



Society of  
Florida Archivists

# Society of Florida Archivists Journal

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## A Letter from the Editors

### Introducing the *Society of Florida Archivists Journal*

This is the first issue of the *Society of Florida Archivists Journal*. It may be small, but there is no question, it packs a big punch.

As the editors of this journal we can declare honestly and openly that this issue was a long time in the making and that it has only been made possible through the combined efforts of a truly dedicated Editorial Board. We want to recognize this hardworking group of archives professionals for their commitment to the scholarly conversation of our field. They devote themselves to establishing and enacting rigorous peer review criteria and procedures; they engage in many stages of painstaking editorial and formatting work; and they continuously lay the groundwork for a journal that will contribute to our professional practice. A huge and incredibly deserved thank you to Hannah Wiatt Davis, Andrea Malanowski, Jinfang Niu, and Rachel Simmons. They are the explanation for *how* this journal came to be.

Now that we have explained the “how,” we will explain the *why* behind the journal and argue what we feel is at stake with this new enterprise. We hope you will allow us a small soapbox and a little bit of leeway for this brief interlude that elaborates on the topics we feel will move our profession forward in new directions. Our letter concludes with a celebration of the wonderful contributions herein and a call for future submissions from you.

### Why does SFA need a journal?

The debut issue of *SFAJ* denotes a groundbreaking moment for the State of Florida’s archives community. A first attempt at creating a peer-reviewed, fully open access journal, *SFAJ* represents a major and purposeful step towards enhanced communication within and among our constituents, and to the world beyond. The *Journal* gives us a formal space to tackle real-world archival problems, theorize together, and discuss changing best practices. It also serves to give further and more expansive recognition to the work that we do as archivists, highlighting our contributions to the educational and cultural arenas in which we work.

#### *A Highly Accessible Professional Literature*

It is sometimes easy to forget that the world of scholarly communication is in crisis.<sup>1</sup> The way that scholars publish is in question, and the business-side of scholarly writing—commercial publishers, expensive journals, and print publications—is under fire for very good reasons. The recent documentary “Paywall: The Business of Scholarship” offers an eye-opening exposé on these very matters and pushes the academy to embrace a true open access publishing model.<sup>2</sup> Since the “fundamental characteristic of scholarly research is that it is created as a public good to facilitate inquiry and knowledge,”<sup>3</sup> *SFAJ* is responding to the number one ACRL-recommended strategy for reforming the scholarly communication complex: “development of competitive journals, including the creation of low cost and open access journals, that provide

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<sup>1</sup> “Principles and Strategies for the Reform of Scholarly Communication.” The Association of College and Research Libraries, approved by the ACRL Board of Directors on June 24, 2003, available online at <http://www.ala.org/acrl/publications/whitepapers/principlesstrategies>.

<sup>2</sup> *Paywall: The Business of Scholarship*, directed by Jason Schmitt, 2018, <https://paywallthemovie.com/>.

<sup>3</sup> “Principles and Strategies for the Reform of Scholarly Communication,” see “Scholarly Communication Defined.”

direct alternatives to high-priced commercial titles.”<sup>4</sup> The Editorial Board understands that the *Journal* not only meets an expressed community need, but it is making the case for more accessible professional writing outlets that do not require subscriptions or memberships. Like all scholars, archivists need to think long and hard about where and how they choose to publish and who can access that scholarship; without access, there can be no scholarly conversation.

### *Helping Archivists Take Action*

In a recent issue of the *American Archivist*, the Editor, Christopher (Cal) Lee, defends and defines “The Literature of a Profession,” stating that “to be a profession requires a professional literature, and professionalism involves drawing from (and ideally contributing to) a professional literature ... Articles should contribute something new and valuable ... Articles should help Archivists *take action*.”<sup>5</sup> The same might be said about the presentations at our SFA Annual Meeting each year, wherein we learn from the insights and experiences of peers and confer with mentors in the spirit of professional development; every year we gain something that we take back to implement in our local environments. Likewise, *SFAJ* is an attempt to add something new, valuable, and actionable to the literature of our chosen profession. It is a way of extending the Annual Meeting conversation into a more formalized and deliberate platform, crystalizing an idea in the scholarly record for anyone to consult or counter, either now or in later years.

