

INFO 6850: Special Topics in Information Management: Archives II (Fall 2015)

Handout for Week Two: Collections Management

<http://hdl.handle.net/10222/62793>

September 21, 2015

Creighton Barrett, Digital Archivist, Dalhousie University Archives

WEEK TWO OBJECTIVES

- 1) Evaluate archives collection management policies
- 2) Examine and critique strategies for developing and managing archival collections
- 3) Review types of archival acquisitions~

ASSIGNED READINGS

Bond, Trevor James. "Collection Development for Digital Photographs." Library Review 56, no. 2 (2007): 127-133. DOI:10.1108/00242530710730312.

<http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.library.dal.ca/docview/218297318/fulltextPDF/869B2076114E4A35PQ/1?accountid=10406>.

Harris, Valerie and Kathryn Stine. "Politically Charged Records: A Case Study with Recommendations for Providing Access to a Challenging Collection." The American Archivist 74 (Fall/Winter 2011): 633-651.

<http://archivists.metapress.com/content/f252r28174251525/fulltext.pdf>.

International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property & UNESCO. RE-ORG methodology (2013). <http://www.re-org.info/en/register/download-the-whole-methodology>.

National Archives. Step 1: Appraising Your Records. (Also review files under "further guidance on appraisal"). <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/information-management/manage-information/selection-and-transfer/appraising-records/>.

Nova Scotia Archives. Archival Acquisition Policy (2004). <http://novascotia.ca/archives/about/policies/acquisition.pdf>.

AGENDA

- 1) Introduction
- 2) Announcements
- 3) Discuss readings
- 4) Break



INFO 6850 (Fall 2015): Handout for Week Two: Collections Management

- 5) Review types of acquisitions
- 6) Collections management exercise

PREPARE FOR DISCUSSION

Use the assigned readings to prepare for seminar style discussion that addresses questions such as:

- 1) When is it permissible to circumvent a collection management policy? Should archivists “rescue” materials that would otherwise be lost or destroyed?
- 2) Archival collections that “fit” a collection management policy can still contain non-desirable material. How can you reduce or avoid the acquisition of material that will not be selected for permanent retention?
- 3) You have started a new job at an archives that has storage capacity for 2 kilometres of archival records. In recent years 50-100 metres of records have been acquired per year. The archives only has 500 metres of available shelving. What would you do?
- 4) Trevor James Bond suggests that archivists should “ensure that the donor has checked the accuracy of his/her camera settings” and “request basic captions for the images” when handling acquisition of digital photographs. Is this advice practical? Is there a “middle ground”? What would you do if the donor said something like “I will check the accuracy of the settings in the future”?
- 5) Valerie Harris and Kathryn Stine provide a case study on the “Chicago Annenberg Challenge (CAC)” records that they argue should “give archivists pause to think about those handshake agreements that can come back to haunt an institution years later.” How would you respond to the intense media scrutiny described in Harris and Stine’s case study?
- 6) Why was proving the CAC Board’s intention to donate the records important to the University of Illinois at Chicago’s overall handling of the case?
- 7) How should archivists handle the acquisition of politically sensitive records?
- 8) What indicators might exist for collections that seem innocuous at the time of acquisitions but “take on” a new meaning over time?
- 9) The University of Illinois at Chicago’s “redact, replace, but preserve” methodology fulfilled the immediate requirements to service the collection in an ethically and legally responsible manner, but it was an exacting and extremely time-consuming process. Would you willingly acquire a collection that required this kind of management?

COLLECTIONS MANAGEMENT EXERCISE

Review the handout for the collections management exercise before class. Supplementary material is available on the course website.