



2024 ANNUAL SPRING MEETING RECAP

Looking Back, Looking Forward: Advancing Accessibility in Archives

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

Presenter: **Dr. Lydia Tang**, LYRASIS, Synopsis by **Sara Mouch**, the University of Toledo

Dr. Lydia Tang, Outreach and Engagement Coordinator for LYRASIS, was this year's keynote speaker. In her address, she emphasized the importance of increasing the accessibility of archives and shared tools that archivists can use to improve their work in this area.

Dr. Tang first shared her experience of becoming aware of the barriers to archives through her personal relationships, which

inspired her to get involved in the work of professional organizations focusing on accessibility. Doing so led her to co-found the Accessibility and Disability Section of the Society of American Archivists, which undertook the mission of keeping archivists employed during the COVID-19 pandemic, just months after its founding.

Changes to the Americans with Disability Act and Web Content Accessibility Guidelines underscore the responsibility of archivists to improve access to information and services to everyone. Dr. Tang emphasized a culture of care and invited her attendees to do so as well. She illustrated patterns of inaccessibility found in libraries and archives, such as furniture arrangement, types of available furniture, location of collections, and the information publicly available on library spaces. Dr. Tang followed up with providing examples of strategies archivists can employ to combat such patterns.

From removing physical barriers to improving the performance of online tools such as screen readers with the use of headers and alt text when designing web content, Dr. Tang addressed obstacles to implementing change and offered solutions. Furthermore, she addressed the need to consider accessibility when hiring new professionals.

Dr. Tang's clear and practical examples provided attendees with a place to start when returning to their own institutions. In addition, she equipped the group with multiple resources from which to start learning how to be a better ally for disabled people.

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The President's Message



Greetings SOA Members,

Let me begin by stating that I feel truly honored to have the opportunity to serve as the SOA president during the next year. I first became involved with SOA when I returned to Ohio six years ago to continue my archival career at Ohio Northern University. Since then, I have found SOA to be the most rewarding archival organization that I have ever been a part of. From day one, I engaged with passionate and knowledgeable archivists from across our great state and found several opportunities to serve and grow as a volunteer within our organization. During that time, I watched SOA be led by amazing and dedicated individuals who navigated our organization through several challenging circumstances and put SOA on a sustainable path forward.

Recently we continued to build on that momentum, as evidenced through our 2024 annual meeting *Archives for All: Enhancing Accessibility and Inclusivity*. The conference showcased the best of our organization, notably including several sessions that challenged us to continue to evolve our archival practices to better serve our diverse society. Additionally, the conference once again offered in-person and virtual attendance, allowing members from across the state (and outside of the state), to share and learn from one another in a setting that worked best for them. We owe a debt of gratitude to everyone who made the conference possible, including our fantastic EPC co-chairs Sara Mouch and Michelle Sweetser, all the EPC committee members, our presenters and panelists, Ohio History Connection, and our generous sponsors.

I am also tremendously proud of the SOA Constitution and Bylaws revisions that our membership overwhelmingly passed at the meeting. These changes aim to increase our organization's efficiency, transparency, and inclusiveness, and I believe will help SOA Council better serve our membership moving forward. One revision in particular that I would like to highlight is making the JEDAI committee co-chairs voting members of the SOA Council starting with the 2025 elections. This change was made in the hope of empowering more voices in Council decision-making, and due to JEDAI's critical work across our organization, I cannot think of a better place to start than expanding voting privileges to their committee co-chairs. Should this model prove successful—and I believe it will be—I hope that our organization will continue to look at how we can bring more voices to Council decision-making in the future.

Looking ahead I see an organization that is ready to continue to grow from strength to strength as we welcome several new individuals to SOA leadership positions. Newly elected SOA officers include Jennifer Long Morehart – Vice President/President-Elect, Sophia McGuire – Treasurer, and Jim DaMico – at-large Council Member. Additionally, we have a number of new committee co-chairs: Sarah Aisenbrey – Advocacy & Outreach, Hannah Kemp-Severance – JEDAI, Amber Bales – Marketing & Communications, and Stephanie Shreffler – Membership & Awards.

I cannot wait to see what the future brings to our organization, and I look forward to working with and learning from all of you during the coming year.

Best wishes.

Matt Francis

SOA Mission

Founded in 1968, the Society of Ohio Archivists' mission is to improve the state of archives in Ohio by promoting the archival profession and providing professional development and networking opportunities for Ohio's professional and aspiring archivists.

SESSIONS

Principles and Practice for Accessible Digitization

Presenters: **Sidney Gao**, University of Cincinnati; **James Van Mil**, University of Cincinnati

Sidney Gao, Digital Collections Manager, and James Van Mil, Digital Projects & Preservation Librarian of the University of Cincinnati, regularly collaborate as they work to create accessible digital collections for users. Framing their presentation around the idea that accessibility is intertwined with the concepts of diversity and inclusion, the presenters began by discussing their rationale for prioritizing accessibility for digital collections (including legal, ethical, and established professional best practices).

The bulk of the presentation focused on the importance of establishing local processes and policies to guide project work as opposed to relying upon one-at-a-time access accommodations. At the same time, it was acknowledged that individuals needed to focus on what they could reasonably achieve and not on striving for an impossible perfection. As a part of this larger focus the presenters discussed a number of practical tools and approaches for creating accessible digital collections, including extensively discussing their experiences with PDF/UA, Transkribus, and the use of image descriptions and alt-text. Importantly, while the presenters are from a large, public university, the information presented focused on scalable solutions that make sense for the context of attendees' local institutions.

SOA By-Laws Amendment

Presenters: **SOA By-Laws Revision Task Force**

In support of the upcoming vote on proposed changes to the SOA Constitution & Bylaws, the Bylaws Revision Task Force held a panel discussion that detailed the process behind the proposed changes, the motivations for the changes, the voting process, and a review of all the proposed changes. Following the introductory presentation audience members were able to provide feedback and ask questions, while task force members shared their personal perspectives on their work.

Archive Management Practices & Strategies for Small Academic Libraries

Presenters: **Brigitte Galauner**, University of Findlay; **Jenni Royce**, University of Findlay

This informative session was presented by two academic librarians who have taken on archival responsibilities for their institution. The presenters began by detailing their efforts to create a strategic plan to guide their archival work, which led to the identification of four key pillars: development and organization, preservation and maintenance, accessibility, and marketing and outreach. While discussing the respective pillars, the presenters covered multiple actions undertaken in support of their goals.

From there the session shifted to an overview of how the librarians assessed their work and what they learned through the process. Some of their final recommendations included learning how to manage your priorities based on existing policies and job descrip-

tions; starting with small projects that are attainable; utilizing extra hands from other individuals (including students, volunteers, other staff, etc.) when possible; and learning to say “no” when resources or priorities did not properly align with a proposed project.

Building Inclusive Futures

Presenter: **Candace Pine**, Miami University

Candace Pine, Rare Books & Manuscripts Librarian, presented on the development of Miami University's DEIA Strategic Plan. Covered in-depth were how the strategic plan came about, the initial ideas and goals of the working group, and the end product. Pine also covered how the working group documented their processes, sharing specific examples, various challenges faced by the group, and how the group plans to continue their work. [Check out the final product.](#)

Intersectional DEI

Presenter: **Michelle Ganz**, Dominican Sisters of Peace

Michelle Ganz, Director of Archives, provided a “common-sense approach to accessibility” through the lens of intersectional DEI. Ganz began with an introduction about DEI before launching into practical examples of ways archival institutions can add and think about accessibility accommodations. Ganz also discussed the need to rethink and evaluate old processes, such as job postings and interviews, to gauge how accessible, or in most cases, how inaccessible they are. Ganz finished with how individuals can get involved and stay involved in practical ways.

One Thing You Cannot Do Is Take

Presenters: **Alia Wegner**, Miami University; **Janet Rhodes**, Toledo Lucas County Public Library; **Brenda J. Foster**, Columbus College of Art & Design; **Nick Pavlik**, Bowling Green State University; **Amber Bales**, The Ohio State University

The 2023 ILEAD group presented their “[Learning to Listen: Rethinking the Approach to Community Archiving](#)” - a short film covering the practice of community archiving. The final video was a culmination of a year's worth of work conducting interviews with various community archivists, community members engaged in memory work, and practitioners. The group then followed up with a discussion of the project, takeaways from the interviews, and lessons learned from the project.

A Fresh Start; Rolling with the Surges; Exhibits for All

Presenters: **Judith Weiner**, Ohio State University Health Sciences Library; **Kristen Rodger**, Ohio State University Health Sciences Library; **Stephanie Shreffler**, University of Dayton; **Michele Jennings**, University of Dayton

This combination session started with a lightning round presentation from Judith Weiner and Kristen Rodger about The Ohio State University Health Sciences Library's ongoing project to document the COVID-19 pandemic. The two discussed the origins of the project, how the work was completed—primarily through surveys of medical staff at the Ohio State medical center—and how they

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plan to continue the work by engaging original participants and expanding their pool. The presentation was followed with poster presentations: Stephanie Shreffler, *A Fresh Start: Providing Better Access by Redefining Collection Mission and Goals* and Michele Jennings, *Exhibits for all: Universal design and audio guide creation for exhibits*.