### *A Voice for Advocacy*

Finally, but importantly, every profession requires strong and sustained advocacy efforts. A recent (and now infamous) article from the prestigious *Chronicle of Higher Education* entitled “The Delicate Art of Dealing with Your Archivist,”<sup>6</sup> trivialized and stereotyped our profession in one, not-so-funny, fell swoop. While the swell of backlash from archivists and our allies in reaction to this piece was admirable and needed, it is important to realize that we often face not just a lack of respect for our work, but a complete lack of understanding about what we contribute to our user communities. We need to continue to educate and promote the incredible value of our profession and show off the good work we are engaged in—digital humanities projects, innovative instruction practices, local history exhibitions, and even community activist work. We all know that SFA members and affiliates lead innovative and impressive initiatives, but publishing and practicing have not always gone hand-in-hand. We want *SFAJ* to change that. We view *SFAJ* as an opportunity to put the work of Florida archivists on the map and provide an advocacy mouthpiece for our active and vibrant constituency.

## **What will you find herein?**

You will notice a few key themes running throughout this issue of *SFAJ*—technological innovation, diversity and inclusion practices, and storytelling through the lens of archives. We want to stress that these themes did not just emerge out of the ether, but rather were proposed by *you*, Florida archivists, who are writing about and presenting on issues that affect your daily work and have a real impact on our practice. They are also topics that archives leaders today find absolutely critical to advancing the profession. The Editorial Board seeks to engage in further discussions in these areas in the future, in whatever form or format is most appropriate, and are open to your interpretations of these themes as they relate to your professional context.

### *Technological Innovation*

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<sup>4</sup> “Principles and Strategies for the Reform of Scholarly Communication,” see “Strategies Supported.”

<sup>5</sup> Christopher A. Lee, “The Literature of a Profession,” *The American Archivist* 81, no. 1 (Spring/Summer 2018): 4-5.

<sup>6</sup> Alice Dreger, “The Delicate Art of Dealing with Your Archivist,” *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, July 29, 2018, <https://www.chronicle.com/article/The-Delicate-Art-of-Dealing/244070>.

Libraries and archives have always faced the challenge of staying technologically relevant, but is “just keeping up” the bar we should set for ourselves and our organizations? In her closing address as SAA President in July of 2017, Nancy McGovern lamented that “archivists tend to focus more on how to protect our digital content against technological change than on the opportunities that new technologies offer in advancing our practice in new and sometimes unexpected ways.”<sup>7</sup> McGovern advised that as a profession we must focus on the possible, not just the pragmatic, and commit ourselves to highly responsive attitudes and practices.<sup>8</sup> Mathew Miguez’s article, “Linked Data for Archivists,” does just that. Miguez argues that archivists have the responsibility, and a unique opportunity, to innovate their descriptive work in a linked data environment to ensure that archival collections are highly discoverable on the web, even if it means deviating from the traditional model of hierarchical description. He calls on us to think, not just about the context of our own collections, but about the entire discovery experience of an online researcher, and suggests the technology of RDF triples as a mechanism for making descriptive connections with resources outside our own institutional boundaries. This contribution is a reminder that in a rapidly evolving technological environment, change and adjustment will always be needed, and we must be agile in our technological approaches if we are to innovate and improve.

#### *Diversity and Inclusion Practices*

Diversity is a major tenant in our core values and ethics as archival professionals. The Society of American Archivists’ Core Values Statement and Code of Ethics states: “Archivists collectively seek to document and preserve the record of the broadest possible range of individuals ... [and to this end] they work actively to achieve a diversified and representative membership in the profession.”<sup>9</sup> In a 2016 keynote address, Chris Taylor challenged archivists to start the work of diversity and inclusion at home in our organizational culture, work practices, and the intercultural competencies of our staff.<sup>10</sup> These issues are tackled head on by Robert Rubero et al. in “Challenges to Creating and Promoting a Diverse Record.” Together, this group of archivists at Florida State University explains how to be intentional about diversity and inclusion across an archival organization, all the way from digitization and description practices, to teaching and research support, and public exhibit designs. Even when faced with a lack of diverse voices in the record itself, these professionals took on major internal initiatives to raise the diversity and inclusion standards of their archive. Their article reinforces Taylor’s critical assertion that the important and foundational work of diversity and inclusion relies on our ability to “get our house in order.”<sup>11</sup>

