Research Interests and Projects

I did not enter academe as a faculty member until the year 2000 (my brief stint at Westfield College would be categorized as a staff position). My work from 1974 to 2000 could be characterized as public history, as I worked generally on government-sponsored projects for the entire period and focused generally on studies of the past and the use of those studies in the present. My interests, from the time I worked on my first dissertation to today, have always been in the how rather than the what: in whatever field I have worked, I have always been interested in how knowledge is constructed in that field and how information is used to construct it. As a result, whether in literature, history, archaeology, or ethnohistory, whether in work as an archaeologist, historian, museologist, or archivist, my work has been seen as fundamentally epistemological, and it is most frequently cited for its theoretical contributions. Today I would identify myself as an applied historical anthropologist of science focused specifically on information, meaning, and the construction of knowledge as those phenomena are affected by the public and private institutions that preserve and control them over time.

My work today is a continuation of these interests and themes, as conditioned and supported by the scholarly interests I have pursued for thirty years. My first independent scholarly work was on the analysis and interpretation of medieval European material culture from archaeological excavations, to which I have recently returned in writing about the uses of archaeological and documentary information together in the field of historical archaeology. A significant thread of my research and writing since 1979 has been the French colonial history and Muskogean tribal ethnohistory of southeastern North America. My historical editing work on the *Mississippi Provincial Archives: French Dominion* documentary series raised questions about the contingency of colonial documentary evidence about Native Americans and about colonial historiography in general, which I have pursued at length, with reference especially to the exploration histories of La Salle and De Soto. I have published extensively in the field of North American Native American ethnohistory, always looking at the informational value of the mostly European sources and their critical use. I have also published frequently on the application of historical documentation to the study of colonial-period archaeological sites in North America. In archaeology, I planned and administered a county archaeological survey of historic-period Chickasaw sites for the Mississippi Department of Archives and History in 1980-81 to recover data; I edited the MDAH *Archaeological Reports* series and *Mississippi Archaeology* from 1981 to 2000 to publish it. In museology, I served as project director and core scholar on the permanent exhibit "Mississippi 1500-1800," installed at the Old Capitol Museum of Mississippi History in 1997, in the process performing research, assembling materials, and working with communities; then working with designers and fabricators to assemble those materials into a physical narrative. I currently serve as a core scholar for a complete redesign of all permanent exhibits for the planned new Mississippi state historical museum. In 1993 I decided to return to school to earn a degree in anthropology, and I completed the dissertation in summer of 2004 on the phenomenology of medical socialization—yet this work too has paid significant attention to the construction of knowledge, this time from the anatomical encounter with a physical dead body and with the canonical body of the anatomical atlas.

Information management practice has been a significant element in my professional life since I attended a conference on computing in archaeology in 1973. I began my exposure to automated information management and humanities computing generally with four and a half years of specifically archaeological computing, first at the Rheinisches Landesmuseum Bonn and then through association with the Institute of Archaeology, London. I served two years as programming advisor to humanities departments of Westfield College in the University of London, 1977-79, where I worked (and published) mostly on computer-aided text analysis. This research included an attempt to build a computer model of the narrative grammar proposal from my 1974 dissertation, which I now find has been recognized as an early model by European scholars who are engaged in current research on narrative grammars as cognitive structures.