Trust the (Re)Process: Enhancing Accessibility for the Jim Harrison Collection

Presenter: **Andrea Howard**, Grand Valley State University

Synopsis by **Sara Mouch**, The University of Toledo

Andrea Howard, Visiting Processing Archivist at Grand Valley State University, walked her audience through her experience in developing a plan to reorganize and describe the Jim Harrison Collection—a heavily used, 160-linear foot collection concerning writer and film producer Jim Harrison—with the main goal of increasing user accessibility.

Howard weighed the positives and negatives involved in the time and cost of reprocessing a large archival collection. With a diverse audience that included classes, individual students, biographers, filmmakers, and fans, complexities in the original arrangement and description, as well as mounting unprocessed additions and limitations in physical access, put up many barriers to such a popular collection. It was clear that any attempt to improve the accessibility of the Jim Harrison Collection would only have a positive impact.

The process to improve access to the Jim Harrison Collection included re-numbering boxes and series, labeling folders, and improving the descriptions for memorabilia and correspondence. In addition, the collection was housed in a building without an elevator, so Howard arranged for it to be moved to the same level as the reading room. The project led to a collection that was easier to understand, provided access to all the materials, and made for a better experience for both patrons and reference staff.

Attendees showed interest in how the process was documented and when access to the new finding aid would be available. There was also curiosity about feedback from patrons on the results of the project, and if there were future plans for assessment. At least one user had reported a positive experience in finding an item in the collection that had previously been more difficult to locate.

Meeting People Where They Are: Reassessing Programming Needs and Collections Access Points.

Presenters: **Kristen Newby**, Columbus Metropolitan Library; **Natalie Fritz**, Clark County Historical Society; **Rachael Bussert**, Dayton Metropolitan Library

Synopsis by **Riza Miklowski**, Akron-Summit County Public Library

Kristen Newby, Special Collections Manager, Rachael Bussert, Local History Librarian, and Natalie Fritz, Archivist and Outreach Director, spoke about the local history programs they created at their institutions to promote access to their collections and engage their audiences in new and interesting ways.

Rachel Bussert talked about the Dayton Metro Library's virtual programming initiatives and their return to onsite programming. These new programs were inspired by research questions from patrons about who died in their homes, how to preserve family heirlooms, and what the library's local history collections contain. From these questions, Bussert developed programs about preservation, paranormal research, and interactive vault tours focused on pop culture topics.

Natalie Fritz presented about the Clark County Historical Society's programming initiatives inspired by their most popular social media posts. Programs included virtual walking tours, trivia nights, presentations showcasing collections and new exhibits, behind-the-scenes tours of the historical society, oral histories interviews, programs created in partnership with local organizations and researchers about local history topics, and their community scanning day event.

Kristen Newby spoke about the Local History & Genealogy division's efforts to engage the public through branch outreach at the Columbus Metropolitan Library. These programs included walking tours focused on a neighborhood's residents and buildings, branch history days, which included partnerships with local historical societies and residents, history pop-up exhibits at branches, and a program based around pop-culture to connect diverse groups and younger audiences with genealogy.

Thank you to the [SOA Educational Programming Committee](#) for the session write-ups.

Feeling Our Feelings:

NAVIGATING GRIEF, EMOTIONS, AND EMPATHY AS ARCHIVISTS

Sarah Aisenbrey, Archivist, *Sisters of the Precious Blood*, Dayton, Ohio

*Sensitivity warning: topics of death, PTSD, secondary trauma, pregnancy loss, loss of a parent, and grieving

This article is about emotions, specifically grief. This is a tough topic for many people – in Western culture, our exposure to grief-related topics is based on “buttoned-up” societal norms. In their book *What’s Your Grief?*, Eleanor Haley and Litsa Williams say the following: “Your assumptions about loss and grief are shaped from an early age by influences such as society, cultural groups, religion, family attitudes, past experiences, television, books, movies, and other media. These influences may contain valuable insights, but each carries a significant margin of error regarding the realities of grief.”

For many archivists, grief is a constant in our daily lives. We often work closely with aging populations, and we are bound to experience loss at some point. In this article, I want to focus on the aspects of grief, emotions, and empathy in the archives.

Secondary Trauma

Before I talk about grief specific to the archives, I want to explain a term that you will hear throughout the rest of this article: secondary trauma. It is also called compassion fatigue, vicarious trauma, or secondary traumatic stress. According to the United States Administration for Children and Families, secondary trauma is a set of observable reactions to working with people who have been traumatized and mirrors the symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder.²

Many of us know people in fields such as healthcare, social work, prison reform, and anthropology and the difficulties they deal with day-to-day. On Instagram, I follow a woman who sets up a stand in Los Angeles’ Skid Row where she tries to help the unhoused people in any way she can. She has said she is strong most days, but other days, she comes home with a weight on her shoulders. While nurses, doctors, veterinarians, and others handle extremely difficult situations daily, and their secondary trauma is well-documented outside of their professional literature, they aren’t the only ones who can receive secondary trauma from their occupations.

Archivists’ secondary trauma is really only mentioned in their own literature. For a little over a decade, the archival community has been producing research on the impact of archival work on archivists, especially in relation to secondary trauma, emotions, subjectivity during processing, empathy, and aging and dying donors.

A Review of Archival Literature on Grief, Emotions, and Empathy

Jennifer Douglas

Jennifer Douglas from The University of British Columbia is one of the leading experts on the overlap of grief, secondary trauma, and emotion in archives. In her article “Treat Them with the Reverence of Archivists: Records Work, Grief Work, and Relationship Work in the Archives,” she says, “Grief work and records work overlap, as the bereaved create records to continue their bonds and social presence.”³ Douglas’s work stemmed from her own personal loss of a pregnancy. In her journey to recovery, she researched how other families in this horrible situation coped, and she found they did it through archival materials. They saved mementos from their loss and shared them with communities on social media. They grieved together.

Cheryl Regehr

Cheryl Regehr of the University of Toronto, in her article “Emotional responses in archival work,” says, “A recent but growing body of scholarly work is focusing on the emotional toll on archivists of working with traumatizing collections and people who are researching or preserving artifacts of their own traumatic stories.”⁴ Many of the materials we preserve have not always had great histories. They are difficult to view, especially when they reflect the archivist’s identity. An example is the recent reparative work done with the archives of Native Boarding Schools. Many Indigenous archivists and memory workers have mediated some of the research, and they explain how intense it is to be faced with what was done to their grandparents and parents.

Many scholars in the Western archival tradition, especially Sir Hilary Jenkinson in the 1940s,⁵ have advocated for archivists to be objective and emotionless during their work. As we recognize that we are not robots, we realize that our emotions inflect every part of our work.

Terry Cook and Seon Young Min

In his essay “Evidence, Memory, Identity, and Community: Four Shifting Archival Paradigms,” Terry Cook writes:

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1 Eleanor Haley and Litsa Williams, *What’s Your Grief? Lists to Help You Through Any Loss* (Philadelphia: Quirk Books, 2022), 18.
2 “Secondary Traumatic Stress,” Administration for Children & Families, <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/trauma-toolkit/secondary-traumatic-stress>, accessed June 7, 2024.
3 Jennifer Douglas et al., “Treat Them with the Reverence of Archivists’: Records Work, Grief Work, and Relationship Work in the Archives,” *Archivaria* 88 (2019): 102.
4 Cheryl Regehr et al., “Emotional Responses in Archival Work,” *Archival Science* 23 (2023): 562.
5 See Hilary Jenkinson, *A Manual of Archive Administration Including the Problems of War Archives and Archive Making* (New York: The Clarendon Press, 1922), and Hilary Jenkinson, “British Archives and the War,” *The American Archivist* 7(1) (1944): 1-17.

The ... need for the archivist to research and understand the complex nature of the functions, structures, processes, and related contexts of creation and contemporary use of records, and to interpret their relative importance as the basis for modern archival appraisal... undermined the traditional notion of the impartiality of the archivist as neutral guardian or objective keeper of evidence... Archivists inevitably will inject their own values, experiences, and education, and reflect those of various external pressures, into all research and decision-making.⁶

An example of this phenomenon is family photographs. Many photos we encounter were taken not only to document a specific point in time, but also to show what emotions the subjects felt. In her master's thesis, titled "Permission to Feel," Seon Young Min introduces the concept of "emotions provenance," or the emotional aspect of the creation of a record. She links this to the archivist's experience of processing collections of photos:

Family photographs will be... a historical example of how emotions provenance can be studied as part of the record-creating process. The camera, as a record-creating tool, has an emotional dimension. The camera is often used to encourage family interaction, to give families a means to express themselves, and to document significant occasions and events. In addition, the familiar visual cues captured in family photographs allow archivists to personally relate to and trigger their memories associated with the photographs.⁷

As archivists, we can provide more context for unidentified photos with our experiences. For example, archivists working with collections that represent their cultural experiences can add additional context to photos based on the family traditions, events, or even clothing worn. Utilizing our memories can help provide better descriptions to photos.

