**INF 389J Appraisal and Selection of Records, Spring 2021, unique #28505: Schedule**

**January 25: Stopping time and editing the past: Course Overview**

**Review of course materials and assignments:**

Except for the designated texts, readings will be available online, in journals available through the PCL catalog or on Canvas; please check this syllabus from time to time for changes.

Class participation: what we are trying to achieve—please speak up in class with all your questions and observations

Readings: how to read critically; how to demonstrate that you can read critically

Discussion: what’s expected, how to do it (discussion thread on CANVAS, discussion in the class

Becoming an appraisal expert: assignment details

Work in class on the Keep-o-meter (what the heck this means!)

Class presentations

**Topic:** Lecture on the emergence of constructivism, accountability, and community control in archival appraisal discourse.

**Questions for discussion:**

1. What is appraisal?
2. Why do archivists do it?
3. How can we examine it critically?

**February 1: Historical Development of Appraisal Theory**

**Today we will draw the archivist whose life and thinking you will analyze.**

**Topic:** For today you will have readings from pioneering archival appraisal practice in English-speaking countries, coupled with what is judged to be the foundational Western European early-modern archives in France, plus a standard (and not as dated as you might think) overview of archival practice. Here are some questions for discussion: bring what you know and any experience you have to this discussion.

Questions for discussion:

1. What is the history of archival appraisal?
2. What is the general flow of its recent canonical history?
3. Why do Jenkinson and Schellenberg disagree?
4. What role does the type of archive play?

**Readings:**

Jennifer Milligan, “’What is an Archive’ in the History of Modern France,” *Archive Stories*; here is a version by a historian.

Barbara Craig, “Archival appraisal briefly reviewed in historical context,” Chapter 4 of *ArchivalAppraisal: Theory and Practice*, 59-79. Available through Canvas.

Terry Cook, “”We are What We Keep; We Keep What We Are’ Archival Appraisal Past, Present, and Future,” *Journal of the Society of Archivists* 32:2 (2011), 173-189. Available on Canvas.

Hilary Jenkinson, A Manual of Archive Administration, Part III Modern Archives: 115-133. The whole work is available on Canvas.

Theodore Schellenberg, *The Appraisal of Modern Public Records* (Bulletins of the National Archives No. 8, Washington: National Archives, 1956), 237-278.

Gerald Ham, *Selecting and Appraising Archives and Manuscripts* (SAA 1993), Chapter 1, ‘Archival Selection’: A most demanding task,” and Chapter 2, “Appraisal Theory and Selection Goals.” Available from Hathi Trust.

**February 8: “Value” and “significance” as grounds for selection**

**Turn in today your preliminary bibliography for studying your designated appraisal expert**, along with your tentative schedule for covering the material. Please send it to me as a doc or docx file at my email address.

**Topic:** The “values” theory of appraisal, as presented by NARS/NARA is the topic we’ll discuss today. We’ll talk about the social content of this statement and the reception of it as an example of the importance of historical context in understanding archival theory itself.

**Questions for discussion:**

1. What was going on in the archival world at this time?
2. What was the status of NARA’s power at this time?
3. What is value? What makes it “intrinsic”?

**Readings:**

Gary Taylor, *Cultural Section: Why Some Achievements Survive the Test of Time—And Others Don’t* (New York: Basic Books, 1997), read the first chapter. “Death of Culture,” 3-20. Available on Canvas.

Frank Boles and Julia Marks Young, “Exploring the Black Box: The Appraisal of University Administrative Records,” *American Archivist* 48 (Spring 1985). Note that this theory is developed in more detail in Boles and Young, *Archival Appraisal* (Neal-Schuman 1991).

“Intrinsic Value in Archival Materials” Staff Information Paper 21: Washington, NARA, 1982). Available from <https://www.archives.gov/research/alic/reference/archives-resources/archival-material-intrinsic-value.html>

Lynn C. Westney, “Intrinsic Value and the Permanent Record: The Preservation Conundrum,” OCLC Systems and Services: International digital library perspect (23(1), 2007: 5-12: Note how this article echoes the NARA position.

Shauna McRanor, “A Critical Analysis of Intrinsic Value,” American Archivist 59 (Fall 1996), 400-411. Note how this article tears the NARA position apart.

