

AERI 2010

Digital Cultural Communities

Where: Great Lakes Central

When: Wednesday, 6/23, 3:30-5:00 pm

Abstracts:

Abreu, Amelia. Finding my people: Youtube and the intimate archive.

The growth of broadband capability has significantly advanced the integration of networked technologies into the home, turning domestic spaces into interactive environments. Functional practices such as crafts, cooking and shopping have been transformed by such technology (Rall, 2007), impacting the "cultural economy" of the home, but also shifting the relations of residents to the public sphere. The rise of video sharing, in particular, has allowed domestic entertainment to take on particular public dimensions, resulting in an intricate system of viewing and recording artifacts along social indicators.

This project engages the communities built by youth of color in the "response" video genre: the practice of performing or embodying popular videos. In previous work, I examined the responders to Beyonce's "Single Ladies" video: diverse in age, ethnicity, class, gender, and sexuality, each working on a particular set of indexical (Fairclough, 2003) factors. Beyond that phenomenon, thousands of "response" strains cultivate subcultures along existing lines of class, race, gender and sexuality: transgender teens gathering around video diaries, the Latina beauty tutorial community, Asian-American teens' dance videos. The "trace bodies" (Puar, 2007) of virtual activity intersect with physical, raced bodies, but how? Lisa Nakamura (2002) argues that digital settings make "racial and ethnic competence as always the result of a partial, incomplete knowledge", rather than determined by a racialized body. As Nakamura relates the experience to a physical experience of body as well as that of a digital and knowledge body, she outlines a relationship between bodies, cultures, and knowledges. In this model, "race happens" (as well as gender and sexuality) in digital settings, and the ways that it does can iterate an idea of the "real" ethnic experience. Engaging with both the physical (spatial and embodied) and virtual dynamics of these communities (Stone, 1996), I will set out to build a framework for the way that ethnic identification happens on video sites, the values expressed in performance, and the pathways to interaction in this environment.

On video sharing sites, the performance of race, class, and gender identities both indicate and document complex forms of identity. Perhaps no other media platform allows for so much documentation of culture-building activity, and lends itself to such intense discussion. This paper will illuminate considerations for preservation, collection, and representation of this intimate archive.

McKemmish, Sue. Towards the Archival Multiverse: The Koorie Archiving System.

This presentation will report on the Koorie Archiving System (KAS), an outcome of an Australian Research Council funded project, Trust and Technology: Building Archival Systems for Oral Memory. KAS uses digital technologies and ideas about archives that derive from both postmodern and Indigenous traditions to move beyond conventional configurations of archives; traditional notions of ownership of and rights in government records based on the construct of a singular records creator; and the boundaries we have drawn between personal records and public records, community and government records. It moves towards an archival multiverse in that it aims to provide an archival space where control is shared and all parties involved can negotiate a meta-framework in which multiple perspectives, provenances and rights in records co-exist. The presentation will provide an overview of how the Koorie Archiving System uses web-based technologies to create a shared space for the Public Record Office of Victoria, the Koorie Heritage Trust Inc, the National Archives of Australia, and Koorie communities and individuals to work collaboratively as equal partners to create an archive that operates in both public and personal spacetime, an archive that respects Koorie community requirements relating to Koorie rights in government archival records, and supports Koorie community control of who can use community and personal records and stories according to their access protocols. It will also discuss how KAS provides a demonstrator of a socially inclusive approach to archiving, showing how government and alternate views can be presented in a harmonious environment, while demonstrating how community organisations can integrate government records into their own knowledge and records systems. KAS involves a partnership between Monash University, the

Public Record Office Victoria, the Koorie Heritage Trust Inc., the Koorie Records Taskforce, the Indigenous Special Interest Group of the Australian Society of Archivists, the National Archives of Australia and Koorie communities in Victoria (Koorie is a term used to refer to the Indigenous peoples of South Eastern Australia).

Sinn, Donghee. No Gun Ri Archives: Exploring How Archives Can Use Social Media to Encapsulate Collective Memory.

Archives often regard themselves as memory institutions. However, the archives' role to serve for collective memory has not yet been actively studied. This study looks at how archives can encapsulate collective memory of a certain historical event using social media technologies which facilitate user collaboration and information sharing. In this research project, a virtual archives to document collective memory of the No Gun Ri massacre is being created. The No Gun Ri massacre was a mass killing of more than 400 Korean refugees by American soldiers during the Korean War. The incident began to be researched based on accumulated archives in the survivors' community. The process of building knowledge was notable due to the vigorous controversies and discussions, which have become a part of larger collective memory. Using social media technologies, this archives will provide a space not only to collect and digitize materials but also to provide grounding for the development of collective memory from user contributed contents in the collection.