Michelle Caswell

Michelle Caswell of UCLA writes in her article "Dusting for Fingerprints: Introducing Feminist Standpoint Appraisal" about the importance of abandoning a "view from nowhere," or a completely impartial standpoint when processing archival collections. She writes, "Members of marginalized communities *see things differently* than those who occupy dominant positions, and those differences in perspective strengthen and enrich the creation of knowledge, leading to better questions, research methods, and scholarship."⁸ She advocates for involving donors, especially from marginalized communities, to be involved in archival processing.

Case Studies

To give some examples of how grief can affect us in the archives, I will present two case studies that show how we can positively

channel our feelings into our work, even when it is difficult.

Case Study 1

My first case study is from a 2021 article by Elvia Arroyo-Ramírez in the *Journal of Critical Library and Information Studies*. In "Radical Empathy in the Context of Suspended Grief," Arroyo-Ramírez explains how she processed the papers of Argentinian poet Juan Gelman. Gelman lived during Argentina's Dirty War (the name used by the Argentinian dictatorship, or *junta*, at the time) which took place from 1976 to 1983. During the war, the Argentinian government found political dissidents and placed them in concentration camps or killed them, what is also known as "disappearing" them. His papers included his poetry, correspondence, and other typical papers in an author's collection, but they also included hundreds of documents about his son and daughter-in-law, who were disappeared during the war. Because of Gelman's political affiliations with anti-government groups, he went into hiding for several years. He felt that the government targeted his family in his stead, which gave him a sense of overwhelming guilt. In response, Gelman spent the better part of two decades trying to learn what happened to his family members, including a formal investigation through the Argentinian government with the help of international human rights organizations. His son and daughter-in-law were confirmed dead, but their child was living.

Interestingly and importantly, his papers on investigating the disappearance were mixed in with his poetry and correspondence. Arroyo-Ramírez explains that "besides being an archival collection of an internationally acclaimed Latin American poet... [this archival collection is] a human rights archive created as a response to grief, an instillation of hope, because of a lack of an official government record."⁹

During her time processing the collection, Arroyo-Ramírez experienced the loss of her former partner and her best friend. She had just started a new job after the death of her best friend, and because of the bereavement policies at her workplace, she could not attend the funeral. She considered this "suspended grief," i.e., grieving alone. Arroyo-Ramírez compared this to Gelman's suspended grief in exile, and she channeled her grief into processing Gelman's collection. She writes:

I found a deep solace and catharsis in our mutual grieving as I sat with his thoughts, his poetry about his murdered family, and his unwavering fight for justice in their names. His archive gave me much needed purpose and occasional escape from my own grieving to focus on his... grieving... The emotional processing of suspended grief became part of the process of archival processing...¹⁰

Arroyo-Ramírez found comfort in her work during one of the most

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6 Terry Cook, "Evidence, Memory, Identity, and Community: Four Shifting Archival Paradigms," *Archival Science* 13 (2013): 101-102.

7 Seon Young Min, "Permission to Feel: Refocusing Provenance on Emotions Using the Photographs of the Dave White Family Fonds," (Master's Thesis, University of Manitoba, 2020), 26.

8 Michelle Caswell, "Dusting for Fingerprints: Introducing Feminist Standpoint Appraisal," *Journal of Critical Library and Information Studies* 3(2) (2021): 9 [emphasis in original].

9 Elvia Arroyo-Ramírez, "Radical Empathy in the Context of Suspended Grief: An Affective Web of Mutual Loss," *Journal of Critical Library and Information Studies* 3(2) (2021): 6.

10 *Ibid.*, 9.

difficult times in her life. Another archivist may not have picked out the nuances of Gelman's grief.

Case Study 2

My second case study comes from my own experience as an archivist. My story focuses on the aspect of secondary trauma related to aging and dying donors who donate collections to the archives.

I began working for the Sisters of the Precious Blood in November 2018. I learned what was expected of me professionally for a Sister's funeral. I provide the Sister's file to the person writing the eulogy, put together memory boards with photos for the viewing, give photos to family members, and keep all of the internal records. I was also attending every funeral because that had always been the custom for the archivist (who had previously been a Sister). During the pandemic, I helped to facilitate the funerals over Zoom since we had limited staff who could come and go from the central house. We had 17 funerals from March 30, 2020, to March 20, 2022 (none due to Covid).

Because of the traumatic experience of the death of my dad in childhood, I have always been attuned to the grief of others and I think I have handled my grief relatively well over the years. However, in late 2021 into early 2022, I noticed I started having many problems working on funeral-related materials and, especially, attending funerals. I had panic attacks during the services and soon had out-of-body experiences where I could see myself watching the funeral. I went to my supervisor at the time and explained that I could not physically go to another funeral, and this was a boundary I would not cross. However, small requests crept into my walled-off boundary and slowly chipped away at it, and I found myself back in similar situations. It is hard because you do not want to disappoint anyone, and you want to seem strong.

As 2022 continued, we lost five more Sisters. All the while, I was doing intensive therapy. I felt embarrassed that I needed this because, in comparison, my situation felt so minor.

In early 2023, I hit a breaking point. I could not focus on my job, and my personal life was non-existent. I reached out for help. My coworkers expressed compassion and care for me, and one of them in HR gave me the option to take leave for a month. I took that option, and with firmer boundaries, I came back to work doing much better.

Since then, we have had two deaths. They were both hard because I loved both of the Sisters, but now the people who need to know understand why I do not attend the funerals. I now use the work surrounding a Sister's death as a way to channel my grief into memorializing her loss. Like Arroyo-Ramirez, I find comfort in the process.

Practical Tips

So, what do we take from all of this? How can we apply these lessons to our daily lives as archivists?

Advocate for paid work and access to mental health services. In "Not 'Just My Problem to Handle': Emerging Themes on Secondary Trauma and Archivists," Katie Sloan et al. interviewed Canadian archivists' perception of secondary trauma in the workplace. They write: "Archivists who reported having experienced secondary trauma identified several reasons why they might not access available support services, including organizational culture, workplace precarity, and stigma associated with admitting to being emotionally affected at work."¹¹ I think of Arroyo-Ramirez's not being able to attend her best friend's funeral because of her workplace's bereavement policy. Ensuring that workers have security, stability, and access to resources is one of the best ways to stem issues with grief or secondary trauma.

Mental health and wellness have come a long way, even over the past decade. But there is still work to do. Many health insurance plans support mental health needs, but a lot more do not. If your health insurance provider does not cover these needs, advocate to HR or your leadership team that you would like to have this option the next time they review the coverage. Also, there are free or low-cost solutions you can present in the meantime. For example, our local hospice, Ohio's Hospice of Dayton, provides free grief counseling to anyone who needs it (this includes people who have never had a loved one on hospice care).

Advocate for your well-being. I have an article called "The Comprehensive Guide to Resisting Overcommitment" by Katrina Spencer bookmarked on my work computer. The article can be summed up in a wonderful sentence: "Take what serves you and leave the rest."¹²

Slow down. Slowing down, thinking about what you need, and giving yourself grace can help during especially emotionally difficult seasons in your professional and personal life. If you need to take a day away from that exhibit to process a collection that brings you joy, do it. If you need a minute to gather yourself after a hard conversation, do it. Take a walk, have a drink, grab a snack, or go home a few minutes early. Also, ask for support from trusted colleagues or friends. I call these my "board of directors" — people who will listen to me and only offer advice if I ask for it.

Remember the people behind the collections. Arroyo-Ramirez writes, "In our professional discourse, we are still questioning and dismantling our feigned responsibility to neutrality and have just begun to center our affective responsibilities on the very humans we encounter as donors, record creators and subjects, users, and communities."¹³

To conclude, I think back to Arroyo-Ramirez and Gelman's papers alone. She said, "The best way I can describe grieving alone is like grieving in suspension—lacking the proper community to grieve, process, and mourn with as a congregational act."¹⁴ My hope is that we can be more open about these difficult topics so we can support and advocate for each other during difficult seasons in our professional and personal lives.

11 Katie Sloan et al., "Not 'Just My Problem to Handle': Emerging Themes on Secondary Trauma and Archivists," *Journal of Contemporary Archival Studies* 6 (2019): 21.
 12 Katrina Spencer, "The Comprehensive Guide to Resisting Overcommitment," up//root, December 7, 2021, <https://www.uproot.space/features/the-comprehensive-guide-to-resisting-overcommitment>, accessed June 7, 2024.
 13 Arroyo-Ramirez, "Radical Empathy in the Context of Suspended Grief," 10.
 14 Ibid., 8.

SOA Merit Awards

Each Spring at the annual meeting the SOA Merit Award is given to individuals or organizations that have, by excellence in deeds, actions, or initiatives, improved the state of archives in Ohio over the past year. Two awards were given this year to the Greene County Records Center and Archives, and jointly to the Columbus Metropolitan Library and the Cincinnati and Hamilton County Public Library.

