] William S. Hemming's literature review of the general information-seeking behaviors of visual artists found that information needs and behaviors "are extremely individualistic" and that participants studied preferred "serendipitous browsing" and human mediation over catalogs and indexes.[42]

In short, the paucity of research on the information-seeking behaviors of users of moving image archives, combined with a persistent focus on scholars as archives' users, not only contribute to a poor understanding of who is using our moving image collections and for what purposes but could also hinder the acquisition of funding for the preservation of these materials. Since 2007, the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) has included in its guidelines for the Humanities Collections and Reference Resource program a special interest call for applications that support the preservation of audiovisual materials. In 2009, NEH's Division of Preservation and Access established audiovisual preservation and access as one of three areas of special interest and incorporated this interest into application guidelines and outreach with the cultural heritage community. In 2016, the Council on Library and Information Resources (CLIR) proposed Recordings at Risk, a three-and-a-half year regranting program, to the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation to support the preservation of audio and audiovisual materials. However, successful applications may require institutional knowledge of actual and potential users and may also rely on *scholarly*

use. Recordings at Risk is now in its third cycle, and its application guidelines require that applicants "address the importance of the collections to teaching, research, and the creation of new knowledge, art or experience." The guidelines further state that "scholarly and public impact are the primary criteria" for application assessment and require letters from three experts, "normally . . . practicing scholars or other professionals poised to use the digitized recordings in research, teaching, or the creation of new work."[43] In short, with little documentation of who is using moving image collections and for what purposes, archives may face decreased opportunities to fund their preservation efforts.

Methodology

We began by conducting an online survey and focus group to establish baseline information about how filmmakers, defined as producers, directors, and footage researchers, interact with archivists; to identify common vocabularies; and to recruit participants for in-depth interviews.[44] In August 2015, we distributed an anonymous online survey to members of the Association of Moving Image Archivists (AMIA), the Association of Clearance and Research Professionals (CLEAR), and the European Documentary Network (EDN). We received thirty-four responses from producers, directors, and footage researchers who work with archival moving image collections. We held an informal focus group with three members of the filmmaking community at AMIA's November 2015 annual meeting: a footage researcher for independent films, a filmmaker with extensive experience in archival research, and a footage researcher for a large corporation. We recruited participants from survey respondents and from a posting on the AMIA mailing list. Information obtained in the survey and focus group informed the interview protocol.[45]

In March through June 2016, we conducted ten sixty-minute phone interviews with members of the filmmaking community. To qualify to participate, interviewees needed to be directors, producers, or footage researchers who had worked on film projects using archival footage within the past five years. We employed a snowball sampling method to recruit participants. Participants were recruited from among the online survey respondents, based on usage of our institution's collections, and through an email sent to the AMIA listservs. One AMIA listserv subscriber shared the call for participants with other professional filmmaking and footage research groups.

Participants completed a pre-interview online demographic survey and were compensated with a $50 Amazon gift card. We made audio recordings of interviews with GoToMeeting and alternated between the role of interviewer and scribe. Each recording was transcribed by the scribe and verified for accuracy by

the interviewer. We analyzed the data using grounded theory, allowing themes and concepts to arise from the data.[46]

During the interview process, we worked together to develop a preliminary codebook. To develop the final codebook, we each read through the interview transcripts and compiled two separate lists of observed themes and data points. Initial codes were based on the core research questions of access and discoverability. In the process of refining the codebook, we added codes according to themes that had come up unexpectedly during the interview process, such as "What filmmakers want archivists to know." We then assigned codes more granularity to ensure that all data were fully captured. We finalized the codebook in an in-person meeting, where we condensed our separate lists into one. We independently reviewed and hand-coded the transcripts using the codebook and met again to discuss our findings, which were largely congruent. We discussed the few instances of divergence and refined the codebook again after revisiting the data in question. After individually hand-coding the transcripts one more time with the final codebook, we concluded the data analysis stage of the project.

