



Preservation Education: New Directions, New Partners
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Key Challenges
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WORKING OUTLINE

Thanks and Acknowledgements

1. Introduction
 - a. Point of departure is our collective search for more comprehensive educational enterprise that effectively advances the knowledge requirements of an unquestionably real preservation challenge.
 - b. outline of issues covered
 - i. Five Contexts
 - ii. Seven Challenges
 - iii. Three Ways Out

The Context of This Symposium

2. Context 1: Who am I?
 - a. archives / preservation / technology in a mix – change jobs to grow
 - b. longstanding teaching and research commitments
 - c. preconceived notion: principles drive practices (idealism)
 - d. reality check: limitations and opportunities and costs
3. Context 2: Who are we?
 - a. different cultures, training, professional identities, etc.

 - b. preservation administrators – a fairly recent phenomenon
 - c. archivists – new to preservation management
 - d. technologists – with a library or archives orientation
 - e. LIS educators – Simmons almost exclusively
 - f. funding officers

 - g. composition of audience -- percentages
 - h. overlap between SAA and ALA/PADG
4. Context 3 : Who are they?
 - a. us versus them – or us plus them – possible allies?
 - b. International community (UNESCO, European Commission, etc.)
 - c. scientific community (eg., NSDL, NSF, etc.)
 - d. digerati from the IT revolution (Hillis, Brand, Kapor, Kahle, Dyson)

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- e. corporate and government research labs (IBM – NIST)
 - f. where we stand now, preservation has an amazing coterie of friends
 - g. an online public – that is fascinated, motivated, clever, expectant, and excited about technology and content; but as with everything else, preservation is caught up in the cultural changes taking place all around us
 - h. a distracted / alienated / polarized public
 - i. we face a specter of self-imposed isolation – even with an encompassing cultural heritage community as the base
 - j. hypothesis: education as bridge builder across communities
5. Context 4: everything is digital, or so seems that way
 - a. amount of information (varian/lyman)
 - b. nature of digital information (web fountain; cyberinfrastructure)
 - c. hidden preservation challenges that are barely on the public policy radar screen, especially “old new media” and “new new media” (ca. 1925 to present, all of which presents very significant intellectual property challenges)
 6. Context 5: Absence of convergence on archival media
 - a. we wouldn't be having this conversation if we had a media system that could support generational transfer and insurance policy equivalent to microfilm and alkaline paper
 - b. no disaster like Florence Flood that mobilized a conservation community [sidebar: Slow Fires uses Florence; Into the Future uses the Sarajevo fire]
 - c. no pending disaster like the cold war that was the genesis of microfilm
 - d. no cultural coincidence such as the convergence of “green movement,” paper making, and the preservation imperative
 - e. history of technology teaches us about the requirement for convergence of need (government, industry, cultural heritage)

Key Challenges in Advancing Education

7. Challenge 1: finding a new definition for “market share”
 - a. will never be monetary in character
 - b. assumption: cultural heritage community – one big thing – much more in common than different – the commonalities are significant, while the differences are trivial in the area of preservation
 - c. higher ed and the moral higher ground, which seems to be in short supply
 - d. stop picking at words and definitions (particularly preservation versus access)
 - e. refer to table from Preservation in Digital World (1996) but update
 - f. challenge of asserting the “control zone” (Ross Atkinson)
 - g. asserting influence rather than control
- Question: Is the cultural heritage community a meaningful construct for purposes of advancing preservation education?
- Question: What critical elements of a broad preservation framework can that community control or influence?
- Question: What is the role of formal educational programs in identifying and nurturing the cultural heritage control zone?
8. Challenge 2: Integrating preservation research and teaching
 - a. research agendas – e.g., “Invest to Save” – take operations off the table