The Greene County Records Center and Archives is honored for its work to preserve the vital records of Greene County through the new Online Catalog System and Digital Repository. County Records Manager and Archivist Robin Heise coordinated the procurement and implementation of a data management system and digital preservation system that worked together to provide improved access to the County records. To date nearly 4.8 million files (2.3 terabytes of data) were uploaded to the digital repository by staff. Approximately 3 million of these files are open to the public. Essential metadata was added to over 110,000 files. With the new online catalog as well as indexing at the file level, acces-

sibility has been greatly increased for all researchers. The digital repository not only provides greater access to public records, but it has also allowed for quicker responses to public records requests.

The Columbus Metropolitan Library and the Cincinnati and Hamilton County Public Library are honored for their work in preserving the archives of their hometown newspapers, the *Cincinnati Enquirer* and the *Columbus Dispatch*. The Cincinnati and Hamilton County Public Library recently acquired over a million images measuring 1,500 cubic feet of material, and the Columbus Metropolitan Library recently acquired 1,000 cubic feet of images and 400 cubic feet of other records. Based on user demand, over 8,600 images were digitized within a year of acquisition. Newspaper archives serve as an important source of collective memory for the communities they serve. These public libraries have improved the state of archives in Ohio by making their hometown newspaper archival sources available to all and ensuring the records are preserved for future generations.

SOA History Day Awards

The Society of Ohio Archivists collaborated with the Ohio History Connection to present two SOA History Day Awards on April 20, 2024, at Capital University in Bexley, Ohio.

Ohio History Day, affiliated with National History Day, helps students in grades 6-12 learn to research using primary and secondary sources, build a thesis and supporting argument, and create a documentary, exhibit, paper, performance, or website presenting their work.

The Society of Ohio Archivists supports Ohio History Day and archives by selecting the SOA History Day Awards based on the following [criteria](#):

- Project must demonstrate exceptional research and use of primary sources to include at least two of the following: letters, speeches, diaries, newspaper articles from the time, oral history interviews, documents, photographs, artifacts, or anything else that provides a first-hand account about a person or event.
- History Day Project winners must have used primary resources on site at a research institution housing those materials.
- All primary sources must be cited accurately in the bibliography of the paper.

The 2024 SOA History Day Award winners are:

Junior Division (grades 6-8):

Brady K. and Jensyn G.

The Toledo War: A Border Dispute Turning Point



2024 SOA History Day Junior Division winners Brady K. and Jensyn G. (Photo Courtesy of the Ohio History Connection.)



2024 SOA History Day Senior Division winners Joshua C. and Joshua G. (Photo Courtesy of the Ohio History Connection.)

Senior Division (grades 9-12):

Joshua C. and Joshua G.

Norman Borlaug and the Green Revolution: How One Man Sowed the Seeds of a Global Turning Point in Agriculture

Congratulations to the 2024 SOA History Day Award winners!

Thank you to the [SOA Membership and Awards Committee](#) for coordinating SOA History Day Awards selection. To learn more about History Day and SOA's involvement in the event, see George Bain and Connie Connor's blog post [National History Day at 50: A Salute](#).

(continued)

SOA Student Scholarship Award

Katie Gable

My involvement with archives began two years ago during the last year of my undergraduate studies at the University of Akron. I spent the majority of my final year earning my certificate in Museum and Archival studies and discovering my passion for the stewardship of history. My experience there ultimately led me to pursuing my MLIS degree, getting involved with organizations such as the Society of Ohio Archivists, and attending my very first professional conference.

As a first year MLIS student in an online, asynchronous program, attending the Society of Ohio Archivists Annual Meeting was not only an exciting experience, but an important one. There I was able to connect face to face with a range of professionals with different expertise, experiences, and perspectives that ultimately share my same passion. Attending the meeting confirmed for me that this is the field I want to work in, and these are the people I am looking forward to working with.

This year's meeting was centered around accessibility in archives. There were a multitude of sessions to choose from, many of which emphasized the importance of advocating for yourself, your peers, and your patrons. The first session I went to

was presented by Michelle Ganz from the Dominican Sisters of Peace. Michelle gave a wonderful presentation and what I liked most were the suggestions she provided for low- and no-cost ways to make archives more diverse, inclusive, and accessible. In some cases, these suggestions were as simple as using communication aids such as pencil and paper or Google Translate to best accommodate communication needs. While simple, it was something I had previously not thought about, and the perspective around this suggestion helped me to reflect more on current archival practices I have encountered and ways in which they could be improved to satisfy everyone's needs, not just the needs that are most common.

One of my favorite sessions was the engagement discussion with the SOA JEDAI committee. During this session, attendees were separated into groups to share their thoughts and experiences regarding SOA. As a fairly shy student in an online program, I appreciated the discussion prompts because they gave me a chance to share my opinions and hear from others as well. Taking the time to introduce ourselves to our little groups and discuss our responses to the questions provided me with the

opportunity to make connections with a diverse group of archival professionals from throughout the state of Ohio.

Overall, I had a wonderful experience attending the Society of Ohio Archivists Annual Meeting. Every session I attended was insightful, engaging, and helpful, and networking with diverse professionals enriched my knowledge and perspective of the field. I specifically would like to commend the SOA for not only organizing a conference focused on accessibility, but also making the conference itself accessible through hybrid sessions and live captions. I am so honored to have been awarded the student scholarship and as I reflect on my experience at my first SOA annual conference, I look forward to attending future conferences to connect with faces old and new and share in the joy of archival, research, education, collaboration, and development.



Katie Gable, SOA Student Scholarship Award recipient

SOA New Professional Award

Emilie Cornelius



Emilie Cornelius, SOA New Professional Award recipient

As a new professional, I am extremely thankful to the Membership & Awards Committee for presenting one of the New Professional Scholarships to me during this year's SOA Annual Meeting. I am a Texas native and new to the state of Ohio. My goal for this conference was to meet others in the profession and get a feel for what librarianship was like here.

Thursday was full of wonderful virtual sessions and project presentations. It really gave me an insight into what projects are even possible. Dyani Feige's presentation on *The Appalachian Regional Heritage Stewardship Program: Creating and Sustaining Communities of*

Opportunity really showed me that there is care and passion for preservation in this area that I haven't experienced back home.

The in-person portion of the conference took place on Friday at Capital University in Bexley. One of my favorite presentations had to be Jocelyn Robinson's presentation for *Creating Access for All at the WYSO Archives*. I had never thought about archival processes for radio, and it was inspiring to hear how she brought that project to life. Dr. Lydia Tang's keynote speech was also so insightful and inspiring to bring accessibility to light for every part of archives and libraries. Her examples and life experiences made it clear that we are on the right track for bringing accessibility to everyone, yet we still have a long way to go. Overall, the conference was an enlightening experience, and I enjoyed every moment of it. I'm so excited for next year's annual meeting.

SOA Student Scholarship Award

Jessica Licker



Jessica Licker, SOA Student Scholarship Award recipient

Thank you to the Society of Ohio Archivists for awarding me the student scholarship! I'm grateful to have attended the conference at Capital University this spring. This year's theme of *Archives for All: Enhancing Accessibility and Inclusion* has been incredibly useful as I finished my archival research as a rare books graduate assistant and transitioned into my new job as a digital literacy

librarian at a public library. Learning and access to information are some of the things I am most passionate about. The resources and methodologies shared at this year's conference ranged from advice for interpersonal interaction and how to use one's own privileges to support marginalized coworkers and patrons, to how to make sure the digitization of resources is done with accessibility in mind from the ground up. Everything I learned at the SOA conference is invaluable to both myself and the digital literacy team I am a part of as we create multi-format educational materials, finalize the ways in which they are to be distributed, and create ways to document our success and failures.

Libraries have always been a place I love, and history has always been a subject that fascinates me. With archives at the crossroads between the two, it is incredibly heartening to know that there is consistent work being done and methodologies being improved upon in order to make the spaces and materials accessible to all with the same level of ease. Most of my background is in public libraries from my undergraduate studies and employment, and in working with rare books from my graduate assistantship. Attending the SOA meeting has solidified my interest in publicly accessible archives as vital repositories for our shared history, making sure that our stories aren't reduced to a single dominant narrative. Getting to know more about the presenters and their research, and the people I was seated with and their work, was eye opening in the breadth of what sort of materials and research exist within the field of archives.

In the near future, I plan to enroll in the PennWest online MSLS programs to be dual certified in both local and archival studies, as well as reference and user services. Attending the SOA conference was a wonderful way to get to know the community of archivists working across Ohio and the work they're doing. In the meantime, I'm continuing to indulge my interest in experimental archeology around historical fiber crafting practice, continuing with making patterns from a WWI knitting and sewing pattern book, and starting on the transcription of a 1922 manual for the spinning and dyeing of wool. As I digitize the manual, I've been able to utilize my new knowledge on accessible transcribing practices.

SOA New Professional Award

Nikala Trujillo



Nikala Trujillo, SOA New Professional Award recipient

I was excited to attend the 2024 Society of Ohio Archivist Annual Meeting and honored to be the New Professional Award recipient this year. Thank you, SOA, for making attending this meeting possible. Additionally, the free membership and travel stipend I received were wonderful benefits.

