Introduction to access and reference services

Originally by Nancy Goldman; revised by Rebecca Guenther & Howard Besser

Overview

• Metadata
  ▪ Cataloging and metadata; metadata models
  ▪ Data structures and element sets
  ▪ Descriptive standards
  ▪ Metadata interoperability
  ▪ Cataloging moving image resources
  ▪ Controlled vocabularies and subject analysis
  ▪ Preservation, technical and rights metadata
  ▪ XML and Linked Data
  ▪ Wrappers and complex objects
  ▪ Cataloging software and databases

Principal components of access

• Description: written information detailing resources
• Reference: expert assistance in locating resources
• Presentation: experience of using resources

Where does access take place?

• Physical
  ▪ Visit to view/study actual item
• Virtual
  ▪ Online surrogate
• Intellectual
  ▪ Information about the resource: bibliographic citation

Access strategies

• Information
  ▪ Provide answer to specific query
• Guidance
  ▪ Help narrow down patron's general query and guide to relevant answers or resources
• Instruction
  ▪ Instruct patron in using bibliographic resources, catalogs, finding aids, etc. to perform detailed research
Collection policies and user needs

- Open collections
  - General public
  - Specialized researchers
- Closed collections
- Restrictions on access

Types of archival collections

- Creating
  - Corporate
  - Government
  - Individual
  - Educational
- Collecting
  - Libraries
  - Historical societies
  - Museums
  - Individual

Varied user needs

- General interest
- Specialized research
- Re-use (footage)
- Remakes
- Exhibition
- Preservation

Service oriented perspective

- Responsibility to select and organize collections to maximum effectiveness
- Strong knowledge of subjects and the principles and practices of the field
- Commitment to either answering a user’s question or referring to a source which can
- Belief in providing the same level of service to every user, no matter the subject of inquiry or the means for which the information will be used

Complexities in servicing moving image materials

- Format obsolescence
  - Cost of replacements
  - Impact on preservation and access
- Adherence to artists’ intent
  - Ethical considerations
  - Codes of ethics
- Nature of material
  - Mass produced or unique
- Copyright status

Codes of ethics

- FIAF
  - [http://www.fiafnet.org/uk/members/ethics.html](http://www.fiafnet.org/uk/members/ethics.html)
- AMIA
  - [http://www.amianet.org/about/code-of-ethics](http://www.amianet.org/about/code-of-ethics)
- SAA
  - [http://www2.archivists.org/statements/saa-core-values-statement-and-code-of-ethics](http://www2.archivists.org/statements/saa-core-values-statement-and-code-of-ethics)
Types of repositories and their access protocols

- Access protocols typically determined by:
  - Nature and mission of institution
  - Government, public, academic, private
  - Whether privately or publicly funded
  - Rarity of collections
  - National cultural priorities

Libraries

- Often collect mass-produced materials
- Mission usually prioritizes access over conservation
- Access geared to individuals for private use
- Special or private libraries may have more “museum-like” policies, e.g. exhibits
- Access protocols and costs vary depending on type of institution and nature of collection but usually free
- Reference services to help patrons best make use of collections

Archives

- Traditionally records repositories
- Often have unique or rare materials so restrictions
- Copyright status related to nature of archives, e.g. corporate vs. public
- Prioritize research and individual access
- Access varies depending on affiliation, nature of collection: frequently has restrictions

Museums

- Generally collect unique/rare objects
- Mission prioritizes exhibition and conservation
- Consequently have strictly controlled access
  - Credentialed
  - By appointment
  - May be limited
- Sometimes access to digital surrogates is available
- Loan agreements outline precise details regarding care of resources

Variations in policies between

- Nonprofit
  - Public or grant funding may mandate a certain degree of access
  - Could be restrictions because of underfunding
- Government
  - May have legally mandated policies
  - Cost may be less through government institutions, e.g. LC
- Commercial, e.g. stock footage libraries or still image brokers
  - Costs may be high, although liberal reference policies
  - May have deeper indexing but at a cost

Appendix 2 - Comparative table: audiovisual access/reference

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution Type</th>
<th>Access/Reference</th>
<th>Mission/Collection Focus</th>
<th>Access Protocols/Costs</th>
<th>Variations in Policies</th>
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Acknowledgement:

Some of the content in this table, and some of its content, is adapted from:  
D W Thorpe/Australian Society of Archivists, Keeping archives (second edition)

History of film archives’ access policies

- Early archivists efforts to safeguard film heritage mistrusted by producers; producers didn't want to invest in archiving
- Attitudes changed as studios realized profits from archivists' foresight
- This history still leads some archivists to restrict even intellectual access to holdings in order to avoid possible legal battles