Patricia Galloway, “Intrinsic Value,” Encyclopedia of Archival Science (2016), 237-240. Available on Canvas.

**February 15: Social History and Documentation Strategy: Comprehensive Archival Engineering**

**Topic:** Archiving from the bottom up: social history and documentation strategy. This is the motel that will never die and keeps evolving.

**Questions for discussion**

1. What should the archivist do to be sure society gets documented?
2. What archives have the duty of documenting”society”?
3. How deep do you have to go? Should documentation of society stay around forever?

Readings:

Gerald Ham, “The Archival Edge,” *American Archivist* 38 (January 1975), 5-13.

Peter Fritsche, “The Archive and the Case of the German Nation,” *Archive Stories*. This reading offers a good background for the Booms reating below.

Larry Hackman and Joan Warnow-Blewett, “The Documentation Strategy Process: a Model and a Case Study,” *American Archivist* 50 (Winter 1987), 12-47.

Hans Booms, “Society and the Formation of a Documentary Heritage: Issues in the Appraisal of Archival Sources,” *Archivaria* 24 (Summer 1987), 69-107.

Katie Shilton and Ramesh Srinivasan, “Participatory Appraisal and Arrangement for Multicultural Archival Collections,” *Archivaria* 63 (2007), 87-101.

Doris Malkmus, “Documentation Strategy: Mastodon or Retro-Success?” *American Archivist* 71 (Fall-Winter 2008), 384-409.

Elizabeth Snowden Johnson, “Our Archives, Our Selves: Documentation Strategy and the Re-Appraisal of Professional Identity,” *American Archivist* 71 (Spring-Summer 2008), 190-202.

**February 22: Documenting Institutions: Functional Analysis and Macro-Appraisal**

**Topic:** Archiving from the top down: Bureaucracy and function as begun by Helen Willa Samuels and instantiated in the Canadian Macro-appraisal and the American Minnesota Method. This is a very important model and I’ve added readings to walk you through how it is applied.

**Questions for discussion:**

1. Why start from the top down?
2. What are the implications of doing so?
3. Who gets left out?

Readings:

Helen Willa Samuels, “Improving our Disposition,” *Archivaria* 33 (Winter 1991-92), 125-140.

Tom Nesmith, “Documenting Appraisal as a Societal-Archival Process: Theory, Practice, and Ethics in the Wake of Helen Willa Samuels,” in Cook, *Controlling the Past*, 31-50. Don’t miss the rich footnotes.

Terry Cook, “Macroappraisal in Theory and Practice: Origins, Characteristics, and Implementation in Canada, 1950-2000,” *Archival Science* 5 (2005), 101-61. This is the historical background to macroappraisal. Note that this whole issue of *Archival Science* is about macroappraisal and it is worth your time to learn a lot about this influential appraisal method.

Library and Archives Canada, Appraisal Methodology, Macro-Appraisal, and Functional Analysis, Part A, available at <https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/services/government-information-resources/disposition/Documents/MacroappraisalPartA.pdf>; Part B, Guidelines for Performing, at <https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/services/government-information-resources/disposition/Documents/MacroappraisalPartB.pdf> These two documents represent theory and practice AS IMPLEMENTED.

Bruce Breummer and Sheldon Hochheiser, *The High-Technology Company: A Historical Research and Archival Guide* (Charles Babbage Institute, 1969). Online at <https://www.obi.umn.edu/hostedpublications/pdf/CBI_HiTechCo.pdf> Skim the first part, look at the “Documentary Probes” section from 99-122.

Mark Greene and Todd Daniels-Howell, “Documentation with an Attitude: A Pragmatist’s Guide to the Selection and Acquisition of Modern Business Records,” M. O’Toole (ed.) *The Records of American Business* (Chicago: SAA, 1997), Chapter 7. Available on Canvas.

**March 1: Appraising Individuals’ records**

**Topic:** Features of personal records, differences from organizational records—here we see the difficulties of working with records created by individuals with an attitude only to their own needs and concerns. Important issues here are related to how archives can justify dealing with the idiosyncrasies of personal records.