As an emerging professional who has only been an Archivist for a few years, attending this annual meeting was crucial to my professional development and involvement in the field. *Archives for All: Enhancing Accessibility and Inclusivity* has been my favorite conference theme yet! A session that stood out most to me was by Michelle Ganz, *Intersectional DEI: We are Nobody without Everybody. A common-sense approach to accessibility*. Ganz gave great examples of how to be an ally in DEI, disrupt old patterns, and create new models, offering very doable approaches that one can take to make an impact. This year's theme had something for everyone!

I genuinely enjoyed the networking opportunities that this meeting offered. I always love attending round table sessions, sharing ideas, and getting to know others in the field. It was interesting to hear what brings people to participate in SOA and ideas on improving relationships.

The keynote speaker, Dr. Lydia Tang, shared many great resources on accessibility surrounding exhibits, fonts, new tools to try, and job accommodations. I gained valuable exposure to innovative ideas and new perspectives from all who presented. I loved hearing insight, experiences, and knowledge from different presenters. I learned up-to-date archival best practices and the latest field trends relating to diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility that will translate nicely into my practice.

A quote shared at this meeting that I found to be so powerful was "Nothing about us without us." I now understand better what "*Archives for All*" means and have tips to enact positive changes to be more accommodating and inclusive in the archives. I am excited that I get to use the new skills and ideas that I learned in my own professional and everyday practices. I am eager to share what I learned with others and cannot wait to use my new membership benefits. Again, thank you, SOA, for creating an informative and interesting conference. I cannot wait to attend the next one!

Ohio Preservation Council Scholarship Award

Niel White



Niel White, Ohio Preservation Council Student Scholarship Award recipient

As a recent graduate of my remote MLIS program through the University of Denver, experiencing professional gatherings is an exciting endeavor for me. Thanks to the

Ohio Preservation

Council Scholarship, in May of 2024, I had the privilege to attend the annual meeting of the Society of Ohio Archivists held at Capital University. The overall theme for the conference was accessibility, and while I had previous interest in the topic, the presenters allowed me to see the myriad of opportunities available to expand access within and around archives.

First and foremost, kudos to the hybrid nature of the conference, as it opened up access for many professionals across the state that were unable to travel to the in-person event. Virtual guests were able to ask questions of the presenters, English subtitles were provided, and should a guest be unable to contribute to the discussions, they could still attend presentations silently and off video. On the first day of the conference, I attended three virtual sessions. The first was given by Collette McDonough, Eira Tansy, and Brian Whittedge, and it detailed their experiences advocating for various archival causes at Archives on the Hill in 2023. The art of advocating showed itself dependent on both sides of the conversation being invested, as well as an understanding of the

avenues available. The next presentation I attended was given by Andrea Howard, concerning reprocessing high-traffic university collections for accessibility needs. The final virtual presentation was given by Dyani Feige, regarding her work with the Conservation Center for Art & Historic Artifacts (CCAHA) to build communities of opportunity within the Appalachian Region of the United States. For cultural heritage organizations in this region, Feige offered opportunities for partnering with CCAHA to improve collection care and management in a sustainable way. Sustainability is a key component to accessibility in the long run, making the Regional Heritage Stewardship Program invaluable to the cause.

When I arrived the next day at Capital University, I was excited to talk with and listen to the work of professionals within my state. Not only was I able to expose myself to new ideas and methods to archiving inclusively, but I also saw faces new and old to me that allowed me to understand archives from multiple perspectives. The combination of archival, library, museum, university, and emerging professionals surrounding me really spanned the spectrum of the archival field and was heartening to my own varied interests and creative ideals. The presentations that I attended on day two of the Annual Meeting did not disappoint in this regard either.

One session that particularly resonated with me was that of Jocelyn Robinson and Sam Meister regarding their work with the public radio station WYSO's recently discovered broadcasting archives.

WYSO's creation of the Center for Radio Preservation and Archives was done in reflection of this discovery of materials, and it now houses the WYSO archives as well as the HBCU Radio Preservation Project. Their presentation truly showcased the power of making connections inside and outside one's community, as well as the delicate balance that is providing both access to and preservation of these materials to a wider audience.

The overall discussion of accessibility throughout the conference was driven home by this year's keynote speaker, Dr. Lydia Tang. Her extensive work improving accessibility both in-person and digitally for various organizations was inspiring. From her own anecdotal knowledge and personal connections to disability, Dr. Tang was able to highlight areas of archiving in need of accessibility considerations. The engagement discussion of the Justice, Equity, Diversity, Accessibility, and Inclusion (JEDAI) committee prior to the keynote fit nicely into the overall objectives of the conference by asking for practical ideas of improvement within the SOA. From programming needs in public libraries and historical societies to the surveying of university health science libraries, the remaining sessions showcased the importance of deliberate inclusion in making archival spaces and collections accessible. I look forward to becoming more involved in both the archival profession and accessibility work in the future. Thank you again to the [Ohio Preservation Council](#) for allowing me access to this experience!

OLHA/SOA ANNUAL FALL MEETING

Truth and Consequences

QUEST CONFERENCE CENTER
COLUMBUS, OCTOBER 4-5, 2024

SOA TRACK – FRIDAY, OCTOBER 4, 2024

The [Ohio Local History Alliance Annual Meeting](#) with an SOA track of sessions will take place October 4-5, 2024 at the Quest Conference Center, just north of Columbus in the Polaris area. This year's theme is *Truth and Consequences*, and the SOA track will run on Friday, October 4. Please join us!

SOA Track Includes:

Find Digital Ohio: Advocating and Promoting Your Digital Collections

Jenni Salamon, *Ohio History Connection*, and Cari Hillman & Adam Wanter, *MidPointe Library System*

Learn about Find Digital Ohio, a customizable, no-cost digital collections advocacy toolkit developed as part of the ILEAD Ohio program. Topics will include background and inspiration, the toolkit itself, and some marketing best practices. Designed to scale to large or small institutions, we'll share practical solutions and spark conversations about promoting digital collections.

Crucial Conversations: Preserving Undertold Stories

JEDAI Committee *Panel Discussion*

Join the Society of Ohio Archivists (SOA) Justice, Equity, Diversity, Accessibility, and Inclusion (JEDAI) committee and a panel of guests for a discussion on archiving audio media related to underrepresented people. No matter where you are in the process of creating oral histories or preserving audio recordings, bring your questions!

Designing and Sustaining an Institutional Archives

Brianna Treleven & Rachel Sykes, *Shaker Historical Society*

Presenters will discuss the value of establishing a well-organized institutional collection that meets the needs of its organization and broader audiences. Presenters will detail the processes that allowed them to effectively establish the institutional collection at the Shaker Historical Society as well as the elements they developed to create a sustainable solution. Discussed elements will include securing funding, conducting an inventory, archival appraisal and processing, legal considerations, and the user-centered elements that contribute to a sustainable and usable institutional collection.

Intersectional DEI Mini-Workshop

Michelle Ganz, *Dominican Sisters of Peace*

Diversity and Inclusion must be intersectional to be successful. The speaker will discuss strategies for management/leadership and staff for how to create a truly diverse and inclusive environment that fosters and supports social justice efforts. Change comes from a thousand little acts, not one giant leap. Michelle will talk about small ways to build big changes and shift institutional thinking.

SOA would like to thank the [Ohio Local History Alliance](#) for continuing to allow SOA to partner with them in their fall meeting. For more information about the meeting, please visit [OLHA's Annual Meeting page](#).



Archives Month Poster

This year's [Archives Month poster](#) theme is The Olympics! Another online poster reveal event is just few weeks ahead of [Archives Month](#) in October. Keep your eyes peeled on Facebook and the website for more.

For Archives Month, A&O will be creating blog posts featuring organizations with collections that relate to the Olympics. Also be on the lookout for fun Halloween posts!

View our [posters in Pinterest](#) and see blog posts tagged [Archives Month](#).

A&O would also like to welcome Sarah Aisenbrey as our new co-chair. Sarah is a great addition to our amazing committee.

[SOA Advocacy and Outreach Committee](#)

Linear Growth in Archives

Eira Tansey, [Memory Rising, LLC](#)

Welcome to Climate Control! This column for the SOA newsletter is dedicated to exploring the role of archives and archivists in addressing climate change and environmental issues. This issue's column is adapted from a keynote I recently gave for the Society of Southwest Archivists.

Linear growth rules not just how our society thinks about things like the economy (a giant line graph infinitely going up and to the right), but also how archivists think about our collections. According to the [recent A*CENSUS II administrators report from Ithaka S+R and the Society of American Archivists](#): "Archives accession vastly more physical archives each year than they deaccession. On average, archives measuring physical collections by linear feet accession 100 linear feet of collections and deaccession less than one linear foot per year. Likewise, archives measuring by cubic feet accession 300 cubic feet of physical collections per year, deaccessioning just two cubic feet per year on average."