Access policies and fees

- Restrictions limit handling of rare and fragile materials
- Fees can offset some of the costs of providing access
- Most non-commercial institutions cannot cover costs through fees

Negotiating access conditions in donor agreements

- Donation preferable to deposit
  - If deposited items can be pulled from collection at any time
- Best if donor agrees to institution's access conditions; otherwise can be problematic
- Should include permission to preserve materials and provide access to them

Establishing policies and fee structures

- Must balance differing institutional requirements
  - Adequate time to retrieve, inspect materials
  - Staff to create surrogates, operate equipment
  - Policies must respect preservation needs of materials
  - Policies must reflect funding realities

Fundraising through access activities

- Diverse array of funding streams to support activities
  - Exhibition
  - Research
  - Duplication
  - Licensing
  - Outreach
- Funding challenges for film archives that seek to collect, store, preserve and provide access to materials in original format

Exhibition

- Like many archives, PFA has a very active exhibition program; go to http://www.bampfa.berkeley.edu to see what's playing
Research and Duplication: PFA’s research screening room

Licensing

- Take a look at UCLA’s “Commercial Services” website http://www.cinema.ucla.edu/collections/media-licensing for a good example of a very active licensing program.
- Doesn't offset expenses of preservation activities and is only a partial subsidy

Outreach

Relationship between preservation and access

- “Preservation without access is pointless”
- FIAF motto: “To preserve and to show”
- NEH: Division of Preservation and Access

Preservation vs. access

- Point of preservation is to keep resources accessible over the long term
- Collecting institutions have mandate to retain materials permanently
- Whether preservation and access can be accomplished depends on institution's resources
- Complications of copyright/licensing restrictions makes free public access difficult

Preservation vs access

- Access carries risks and costs
- Access has technological and cost implications; mode of access of analog could put survival of work at risk
- Frequent changing of formats makes both preservation and access more complicated
  - Need to maintain obsolete technologies
  - Need to maintain access to analog and digital
  - Need to keep current with what formats are preferred in the marketplace
**Preservation vs. access in the digital age**

- More emphasis on digital preservation copies
- Does change to digital affect the ability to recreate the experience? Is access to original intent compromised?
- Access vs. preservation copies of digital material
  - The truer to the original the longer it takes to deliver via the Internet
- Changes in format can result in changes in content

**Preservation vs. access in the digital age**

- Audiovisual archives increasingly using digital technology to provide access to collections
- Technical judgments needed in migrating and copying
- Digital formats are mediated through software
- Problems with AV because of storage requirements
- Different ways of accessing a collection digitally
  - Access may not be what the institution owns but also what they license through networks
  - Video collections have become more of a user interface than a collection of resources an institution owns

**Issues in preservation**

- Value of assets not always recognized until it’s too late
- Frequent technological change
- Minimal resources
- Industry preoccupied with control of intellectual property
- Difficulty with changes in formats that affect the experience of using the resource

**Legal complexities of access to audiovisual materials**

- Need for detailed technical, collection, subject and historical knowledge of resources in a collection
- Access constrained by legal entitlements of owners of copyrights, distribution and broadcast rights
- Difficulty in establishing rights ownership
- May be a need to take risks in allowing public access
- Obligation to provide access to resources in the public domain if they were preserved with public funds

**Importance of metadata in providing access**

- Metadata is key to access
- Audiovisual archives historically low on resources; not all materials have descriptions (cataloging)
- Nature of medium doesn’t allow browsing as with printed material
- Intellectual control through catalog entries more important
- New technologies are resulting in new possibilities for browsing

**Importance of metadata in providing preservation**

- Preservation and accessibility of moving images and sound recordings involves copying and migration
- Importance of documenting processes involved to preserve the integrity of the work
- Complexities of file formats require validation and monitoring in case of obsolescence
- Need for technical and structural metadata
Importance of metadata for preservation and access

- Institutions need to provide staff and users with accurate rights metadata
- Ideally systems can act on restrictions
- Rights restrictions may be in place because of copyright or licenses
- Rights restrictions may differ for preservation vs access

Issues in providing access to moving image materials

- Moving image resources aren't available
  - Not all films that were available in the 1980s and earlier on 16mm were made available in VHS
  - Many titles released on VHS are not available on DVD
  - Many works aren't available in any format
- Orphan works may be in libraries or archives but can't be viewed outside them
  - Institutions can't secure rights
  - Viewing in institutions limits the amount of deep analysis that can be done

Issues in providing access to moving image materials

- Serious film research involves analysis, multiple viewings, being able to view frame by frame
  - DVDs allow for deep analysis but many not available
  - Those that are non-commercial but online may have access restrictions, e.g. British Film Institute
- Unless there is commercial value in distributing copyright holders don’t