Interviews consisted of two segments: an open-ended timeline interview and a structured interview section or "hypothetical research scenario" (HRS). In the timeline interview, participants were asked to "reconstruct each event in an overall situation step-by-step—the nature of the situation, gaps, and helps sought at each particular moment."[47] We asked participants to describe steps taken during a recent project to find, access, obtain, and license copies of archival footage, including resources, tools, people, and organizations consulted along the way. We encouraged them to mention both failures and successes. We created a guide that included follow-up probes organized by broad topics including discovery, access and interaction, reuse and licensing, and overall experiences working with archives.

The HRS asked participants a series of scripted questions concerning an imagined research project. We chose to include the HRS because survey and focus group participants reported that a variety of factors including budget and project timeline influence their processes as well as the tools, people, and obstacles they encounter. For example, a particular project may require a filmmaker to negotiate with a library for the digitization of analog materials, while another project may require that he or she view and purchase digital content directly from a vendor. We were concerned that a project discussed in the timeline interview might not involve all of the behaviors we hoped to explore or include all of the resources and tools used by filmmakers. We also hoped to use the HRS to specifically explore the use of television news collections and experiences with academic or university archives.

Findings

We interviewed five producers (hereafter "P1" to "P5"), three footage researchers ("R1" to "R3"), and two directors ("D1" and "D2"). Participants shared experiences from their work on commercial documentaries, independent and student films, and self-financed labors of love. Participants had worked an average of 13.3 years in their current occupations: the most experienced participant reported working as a director for forty years, while the least experienced participant reported working as a producer for three years. Participants reported a wide range of project budgets (from $15,000 to $1 million) and timelines for archival footage research. The percentage of the typical total budget devoted to archival research was reported to range from less than 1 percent to as much as 30 percent. The timeline for archival research on these projects ranged from five days to four years. When these outliers were removed, the average amount of time budgeted for archival research was 5.69 months.

Timeline Interviews

Timeline interview responses are presented according to the common information-seeking stages identified during our data analysis.

Project Planning

Regardless of occupation, all the participants were organized and strategic in their pursuit of archival footage, relying on shared methods of planning and discovery developed over time and under the guidance of senior colleagues. All participants reported that their information-seeking processes typically begin by identifying a project's visual requirements and creating a footage wish list or timeline. Because documentary projects often begin with only a general story arc in mind (and not a finished script), a "wish list" is a way of managing the footage they hope to locate and is also a tool that guides interactions with institutions. These lists vary in their specificity depending on the project or the filmmaker's existing subject knowledge. The creation of a timeline of important events and people they want to cover in their films helps guide subsequent searches. Participants indicated that timelines, informed by researching a topic in advance, help them to uncover new sources and identify gaps in the visual narrative and also serve as a project management tool. This timeline tool appears to be especially important when the filmmaker begins with a limited knowledge of the subject.

Search and Discovery

After creating wish lists and timelines, filmmakers begin matching their footage needs with potential repositories and vendors. This process often begins before the initial archival contact. Because filmmakers are typically operating under tight budgets and timelines, they must quickly establish what materials are potentially available and make shrewd decisions about which leads to pursue.

Two filmmakers reported following a "credit chain" (the list of archival credits at the end of other films) as a first step to quickly establish the availability of relevant footage and identify potential archival sources before they begin more in-depth research. Whether they began with a simple search on Google or YouTube or immediately began browsing a digital archives or stock footage website, all participants reported beginning their searches by evaluating existing online resources. Having instant online access to materials at any hour is now an expectation for many filmmakers, whose work schedules can be unpredictable and inconsistent with reading room hours and because they infrequently have travel budgets for archival research. P5 explained, "Producing is not a 9-to-5 job. It's nights, it's weekends, 3 a.m., it tends to be all over the place. Any time you can have what you need, when you need it—it's a great thing." Only three participants reported a preference for on-site research. Although these participants described on-site research as a "luxury" and "incredible resource," two other participants reported that they did not feel welcome in archives whose policies are too restrictive. Although six participants expressed a need for (or at least an expectation of) comprehensive online access, five of the filmmakers interviewed wanted instant online access in addition to the feeling of personal connection with someone who knows the intricacies of the collection and can guide them to rare or unseen content, including that which has not been digitized. P5 said that she appreciates when archivists have time to be her "creative partner" and lead her to new materials because she believes showcasing undiscovered content is "sort of magical." P3 expressed a special appreciation for smaller and regional moving image archives, not only for their unique materials but also because they are staffed by "archivists and librarians who tend to understand the research process and aren't salespeople." Two participants also recognized that if materials are available online, it means everyone else making a film on the topic has the same access. This is discouraging to filmmakers who are especially keen to discover and share unseen sources. P1 reported that although she appreciated the efficiency of online access, she preferred working with archival or curatorial staff who could guide her to more unique materials. She said, "I don't wanna just plug in 9/11 and get the same shot that everyone else who has plugged in 9/11 gets and pull the same

