

ICA-SAE Annual Conference

Social Justice/Injustice in Archival Education, Research, and Practice

Sunday 12 July 2015

University of Maryland, College Park

8.45 – 9.00	Registration and Conference Opening
9.00 – 9.30	Marika Cifor and Stacy Wood Educating for Social Justice: Developing an Undergraduate Archival Studies Curriculum
9.30 – 10.00	Biyong Tan The Left-behind Children Digital Archives: Concept, Framework and its Education Significance
10.00 – 10.15 Morning Tea	
10.15 – 10.45	James Lowry International Co-operation on Archival Education in Africa
10.45 – 11.15	Shadrack Katuu The Role of Educational Institutions in Africa in an Increasingly Changing Records Management Environment
11.15 – 12.45	Joanne Evans, Sue McKemish, Michelle Caswell, Tonia Sutherland Social Justice and Scholarly Practice: Reflections on Pluralising Archival Curricula Agendas
12.45 – 1.45 Lunch	
1.45 – 2.15	Jenny Wang & Wenhong Zhou The Progress of Accessing Records and Archives in China towards Social Justice
2.15 – 2.45	Sigrid McCausland Indigenous People, Records and Social Justice in Queensland
2.45 – 3.00 Afternoon Tea	
3.00 – 3.30	Jane Zhang Dorothy Porter Wesley and the Documentation of Black History and Culture
3.30 – 4.00	Cecilia Salvatore Social Justice or Activism: Archival Approach in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
4.00 – 4.30	General Discussion (including action items arising from the conference)
4.30 – 4.45	Announcement about ICA-SAE 2016 Conference, Seoul, Republic of Korea Conference Close

Abstracts

Marika Cifor and Stacy Wood

This paper explores the unique challenges and opportunities of developing an undergraduate curriculum in archival studies at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA). This new curriculum draws on the expertise and research community in the Department of Information Studies where a popular specialization in Archival Studies devoted to social equity and justice at the graduate level is already offered. Building off of the work of such scholars as Caswell et al in developing a social justice curriculum for archival studies at the masters' level and an aspect of our social justice commitment is expanding understandings of archival work at the undergraduate level. We argue that Archival Studies is a vital aspect of interrogating and understanding power and its daily manifestations. Without providing professional training or technical skills we focus on an enhanced understanding of the roles of archives and archiving in different disciplines and in wider society and personal life that inform students' notions of identity, citizenship, human rights and social justice. Additionally, knowledge of archival functions, practice and policies puts this understanding into motion. Such knowledge can empower students in research settings and provide them with the necessary skills in evaluating and using primary sources.

Concerns central to the archival studies field such as accountability and transparency, access and use, community representation and ownership, cultural heritage, data literacy, human rights and social justice are paramount in a rapidly changing technological and political landscape. Developing a critical language and perspective on the role of archives, records, and data in both historical and contemporary political, cultural, and technological contexts can serve as the foundation for increased archival literacy broadly. A background in Archival Studies provides students with the tools to understand information through its structures and systems, establishing a material perspective that addresses the everyday instantiations of power. Undergraduate offerings and enrollment increases the reach of the Department of Information Studies and enriches the scholarly community in archival studies more broadly and raises our profile as a discipline within the university. Traditionally Information Studies programs have been focused on professionalization. This type of curriculum signals a broadening of scope for our field opening opportunities to engage new types of scholarship, pedagogical practice, and political possibility.

Biyong Tan

China's rapid urbanization has led to a rising number of left-behind children, who have one or both parents working away from home, leaving them to be taken care of by grandparents or other relatives. The number of such children in China's rural areas has exceeded 60 million, according to a report published by All-China Women's Federation in May 10, 2013. The left-behind children issue has been a serious social problem, and if left unsolved, which will pose a great threat to China's future.

We can search many items from Google with keyword "left-behind children" in different government and non-government websites in China and other countries, however, these digital records are very scattered and might be disappeared sooner or later. Thus, I decide to put forward a digital archives proposal - Left-behind Children Digital Archives (LCDA), which might preserve all kinds of archival materials about the left-behind children from government institutions, non-government organizations and individuals. LCDA would record these children's daily lives and provide us useful educational materials and common memory from generation to generation.

James Lowry

This paper will outline the socio-political history of government record-keeping in Africa, from the introduction of bureaucracy during the colonial period, the transition of responsibility for record-keeping through the 'nativisation' of public services during decolonisation, to the current spread of digital technologies. The paper will compare the challenges that have accrued over these periods of change with the provision of archival education, from the training of clerks under colonial rule, the provision of archival education in the metropolises, and the growth of archival education programmes in African universities. The paper will then consider international involvement, from the earliest international co-operative efforts to establish centres for archival education at Accra (for Anglophone Africa) and Dakar (for Francophone Africa), exchange and scholarship programmes, and the efforts of national institutions and international organisations such as UNESCO, the ICA and the IRMT. This history will form the context for a discussion of the ICA's draft 'Africa Strategy' and the work that could be done to focus international efforts in the most effective way possible.

Shadrack Katuu

The education and training of archives and records professionals in Africa can be traced back several decades. Archives and records practitioners in Africa's different countries have, over the years, taken varying paths to attain their professional qualifications. A number of publications have offered an analysis of the historical developments. This paper outlines progress on an ongoing study that examines the curricula in different African educational institutions and investigates the extent to which they address the increasingly complex environment.