Introduction to reference services

- Help the user to concretely identify what information they are seeking (via the reference interview)
- Interpret an institution's information organizational systems (catalogs) and holdings to users
- Provide bibliographic instruction in using print and electronic indexes, databases, and other reference tools
- Keep abreast of relevant past and current print and electronic reference tools and continually develop and update reference collections

User information-seeking behavior

- Most users start with easiest routes, even if they lead to less in-depth answers
- Traditional routes included friends, personal libraries
- Internet searches are now the typical first step
- But may not provide as thorough results as expert reference assistance using strong search skills, understanding resources available, using metadata effectively
The reference interview

- Can occur face-to-face, by phone, on-line
- Psychological/non-verbal components:
  - Encourage questions
  - Ascertain what people want to find out without feeling like you’re invading their privacy

Soliciting the reference query

- Requires good communication skills to efficiently and accurately elicit the actual query
- Use questions to broaden or narrow the scope of the request
  - Turn general query into a more specific one

Determining what level of reference service is needed

- Bibliographic instruction
  - Interpreting the collection and its organization for the user
  - How to use the catalog, indexes, Internet resources, etc.
- In-depth research
  - This service often determined by institutional policy

Finding the answer: Search strategies

- Definition: organizing your research to make the most efficient use of your time by approaching the resources in a logical order, starting with those which are most likely to answer your query first.
- Where to look
- How to construct a successful search
- How long to look

Where to look

- Know your field’s sources and their
  - Scope
  - Purpose
  - Authority
  - Authenticity
  - Currency

Constructing a search

- Boolean logic
- Broadening and narrowing
- Controlled values vs. free-text/keyword searching
- Matching resource to type of query
- Tracings and footnotes chasing
- Creativity
How long to look

- Often takes longer than you expect
- Balancing time and resources
- Referrals

Interpreting/focusing the answer

- Match retrieved information to the level of the inquiry and/or inquirer
  - Depth of response for children versus adults
  - Students vs. general public
  - Ready reference vs. in-depth research
- If necessary, interpret/contextualize the answer

Reference sources;
Presentation of information

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Reference sources for film

- Primary source material
  - Raw footage
  - Documentation
  - Interviews
  - Oral histories
- Secondary source material (produced)
  - Films
  - Documentaries
  - TV shows

Reference sources;
Presentation of information-

- Reference sources
- Presentation of information
  - Physical
  - Virtual
  - Intellectual
- Searching demo
Other film-specific reference sources

- Providing access to supplemental documentation
  - Scripts
  - Stills
  - Posters
  - Reviews
  - Press kits
- Often found in archive documentation or study centers

Introduction to specific access tools

- Includes
  - Guides to the literature
  - Bibliographies and indices
  - Reviews
  - Filmographies
  - Biographies/biographical dictionaries
  - Distribution and stock footage
- Many are available in online versions

Guides to the literature

- Exist for many fields
- Usually arranged by type of resource
- Generally include annotations describing scope, audience, organization of resource

Bibliographies

- Useful in locating books by subject
  - Often include more specific subject headings than larger library catalogs

Periodical indices

- Major source of academic, critical, historical research
- Include print and online indices
- Online sources enhance research efficiency
- Older print sources very useful for locating historical texts and perspectives
- Many online sources include full text

Reviews

- Key sources for:
  - Reception studies
  - Credits
  - Distribution information
- Many, including Variety and New York Times available on Lexis-Nexis as well as individual publishers’ websites
### Information on specific films and people

- Catalogs: national production, individual collections, union
- Subject filmographies: specific in scope; many include annotations and print sources
- General filmographies: *Film Index International*, *AFI Catalog*, *Dictionary of Films and Filmmakers*

### Finding Film-related Primary Source Documentation

- Directories of archives
- Directories of documentation collections
- Union catalogs
- Bibliographic utilities

### Web Resources

- Great variety of sources
- Assessing accuracy/quality of information can be challenging
- The “deep Web” not accessible through Internet search

### Finding aids

- Detailed information about a collection
- Compiled by an archivist or librarian as part of processing a collection
- Hierarchically arranged to describe separate items in a collection
- Uses standard Encoded Archival Description for electronic finding aids
- Example: [http://www.loc.gov/rr/ead/](http://www.loc.gov/rr/ead/)

### Pathfinders/Webliographies

- Compiled by librarians on a particular subject
- Guides researcher to appropriate sources with selection of books, databases, etc.
- Bibliographies of web resources with links

### Catalogs important for research on cinema

- OCLC
- BFI
- BiFi France
- Academy for Motion Pictures Arts and Sciences
- Other online catalogs
Presentation of information