shot. I prefer to know the person on the other end of the line and discuss what may be available, what's been used and not used."

The importance of relationships and social networks in locating new and relevant materials was a recurrent theme in our interviews. Experience and mentorship guide filmmakers' decisions about which archives or vendors to prioritize. Six participants indicated they were likely to return to trusted sources, including archives and stock footage houses, where they had an established relationship. In fact, R3 reported that she would not jeopardize her relationship with a trusted resource, large or small, in favor of cutting a better deal for the director because her livelihood depends on productive relationships with vendors and archives. In terms of finding new sources, professional and social networks play an important role. R1 reported unsuccessful interactions at a large public library until her producer connected her with the archivist who had processed the materials she was interested in. R1 praised that producer for building "a little network, based on the work she's begun to do about telling the story."

Although filmmakers reported an appreciation for the knowledge of archives' staff, film productions typically work on a faster schedule than cultural heritage institutions can accommodate. P3 reported that "there's a disconnect about how long things take on both ends." R1 reported that when working on a corporate production, they cannot afford the time it takes to work with an archives "because I know they are going to cost me a day. Which is fine in the real world. But in the impatient corporate world, oh my God! No one has a day!" However, experienced filmmakers have learned to work around incompatible schedules while maintaining relationships by being clear about their timelines and giving smaller institutions plenty of time to locate and digitize materials. P4 reported establishing contact with smaller institutions early in the process because "it can still take weeks or months before you're really getting what you're looking for, material-wise."

Engagement and Reuse

Another obstacle and potential source of tension is the cost associated with accessing and licensing archival moving image collections. Because these materials are infrequently available for viewing on their original media, filmmakers often have to pay to have materials digitized before they can determine the footage's relevance to their projects. This places additional pressure on understaffed and underfunded institutions, as well as on filmmakers who are typically working on tight production timelines and small budgets. P3 said, "Unless Ken Burns or Michael Moore calls you, people are going to be watching the bottom line very intensely." Given their tight budgets, it is no surprise that filmmakers are

interested in negotiating licensing and digitization fees and will do so whenever possible. All participants discussed the tactic of a "bulk deal," whereby a lower fee is charged because of the purchase of a large volume of footage or to reward repeat business. Two participants reported that smaller archives might be more willing to negotiate than large vendors or major networks. These same two filmmakers shared that they sometimes feel that archives' licensing rates are too low.

Although not all projects require unique footage, five filmmakers reported a preference for using previously unseen footage from archives or small institutions rather than from stock footage houses. However, the majority (7) of participants reported that the final decision about what makes it into a final cut often depends on budget and production schedules. All participants, in particular footage researchers, expressed enjoyment as well as frustration in locating rare content while staying within budget. "I would take specific pride in being able to say we've uncovered this thing that no one's seen in fifty to sixty years and it's not in every documentary about this topic," P3 said. However, filmmakers reported becoming "pragmatic" at some point, accepting less unique footage but from a more reliable and efficient resource (D1). They reported that at the end of a production, it is especially hard to prioritize slower sources because they can go to a vendor and get "ten clips in ten minutes and the problem is solved" (D1).

Structured Interviews

Hypothetical Research Scenarios (HRS)

We presented participants with hypothetical research scenarios adapted slightly to reflect their occupations. We then asked them to respond to the same series of follow-up questions that presented challenges or constraints to their research, including budget, deadline, underdescribed collections, and access to digital copies. As in the timeline interview, participant responses shared many commonalities regardless of profession.