During employment from 1979 to 2000 at the Mississippi Department of Archives and History, I became an automation evangelist solely due to the fact that I came to MDAH with competence in humanities computing: I had been hired to do historical editing, and some of my first computer work at MDAH, in 1982, involved teaching the Louisiana State University Press how to do a draft-to-print publishing project—*Mississippi Provincial Archives: French Dominion* vols. 4 and 5—electronically. It was my first experience of multigenerational digital archaeology, in that the "manuscript" had to be transferred from magnetic cards to tape and then to a different encoding before it could be marked up to drive a computer-driven press. At the Mississippi Department of Archives and History I was classified as a systems manager, serving as director of the Information Systems section of the Administration Division. In that capacity I was the architect of a distributed system of IT management and deployment as I chaired the departmental Information Management Committee and the Website Committee and built computer support services from nothing in 1980 to a nested series of UNIX-based intranets in 2000. In providing core services I supervised a senior desktop publishing specialist, a webmaster, a computer systems analyst, and a programmer in providing a full range of networking, Internet gateway, procurement, and end-user oriented computing services to the entire Department, coordinating additional autonomous computer support staff with subject-area specialties in the Museum, Archives, Records Management, and Historic Preservation divisions. I designed the locational database for the movable shelving purchased to accommodate MDAH's archival collections in 1990 and I was responsible for long-range planning and budgeting for data processing and for planning computing facilities for a new archives building project (opened in 2001) with a computer budget of over $900,000.00. All of this experience was brought to bear when I was project director for an NHPRC grant-funded archival electronic records program development project from 1997-2000.

I have thus been involved with humanities-oriented computing from 1974 to the present, and my digital archives work benefits from the solid computing experience and perspective I have gained over that time, not to mention the skills that now must be mobilized in aid of digital archaeology to rescue many of the products of obsolete systems. My experience includes (hardware) IBM and CDC mainframe computers, DEC (VAX) and AT&T (3B2) minicomputers, and personal computers and Intel-based servers; (operating systems) OS/VS, SCOPE, UNIX, VMS, MSDOS, Windows, and

Linux; (programming languages) FORTRAN, Pascal, SNOBOL, PHP, and a little Java; (markup languages) SGML, HTML, and XML; and relational databases and SQL.

My administrative experience as an IT manager has been invaluable in understanding the exigencies of planning for the operation of a digital archive and for designing IT infrastructure to support legally adequate digital recordkeeping. I supervised professional computing staff for fifteen years and served from 1998-2000 on a multidepartmental committee charged with reviewing all IT staffing decisions in Mississippi state government for its State Personnel Board. I was involved in specifying electronic records policy for Mississippi state government and have worked with Texas state government officials in a consultative capacity on similar issues.

Other aspects of my professional experience have likewise been useful to my teaching and research in information science at the University of Texas. As an archaeological finds supervisor for four years in Europe, I organized and maintained systems for the processing and cataloging of artifacts, supervising up to ten people of different nationalities in various phases of this work, including conservation, identification, and recording. This experience and my own research in numerical taxonomy made me especially aware of the ethnocentrisms that are encountered in the classification of cultural objects, an issue that is highly important in work on digital libraries and archives, especially in areas of metadata design and automated resource discovery. As author and recipient of grants from NEH, the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC), the Mississippi Humanities Council, and corporate donors, I supervised staff of all divisions of MDAH and contract personnel on a project basis in documentary research, museum exhibit design and implementation, and development of public programs in history. As a result, I am familiar as a practitioner with a broad range of institutional practice—especially in the management and use of information—in archives, libraries, and museums. My forthcoming book of essays, *Practicing Ethnohistory: Mining Archives, Hearing Testimony, Constructing Narrative*, gathers past and more recent work to consolidate those interests under the headings of historiography, positive methods of data analysis, analytical synthesis of evidence from multiple sources, and ethical issues raised by the making of knowledge from information.

Current research program

I spent most of the first two years in Texas devising the courses described previously. I also worked intensively with a an adjunct colleague who was also records manager for the Texas Railroad Commission to negotiate requirements at the agency and write an NSF grant proposal to investigate automatic classification of email records. That proposal had the distinct disadvantage of being submitted for the fall 2001 NSF award cycle, which was delayed and altered by the events of 9/11, and we did not receive funding for the project. But I continued to work on the project on a larger scale with the Department of Information Resources as the TERM project for my LIS 392K permanent retention seminar in spring 2002, which informed advice we provided to the DIR on email management and eventuated in a publication in *D-Lib*. This advice was included in the 2003 Texas Senate Bill 1355, Subchapter L, Electronic mail, which alas did not pass. All of my courses had begun to bear fruit both in suggesting directions for research and in demonstrating the trends of student interests. In addition, the DSpace open-source

institutional repository software was released by MIT and Hewlett-Packard in late 2002, and we were able to download and install it and begin to experiment with its application to archival needs. By 2002 my previous research was continuing and new research areas in digital archives were beginning to open up.