- b. not simply a variation on the timeless theory versus practice debate
 - c. research agendas in library preservation, digital preservation, electronic records, etc. What about operational concerns?
- Question: How can preservation education programs bring current research activity into the classroom?
 - Question: How is research on operational (management?) issues to be developed?
9. Challenge 3: building educational programs in a diversified educational marketplace
- a. conferences, seminars, symposia, and forums by and for practitioners have usurped formal education's prerogative to define the theoretical foundation
 - b. OAI as but one example; RLG/OCLC work on digital preservation is another; Digital Preservation Coalition (UK) or Digital Library Federation (US) are others
 - c. values vary; outcome expectations vary
 - d. the critical role of standards organizations (W3C; NISO; etc.)
- Question: What is the role of professional education (at graduate and undergraduate levels) in building cutting-edge knowledge?
 - Question: How can the educational sector engage professional associations and coalitions more effectively?
10. Challenge 4: increasing the advocacy role of educators
- a. continuum of advocacy on behalf of action and dispassionate exploration of solutions
 - b. at both extremes is dilution of the message and/or disengagement
 - c. conveying the tension between academic/technical research and the need for action
- Question: What are we advocating for anymore in preservation?
 - Question: Who are we advocating to?
 - Question: Where does the leadership for preservation advocacy reside?
 - Question: Are preservation educators advocates?
11. Challenge 5: finding a common theory for the work of cultural heritage (that is relatively timeless)
- a. eye toward the past in a society that is, if not a-historical, remains distinctly anti-intellectual [Ashis Nancy]
 - b. anti-intellectualism in American life (a continuing reality) [Hofstadter]; and a government that disdains institutional memory [Turnbaugh]
 - c. until now, preservation's core purposes have been largely about history and stewardship of artifacts for future "historians" (evidence and its uses)
 - d. preservation may need to move "beyond history" (support for new "artifacts" in art, culture, etc.) [beyond productivity]
 - e. assertion: repurposing and secondary use are key values that challenge our underlying goal of stabilizing or fixing artifactual values [Levy] [decais]
- Question: Should preservation turn its back on the past?
 - Question: What is "core knowledge" for a newly integrated preservation field?
12. Challenge 6: defining the depth of genuine technical expertise needed to be credible
- a. technology expertise is the new "bench skills"? [Paul Banks]

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- b. what is expertise and who needs to know it? – resentment of expertise [Hofstadter again]
 - c. what is deep enough? [managing technology versus doing technology]
 - d. who determines what credible is? (relates to market share and mutual respect, judged by outcome)
 - e. new career paths needed; people willing to move around and cross boundaries
- Question: What role does formal graduate education play in acquiring technical expertise?
 - Question: How do formal and informal learning methods intersect to support preservation?
 - Question: How do we move from learning by reading to learning by doing?
13. Challenge 7: overcoming the “vanity of preservation”
- a. the power of disasters to destroy (man and nature) and elites (religious, wealthy, powerful) to protect in contrast to our professional efforts to collect and keep (such a recent phenomenon) decisively
 - b. shifting landscape of the value of preservation
 - c. assertion: return to the value of “responsible custody” [Pelham Barr]
 - d. we preservationists tried to argue that preservation really about access, but archives and libraries have forever been about possession, not necessarily access [Stanford]
 - e. we archivists tried to argue that archives are the foundation of democracy until we discovered that the most compelling archives have been agents of control by totalitarian regimes
 - f. we librarians tried to argue that the library is the center of the university until everyone went online; what is the center today?
 - g. Preservation and archives both have competing strategies for selection: collection versus use in preservation; value-drives versus documentation strategies in archives
 - h. technologists today generally disavow the value of selection (or appraisal) for preservation; where does this leave our core construct?
- Question: Are core collection development and archival appraisal ideas obsolete or, perhaps, simply misunderstood?
 - Question: Is Don Quixote the new role model for preservation educators?
14. Way out 1: deeper synthesis of ideas and action across professions
- a. conscious effort to downplay distinctions among professional identities in favor of mutual reinforcement toward something new and more significant
 - b. what does archives have to teach preservation?
 - c. what does preservation have to teach archives?
 - d. what does digital preservation have to teach archives and preservation?
 - e. what do archives and preservation have to teach digital preservation?
 - f. is “library and information science” at center or periphery of new partnering?
15. Way out 2: new focus on incentives for preservation
- a. information ecology [Nardi] and information commons [Boyle]

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- b. incentives by producers (owners) and beneficiaries (users) to support preservation
 - c. incentives are the domain of intellectual property assets, fees for services, etc.
 - d. advocacy for incentive programs grounded in technically sound approaches to management
 - e. mindset and technique: mindset is the most critical, the most complex, the most fertile ground for innovative approaches to education
16. Way out 3: ally preservation with the pursuit of deeply interdisciplinary creativity
- a. what can we learn from other disciplines (economics, computer science, history of technology, etc.)
 - b. history of 20th century technology (e.g. radio, networks of power, etc. provides clues about how to position our alliances) Long history of library technologies being studied (ALA, LIT, OCLC, etc.).
 - c. HASTAC, ISIS, ITCP, etc.
 - d. Long Now and its successors

Conclusion: New direction may turn out to be a new focus on what we collectively know is true.