guidebook for beginners, Cocciolo has included a provocative argument about how media preservation is practiced and taught.

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NOTES

1   The syllabus for this class is online at http://www.thinkingprojects.org/courses/lis-668-projects-in-moving-image-sound-archives/.

2   These resources can be found at http://www.amiaonline.org/?cat=5, https://www.beeldengeluid.nl/en/visit/events/winter-school-audiovisual-archiving-2018, https://filmcare.org, http://www.avcompass.bavc.org, and https://psap.library.illinois.edu/collection-id-guide#audiovisual.

Future-Proofing the News: Preserving the First Draft of History

On November 2, 2017, the Gothamist network of local news websites abruptly shut down, leaving the sites' story archives temporarily inaccessible.[1] After a social media outcry, the websites' past coverage reappeared; however, the incident demonstrates the instability and precariousness of our access to yesterday's news.

Kathleen A. Hansen and Nora Paul were motivated by tales of disappearing Web content, and, indeed, by the disappearing field of news librarianship and archives, to write *Future-Proofing the News: Preserving the First Draft of History*, a history of news preservation in the United States. Hansen and Paul survey the past three centuries of American news production and conclude that the preservation and disappearance of news content is not unique to the digital age. Rather, preserving the news has historically been an "afterthought"; a casualty of the "tension between preserving what has been created amid the pressure of creating new material" (pp. xiii, 56). Hansen and Paul argue that future-proofing the news requires new focus, forethought, and collaboration between news producers, archivists, and librarians.

Hansen and Paul are both faculty members at the School of Journalism and Mass Communication at the University of Minnesota–Twin Cities and have decades of experience working directly with newsrooms and researching information management. The authors have previously collaborated on articles

related to digital news preservation and are both active in the Special Libraries Association. The idea for *Future-Proofing the News* developed from their observation of the decline of newsroom researchers, librarians, and archivists over the past decade. The authors use their experience and professional connections to survey a wide swath of American news media and cultural heritage institutions.

Hansen and Paul provide numerous examples of past preservation efforts, detailing both the tragic losses of collections and the serendipitous activities that preserved content for future generations. For example, the Associated Press's (AP) original archival collections policy mandated that it discard collections after ten years, resulting in the complete loss of all AP coverage of World War I (p. 25). The infamous sounds of the Hindenburg disaster in 1937, however, were only recorded because the event had been selected for a technical experiment in recording news for delayed broadcast (p. 109). Other times, news collections have been salvaged from unexpected places, such as a cache of nitrate film newsreels and other silent film footage from the 1900s that was discovered buried in a swimming pool in a former Canadian Gold Rush town (p. 71). Between these seemingly disparate cases, Hansen and Paul identify three clear trends: 1) The creators of news content rarely plan for the long-term preservation of materials (although, the authors identify public radio as a notable exception to this trend) (pp. 116–17); 2) the materials used to create or store content have often proved instable and problematic for future accessibility; and 3) the corpus of American news content from the last three hundred years exists thanks to heroic efforts made by organizations, archives, museums, libraries, and individuals.

Future-Proofing the News is divided into ten chapters discussing the preservation history of various news media: newspapers, visual news, newsreels, radio news, television news, and digital news. Each chapter begins with a brief history of these respective media and their emergence in the United States, followed by a discussion of the various organizations and individuals responsible for their preservation, including news organizations, commercial database vendors, libraries, archives, and independent collectors. The authors explore the specific preservation issues threatening different formats and also identify such universal threats to collections as nonexistent or short-sighted archives policies, limited space and resources, media degradation and obsolescence, and disasters such as fires or floods. For example, a combination of these perils led to the loss of the majority of newsreel footage from the early twentieth century. The Library of Congress does not hold a complete collection of any newsreel company because it chose to alternate between collecting different newsreel companies each year based on the assumption that the newsreels "were substantially the same" (p. 80). And NARA lost nearly half of its Universal Newsreel Collection—12.6 million feet of footage—when a vault of nitrate film spontaneously ignited (p. 72).