#### *Storytelling through the Lens of Archives*

As with future issues of SFAJ, this first issue features book reviews of works that utilize or feature archives and/or archivists. The books reviewed herein—*Anna Madgigine Jai Kingsley* and *Voices from Mariel*—use plantation records and oral history accounts, respectively, to tell the different but equally traumatic stories of immigration and assimilation to a new life in Florida. While these stories take place in very different contexts and eras, both come to life with the aid of a significant number of archival artifacts and sources. These books are a reminder of the ability and power of archives to tell stories that have yet to be told, adding to our

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<sup>7</sup> Nancy Y. McGovern, “Archives, History, and Technology: Prologue and Possibilities for SAA and the Archival Community,” *The American Archivist* 81, no. 1 (Spring/Summer 2018): 11.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 20.

<sup>9</sup> “SAA Core Values Statement and Code of Ethics,” The Society of American Archivists, Approved by the SAA Council in May 2011, <https://www2.archivists.org/statements/saa-core-values-statement-and-code-of-ethics>.

<sup>10</sup> Chris Taylor, “Getting Our House in Order: Moving from Diversity to Inclusion” *The American Archivist* 80, no.1 (Spring/Summer 2017): 19-29.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 21.

understanding of history and, in many ways, humanizing historical narratives in unparalleled ways. Archivists should not forget their role in this work.

In an early and pivotal issue of *Archival Science*, Joan Schwartz and Terry Cook famously devoted much of their introduction to a beautiful explanation of how archives and archivists play a role in the modern storytelling endeavor:

Through archives, the past is controlled. Certain stories are privileged and others marginalized. And archivists are an integral part of this story-telling. In the design of record-keeping systems, in the appraisal and selection of a tiny fragment of all possible records to enter the archive, in approaches to subsequent and ever-changing description and preservation of the archive, and in its patterns of communication and use, archivists continually reshape, reinterpret, and reinvent the archive. This represents enormous power over memory and identity, over the fundamental way in which society seeks evidence of what its core values have been, where it has come from, and where it is going. Archives are not passive storehouses of old stuff, but active sites where social power is negotiated, contested, confirmed. The power of archives, records, and archivists should no longer remain naturalized [*sic*] or denied, but opened to vital debate and transparent accountability.<sup>12</sup>

This statement represents an important moment in our profession in that it questioned the objectivity of our collections but also elevated our work as curators of the past. It is our hope that current and future contributions to *SFAJ* will honor the storytelling labor we all engage in as archivists and also acknowledge the real difficulty of interpreting and untangling the complexities of the historical record.

### **What is the future of *SFAJ*?**

The launch of this publication serves as an open call to all curatorial scientists, particularly those in Florida, to re-think what it means to manage and discuss archives in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This letter is our attempt to prioritize themes that we feel are “live” issues now in our profession, and we are optimistic about the scholarly conversation that will unfold in the following issues of *SFAJ*. Without being too prescriptive, we can simply state here that future contributions may run the gamut of topics, from archival education and career paths, to digital preservation standards and procedures, to community outreach and public programming, and everything in between. All submissions should foster exciting discussions about progressive archival approaches and best practices that can benefit state of Florida practitioners and others beyond our borders. And finally, because scholarly writing always benefits from a full spectrum of perspectives and viewpoints, the Editorial Board welcomes the contributions of not just archivists, but those working in allied professions like librarianship, education, information technology, museum studies, oral history, historical preservation, and genealogy.

This letter serves as our open call to all of you. Archives practitioners – send us case studies, reflective essays, book reviews, and opinion pieces. Records managers, non-archives curators, and librarians – send us your perspectives and experiences and collaborate with us. Technologists – send us usability studies, implementation strategies, and tool reviews. Faculty – send us academic papers and theoretical think pieces, and tell us about your pedagogical approaches. Students – send us fieldwork and practice reports and outstanding papers about

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<sup>12</sup> Joan Schwartz and Terry Cook, “Archives, Records, and Power: The Making of Modern Memory,” *Archival Science* 2, nos.1-2 (March 2002): 1.

archival theory and practice. And, everyone – mix it up! We want the *Society of Florida Archivists Journal* to be as compelling and creative as you are.