Wong, Vivian. History and identity: Creating the diasporic community archive through digital storytelling

Developments in emerging digital technologies are making it more possible for previously marginalized, neglected, and buried communities to document themselves, allowing diverse people to (re)discover and (re)claim their histories, identities, and experiences and capture their memories. These people and their communities act as agents in the creation, collection, preservation, and dissemination of their own historical and cultural narratives, while simultaneously (re)producing those narratives as digital records in community-based archives for themselves as testimonies of their histories and identities and to evidence their experiences to the larger globalized world.

My presentation discusses how Asian American communities are not only reshaping the landscape of archives in digital environments, but also the nature of archives as constructs, rendering themselves (their communities) "visible" through the use of technology that (re)present the narratives of their psychic imaginaries and (re)define their archives as "sites" where histories are transmitted, cultures constructed, and identities transformed. Using the research project with a Chinese American community-based organization in Los Angeles, California as an example, this presentation will examine how the availability of and access to new digital media technologies are compelling and propelling "Asian America" into alternative sites of knowledge production that re-imagine the archive to serve communities and their aspirational desires to represent themselves – their histories and identities – while simultaneously creating "new", alternate records through collaboration.

Convener: Elizabeth Yakel, University of Michigan

Bios:

Elizabeth Yakel

I am currently an Associate Professor in the University of Michigan School of Information. Before joining Michigan faculty in 2000, I taught at the University of Pittsburgh and prior to that was an archivist and records manager for 15 years. I teach in the Archives and Records Management specialization and am coordinator for the new Preservation of Information specialization. Additionally, I also teach a doctoral seminar in qualitative methods. My research interests include access to primary sources and user information behavior in archives, particularly digital archives. Recently, I have been investigating how social computing / Web 2.0 applications affect access to archives through the [Polar Bear Expedition Digital Collections](#). My other major research project concerns [Archival Metrics](#) and creating standardized assessment and reporting tools for archivists. My research has been supported by the National Historical Publications and Records Commission, the Institute for Museum and Library Services, and the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. I have been active in the Society of American Archivists (SAA) and served on its governing council. I became an SAA Fellow in 1999.

Amelia Abreu

Having worked as an archivist and librarian prior to starting the PhD, my work brings practical concerns of libraries, archives, and museums to the critical study of documents in the digital world. Through my work, I hope to enrich the theoretical discourse of cultural institutions and illuminate their processes to an interdisciplinary community.

Participating in the 2009 Institute, I was able to develop my research and teaching agendas in a supportive and dynamic community. I am dedicated to my research in this area, but also in helping to implement the next generation of archival curriculum. In my teaching, I emphasize a socially-aware, and democratically-minded, perspective on the practice of archives. My goal is to create a collaborative environment with my teaching and research that allows students to take seriously and learn from their own perspectives as well as their peers.

Promoting diversity and social engagement in Information Studies is crucial to the future of the field, and is one of my key priorities. In my time at UW, I have held fellowships from the Institute Public Humanities and the HASTAC Scholars program, working within these interdisciplinary environments to develop public engaged research. I have also worked for the Washington Doctoral Initiative, a grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services dedicated to recruiting LIS doctoral students from underrepresented backgrounds and

developing a comprehensive mentoring program.

Prior to entering the doctoral program in 2007, I worked professionally as an archivist and academic librarian. I hold an MSIS from the University of Texas- Austin.

Sue McKemish

My research relates to archival science and systems, electronic recordkeeping, and the broader knowledge management, metadata and resource discovery areas. I have been involved for many years with researchers at Monash University in the development of records continuum theory, particularly relating to the societal role of records in memory, identity, governance and accountability. I have particularly enjoyed working with archival, LIS, information systems, computing science and Australian Indigenous studies researchers, PhD students, archival institutions, government agencies, community organizations and communities on an exciting range of collaborative, multidisciplinary research projects, for example relating to Australian Indigenous communities and archives; inclusive and culturally sensitive archival education; the nexus between memories, communities and technologies; metadata standards to support electronic recordkeeping and the provision of quality information and archival resources online; and smart information portals tailored to the needs of individual users and communities. I also have a major commitment to the development of archival research design and methodology, community-centred participatory research models, and the user-sensitive design of information and archival systems.

Research highlights have included the 2004-8 ARC Linkage Major Project "Trust and Technology: Building Archival Systems for Indigenous Oral Memory" which explored how archives can support Indigenous frameworks of knowledge, memory and evidence, particularly knowledge that is still stored within the community orally (<http://www.infotech.monash.edu.au/research/centres/cosi/projects/trust/>); my recordkeeping metadata research (the Australian Recordkeeping Metadata Schema (RKMS) Version 1.0, the related 1997-8 SPIRT Project, and the 2003-05 ARC Linkage Project, "Create Once, Use Many Times: the Clever Use of Metadata" (<http://www.infotech.monash.edu.au/research/groups/rcrg/crkm/index.html>) which impacted significantly on the development of the new Australian National Standard, and ISO23081; and the development of the Breast Cancer Knowledge Online Portal (www.bckonline.monash.edu.au), an outcome of consumer instigated research and collaboration between researchers, governments, industry and professional partners, and user communities.