What is strange about this is that deaccessioning is something we have long recognized and occasionally embraced, if not consistently practiced. In 1981 [Leonard Rapport wrote](#), "Every repository of public records has on its shelves records which, if offered today, we would not accept. If we wouldn't accept them today, why should we permit these records to occupy shelf space? For such records there should be no grandfather clause." In 2006 [Mark Greene argued](#), "The archival profession is difficult (and necessary) not because we are good at saving things, but because we are able and willing to decide what does not get saved. Of course, we have a responsibility to explain as clearly as possible why we make the decisions we do, and we have to be willing to accept responsibility for our professional decisions." And as recently as 2017, the [Society of American Archivists noted](#), "Since the 1980s, the archival profession has more readily come to acknowledge reappraisal and deaccessioning as parts of good collections management practices. [...] Despite the increasing amount of research and information on these practices, they remain underutilized as a collection management tool. Archival practitioners need a clear process outlining general steps, problems, and solutions to responsible and ethical reappraisal and deaccessioning."

So despite having clear guidelines on deaccessioning, why do we keep accessioning so much stuff, when at the same time we have fewer staff and fewer resources to address it? The previously mentioned [A*CENSUS II survey of administrators](#) also found "71 percent of respondents say that staffing is the most significant challenge facing their department in conjunction with collection storage space."

The obvious answer is that we've normalized the idea of linear growth in archives. This can most easily be seen in the normalization of backlogs (which [Ciaran Trace](#) characterizes as a form of 'deferred maintenance'), but it shows up in other places, too. Like annual reports that detail new accessions (and nothing about deaccessions), in endowed funds earmarked for acquiring new materials (but not reparative description or reappraisal), positions exclusively focused on acquiring and accessioning new materials, and obscuring weeding or deaccessioning by hiding methods of disposal for fear of public outcry.

We know that our planet doesn't have infinite resources, and neither do our archives. And yet our society is far behind reimagining what healthy economic growth would look like in a way that doesn't destroy the planet. We archivists are also behind in imagining what healthy growth might look like within archives. We should ask ourselves how our practices would change if we knew our storage capacity would never increase.

One concept I've been thinking about to replace linear growth in archives is the idea of applying circular economy principles to archives—you might call it "circular archives." Back in the 1970s, academic library administrators who were confronting the issue of constantly expanding publications with the space limitations of academic library buildings proposed the idea of "steady state libraries." What would this look like if we applied it to archives? What if we tried to balance out accessions with deaccessions? How would we appraise for growth and loss?

We know that in nature, there is no growth without loss. Growth always comes out of decay. In rejecting linear growth, we have to have the courage to say Enough is Enough. Enough is *enough* not just as a declaration of frustration for the resources we lack and may never receive, but also as a celebration of the abundance that is already present in most of our archival institutions. By rejecting a linear growth paradigm which always makes us feel inadequate to the task at hand, we can feel reassured by the idea that Enough is Enough.

*Eira Tansey is an archivist, researcher, and consultant based in her hometown of Cincinnati/the Ohio River watershed. She is the founder of [Memory Rising](#), which provides research, consulting, and archival services with expertise in climate change, environmental and labor movements, and Ohio Valley regional history. She previously worked as an archivist at the University of Cincinnati and Tulane University. Eira's research on archives and climate change has been profiled by [Yale Climate Connections](#), [VICE](#), and [Pacific Standard](#), and has been [honored](#) by the Society of American Archivists. Her most recent publication is *A Green New Deal for Archives*.*

The State of Research

Michelle Ganz, Director of Archives, Dominican Sisters of Peace

Authors note: This article is an excerpt from a longer piece in the Encyclopedia of Libraries, Librarianship, and Information Science to be published by Elsevier.

Archives are as varied as the collections they hold: personal papers, government records, photographs, manuscripts, ephemera, and many other formats. From academia to the private sector, archives contain our collective memory as individuals, as institutions, and as members of society. **Collective memory** refers to the shared knowledge, memory, and information of a social group. The diversity of archival collections correlates directly to the diversity of historical research, interpretation, and impacts on current events. Diverse voices in historical records allow for more accurate interpretation of events while clarifying how the past affects current events. Researchers seeking out collections from underrepresented communities face incomplete information or frames of reference outside the subjects of the collections. By shifting the perspective of archival records away from external witnesses, we benefit from the archival voices of those impacted people rather than empowering the voices of observers.¹ Traditional archival institutions continue to grant power to the second-hand knowledge of observers, and researchers without sponsorship can rarely afford the time or expense required to seek out non-traditional archival institutions.

The underrepresentation of voices

downplays the contribution of marginalized peoples to culture, politics, advocacy, technology, and countless other areas. The role of Black people in the Wild West

or cowboy narrative has been virtually erased from common awareness despite their substantial presence: a number of estimates by historians, including Kenneth Porter², estimate that of the 35,000 or so cowboys of the era, 6,000 to 9,000 were Black. In Texas, where enslaved Black people comprised more than a quarter of the population before the Civil War, as many as one in four cowhands was Black. They worked as ropers, trail cooks, wranglers, and bronco busters. Some hunted game, sang, played instruments on the trail, or performed other duties for white cattlemen.³

How exclusion happens

Community archives return agency to excluded peoples. Anthropologist Michel-Rolph Trouillot identified four major stages in which we write silences into the historic record: the creation of sources, the creation of archives, the creation of narratives, and the creation of formal history.⁴ Cultural institutions begin to rectify past wrongs by creating collections and programs for marginalized communities, and must also acknowledge the role of theft in building most museum collections. Archives engaged in restorative practices return stolen artifacts, ephemera, and archival records to their communities of origin.⁵ “The rise of memory studies, ‘colonial ethnography,’ testimonio, queer theory, postmodernism, and post-structuralism has provided the intellectual framework to dispute both discursive and material power structures that perpetuate the erasure of the colonized, the enslaved, and the vulnerable.”⁶

Community archives are often left out of the search for source materials because there is no comprehensive search tool that will identify community archives alongside traditional repositories. Tools like ArchiveGrid allow researchers to search across the United States and Canada for archival holdings.⁷ The database is populated by an algorithm that searches the internet for finding aids. As a result, most community archives are unlisted because they do not necessarily generate finding aids or adopt the same methods as traditional archives to collect and provide access to their collections.

Models of archiving

Archives function under different paradigms based on the type of archiving in which the repository engages. There are different approaches to archiving depending on the institution, policies, and community. The traditional model works with the scholar or researcher in mind, tailoring policy and procedure to meet their needs. It uses collection policy and strategic goals to focus on specific subjects, topics, people, institutions, or community groups.

Community archives are created by and for specific communities. The community-driven model flips the traditional model, placing the *community itself* as the focus of the repository, shifting scholars and traditional researchers to minimal importance. Community archives focus on documenting and preserving cultural groups and events. Programs such as The Community-Driven Archives (CDA) Initiative address inequity within collections and

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1 Fuentes, M. *Dispossessed Lives: Enslaved Women Violence and the Archive*. University of Pennsylvania Press 2016. p.127

2 A professor of history, Kenneth W. Porter conducted research on African-American frontiersmen and cowboys, Black Seminoles, and American folklore and folk history. This collection consists primarily of his manuscripts and research materials pertaining to African-American and Native American studies.

3 Tucker, N. Black Cowboys at Home on the Range. March 16, 2022. Retrieved from <https://blogs.loc.gov/loc/2022/03/black-cowboys-at-home-on-the-range/> July 13, 2023

4 “To Suddenly Discover Yourself Existing”: Uncovering the Impact of Community Archives p 58 & 59

5 *Replevin* n. a legal action to recover property, including public records, that has been improperly or illegally taken from the owning or custodial entity <https://dictionary.archivists.org/entry/replevin.html>

6 El Guabli Brahim. *Moroccan Other-Archives: History and Citizenship After State Violence*. Fordham University Press 2023. p. 12

7 ArchiveGrid <https://researchworks.oclc.org/archivegrid/>

work to fill critical gaps by empowering archivists to actively collect. The community-driven model has been so impactful that traditional archives are applying the concepts and strategies to their existing collections and collection goals.

While the community-driven model is gaining traction within the traditional model, the profession as a whole does not reflect this change. The archival profession is integrating community archives into the scope of archival work, but it is still largely an afterthought. The A*Census reports that across the profession, diversity is neither rewarded nor addressed adequately. It further demonstrates that anti-racism initiatives within the profession are largely inadequate and have made no real change to the diversity and inclusion of archival collections today.⁸ Question 73 of the census took this further and asked if people felt that the profession is inclusive of community archives. The survey results were split with some respondents saying the profession is somewhat inclusive, but others neither agreed nor disagreed with

the statement. These variances from the A*Census report 2022 demonstrate how community archives and marginalized peoples are still seen or considered within the profession. It is clear that most of the profession rarely thinks about community archives and is unaware of the challenges they face.

