

# Session 5 (acquisitions)

## Symposium Chat - Session 5: Acquisitions, Saturday 1.30-3.00pm

### Proposals

- Hobbs
- Broderick
- Watterworth Batt

New Behaviors in Acquisition:

Catherine H's topic: Capturing / representing the contexts of personal digital lives

Melissa: Personal digital contexts are unique and not stratified. What does the individual think they are doing. What do people remember? Knowing that story will help position personal archives.

Seth: depends of the individual. Management of a digital life is very individualistic. How an archivists would describe that digital life is a good question? What should an archivist describe? What are the ethics of that description? What is missing? How is the absent to be explained?

Catheriene: there might be scales of practice. Important thing to do is capture the psychological context.

Seth: The concept of provenance is growing in born digital archives. Note the agent entity in PREMIS. Intellectual arrangement may become a representation imposed by the archivist.

Erin: Notes the value of notes (e.g., field notes) in capturing acquisition process and also for providing one more foundation for establishing trust.

Catherine: the problem of intent. We need to try to capture the intent of creator's

Gabby: The concept of original order applies at several different levels, and may be different at those levels.

Helena: The representation of T. Hughes working space

Seth: Context is king. Recreating the actual "work" context is highly desirable but incurs extra cost. Not all context matters

Mark: All context needs to be recognized and those worth tracking differentiated from those not.

Melissa: Act of regular accessions / accruals

Several people noted experience with regular accruals for literary collections

Catherine: Do people have awareness of donors using Time Machine

Seth: Problem of versioning

Mark: TimeMachine presents certain problems, some related to capacity

Seth: Are people really interested in panorama shots of work spaces

Helen: The problem is how to provide access to these context representations

Seth: How is the context information to be added to the description.

Catherine: Provide control file contents as part of the published description.

Micheal: Are people provided "enriched" description / context representation

CSI---Creation scene investigation

Gretchen: describes acquisition of photograph collection at UNC

Catherine: how does this interest in personal context dovetail with digital forensics

Dave: Problem of finding mis-labeled disks, indicating that disk has been re-used. The question is whether the "under" should be captured. Also the problem of un-described containers. No labels.

Seth: Duke's policy is not to un-delete anything unless if requested by the donor

Seth: the problem of persona management is not foreign to digital archives. Are archivists bound to support the created persona or can undermine it.

Gretchen: digital forensics is important to for capturing and revealing literary process

Catherine: not all donors are aware of what digital forensics entails.

Bradley: Two questions: 1) do repositories keep original media if donor does not want forensic work done and 2) do repositories have written policies for this? Keeping original media allows for possibility that intentions are contradicted. Repository incurs certain risks by keeping original media un-necessarily.

**Bradley: useful next step: sharing a broad range of policy documents. Build a compendium of practice.**

\* \*Seth: SAA Standards Committee might provide a portal for publishing best practices

Alison: Should we talk about appraisal / de-accessioning. What are folks doing

Melissa:

Seth: Three options: 1) keep media but restricted,, 2) return media once desired contents are acquired, and 3) physically destroy media on request

Seth: another issue for the ingest station. Is it periodically cleaned?

Gabby: does the physical media need to be retained to for 'museum' purposes?

Catherine: anybody working with new media artists?

Seth: we are going to have to use emulation strategies to preserve e-literature, esp. hypertext

Alison: article by Jeff Rothenberg

Gabby: to what extent online publishing, and their records, might be categorized as new media?

Ongoing discussion about problematic types of acquisitions.

Bradley: the tricky part is does the material stay with the institution or go with donor. On deposit materials, in which custody has not been clearly given to the institution. Need to determine who owns it the "physical" materials.

Erin: Collection development policies are ways to say no.

Matt: difficult to re-establish a dialog, once interrupted.

Bradley: need to maintain transactional / administrative breadcrumbs. What functionary permitted what? Need to alleviate the number of digital orphans.

Seth: problematic archiving Polar Bear site.

Catherine: Edna's archive. Theatre piece constructed from found archival material.

Problem of new media:

Matt K: Enemies of books / enemies of bits. Stripping away of contextual / physical features. Same is being done to bits. Reference crude stab at documenting hardware as part of a collection.

Archiving the avant garde, formerly the variable media network: these folks address new media arts