Questions for discussion:

1. Is there some systematic way that individuals’ records are different from organizational records?
2. Whose individual records are likely to be archived?
3. Should the original order of personal collections be honored?
4. Whose individual records should be archived?

**Readings:**

John Randolph, “On the Biography of the Bakunin Family Archives,” *Archive Stories*.

Philip N. Cronenwett, “Appraisal of Library Manuscripts,” in Nancy E. Peace, *Archival Choices: Managing the Historical Record in an Age of Abundance* (Lexington MA, Lexington Books), 1984, Chapter 5, 105-116. Available on Canvas. This approach is alive and well in many collecting archives, as in the following one.

Tom Hyry, Diane Kaplan, and Christine Weiderman, “Though this be Madness, yet There is Method in ‘t’: Assessing the Value of Faculty Papers and Defining a Collecting Policy,” *American Archivist* 65 (2002), 56-69.

Sue McKemmish, “Evidence of Me,” *Archives and Manuscripts* 24 (May 1996), 28-45. Available on Canvas.

Lucie Paquet, “Appraisal, Acquisition, and Control of Personal Electronic Records: From Myth to Reality,” *Archives and Manuscripts* (November 2000), 71-91. Available on Canvas.

Riva Pollard, “The Appraisal of Personal Papers: A Critical Literature Review,” *Archivaria* 52 (2001), 136-150.

**March 8: Sampling and Case Files: Reductive models for appraisal**

**Topic:** Case files are arguably the best source of Schellenbergian informational Materials, yet there are all kinds of obstacles advanced in the literature to keeping them. The first is the presence of personal data and the second is bulk. The solution: sampling; but see if you can figure out how satisfactorily anyone could defend the sampling techniques discussed in these readings.

**Questions for discussion:**

1. Could banks succeed without keeping case files as long as you have your account?
2. How do you feel about government case files not being kept?
3. What kinds of these files should be kept?
4. What about medical case files?

**Readings:**

Eleanor McKay, “Random Sampling Techniques: A Method of Reducing Large, Homogeneous Series in Congressional Papers,” *American Archivist* 41 (July 1991) 281-288.

Terry Cook, “Many are Called but Few are Chosen: Appraisal Guidelines for Sampling and Selecting Case Files,” *Archivaria* 32 (Summer 1991), 25-50.

Optional: Terry Cook, *The archival appraisal of records containing personal information: A RAMP study with guidelines*; available on Canvas. This is the excellent longer study from which Cook’s article above is a summary, and it would be well for you at least to skim it (note that it has some additional information about the appraisal and contributed significantly to thinking on macroappraisal.)

Margaret J. Dixon, “Beyond Sampling: Returning to Macroappraisal for the Appraisal and Selection of Case Files,” *Archival Science* 5 (2005), 285-313.

James Gregory Bradsher, “The FBI Records Appraisal,” *The Midwestern Archivist* XIII, 2 (1988), 51-66. Available on Canvas.

NARA, “Appraisal of the Records of the Federal Bureau of Investigation,” This is a pdf file available on Canvas, containing the first 568 pages of the report. You are luckily only assigned to read the first 55 of these, though the rest is informative if you are feeling ambitious. Scroll to the table of contents and read parts 1-4 (Introduction through Findings).

Thomas D. Norris, *Prison Inmate Records in New York State: the Challenge of Modern Government Case Records*. SAA case studies, 1996. Available from Hathi Trust: <http://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/003938563> Notice in this reading how influential the FBI appraisal was.

**SPRING BREAK March 15-20**

**March 22: Appraisal Workshop**

**March 29: Cost-benefit analysis, appraisal, and reappraisal: Does it cost too much to keep?**

**Topic:** Are archives really forever? Should they be? What is the significance of the switch from a discourse of “permanence” to one of “endurance”? We have already discussed this, but now we will focus on it in detail, from a background of a month’s worth of additional readings.

**Questions for discussion:**

1. Why do you think it is hard to find studies of cost-benefit in archives?
2. Can computerization make any of the costs less onerous?
3. Whose side do you take on the subject of reappraisal, Rapport or Benedict? Why?
4. What side doea SAA take?

Readings:

Roy Rosenzweig, “Scarcity or Abundance? Preserving the Past in a Digital Era,” *American Historical Review* 108, 3 (2003), 735-762. Available on Canvas.