Another recent highlight has been the establishment of the Monash Centre for Organisational and Social Informatics in 2006 – COSI brings together a critical mass of Monash researchers, national and international research collaborators, industry and community research partners and research students, and aims to contribute to the development of individuals, organisations, and society through multidisciplinary research relating to human-centred design and deployment of information technologies, and their creative and effective use in government, business and civil society. COSI's major research themes include the role of ICTs in social inclusion, and the nexus between memories, communities and technologies (<http://www.infotech.monash.edu.au/research/centres/cosi/index.html>).

Since 1990, I have been involved with my Monash colleagues in the development, coordination and teaching of one of Australia's leading professionally accredited graduate programs in recordkeeping and archival systems. This has been enormously satisfying, and sustaining our archival programs remains a major challenge. A key to our success so far has been the development of our programs within the multidisciplinary framework of a broadly based Faculty of Information Technology which includes information disciplines ranging from the engineering to the social sciences ends of the spectrum, the strong nexus between our research and teaching programs and our engagement with a wonderfully supportive professional community.

DongheeSinn

Donghee Sinn is an Assistant Professor of the Department of Information Studies. She specializes in Archives and Records Management, and her research interests focus particularly on the archival research in relation with public memory, archival use/user studies, and personal archiving in the web environment. She has a B.A. and a Master's in Library and Information Science from Chung-Ang University in Seoul, Korea with a focus on history of books and Korean bibliography, and a Ph.D. in Library and Information Science from the University of Pittsburgh, specializing in Archives and Records Management. Previously, Donghee worked at the National Archives in Korea in acquisition and appraisal, taught at a college in Korean bibliography, and worked as a reference librarian in Korea. While working for a Ph.D. in the States, she worked in the East Asian Library for the Korean Collection at the University of Pittsburgh. Since then she has been participating and serving on the Library Technology Committee and the Membership Committee of the Council of East Asian Libraries, which is a sub group of the Asian Studies Association. She also worked as a webmaster for one of the institutes at the University of Pittsburgh. Her dissertation study was recognized and prizes were awarded from the ALA (American Library Association) and her own school. She is very interested in building bridges among several disciplines including archival studies, archiving in the web environment, and the East Asian culture and heritages.

VivianWong

I am a filmmaker by training and received my MFA in Directing from the UCLA School of Theater, Film, and Television. My most recent film is a short documentary about my grandmother from Malaysia entitled, "Homecoming". And it was through this film that I found my way to the PhD program in Information Studies at UCLA. In making "Homecoming", I experienced first-hand the power of visual images to hold and transfer history and memory—a picture really is worth a thousand words and every picture does tell a story. Moreover, I came to believe in the value and significance of one's personal archive to validate one's identity and make visible one's experience; and in the importance of these archives as part of a greater whole to document, preserve, and display the histories and cultures of the larger communities one belongs to. As my film work explores personal histories, memories, and identity, my work in Archival Studies engages those same ideas but in the broader context of collective community histories, memories, and experiences that are (re)configured in the

diaspora.

My research interests include the documentation, collection, preservation, and dissemination of historical and cultural records in Asian American communities and archival formations in the Asian diaspora. My work explores the notions of historical memory in im/migrant and diasporic narratives and the ways those experiences are embodied and performed in the everyday practices of local, transnational, and globalize communities, as well as circulated across time and space with the mediation of digital technologies. My current film project is a documentary about an organization in Los Angeles that mobilized the Chinese American community to build a library in its Chinatown neighborhood. My films have screened internationally in film festivals, academic conferences, and on public television.

Prior to returning to graduate school, I was the Assistant Director of the Center for EthnoCommunications at the UCLA Asian American Studies Center where I developed, produced, and promoted media about and by Asian Americans and their communities. I also taught classes in community media, video ethnography, and documentary filmmaking at the UCLA Department of Asian American Studies I am planning to continue my career in academia. I find teaching very rewarding and would like to teach in higher education for the foreseeable future. In addition, I want to continue as a filmmaker and incorporate documentary filmmaking, community media-making, and visual ethnography in my methodological, pedagogical, and research practices in Archival studies. Moreover, and more significantly, I also want to build upon the interest that was sparked working with my own family's collection of photographs and film footage to expand my scholarship, emphasizing the preservation of records in diverse communities to bring them into the cultural and historical fold of the Archives and archival understanding and practices.

I originally hail from the East Coast, growing up in Maryland and graduating from college in Pennsylvania where I majored in East Asian Studies.

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