> Footage Researcher Prompt: *You have been hired by Acme Film Studios to find unique archival footage for their project, which will explore civil rights in the Southwest United States. At this stage in the production, the producers are unsure of the exact direction they will take in the project or how much money they can devote to the budget for archival resources. They do know that they are most interested in local or regional television footage, unpublished works, or other materials that have yet to be used in topically similar documentaries. The producers have given you a timeline of three months to present some sample footage. How you would begin to fulfill this request? What sources would you use first?*

As in the timeline interview, participants began by establishing their information needs and available resources before contacting an archives or vendor, and they reported relying heavily on professional and social networks. All participants planned to begin their searches remotely—online, by phone, or by email—starting with broad searches to gain further insight into the topic and establish what content exists. Participants suggested starting with an internet search, looking online for news footage and reference sources, and reading published books on the topic to get a sense of where other researchers have found materials.

The budget and timeline in the initial prompt were left vague so further restrictions could be imposed as the scenario evolved. However, interviewees took the lack of a budget as a sign that there was no funding, which shaped their hypothetical search strategies and led to an emphasis on ways of finding free screeners (low-resolution copies of pieces of footage that can be used in a draft edit to help shape a film's pacing) from larger vendors or looking to existing documentary films for available footage. Influenced by the perception of little to no funding or time for research, P3 questioned the prompt's suggestion of beginning with local sources or television news collections.

Despite the perceived time and budget constraints, the majority of participants (7) reported that they would fulfill the fictional producers' desire for "unique" footage by contacting libraries and archives before stock footage houses or other commercial vendors. "If my charge is to find unique and unseen things," P1 said, "I'm probably going to the libraries and local sources and put the stock footage places last because my guess is that stock footage places are being accessed a lot." However, experience had taught these filmmakers that slower processes at these institutions require early contact and clear communication about project deadlines. R2 would strategically contact smaller, "more difficult" resources first to "get the process started," while simultaneously pursuing the more easily available resources from footage houses. Although deadlines and budget constraints guided some decisions, participants had learned workarounds to these obstacles: they indicated they could quickly assess the feasibility of obtaining materials from an archives or library under a given deadline or budget. P3 reported that possible "red flags" included the time it took for an institution to respond to an initial inquiry and a disclaimer that staff would not be available to do research.

When the scenario further constrained participants to obtaining materials from a fictional university archives, the participants anticipated encountering wait times, tools, and policies incompatible with their needs. Two participants expected to encounter archives staff who would not have the time or resources to "deal with their requests" (P4). P5 said, "I don't know the motivation is always there to have that kind of high-touch relationship with a client, but when that person is there, when that skill set is there it's like gold. . . . It really does become

a relationship." Filmmakers have developed strategies to encourage a "high-touch relationship" despite a lack of resources. Three participants reported that they would begin by learning as much as possible about the collection and the institution's policies before making initial contact. They would contact the archivist or librarian only when they encountered an obstacle or when they had more specific questions about using the materials.

Five participants expected it would be difficult to independently review collection materials due to a lack of adequate descriptions or availability of online content. In her "wildest dreams," P2 would hope "for a dedicated archivist for the collection who'd watched every second and who could show me all these wonderful moments that no one's ever seen before." However, in reality she would expect that the materials were "sitting in a box in a heated Texas garage somewhere off campus, and nobody has gone through them and there's not enough resources."

Two participants expected to encounter archivists who were unfamiliar with the filmmaking process. P3 viewed archives' policies and procedures as being created for "writers and scholarly researchers" rather than for people like her who wanted to "reproduce the collection." She expected that archives' policies and forms would use terminologies more appropriate for text documents than for film productions. When participants were advised that the only information available online about the hypothetical moving image collection was a finding aid that listed some of the collection materials, they all ignored the finding aid as a potential resource. Six participants reported that their first tactic would be to call the archives, hoping to speak to an archivist knowledgeable about the collection, or to hire a local researcher to learn about the collection. Two filmmakers suggested workarounds for learning more about minimally described collections before committing time and money for travel or digitization, including asking faculty in other university departments to view materials for them or asking an archivist to send video of the content shot on a smartphone.