Laura O’Hara, “Analysis of the costs of a backlog project in response to recommendation 2 of the 2004 Archives and History Office Program Review Committee draft report 2007.” Available on Canvas.

Paul Ericksen and Robert Shuster, “Beneficial Schocks: The Place of Processing-Cost Analysis in Archival Administration,” *American Archivist* 58 (Winter 1995).

Mark Greene, “’The Shurest Proof’: A Utilitarian Approach to Appraisal,” *Archivaria* 45 (Spring 1998), 127-169.

Leonard Rapport, “No Grandfather Clause: Reappraising Accessioned Records,” *American Archivist* 44 (Spring 1981), 143-150.

Karen Benedict, “Invitation to a Bonfire: Reappraisal and Deaccessioning of Records as Collection Management Tools in Archives—A Reply to Leonard Rapport,” *American Archivist* 47 (Winter 1984), 43-49.

SAA, Guidelines for Reappraisal and Deaccessioning, 2012. You can find this document linked from here: <http://www2.archivists.org/sites/all/files/GuidelinesForReappraisalAndDeaccessioning-May2012.pdf> Now approved by Council.

**April 5: Appraisal of non-text physical collections**

**Topic:** Most appraisal literature addresses text; kany non-text materials have non-archival values that make their “appraisal” take on a different meaning.

**Questions for discussion:**

1. Which of these media do you collect? How do you appraise your personal collection?
2. Are their other media that should be included here?
3. Does appraisal actually “fit” commercially-made media?

Readings:

Ernest Dick, “Appraisal of Collections,” in Steven Davidson and Gregory Lukow, eds., *The Administration of Television Newsfilm and Videotape Collections: A Curatorial Manual*, (Los Angeles, American Film Institute, 1997), Chapter 3, 31-48. Available on Canvas.

Karen Gracy, *Film Preservation* (SAA, 2007), Chapter 8, “Power and Authority in Film Preservation.” Available on Canvas.

Christopher Ann Paton, “Appraisal of Sound Recordings for Textual Archivists,” *Archival Issues* 22 (2), 1997, 117-132.

Caroline Daniels, Heather Fox, Sarah-Jane Poindexter, and Elizabeth Reilly, ‘Saving all the Freaks in the Life Raft: Blending Documentation Strategy with Comn Engagement to Build a Local Music Archives,” *American Archivist* 78 (1), Spring-Summer 2015, 238-261.

Nancy Carlson Shrock, “Images of New England: Documenting the Built Environment,” *American Archivist* 50 (Fall 1987), 474-498.

Karen Oberdeck, “Archives of the Unbuilt Environment,” *Archive Stories*.

Joan Schwartz, “The Archival Garden: Photographic Plantings, Interpretive Choices, and Alternative Narratives,” in Cook, *Controlling the Past*, 69-110.

T. Masurczyk, N Piekielek, E. Tansey, and B. Goldman, “American archives and climate change: Risks and Adaptation,” Climate Risk Management, available downloadable at <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2212096318300135>

**April 12: Appraisal of virtual collections**

**Topic:** In the literature you’ll hear that appraisal of digital records should follow the same guidelines as appraisal of similar (text, non-text) physical records. How are digital records different? What tools exist to help in appraising them?

**Questions for discussion:**

1. What characteristics make digital materials not fit what we have so far seen in appraisal?
2. Should all “virtual” materials be kept? What shouldn’t?
3. How would you keep social media?

**Readings:**

*SAA Appraisal and Acquisition Strategies* (2016), Module 14 by Greg Huth, “Appraising Digital Records,” and Module 15 by Megan Barnard and Gabriela Redwine, “Collecting Digital Manuscripts and Archives.”

Steve Bailey, “Appraisal, Retention, and Destruction” and “The Problems with applying existing approaches to appraisal in the Web 2.0 world,” from *Managing the Crowd: Rethinking records management for the web 2.0 world* (2008). Available on Canvas.

Bethany Anderson, Fynette Eaton, and Scott Schwartz, “Archival Appraisal and the Digital Record: Applying Past Tradition for Future Practice,” *New Review of Information Networking* 20 (2015), pp. 3-15. Downloadable online through the library.