We are excited to receive, read, and review your approaches to contemporary archival theory and practice, and we look forward to working with you to grow the knowledge and innovation of our field.

-Rachel Walton, Editorial Chair  
Rollins College

-Tomaro Taylor, Review Editor  
University of South Florida

# Linked Data for Archivists: Graphs and Rhizomes

Matthew Miguez

*This article is adapted from a session presented at the joint meeting of the Society of Florida Archivists and Society of Georgia Archivists in Savannah, Georgia in October 2016.*

The data models used in libraries and archives are in the midst of a big change. Traditional bibliographic records use the structure of relational databases for information storage and retrieval. Adoption of linked data technologies and supporting practices—such as Bibliographic Framework (BIBFRAME) and Resource Description and Access (RDA)—illustrate the movement from a relational data model to a graph-based model. Linked data is the underlying architecture of the semantic web, but many archives have attempted only tentative explorations of the technology. Linked data presents archivists with both challenges and opportunities by allowing archives to expand the scope of their descriptive practices, offering different types of data sources, and providing different voices a role in resource description. Conversely, linked data requires new skills and challenges the theoretical model of hierarchical arrangement by presenting a new data model: the rhizome, a structure prizing connection and relationship over arrangement. Archivists have a responsibility to be involved in the overall endeavor for their own benefit as well as for the benefit of others. The uniqueness of archival collections is a great benefit in expanding the data in the semantic web and linked data environment, and linked data can provide users of archives with a more fluid and complete discovery experience.

There is growing awareness in archival literature that the creation and organization of records are not benign acts, but, rather, operations of political interpretation and memory.<sup>1</sup> One problematized practice is archival description. In library literature, the conversation of cataloger bias dates to the 1970s<sup>2</sup>. Melanie Feinberg summarizes that, conscious or not, the biases and experiences of the cataloger enter the tools and practices of description and influence how resources are represented and used.<sup>3</sup> The inherently political nature of records compounds the challenge of describing archival materials,<sup>4</sup> as the representation of records can change the

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<sup>1</sup>These ideas are most thoroughly explored in *Archival Science* 2, issues 1-4 (2002).

<sup>2</sup>Sanford Berman, *Prejudices and Antipathies: A Tract on the LC Subject Headings Concerning People* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Co., 1993).

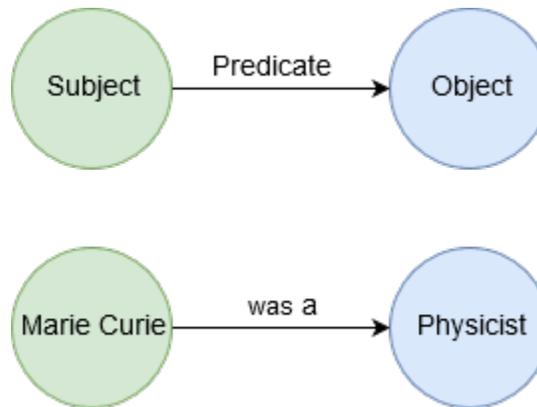
<sup>3</sup>Melanie Feinberg, "Hidden Bias to Responsible Bias: An Approach to Information Systems Based on Haraway's Situated Knowledges," *Information Research* 12, no. 4 (October 2007). <http://www.informationr.net/ir/12-4/colis/coliso7.html>.

<sup>4</sup>John Ridener, *From Polders to Postmodernism: A Concise History of Archival Theory* (Duluth, Minn.: Litwin Books, 2009).

interpretation of their real-world consequences and affects.<sup>5</sup> Privileging certain aspects of material representation and access is even encoded in the guidelines for arrangement and description: “Each mission will lead to the high prioritization of certain users, so that access tools developed will address their particular informational needs. This will affect the extent of descriptive work and the types of products developed by arrangement and description.”<sup>6</sup> A single voice is insufficient to describe the totality of what a record or a collection represents. More diverse and inclusive models, practices, and philosophies are necessary to serve as a counterweight to these limitations.