- Physical
- Virtual
- Intellectual

Physical access

- Attributes of research spaces
  - What material is used and is there adequate space to view it? E.g. large format paper materials
  - Is it quiet, well lit, have electrical outlets, wireless? Are there adequate computer terminals?
- Viewing conditions
  - If material only used on-site is there enough equipment?
  - Space for research screening rooms, projection booths, flatbed viewing tables? Space for file inspection?
- Equipment needed in a study center
  - Soundproof booths? Headphones? Appropriate lighting?
  - Some have video and audio decks remotely and screen to a reading room (e.g. NYPL, LC MBRS)

Physical access

- Policies for making copies
  - Provide space and equipment for photocopying or printing or allow cameras
  - http://bancroft.berkeley.edu/info/camera.html
- Using originals vs. reproductions
  - Ideally service them as close to original as possible
  - For preservation or exhibition can closely control use of original; for research access may be different
  - Works on film – what viewers are available? For video, can user view a VHS, DVD or other digital? For paper, is a photocopy adequate if original is fragile?
- Must the researcher view original to satisfy research needs?

Access factors

- Film
  - Higher reproduction costs
  - Higher staffing and maintenance needs because of operating equipment
  - Higher quality (usually)
- Video formats
  - Decreased transfer costs
  - Decreased staffing and maintenance needs
  - Decreased quality (usually) unless they have top-of-the-line equipment
- Rights issues to consider – showing to private researchers vs exhibiting to an open group

Virtual access

- To content
  - Use of digital surrogates available onsite becoming more common in libraries, archives and museums
  - Accessing content via the Internet – may be restricted to onsite or in password-protected networks
- To institutions
  - Collection websites

Digitization project considerations

- Scope and purpose of project
- Intended target audience and mode of delivery
- Standards, specifications, best practices (technical, metadata)
- Staffing
- Timing
- Infrastructure and content costs
- Funding sources (development and ongoing)
Virtual access to institutions: Collection websites

Virtual access to institutions: Collection websites

Websites

Collection / Institutional websites

• What are the primary components of a good collection website?
• What kind of design should a collection website have?
• Is there information on collection websites that is superfluous or duplicative?
• Is it easy to navigate the site?
### Intellectual presentation

- Gateways to bibliographic and holdings information (e.g. catalogs)
- Differing levels of control call for different types of descriptive gateways
- Different levels of description

### Shot-level description

- Most granular
  - Shot by shot or scene by scene
- Rarely seen outside of commercial stock libraries where precise, fast access essential to business
- Most collections can’t afford this level

### Item-level description

- Commonly used in libraries, museums and many film archives
- Highly granular
- One record per title
- Each format cataloged separately
- Forms the basis of most catalogs

### Collective description

- Describes many items in one record
- Used by institutions following traditional archival practices where original order is important
- Can be very useful when working with large collections
  - UCLA, for example, uses extensively in describing film collections.
  - Many European archives catalog all manifestations of a work on one record

### Harold Lloyd Collection

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Harold Lloyd collection of home movies, 1926-1950, bulk 1926-1932.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extent</td>
<td>87 film reels, 9 videocassettes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scope and Content</td>
<td>This collection of home movies primarily documents the early years of the Lloyd children and life at the family’s Greenacres mansion in Beverly Hills, California and beach house in Santa Monica, California. It features children’s parties, Harold Lloyd playing golf with friends, various family gatherings, vacations, picnics and barbecues. Also included is home movie footage of Lloyd and his volunteer activities at the Shriners Hospitals for Crippled Children.</td>
</tr>
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### For Assignment #1

- Keep in mind physical access factors as you evaluate film and media collections for this assignment
- Study ways media centers and libraries present information about their collections and services and provide access to them
- Evaluate how information is presented on the website and how easy it is to navigate it
- Consider intellectual access, i.e. the catalog or finding aids to resources
### Accessing descriptions

- Bibliographic control
- Catalogs vs. indexes
- Important concepts
  - Collocation
  - Controlled vocabularies
  - Unique identifiers

### Search strategies

- Browse vs. search
- Web search vs deep web
- Metadata vs full text
- Sorting
- Indexing
- Need to understand database you're using

### Search strategies

- Search engines use logic, algorithms and character string matching to meet user-defined criteria
- Database design: fields, data elements and structure of database interact with search engine capabilities
- Formulating a search
  - Boolean logic
  - Proximity operators
  - Wildcards/truncation
  - Weighting and relevancy
- Precision vs. recall

### Search protocols and technologies

- Z39.50 and SRU
- Federated search
- OAI/PMH
- Linked data and opening up data and metadata