Peter Botticelli, “Records Appraisal in Network Organizations,” *Archivaria* 49 (Spring 2000), 161-191.

Keli Rylance, “Archives and the Intangible,” *Archivaria* 62 (2006), 103-120.

**April 19: Archival Agency? Social Memory and Advocacy Appraisal**

**Topic:** Archival appraisal decides what will survive and what will not. Or does it? Have archives had this monopoly in the past, and do they still have it? Should they have it? Is there a place for Advocacy Appraisal?

**Questions for discussion:**

1. How do archivists think about social memory? Has anyone worked at the Austin History Center?
2. How would you work with a community archives?
3. Would you need to belong to that community?

**Readings:**

Francis X. Blouin, Jr., “Archivists, Mediation, and Constructs of Social Memory,” *Archival Issues*, 24(2), 1999, 101-112.

Margaret Hedstrom, “Archives and Collective Memory: More than a Metaphor, Less than an Analogy,” in Eastwood and MacNeil, *Currents of Archival Thinking* (Libraries Unlimited, 2010), 163-174. Available on Canvas.

Mark Greene, “The Messy Business of Remembering: History, Memory, and Archives,” Archival Issues 28(2), (2003-2004), 95-103. Available at <http://minds.wisconsin.edu/bitstream/handle/1793/45954/MA28_2_3.pdf>

Verne Harris, “The Archival Sliver: Power, Memory, and Archives in South Africa,” *Archival Science* 2 (2002), 63-86.

Verne Harris, “Ethics and the Archive: ‘An Incessant Movement of Recontextualization,’” in Cook, *Controlling the Past*, 345-362.

Daniel Caron and Richard Brown, “Appraising Content for Value in the New World: Establishing Expedient Documentary Presence,” *American Archivist* 76 (1), Spring-Summer 2013, 135-173.

Explore the Mukurtu platform designed to be used and managed by indigenous communities but perhaps also effective for community archives. <http://mukurtu.org/project/mukurtu-wumpurrami-kari-archive/>

**April 26: Formal Appraisal Method Testing: Experimenting with digital tools (with an exercise)**

**Topic:** If digital records can be evaluated with digital tools, how will that change appraisal? Does this mean that we can potentially know with much greater confidence what is in a collection or series before we decide whether to retain or destroy it? And is it possible to discover what kind of impact specific destruction practices have on the contents of an archival corpus?

**Questions for discussion:**

1. We have seen a lot of discussion about the NSA using artificial intelligence to scan enormous amounts of data?
2. How do you search your own personal collection? Do you use different approaches for different kinds of data?
3. Why has Google become our go-to tool for finding stuff? Are you sure that you always find what you are seeking?
4. How could you create an algorithm for appraisal?

**Readings:**

Adam Perer, Ben Schneiderman, and Douglas Oard, “Using Rhythms of Relationahips to Understand Email Archives,” *JASIST* 57 (14), 1936-1948 (online October 2006).

William Underwood, “Grammar-Based Recognition of Documentary forms and Extraction of Metadata,” *International Journal of Digital Curation* 1, 5 (2010).

Maria Esteva, “Text and Bitstreams: Appraisal and Preservation of a Natural Electronic Archive,” Paper presented at New Skills for a Digital Era, 2006 (along with other UT contributions). Available online, pp. 77-86, at <http://www.archivists.org/publication/proceedings/NewSkillsForADigitalEra.pdf>

Patricia Galloway, “Testing appraisal models with digital corpora,” Presentation at SAA Research Forum, 2007.

Sharon Machlis, “Chart and image gallery: 30+ free tools for data visualization and analysis,” *ComputerWorld* August 1, 2016.

ePADD (a tool for all kinds of processing for email collections, from Stanford Libraries.)

**May 3: Summative Discussion of Class Ideas**

**Topic:** So what is the archivist to do? After the profusion of theories and practices we have discussed this semester, what would your first day as an appraiser be like?

**Readings:**

Jennifer Marshall, Accounting for Disposition, Chapters 7 and 8. This is a 2006 University of Pittsburg dissertation, offering a comparative study of how three archives, US, UK, and Australian, document for their appraisal decisions. Available on Canvas.