Even when news collections have been saved, Hansen and Paul explain that significant challenges to access, usability, and long-term preservation still exist. Chapter 9, "Challenges to News Archive Access," and chapter 10, "What Next?," both describe current barriers to access, restrictions on use, and future opportunities and challenges for news preservation. Internal news archives are often proprietary or commercial assets and are restricted to the public. Even public collections at public libraries or cultural institutions may require the use of obsolete playback equipment and may have copyright restrictions that prevent a wide circulation of media. Even when collections have been digitized and made available on the Internet, the looming threat of the "dreaded '404— Not Found' error message" always exists (p. 219).

This book is an important intervention in the history of American news media. Previous works of history have focused on the production of news rather than "what happened to those news products once they were published, aired, or broadcast" (p. xii). However, as the authors acknowledge, their scope is limited to traditional American news media, "the preservation challenges for local, ethnic, and niche publications or broadcasts—in many cases more dire than those of larger, mainstream organizations—[that] are not specifically addressed" (p. xiii). This omission unfortunately results in a focus on English-language and large national news outlets and leaves important questions about representation and inclusivity in the archives completely unaddressed. Chapter 8, "Digital News," similarly focuses on traditional news organizations and websites leaving a wider news ecosystem of mobile apps and social media algorithms largely unexplored. It is quite conceivable that future scholars researching the 2016 presidential election will take equal interest in the work of Twitter bots and *New York Times* columnists.

To their credit, Hansen and Paul shift the central question of their work away from the oft-debated straw man, "should we save yesterday's news?" to the more pertinent question, "how do we save yesterday's news?" However, this work is not a how-to-guide to news preservation, and this is not a question that Hansen and Paul attempt to answer. Rather, they intend the work to serve as a wakeup call to the importance of preserving today's news. Their rallying cry: "access to news content in the future depends on decisions made today" (p. 230). Although the lack of forethought given to the preservation of today's news is nothing new, the stakes have shifted and the accidental archives of the past are no longer a plausible preservation strategy. In the book's preface, Hansen and Paul ask the chilling question: "will we have better access to news produced in 1817 than news produced in 2017?" (pp. xi–xii). *Future-Proofing the News* is a compelling call-to-action for all archivists, news producers, librarians, cultural heritage professionals, and users to band together in an effort to future-proof the news.

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NOTE

1   Perry Stein, "Gothamist Local News Network, Including DCist and DNAinfo, Abruptly Shut Down," *Washington Post*, November 3, 2017, sec. Local, https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/gothamist-local-news-network-including-dcist-abruptly-shut-down/2017/11/02/b0ffc85a-c014-11e7-959c-fe2b598d8c00_story.html.

Well, What Came Next? Selections from ArchivesNext, 2007–2017

By Kate Theimer. North Charleston, S.C.: CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2017. 397 pp. Softcover and EPUB. Softcover $25.00, EPUB $9.99. ISBN 978-1-54708-209-4.

Kate Theimer is probably best known in the archival field for the blog *ArchivesNext*, which she started in 2007 shortly after leaving NARA as a policy specialist. Because of that blog and her interests in Web 2.0 technologies, participatory archives, and rethinking the archival profession's role in the twenty-first century, Theimer has edited and written several books and articles on these and related topics. These works include the *Innovative Practices for Archives and Special Collections* series published by Rowman and Littlefield and the single volumes *A Different Kind of Web: New Connections between Archives and Our Users* (SAA, 2011) and *Web 2.0 Tools and Strategies for Archives and Local History Collections* (Neal-Schuman, 2010).

Well, What Came Next? is a "blook," or publication of selected entries from Theimer's blog over the course of its ten-year history. While many blog writers in other fields have successfully published blooks based on their blogs' content, I am unaware of any other archival blog author who has done this. Theimer chose over sixty entries from the hundreds of posts on her blog, organizing them into several small, digestible sections. These sections, typically containing five to ten posts, are organized thematically, ranging from the substantive topics for which she is known, such as "Social Media and the Web," "Archives Writ Large" (i.e., archives in a larger sociocultural context), and "Participatory Archives," to posts by guest bloggers and transcripts of keynote speeches and papers she has given at conferences around the world. The blook also includes lighter sections on archival humor and "Getting Personal, Doing Good," which focuses on more personal objectives, including the Spontaneous Scholarship Theimer organized for several years to help archivists travel to the Society of American Archivists (SAA) annual meeting and other service projects associated with SAA.