Ethnohistory of southeastern Native Americans (continuing research): This is the field in which I have established a major reputation, in which I have published from 1982 to the present, and which has been the inspiration and impetus for my interest in historiography and the contingencies of the archival record. I have continued this research while at the University of Texas, and have published work using archival sources to reconstruct an archaeological excavation from 1935; investigating the informational content and structure of evidence from archaeological and documentary sources as used by historical archaeologists; analyzing the macro effects of European colonization on Indians of the Lower Mississippi Valley; tracing the information flows in the historical cartography of the De Soto discoveries as drawn from the descriptions of Garcilaso de la Vega; exploring the writing of historical biography of an eighteenth-century Choctaw chief from colonial documents that are essentially outsider discourse with respect to the biographee; investigating the importance of dual organization as a factor in the social organization and construction of power among southeastern Indians; and providing entries for a major Smithsonian encyclopedia of North American Indian ethnography. (Reaching even further back to my training in comparative literature, I have published on the sources in popular culture and local tradition of Faulkner's portrayal of Indians in his short stories.) Ongoing research addresses the economic and social-structural impact of the interaction of eighteenth-century Choctaws with European colonies.

My approaches to this research are beginning to be colored by my work in information science since coming to Texas, but it may not be so obvious how my ethnohistorical work, which stands on its own as information study for its rigorous attention to epistemological and evidential issues, contributes to my research on archives. As I see it, there are two major threads. In the first place, my long-sustained habits of deconstructing a multicultural discourse in critiquing the sources for ethnohistory has made me particularly aware of the direct problems of Euroamerican ethnocentrism in extending, for example, Western ontologies of knowledge over information practices everywhere. But for a long time I have also used an understanding of how the role of a cultural broker (an autonomous boundary object!) works, learned from observing many of the eighteenth-century subjects of my research, to construct a professional role as such for first myself, as IT manager at MDAH, and now my students who will professionally broker between archives and information technology.

A second thread of my interest in southeastern Native American history has been organizational. My award-winning *Choctaw Genesis 1500-1700* has been influential for its illumination of Choctaw ethnogenesis as a process of constructing a consensual federation as a governance structure. This structure turned out to be so robust that it could not be easily dislodged by Europeans, preserved the Choctaws on their lands until the first third of the nineteenth century, and forced the United States to undertake forcible expulsion to open their lands to American occupation. There is a great deal in these historical patterns that is applicable to the central problem of institutionalization that

digital (and other) archives face. I made use of my understanding of the importance of decentralization and consensus by constructing the IT infrastructure at MDAH as I did, and that infrastructure subsists today. I incorporated my understanding of consensus as a participatory process for meaning construction when I created a community advisory committee for work on a museum exhibit at MDAH and gave it autonomy and power in the content and representational choices to be made by the museum (this is documented in a paper to be published in the forthcoming *Practicing Ethnohistory*). As I continue my work with the Mississippi state historical museum as a consultant for an entirely new museum, I am continuing to carry out research on how that original committee of ten people, representing the descendant communities of people present in 1500-1800, continues to work and interact with museum staff and others now that it has been expanded to more than fifty members covering the entire history of Mississippi. Finally, as will be seen below, this federation/consensus model is at the heart of my research on the means of achieving institutionalization for a digital archival repository.

Institutions of memory and their societal situation: This area of research is informed by my ethnohistorical scholarship as outlined above, by the work for and in my historical museums class, by fundamental archival ideas, and especially by my class on permanent retention of digital objects. The challenges of actually establishing digital archives as self-sustaining entities can only be met by understanding both how successful existing institutions of memory reproduce themselves over time and how the premises on which their success is based may change in the digital environment. Research along these lines is necessary to inform the kind of social engineering that is required to institutionalize digital archiving. My extended historical research on the formation of the Mississippi state archives and the shaping of its holdings by archival action (or inaction), which I began in 1999 and will soon publish, has provided a specific historical baseline for my understanding of the problems of archival institutionalization.