Joanne Evans, Sue McKemish, Michelle Caswell, Tonia Sutherland

The Pluralising Archival Curriculum Group (PACG) was formed at the first Archival Education and Research Institute (AERI) at UCLA in 2009 as a result of a workshop exploring the development of culturally sensitive archival curricula. In a subsequent American Archivist article in 2011, PACG put forward a pluralization model to stimulate further conversations and foster co-ordinated development of more inclusive archival education programs. Engagement with the idea of an archival multiverse, in which multiple ways of knowing, conceptualising and enacting recordkeeping and archiving can co-exist, was encouraged, along with highlighting the need to 'educate the educators' as part of the pluralization framework. Pluralism is an essential component of a social justice curriculum in archival studies in that it both acknowledges and actively engages diverse ways of being and knowing, including paying attention to historic and ongoing power inequities.

In this panel we aim to continue these conversations through reflection on how the eight objectives of the PACG model have influenced and become part of our scholarly practice. The panel combines those who were part of the original workshop, with others who have through subsequent opportunities for disciplinary engagement been influenced by multiverse ideas. It also features those towards the start of their archival education careers alongside those with more experience. After short presentations (5-10mins) from each of the panellists, we aim for a facilitated discussion with the audience to identify next steps in pluralization agendas.

Jenny Wang and Wenhong Zhou

It is progressed dramatically to achieve social justice by empowering the public to access records and archives nowadays compared with what had happened in China over the long history, although there is still a big gap. The paper will elaborate on the progress from three aspects: Firstly, transformation of functions of keeping records and archives from governor-oriented to public-oriented based on Chinese tradition and culture. Secondly, the progress of utilization policies along with the social transformation by analyzing the policies of opening historical records in 1980, opening national archives in 1991 and accessing government current records since 2008. Thirdly, the implementation of new media and digital technology to empower the public to access records and archives in digital era, such as archival websites and social media.

Focusing on the challenge and debate on open policy in the field of archival science and administration in recent years in China, this paper, from the perspective of archival educators and students, will also illustrate their reflection on 'struggling for' better accessing records and archives towards social justice by presenting the outcomes and implementation of their research projects, such as how to promote access principle to foreigners, how to advocate public-oriented model on social media platform and how to help a particular social group like "migrating farmer workers" to identify themselves with social memory.

Sigrid McCausland

Since 1992, Community and Personal Histories, a unit of the Queensland government, has provided research and archival services to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in that Australian state. These services include family history and land rights research and assistance with claims in redress schemes for unpaid and underpaid wages. The significant quantities of records that survive from the previous administrative regime that denied Indigenous Queenslanders their human rights are central to the work of Community and Personal Histories. These records are used to establish rights and document suppressed and forgotten histories; permission to access to records is controlled through consultation with relevant Indigenous individuals and groups. This paper considers the history of Community and Personal Histories in pursuing social justice for Indigenous Queenslanders within the constraints of government structures, policies and budgets.

Jane Zhang

The proposed paper will discuss how the work of a local librarian/archivist in the Washington DC area (Dorothy Porter Wesley 1905 – 1995) has contributed to the documentation and fostered the study of black history and culture. Dorothy Porter Wesley was the first African American woman to receive a master's degree in library science from Columbia University (1932). She worked as a librarian/archivist at the Howard University for more than four decades (1928-1973) and successfully created the Moorland–Spingarn Research Center (formally the Moorland Foundation) at Howard University, a leading research center of "the history and culture of people of African descent in Africa, the Americas, and other parts of the world." Highly recognized as "part of a generation that helped to foster a new understanding of the black experience in Africa, the Americas and other parts of the world" (Thomas C. Battle in Janet Sims-Wood, Dorothy Porter Wesley at Howard University: Building a Legacy of Black History, The History Press, 2014), Dorothy Porter Wesley set an exemplary example for librarians and archivists whose work has the capacity to empower people and promote social justice.

Dorothy Porter Wesley's professional career extended from the 30s to the 60s in the twentieth century, coincidental with the development of modern archival theory and practice in the United States. With her formal library science training, she was known for her creative application of bibliographic methods in organizing and disseminating primary resources that document the history and culture of Black people of African decedents. The proposed research will review primary and secondary resources that reflect her work in this area, including the onsite visit of the Moorland–Spingarn Research Center at Howard University and the Dorothy Porter Wesley Papers at the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library of Yale University. A special research effort will be made to observe any archival method evolved in her work of developing a subject-based research center that contains a variety of primary resources, including manuscript collections/personal papers.

Cecilia Salvatore

Is it enough to be an activist archivist in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI)? In this paper, I describe the history and background of the CNMI, focusing on how colonialism and contemporary immigration have shaped the political and sociocultural discourse. While political leaders, who are members of the indigenous community, and the rest of the indigenous community, strive for their protection and identity, immigrants, such as those from Southeast Asia and the neighboring islands in Micronesia are doing the same. The complexities of the current political and sociocultural status of these islands facilitate systemic inequalities. Amidst these complexities, I argue that archivists must go beyond activism and engage in archival social justice on these islands.