The effects of lack of representation

“Archives are loci of power. The authority vested in them maintains and perpetuates hegemony through the stories they allow to be told and the ones they suppress.”⁹ Lack of representation causes a cascade of negative effects. The quality of research suffers when people do not see themselves in archival records: it erases their existence and denies their humanity. Additionally, the lack of representation gives us an incomplete record. Researchers cannot draw correct conclusions without a complete record of an event. Ensuring sufficient information to draw valid conclusions and weighing the effects of archival silence add to the time and labor of researchers’ efforts. Our collective memory deteriorates when

truth is determined by traditional power structures. For the people who are not represented, erasure amplifies generational trauma, isolating and unmooring them from their cultural and historical roots.

Conclusion

Archival research is a user-driven activity whose success or failure depends on access to archival materials. Researchers rely on access to and completeness of archival collections to find answers and tell their stories. The role of archives is to make sure materials are accessible. As recent history has waged a full assault on education, history, and objective truth, community archives position themselves to provide unique services created by and for marginalized groups, highlighting underrepresented voices in collections. We cannot rely on traditional archival institutions to serve as sole holders of our memory: community archives have a critical place in archival research. Our collective memory is incomplete until everyone has a voice and every voice is heard.

The Edward B. Taylor Collection

Karen D. Brame, M.A., M.A., C. D&I and Rachael Bussert, MA, MLIS, CA

In September 2023, Dayton Metro Library (DML) was awarded a LSTA (Library Services and Technology Act) Metadata Mini-Grant in the amount of \$4,999 to digitize a significant portion of *The Edward B. Taylor Collection* negatives with the goal of making the images accessible to researchers through our Dayton Remembers digital asset management system, while also creating a broader scope of discoverability by harvesting them to the Digital Public Library of America's (DPLA) online user interface. The *Taylor Collection* images will join DML's other collections already harvested to DPLA, such as the *Woman's Suffrage Collection* and the *1913 Dayton Flood Photographs*.

The grant required a minimum of 250 digitized and described items, but there was not a limit on the total that could be done beyond that number. Since the collection largely consists of negatives, the team decided to work with the contractors to maximize the number of negatives that could be made accessible within our funding.

DML contracted with Advent Media, Inc., in Columbus to digitize the negatives. The negatives were digitized in three batches between November 2023 through January 2024. Three record boxes, consisting of 2,957 negatives, were digitized in total.

The descriptive phase of the project began in January 2024. Colleen Badenhop was hired as a consultant to act as the project's Metadata Assistant. Under the direction of Special Collections staff, Badenhop produced a data dictionary and a metadata schema for CONTENTdm, specifically for the *Taylor Collection*. Badenhop worked closely with Information Services Librarian (Africana Archives Emphasis) Karen D. Brame throughout her descriptive process. Brame's descriptions of the images from her preliminary inventory of box one of the Taylor Collection were essential in this phase of the project. At the end of March 2024, 733 records were created on CONTENTdm and are available on the Dayton Remembers website. The records will be harvested by the Ohio Digital Network to DPLA in June 2024.

Born in Savannah, Georgia, Edward Butler Taylor (1908 - 1999) is popularly referenced as being the first African American commercial photographer of Dayton, Ohio. Taylor is most fondly remembered by many for his vibrant visual representation of life in the Black community of Dayton from the 1950s until the 1990s. Spanning nearly four decades, his chronicle of people, events, and gatherings memorialized the diverse realities of African Americans that were all too often intentionally omitted from mainstream audiences. His range of subjects included anniversaries, birthdays, church productions, civic functions, fashion shows, formal balls, family reunions, graduations, sports outings, social affairs, and weddings. The moments that Taylor vividly captured on film readily engage viewers, as his images portray beauty, commitment,

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Mr. Edward B. Taylor



Lynnette Taylor Heard (l) and Lisa Taylor (r)



Debutantes, Delta Sigma Theta, 1950s



Hunting Game, 1950s



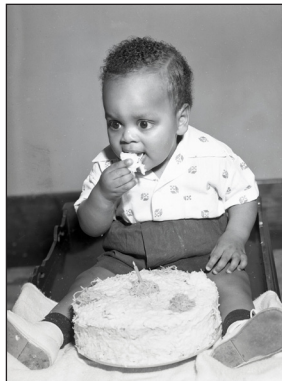
Zion Baptist Church Alter Guild



The Little League, 1954



Untitled



Mrs. Davis's Baby, 1st Birthday, 1955

dignity, joy, love, power, pride, and unity.

The Edward B. Taylor Collection is sourced from an extensive cache of negatives and photographs graciously gifted to Dayton Metro Library by Taylor's daughters, Lynnette Taylor Heard and Lisa Taylor. Inviting guests to "see" the past, face-to-face with historic images frequently absent from local contemporary community memory, their donation commemorates the spectacular vision of their father. During the early part of Taylor's extensive career, racial discrimination was overt and segregation reigned supreme throughout the world. This city was not exempt from these practices, as Blacks were relegated to reside in West Dayton.

However, when given lemons, many local African Americans made lemonade ... and lemon bars, lemon cake, lemon ice, and lemon sorbet! Although rarely discussed in contemporary times, unique by-products of segregation were the supportive connectedness and extensive interdependency that permeated the Black community in The Gem City.

African Americans endeavored in every facet of the workforce and entrepreneurship was the order of the day. The vast diversity of services and amenities allowed for the flourishing of their neighborhoods. This progress, in spite of numerous odds against them, led to communal affluence and success that inspired some to compare West Dayton to the cultural and commercial hub of Harlem, the vibrant neighborhood historically populated by African Americans in New York City.

With integration, changes, both negative and positive, arose and their impacts on Dayton were felt, especially by African Americans. From the '60s until the '80s, various phenomena affected the city. The former included "White flight"; civil unrest, including an uprising that occurred when Lester Mitchell, a Black man, had been viciously murdered by a group of White men in 1966; the three-year spree of shootings of 21, including murder of 4-7 random Black people, and White de-segregation planner Dr. Charles Glatt in 1975 by White domestic terrorist Neal Bradley Long; and educational inequity, as cited in the 1972 lawsuit brought by the NAACP against the Dayton School Board.

However, Black Daytonians continued to persevere in their pursuit of progress. Their accomplishments included increased involvement in education; advancement of culture, including the explosion of numerous musical artists; founding of Dayton Contemporary Dance Company by Jeraldyn Blunden in 1968; and launch of the first Dayton Black Cultural Festival in 1982. This period saw the election of more local African Americans into politics, such as C.J. McLin to the House of Representatives in 1966 and James H. McGee as the city's first Black mayor in 1970. Businesses opportunities expanded; housing opportunities flourished; and various religious institutions and social organizations experienced consistent and continued growth.

The Edward B. Taylor Collection visually attests to a more accurate and authentic historical account of the abundance and vibrancy of African American life in Dayton. As such, its essential insertion, replete with genuineness, into modern conversation and study is entirely undeniable and we owe homage to Edward B. Taylor for his grand gift of Vision!

INDIVIDUAL MEMBER NEWS

Michele Jennings has been appointed Special Collections Instruction Librarian and Assistant Professor at the University of Dayton's [Marian Library](#). In this role she will develop and implement instructional opportunities with primary sources and the Marian Library's collections, curate exhibits and programming,

act as the performing arts liaison librarian, and steward the Marian Library's archival holdings.

Congratulations to **Eira Tansey** of [Memory Rising, LLC](#), for having been elected to serve on the Society of American Archivists Council.

INSTITUTIONAL MEMBER NEWS



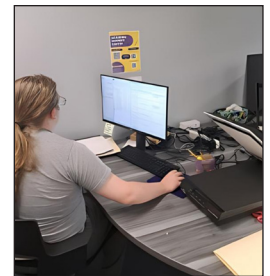
Left: Emily Ahlin and Bishop Paprocki. Right: Emily Ahlin and Katie Oubre

[The Catholic Diocese of Cleveland Archives](#) was awarded the Joseph Cardinal Bernardin Award for "building an exemplary archives and records program" by the Association of Catholic Diocesan Archivists (ACDA) at their biennial conference this past July. Awarded at the discretion of the president of the organization, the award recognizes a diocesan archives program that is excelling in the field. The Diocese of Cleveland was chosen in particular for their work in outreach, especially digitally, which is the result of work completed by both former and current staff and interns. **Emily Ahlin**, current Director of Archives, was present at the conference and received the award on behalf of past and current archives staff from ACDA President Katie Oubre, who serves as Vice Chancellor for Archives and Records in the Diocese of Springfield, IL. Emily is also pictured with the ACDA Episcopal Moderator, Bishop Thomas Paprocki of the Diocese of Springfield, IL.

[Columbus Metropolitan Library](#) is pleased to welcome our newest librarian to the Local History & Genealogy Division, **Maria Lee**. Maria is a recent graduate of Simmons University's MLIS program with a concentration in archives management and was recently at OSU Libraries as an electronic resource access coordinator. Welcome, Maria!

[Defiance College](#) just completed the first step in an exciting new digitization project. **Dr. Kate Davis**, Assistant Professor of Religion and Krieger Visiting Scholar for Religious Studies led the college's first non-STEM Summer Undergraduate Research Program (or SURP) to begin digitizing the archives of the now closed Schauffler College of Religious and Social Work. The Schauffler College of Religious and Social Work was founded by Henry A. Schauffler (1837-1905) on Jan 23, 1886 as a women's college serving the immigrant populations of Cleveland, Ohio. In 1966 the Schauffler Archive and endowment came to Defiance, and courses in Religious Studies and Social Work continue the college's legacy.