   Another example of research along these lines comes from the results of the spring 2005 project of the seminar in permanent retention to implement an institutional repository for the School of Information. Students in this class had previously (in spring 2003) investigated intellectual property issues and general preservation concerns in the DSpace environment for the School's historic websites. One student who had participated in the same class in 2004 wanted to do more work with DSpace and was interested in developing repository policies. As a result we had a strong basis for moving forward with founding the repository and committing to it. Accordingly, in the spring of 2005 we secured the cooperation of four faculty members (to donate their own materials), the School's IT staff and governance (to donate the websites), and fortuitously had the opportunity of working with a project of acquisition and management of the Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center's first significantly digital literary collection. The relative success of this project led to a successful grant proposal to the ALA for modest funding to take the next steps during the 2005-2006 school year.

The problem: Disappearance of digital faculty "papers"

   It is a truism and a concern that with the pervasive use of information technology on university campuses, faculty work in research, teaching, and administration has changed in significant ways. Not the least significant of these changes is the increased ephemerality of the digital "papers" that they now generate, papers that are now only

casually preserved while the faculty member is an active teacher and researcher. In addition, university and other archives have still unfortunately not revised the reluctant stance toward the collection of any but the very most outstanding faculty papers that prevailed when space concerns were uppermost among stated management issues (and undoubtedly issues of university reputation still prevail). Standard archival thinking on this subject has fallen far behind the initiatives of faculty members themselves in seeking more visibility online through e-prints repositories and self-posting of preprints and postprints. Archivists have often communicated poorly with university libraries attempting to develop digital library initiatives for making faculty work more broadly available through an institutional repository, possibly because these non-archival models appear to lack a dominant focus on actual *permanence* for digital materials.

A Possible Solution: Departmental Digital Repositories

As a result of previous research and my work on government and campus projects, I have developed the concept of a campus federation of departmental and special library digital repositories with a central repository located in the general library institution. This layered "onion" concept, which we have discussed with digital library principals in the UT General Libraries, answers both to the need for secure dark-archive storage of original bitstreams to guarantee authenticity and for the now-accepted standard requirement that any trusted digital repository must provide a succession plan in the case of its dissolution. This concept, however, requires that the departmental repositories themselves be proved viable.

Initial Proof of Concept: The Eyes of Texas *Project, Spring 2005*

The task I set my students in my Problems in the Permanent Preservation of Digital Records seminar this spring was the establishment of a digital repository for the School of Information, beginning with faculty records and the recovery and preservation of the School's website in its historical incarnations. The faculty records subset of this task we have called the *Eyes of Texas*, in a nod to our School's name and our university anthem and in recognition of a project that has already broken considerable ground in this direction: the UNC-SLIS *Minds of Carolina* project for collecting the digital records of retiring faculty at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. We took as our technological basis the DSpace repository software (version 1.2). Theoretical principles for all the procedures not instantiated in DSpace were adopted from the Open Archives Information System (OAIS) reference model. From another project undertaken by a student team in the seminar, centered on the preservation of digital literary materials for the Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center at the University of Texas, we have borrowed importantly the collecting archives focus on the agency of the digital object creator. From what we have learned in this context we have made a commitment to a participatory model for the development of digital repository collections. Such a model has been gestured at in the DSpace project at MIT to the extent that DSpace was created to support self-archiving to a central repository, but has not been articulated as a source of *distributed* support through the implementation of departmental repositories.

The producer-participants in the *Eyes of Texas* project are four faculty members, three at the end of their faculty careers: one who retired several years ago, one who retired last year, one who is preparing to retire; and one who is at active mid-career. We have not dictated to them what they will choose to put into the repository. Instead, following the lead of the *Minds of Carolina* project, we have asked them to tell us what

they want to preserve as emblematic of their work and potentially make available in this way. We are providing them with the technological assistance to recover, prepare, and load digital objects and even to digitize paper materials that they feel would be significant for online access. We built on work done in the same seminar in 2003 to develop repository policies on levels of service and support for different formats and types of materials and intellectual property, privacy, and confidentiality concerns, which we adapted to meet their specific concerns as the project progresses.