Power and politics have also problematized archival arrangement. In the 1980s, Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari identified “arborescent,” or top-down hierarchies, as structures encoding and concentrating power in the status quo<sup>7</sup>; yet, 120 years since its conception, hierarchical organization is still the dominant philosophical model for archival arrangement. In opposition to the arborescent organizing principle, Deleuze and Guattari conceived of the rhizome—a structure of organization where the defining feature is connectedness and every part connects to every other part. There are many paths into, through, and out of the rhizome, thereby replacing boundaries and form with integration and comprehensiveness. In the context of information search and retrieval, a user would not necessarily be limited to the “authorized” arrangement and representation of resources defined by the archivist. Records in a rhizomatic data structure could connect organically across *fonds* and institutional borders. Data siloed in disparate discovery systems could integrate into more holistic narratives with the addition of greater context and more transparent connection between collections. Thus, the rhizome, as conceived by Deleuze and Guattari, equally describes the graph-model underlying linked data.

Beginning in 1998, Tim Berners-Lee laid out the framework for linked data and the semantic web on his web site *Design Issues*.<sup>8</sup>



Model of an RDF triple.

The World Wide Web Consortium subsequently designed the Resource Description Framework (RDF) as a practical application of his graph-based metadata model. In RDF, tabular or

<sup>5</sup>Stacy Wood, Kathy Carbone, Marika Cifor, Anne Gilliland, and Ricardo Punzalan, “Mobilizing Records: Re-Framing Archival Description to Support Human Rights,” *Archival Science* 14, no.3-4 (October 2014): 397-419.

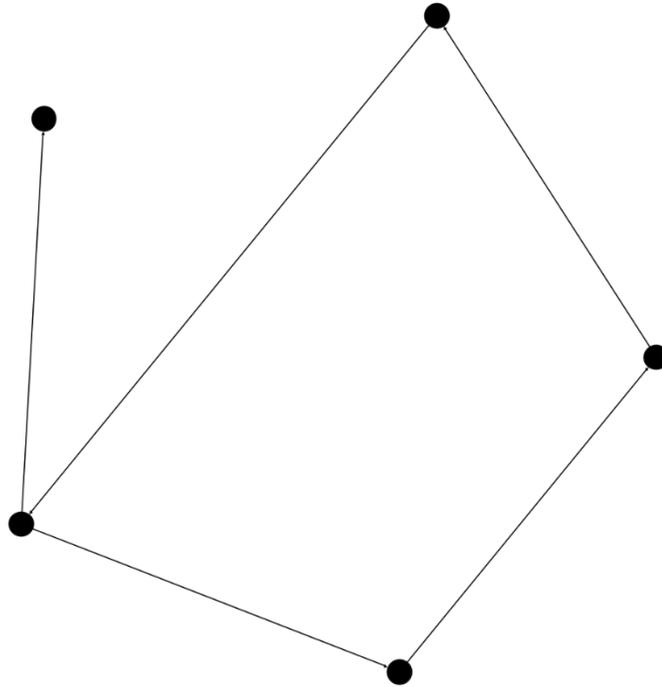
<sup>6</sup>Kathleen Roe, *Arranging & Describing Archives & Manuscripts*, Archival Fundamentals Series: II (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2005).

<sup>7</sup>Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (London: Athlone, 1988).

<sup>8</sup>Tim Berners-Lee, “Design Issues for the World Wide Web,” *Design Issues*, accessed February 28, 2018, <https://www.w3.org/DesignIssues/>.

relational data is atomized into three-part statements or triples: subject, predicate, and object.<sup>9</sup> These three-part statements allow metadata to be comprehensible in contexts apart from the original. The addition of unique identifiers (URIs), allow metadata to be linked to other data sources. Much like HTML web pages, anyone can publish RDF. Data described and linked through RDF create a mathematical structure called a graph. The scope of an RDF graph can be changed by including and excluding data from a variety of different sources.

In the fields of information science, graphs are gaining attention as a data model.<sup>10</sup> A graph is composed of two elements:



*A simple graph of five nodes and five edges.*

- Nodes: points on a plane
- Edges: lines connecting nodes

Google's highly successful PageRank search algorithm is based on treating the parts of the web it indexes as a graph;<sup>11</sup> each web page is a node, and hyperlinks are the edges connecting nodes. Mathematical measures of nodes in the graph then help Google construct the results delivered to the user. Graphs provide insights in other contexts as well. For example, digital humanists construct graphs of social networks. Moreover, traffic patterns can be analyzed by engineers using graphs. Furthermore, citation networks are another example of a graph in practice. In the context of resource description, each atomized datum is represented as a node in the graph. Edges represent relationships or links between those data points. RDF's subject, predicate,