When the HRS moved to a discussion of digitization and licensing fees, participants were all familiar with this process. Although participants respected archivists' labor and the need to pay for digital reformatting, they hesitated to deplete their budgets on screeners. Three participants expressed hesitance about paying screener fees when it is often, in P3's words, a "guessing game" of how useful the footage might be, and they want to know as much as possible about the material before they pay for it. According to P3, "It's harder and harder to justify money for screeners when you can get so much material for free," but she reported keeping some money aside for "the real gems." Filmmakers were interested in a sliding scale or negotiable price for different types of productions, as well as bulk deals, when available. Two participants suggested a discount on licensing fees when significant reproduction or research fees have been paid.

Filmmakers face a difficult decision when weighing the costs of digitization and licensing of unique archival materials against more affordable and common stock footage. For all but two participants, making this decision was a balancing act between their budget constraints, the types of imagery required for their productions, and the uniqueness of the archival footage in question. For P1, "There's always a perception that we're sitting on boatloads of money, and I wish that were the case. I'm not ever going to think that an archive should just give us things for free because I'm working on a cable documentary and it's not a nonprofit enterprise. But there are real budget realities for these projects, and so there are certain parameters we have to work within." "In an ideal world," P1 would always want the best materials available but "unfortunately, there are times when 'good enough' has to be the bar." D1 shared this view because in his opinion "very few shots are so worth it."

Discussion

Although filmmakers may be among the most frequent users of archival moving image collections, their voices haves remained largely unheard in conversations concerning access, discovery, and use. By allowing the voices of the filmmaking community to be heard and their experiences shared, this study sought not only to expose the challenges this group faces in their interactions with archivists but also to provide archivists with a model for cultivating a more mutually beneficial relationship with their users.

The results of this study are limited by the number of interviews conducted, the amount of time spent with each participant, and the artificial setting in which participants were asked to recall their typical research processes and workflows. We were also limited by our initial knowledge of the film production process which was broadened through each interview and allowed for more in-depth discussion with later participants. However, this research into an understudied user population does shed light on some commonalities in information-seeking behaviors and filmmakers' shared experiences of working with archivists.

The results of this study suggest that, with some exceptions, the filmmaking community shares many common tactics and tools for planning and implementing archival footage research. Results also suggest that although filmmakers appreciate and desire increased online access to moving image collections, their research process is fairly social and relies heavily on professional networks as well as interactions with subject and collections experts. An important component of this process is the trusted relationship between the filmmaker and the archivist. Filmmakers in this study repeatedly emphasized the value of archives' staff as both guides and creative collaborators. Even when deadlines and budgets were tight, filmmakers developed workarounds

for ensuring they had time and money to work with archivists. With respect to the importance of online access, they sometimes preferred inaccessibility because archives' staff could lead them to the "real gems" in the collection that no one else was even aware of. Although deliberate obfuscation cannot be recommended to appease the desire for hidden and undiscovered content, these data do suggest that archives' staff should seriously consider the importance and value of curation and collection knowledge in relationship to unmediated access when planning budgets for digitization and archives staff. Other planning tools mentioned by filmmakers, including the timeline and wish list, merit further exploration as they may be incorporated into future digital collection management systems. The reported use of an archives "credit chain" might also be further explored as a potential tool of increasing awareness and reuse of our archival moving collections.

While filmmakers consistently reported their appreciation for archives staff, they did emphasize an ongoing disconnect between archivists and filmmakers with respect to policies, timelines, and budgets. When they were asked in the HRS to describe expectations of tools, policies, and staff employed by academic archives, many anticipated that archives would not have time for them or that the policies for discovery, access, and use would be inconsistent with their needs. Perhaps most alarming to archivists is the filmmakers' disregard for the finding aid. When confronted with a minimally described collection and the availability of a finding aid, participants consistently preferred to ignore this tool in favor of human interaction. The majority of filmmakers (9) we spoke with had developed workarounds to navigate archival obstacles but still expressed frustration with the rigidity of archives' practices. In deference to this compromise, archivists may need to reconsider the value of finding aids for moving image collections and investigate other description and access tools for these collections. Archivists might also reevaluate access policies and forms for moving image collections that employ language and workflows designed for text documents and print publications. Furthermore, archivists might consider increasing transparency about timelines and costs so that filmmakers can more easily assess up front the feasibility of working with moving image collections.