Progressing to Institutionalization

This work taught us much about what the OAIS documentation refers to as the "Producer-Archive Interface," but the next step should be to discover whether we can make the repository sustainable. This is the focus of the ALA/Ingenta grant project, which has four elements: 1) studying measurable benefits, 2) eliciting perceived benefits, 3) recording and tracking costs, and 4) creation of a faculty/staff management panel.

Benefits that can be measured objectively include usage of the site itself and the measurement of link establishment to the site. We intend to observe these behaviors for one month after materials have been loaded into the repository without advertising, to establish a baseline. Then we intend to permit OAI harvesting of the metadata exposed by DSpace and to register our DSpace for scanning by Google Scholar in order to observe any resulting increase at monthly intervals. In addition, we propose to analyze the faculty members' citation frequency and web presence before and after aggressively exposing the materials in the repository. We expect to see that the repository presence will have a discernable impact on faculty visibility as measured by citation analysis and web metrics, and that this will be true even for the two faculty members who are actually retired.

In order to discover what the perceived benefits to the faculty may be, I will carry out "exit interviews" with participating faculty members after the first two months of the OAI and Google Scholar exposure of repository materials. Minimally-directed interviews will address interaction with student archivists, permanence and intellectual property concerns, usefulness of the repository to the faculty members themselves, and their general reflections on the experience. Because the faculty members we have worked with so far include retired, retiring, and active members, we expect to see different concerns, different motivations, and different experiences described in these interviews, which we expect will reflect in some degree the concerns both of the latter half of the human developmental life-cycle and the superimposed university faculty career trajectory.

We intend to turn to the financial records of the School of Information and interviews with the IT staff of the School to determine the costs incurred in the initiation of the repository, including hardware and software, general IT infrastructure, and repository setup and management costs. This latter item we hope to model directly as the Research Assistant funded under the grant learns and performs ongoing repository management tasks during the grant period.

Finally, we believe that a departmental institutional repository such as we propose represents a level at which direct participation by depositors in management and decision-making can establish the buy-in that can lead to institutionalization. To test this hypothesis we intend to invite faculty and staff to form a management panel for the School of Information repository and to elicit formal advice from the panel on a number of issues through facilitated discussion with relevant panel members:

- Value of the contents for teaching purposes

- Potential value to the School for administrative work
- Potential usefulness to students (as, for example, a repository for digital portfolios)
- Usefulness to the research community

We hope that these discussions will both elicit a prioritized set of projects that can demonstrate additional benefits to the School and that the panel will evolve into a permanent faculty/staff committee, but that remains to be seen; in this kind of action research, much depends upon the actual interest of the participants.

The archive as boundary object for disciplinary knowledge construction: This theme has emerged from my involvement as a member of the American Anthropological Association's AnthroSource Steering Committee, which is charged with guiding the development of a disciplinary portal intended eventually to provide access to many of the most important materials for the study of anthropology and which will include an archive for both AAA's own materials and other materials that may over time be entrusted to it. The first materials that AnthroSource will host will be the nineteen peer-reviewed journals published under the aegis of AAA, digitally reformatted. These journals, going forward, will be moved to an automated digital workflow system that will support both paper publication and the production of digital versions of the content for online hosting. This invisible process raised for me the issue of how AAA might wish to document the process of editing and peer review once these processes are made part of a single system, and suggested a research project to address both what disciplinary practice presently is and how it might change. One student spent a semester devising a questionnaire for surveying non-automated workflow practices in journal editing, interviewing several journal editors on the UT campus. One of my PhD students will be studying the social networks created by peer review in the case of the journal *Libraries & Culture*. I will be working personally with colleagues who will be automating the editorial processes for that journal during the coming year. All of these activities point in the direction of larger issues but provide local examples for investigating them.

