

Archival Evolution

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In this issue of *American Archivist*, you will find contributions on a range of topics relevant to the archival profession. Three of the articles relate to the role of silences in social memory. Veronica Ehrenreich-Risner discusses how geographical renaming in postapartheid South Africa, examining “the symbolic power of the state, as well as of the processes of boundary-making.” She argues that “geographic names are often tools of hegemony and that the location and the name combine to create a document in this ‘living archive’ of the power structure.” Edward Janak compares records at the Rockefeller Archive and records at the Texas State Library and Archives related to the General Education Board. Drawing on Eliot Eisner’s concept of the null curriculum, Janak argues that “what is missing is just as important as what is present.” Jessica Holden and Ana Roeschley describe efforts at the University Archives and Special Collections in the Joseph P. Healey Library at the University of Massachusetts Boston to process and provide access to records of the Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children. This included steps to make the records “accessible to the survivors represented in the records and to their descendants, while also providing appropriate access to the collection for the wider public.”

One way to view the evolution of the archival profession is through its approaches to organizing and providing access to records. Ciaran B. Trace explores “literature that covers the first sixty years of the development of the American archival profession,” examining “the negotiated order that formed around the early conception of the purpose and function of archival classification and arrangement.” She contends that “notions of classification and

arrangement are emblematic of the profession's identity and aspirations" throughout the period. Shifting to a more contemporary context, Peter Botticelli discusses digitization of and online access to a collection of Historic Boards (photographs pasted to mat boards) at the Peabody Museum of Anthropology and Ethnology at Harvard University. He argues that the "project offers insights on how archives and museums may benefit from treating digital curation as an iterative practice shaped by an ever-shifting technology landscape, by the resource constraints faced by many repositories, and, ultimately, by the historic opportunities afforded by making archives visible in digital form."

The archival enterprise must adapt to an ever-changing landscape. Carli V. Lowe argues that "preservation goals may be more effectively met through sustainable practices, leading to more reliable preservation environments and financial savings for the institution as a result of reduction in energy use." This includes reconsideration of "building design, learning from cultural preservation traditions, rethinking the role of archivists, and reconsidering the impact of [archival] practices." Emily Larson, 2019 winner of Theodore Calvin Pease Award, "examines the digital preservation needs of government Big Data from the perspective of archival theory." She conveys how "recognizing the power dynamics in Big Data requires an interrogation and documentation of the data themselves, as well as of the ways in which governments and corporations use them."

In addition to the articles, this issue also includes a rich set of publication reviews, shepherded by Bethany Anderson, reviews editor for *American Archivist*.