Conclusions

An improved understanding of the filmmaking community creates a mutually beneficial relationship between archivists, their institutions, and their patrons. This relationship can enable archivists to create systems and procedures that best support the actual use of their collections, forge new collaborative and creative relationships with varied user groups, earn revenue to support digitization and preservation of their collections, and potentially provide support

for applications to fund preservation and access to these materials. By allowing the filmmakers' voices to be heard and their experiences more widely shared, we hope to provide archivists with preliminary guidelines for establishing and improving this relationship.

We recommend the following for managing and providing access to archival moving image collections based on our interactions with the filmmakers in this study:

Manage expectations.
Determine what services can be provided with respect to reproduction rates, ability to provide screeners, turnaround times, and access to original materials. Post these policies prominently on your website and make them known to filmmakers upon first contact.
Ask filmmakers to provide their deadlines and be clear about your ability to meet these deadlines. Even with a tight deadline, a filmmaker may be able to accommodate a slower schedule if the content is unique and expectations are managed.
Provide a primary contact for filmmakers who is knowledgeable about both the collection content and policies. Make this contact information available and clear on your institution's website.
Understand rights management issues related to your collections.
If your archives holds a moving image collection with indeterminate rights, be clear up front about your inability to license the collection. If possible, suggest potential avenues that the filmmaker could contact to secure rights. Provide any and all information you can to allow the filmmaker to make a Fair Use defense against infringement.
Create policies and procedures for licensing materials from your collections.
Create licensing and reproduction agreements that reflect the filmmaking community's language and needs. For licensing agreement forms, include fields for rights duration, region, included media, and any specific restrictions.
Licensing materials is a business, so develop your standard rates but expect to negotiate.
Develop a rate sheet that reflects different pricing for different types of productions and uses. Although most institutions hesitate to publicly post rates, sharing typical costs and knowing that filmmakers will expect to negotiate can increase the efficiency of the licensing process.
Become familiar with the filmmaking community's current views on Fair Use including "Documentary Filmmakers Statement of Best Practices in Fair Use," published in 2005 by American University.
Create policies for attribution and citation of your moving image collections.
Filmmakers and other researchers often discover archival materials via a credit chain. Make sure your attribution requirement includes enough information for another person to locate the materials.
Provide description and search tools that increase discoverability.
Think beyond finding aids. Create visual and descriptive guides to your moving image collections that highlight popular themes, topics, and people that might provide good materials for educational or documentary films.
Review your level of description for moving images and how it might be improved to better facilitate discovery. If filmmakers are not able to handle materials in person, consider adding any known information that may help them evaluate relevance including dates, named people, and locations.
Educate yourself in the terminologies and procedures of the filmmaking community.
Learn to speak filmmaker: understand terms like "screener," "edit," and "locked picture."
Learn more about the process of filmmaking and the role of the archivist in the process.
Incorporate timelines, wish lists, and shopping carts into existing digital library platforms.
Monitor mailing lists for the filmmaking community, including AMIA and FOCAL, to learn more about current discussions and trends around the use of archival moving images.

Promote the use of your collection.
When you acquire a moving image collection, create a landing page on your archives' website to advertise the existence of the collection, its historical strengths, and policies for access and use.
Monitor mailing lists for filmmakers as an opportunity to promote use of your collections.
Consider posting a watermarked highlight reel to popular video platforms such as Vimeo or YouTube that shows the strengths of your collection, highlighting events, people, regions, and time periods.
Familiarize yourself with other archives that contain moving image collections, and consider collaborative opportunities for digitization and promotion as well as creating a referral network.

Notes

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