Purpose and goals of the research

Peer-reviewed scholarly journals are at the heart of the higher education infrastructure and the production of new knowledge (and therefore new intellectual property) in academia, and this is why the stakes in control of them are so high. The issues raised by the open access movement to reduce the costs of scholarly communication have made it clear that those whose voluntary labor actually produces new knowledge in this way are generally committed both to making this knowledge broadly and freely available as it is produced and to ensuring its archival preservation over time in the form of an accessible commons. This academic support has made the Mellon-funded journal archiving investigations extremely important to the inclusion of archival concerns in the digital library arena.

The struggle over current access, however, with its focus on the archiving of "published" work, has pushed into the background editorial recordkeeping practices—especially those surrounding peer review and revision—and the role that they actually play in the knowledge production process. We are going to administer the questionnaire to a list of more than 60 scholarly journal editors at universities in the state of Texas in order to discover and define what these practices are and how the records they generate

may (or may not) document adequately the process of knowledge production through scholarly journal publishing. We will take advantage of the fact that so many social science and humanities journals have been slow in the transition to automation, so it is possible to observe both paper and digital practice and systems and to discover what kinds of changes automation may be bringing to the documentation of the editorial process.

Steps in the investigation

1) Review the literatures on digital journal archiving, integrated publishing workflow systems, and peer review as it affects the scholarly journal editorial workflow process.

2) Gather and analyze data from a survey on editorial practice and record generation administered to editorial personnel of the nineteen refereed journals of the American Anthropological Association in November 2004.

3) Complete inventories and records schedules for *Libraries and Culture* and *French Colonial History*; these tasks will involve the completion of interviews and inventories of existing paper and digital materials. The process followed will draw upon standard archival inventory practice as well as the InterPARES I and II qualitative case study methods, but will focus on records that support informal as well as formal functions. Inventory and schedule *Ethnohistory* (Madison, WI) and *Southeastern Archaeology* (Lexington, KY) in the same way. While at the University of Wisconsin, review the archival holdings from *American Archivist*'s editorial office. Finally, follow up on the AAA survey by inventorying and scheduling three AAA journals.

4) Develop a general schedule with specific variance parameters to accommodate AAA editorial practices and to serve as a template "Submission Information Package" agreement for archiving digital workflow records targeted for retention. Specify the provision of relevant archival documentation features in the anticipated automated editorial workflow system to be used by AAA editors.

The nature of the (archival) digital record: This area of research speaks to questions that arise in all my archival courses, and it includes consideration of the several aspects of the digital object that make it problematic in comparison with records that can be unambiguously "fixed permanently to a medium."

Speech act theory and digital records properties

Recent studies of research needs with reference to the preservation of digital records have often mentioned or pointed to the "significant properties" of the record, those features that confer "recordness" or evidential validity on the record and that must therefore be preserved intact as the record itself is preserved into the future. It is clear that everyone at least pretends to know generally what is meant by this locution: archivists and records managers say that precise replication of the original record's every feature is not always essential to its evidentiary (or even other) value, so it may not be worthwhile to preserve every feature if costs cannot justify doing so. Another advantage accrues as well: if there is a way to decide what features may be lost without harm to the primary function and/or meaning of the record, it may be possible to avoid destroying whole series that cannot be perfectly preserved.

What is more difficult to discuss is what "significant properties" are relevant to any given record and whether it is possible to describe any general principles by which these can be specified for whole types and classes of records. Various models of record structure have been advanced, usually articulated in terms of preservation metadata elements that would *support* the preservation of specific significant properties, but although there has been a great deal of discussion of how to preserve records and of various levels of preservation, no mechanism has been proposed for making and justifying specific decisions for what should or may be lost without destroying specific significant properties of the record.

Two major models of "recordness" have been widely recognized and partially implemented, but because implementations are so recent, there has been no opportunity so far to see what will happen to these records and what decisions may be taken when the underlying technological platform changes. The two models have been derived from the definitions of records features derived from the study of diplomatics (Duranti, InterPARES) and from literary warrant from business and legal best practices (Bearman and Cox), but both of these only *assume* an established (and unchanging) evaluative context in which to make such decisions, rather than making it explicit.