Dr. Davis worked with two student researchers, **Rachael Beardsley** and **Matthew Craig**, as well as Lead Librarian and Coordinator of Metadata and Archives **Barb Sedlock** to begin cataloging and digitizing the thousands of files and artifacts in the Schauffler Archives. Through this process they have uncovered the stories of women from around the world such as Mrs. Asayne Sato who attended the college from 1908-1909 before returning to Japan



Top left: Makeshift Lightbox. Sometimes you have to get creative when materials are limited! A little engineering ingenuity resulted in a surprisingly good lightbox for photographing items
Top right: Annette Goltzcher graduation photo.
Lower right: Defiance College student Matthew Craig works on scanning files
Lower left: L-R: Defiance College Students Rachael Beardsley and Matthew Craig with Dr. Kate Davis after having successfully presented their research at the 4th Annual STEM Summer Undergraduate Research Symposium at Defiance College

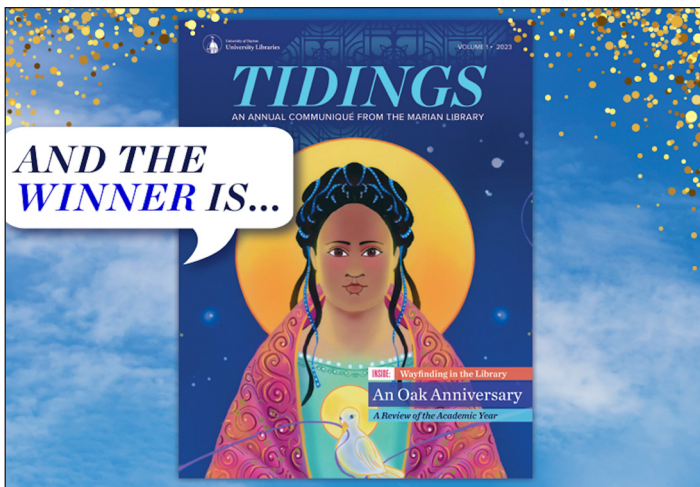
Graduation photo is property of the Schauffler College Archives at Defiance College. All other photos in this group by Kate Davis. All rights reserved.)

to work in diplomatic relations, or Ms. Annette Goltzcher who graduated in 1925, spoke eight languages, and became one of the first policewomen in Cleveland.

The project has concluded for the summer, but Dr. Davis hopes to continue in the coming academic year. In the meantime, please [visit our archive hosted at Ohio Memory](#) to see some of the history of this unique institution!

[Tidings, volume 1](#), published in 2023 by [Marian Library](#) faculty and staff at the University of Dayton has won the American

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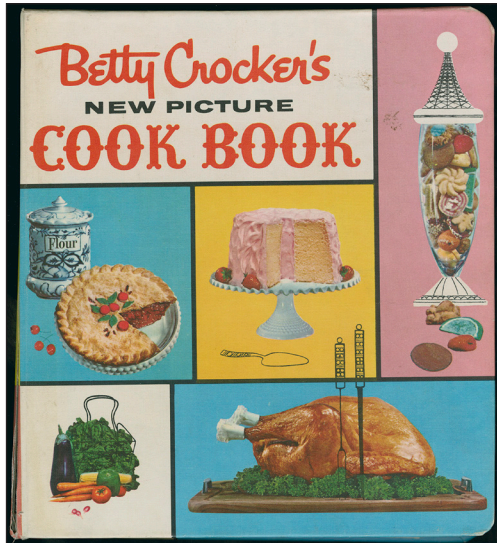


Tidings is the newsletter and annual report of the Marian Library.

Library Association's top honor for born-digital advocacy and annual reports in its annual [PR Xchange awards competition](#). *Tidings* is the newsletter and annual report of the Marian Library, and features reflections and stories about collections, outreach, events, and exhibits.

[Ohio State University's Thompson Library](#) presents [Essential Ingredients: Cookbooks as History](#), curated by [Jolie Braun](#) and [Beth Hewitt](#). The exhibit runs August 20, 2024 – January 5, 2025 at Thompson Library, Thompson Gallery (Room 125).

Cookbooks are everywhere. Many people own at least one. You find them in bookshops and thrift stores. They are frequently

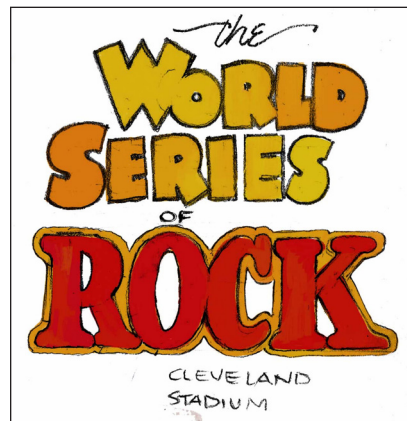


Betty Crocker New Picture Cookbook

given as gifts and passed down through generations. Yet most of us think of them as just collections of recipes, unaware of what else they can reveal. Drawing from the Rare Books & Manuscripts Library's collection of nearly 10,000 volumes, this exhibit celebrates more than 200 years of American cookbooks and their unique ability to offer windows into cultures and histories. *Essential Ingredients* explores cookbooks as a lens for understanding many aspects of the past and present, including social movements, global foodways, local communities, international crises, technological advancements, and personal stories.

[The Rock & Roll Hall of Fame Library & Archives](#) is excited to commemorate the 50th anniversary of [the World Series of Rock](#) concerts through a new exhibit, which opened at the Library &

Archives on June 26, 2024, as part of Cleveland History Days, a 10-day celebration of our city's rich legacy. This exhibit, celebrating the concerts that took place at Cleveland Municipal Stadium staged by Belkin Productions from 1974-1980, features over 50 artifacts, including the guitar Joe Walsh played at the first World Series of Rock with band Barnstorm, behind-the-scenes documents from the Rolling Stones' 1975 and 1978 appearances, swag created for several of the shows, photographs, and clippings related to the exhibit and history of the World Series of Rock. The opening event on June 26 featured appearances by Jules and Fran Belkin as well as several local photographers whose work is featured in the exhibit, including Mike Petrello, Anastasia Pantsios, Bob Ferrell, and Janet



Left: World Series of Rock. Below: Peter Frampton, 1977.

(Photographs by Janet Macoska. Courtesy of the photographer.)



Macoska. Library & Archives staff were on hand to talk about the NEO Sound local music collecting initiative and Northeast Ohio's rich music history. The Library & Archives is hosting additional open house dates to visit the exhibit throughout its 2024-2025 run. [Contact the Library & Archives](#) with any questions or to schedule a visit.

[WYSO](#)

The 1965 commencement address at Antioch College by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. is just one of the many locally produced audio recordings in radio station [WYSO's Archives](#) that are now accessible to the public in digital format. The station began digitizing and archiving its audio collection in 2009 as part of the American Archive Pilot Project. It continues the work today through the Center for Radio Preservation and Archives at WYSO. The WYSO 91.3 FM digital archive is available online through the [Greene County Public Library](#) and the [American Archive of Public Broadcasting](#). The Center also houses the Yellow Springs Civil Rights Oral History Project and the [Rediscovered Radio series](#) and [podcast](#).

Center Director Jocelyn Robinson is also founding director of the [HBCU Radio Preservation Project](#) (HBCU RPP), which works with radio stations and campus archives at Historically Black



Jocelyn Robinson in WYSO Archives

(continued on page 20)



HBCU RPP staff inventoried the audio collection from WRVS 88.9 FM in the archives at Elizabeth City State University. From left, Field Archivists Jenohn Euland and Chinyere Neal and Project Fellow Breighlynn Polk. Photo by Will Tchakirides.

Colleges and Universities to preserve the stations' history and legacy. The project team has so far conducted nine site visits, collected 22 oral histories with people connected to the campus radio stations, and preserved more than 460 audio artifacts. The oral histories are housed at the [Margaret Walker Center](#) at Jackson State University.

The HBCU RPP co-hosted a virtual Black Radio Symposium on June 26 with the African American and Civil Rights Radio

Caucus of the Radio Preservation Task Force at the Library of Congress, and Robinson and Assistant Director Phyllis Jeffers-Coly presented to the HBCU Library Alliance on July 11. On August 9, Robinson keynoted The Ohio Newsroom Conference in Columbus. In October, the team, including project oral historian Will Tchakirides, will present on using oral history in radio preservation at the Oral History Association annual conference in Cincinnati.

Editor's Note

Greetings, Ohio!

I hope you enjoyed this issue of *Ohio Archivist*. As always, feel free to contact me with suggestions, criticisms, or interest in being included or involved with the newsletter. For the most up-to-date information on SOA, including ways to get involved, please visit the [website](#) and join us on the [listserv](#). Thank you for your readership!

Wishing everyone a happy and healthy fall and winter,

Jessica

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