What is needed is a basis for establishing the *social* significance of properties of the digital object, so that we can determine which of its properties are necessary to the continued social functioning of the object and which are not; which we can do without and which are vital to the central meaning and effect of the record.

As has recently been pointed out in the Minnesota Historical Society's review of NHPRC standards, archivists are not the only people for whom some of these questions are of concern. This project suggests that the clue to a possible way forward lies in the business process reengineering craze of the 1980s and 1990s, which responded to the widespread integration of information technology into the business environment by flattening bureaucratic hierarchies and introducing network structures into business communication. A significant part of this work brought speech act theory (Austin, Searle) and the notion of communicative action (Habermas) to bear on the analysis of business communications and the design of network workspaces under the rubric of the "language/action perspective." Further, this research impinged significantly on developing trends in information science concerned with the analysis of digital environments as communication environments (Suchman, etc.). This direct application to the problem of interest, government and managerial communication, suggested to me that speech act theory was adequate to the analysis and decomposition of the records created within these communication systems.

The emergence of a "postmodern archivy" has also raised issues of the situatedness of the archival record. This analysis has shown that much of archival practice as it has developed in the West is implicitly bound up with the structure and functioning of hierarchical bureaucracies in nineteenth- and twentieth-century nation-states. As the archival profession adjusts to postmodern government and other administrative entities in a globalizing context where communication environments increasingly exclude direct communication and even an underlying acquaintance between communicating individuals, it is already clear that new ecologies of communication and trust will emerge and be expressed in forms of communication that have not yet been

seen. We need another way to evaluate evidence, a "meta-evaluation" that can account for such innovation by first explaining what we have been doing already.

In this line of research I expect to revisit the characteristics of records that support evidentiary value as framed in the archival literature, but to attempt to transcend those culturally-specific formulations to look at records in terms of speech acts in an economy of communicative action and to conceive of their significant properties as constituting various kinds of illocutionary force. I intend to review digital record forms, from elementary "flat" forms like correspondence to extremely complex dynamic forms like so-called "active" webpages composed of style sheets, visual elements, and textual content databases, and to apply to these forms an analysis in terms of speech act theory. I intend to use for my sample the digital records being created by the administrative staff of the School of Information, taking advantage of the fact that a class project in 2001 undertook a comprehensive inventory of these materials. Within the School we also have access to emerging and experimental communication forms like weblogs, wikis, and collaboration spaces.

Steps in the investigation
1) Update iSchool e-records inventory and records schedule
2) Review of Pittsburgh "literary warrant" literature and its evaluative assumptions
3) Review of UBC/InterPARES diplomatics literature and its evaluative assumptions
4) Review Speech Act Theory, Language/Action perspective literature
5) Analyze communicative forms in terms of technological functions
6) Analyze communicative forms present in School of Information electronic records in terms of speech act theory

Governmental recordkeeping and the structuration of democracy: My appraisal class and our discussions of especially its primary theme of how not to keep everything informs this topic. Archivists need to address seriously the tension between the ability to achieve "perfect regulability" (Lessig) or complete documentation, by instrumenting networked systems, and the totalitarian implications of such a regime. It is important here to understand whether archivists' paper practices, which have entailed the weeding out and destruction of 95% of created records, may have been protecting us all along from such a possibility, out of simple necessity—or whether this scale of destruction has instead enabled a stupendous lack of accountability. This is an inchoate area of my research, which I am referring to as the "5% Solution." I am investigating the literature on literacy and oral tradition for parallels that preliminary research has suggested may exist with the cumulative effects of archival destruction of the record, and to investigate whether specific kinds of constraints on the historical record are correlated with different communicative technologies and different cultural and governmental forms. I have begun to address this issue briefly in the introduction to my forthcoming book *Practicing Ethnohistory*. I expect to address it in more detail in an essay I intend to prepare this fall in conjunction with teaching the class on appraisal and selection of records..