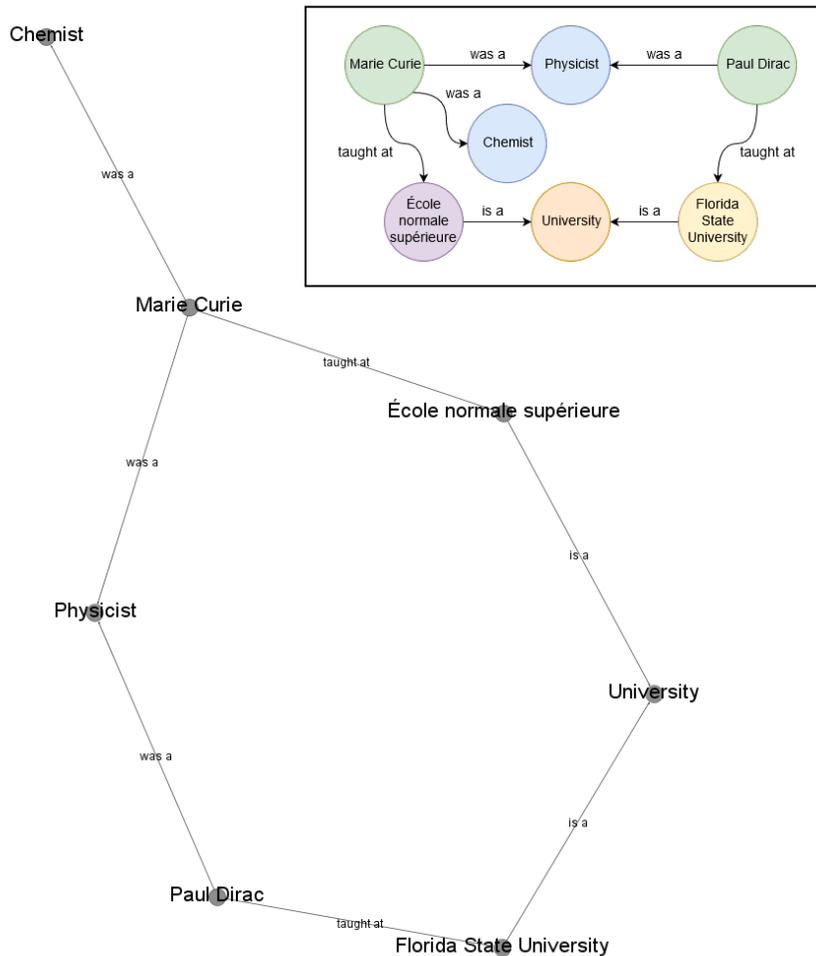
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<sup>9</sup>Dean Allemang and James A. Hendler, *Semantic Web for the Working Ontologist: Effective Modeling in RDFS and OWL* (Waltham, MA: Morgan Kaufmann/Elsevier, 2011).

<sup>10</sup>Ronald J. Murray and Barbara B. Tillett, "Cataloguing Theory in Search of Graph Theory and Other Ivory Towers," *Information Technology & Libraries* 30, no.4 (December 2011): 172.

<sup>11</sup>James E. Powell, Daniel Alcanzar, Matthew Hopkins, Robert Oldendorf, Tamara M. McMahon, Amber Wu, and Linn Collins, "Graphs in Libraries: A Primer," *Information Technology & Libraries* 30, no. 4 (December 2011): 158.

object language encodes such links: subjects and objects are nodes, connected through a relationship described by the predicate.



Seven RDF triples form a graph.

Thus linked data is a technological implementation of information as a graph, and a graph, with its flexibly structured but connected data, is an implementation of a rhizome.

Berners-Lee’s vision is for linked data to do for data what the World Wide Web technologies did for documents. This semantic web allows for greater participation with data. If RDF follows the same path as HTML, tools and systems will be developed making the creation and publication of linked data easy. Marginalized and underrepresented communities will be able to engage in the description and use of resources and information, allowing their views and values to supplement description created by professional catalogers and archivists. There is potential for the inherent bias in top-down description to be mitigated through greater descriptive participation enabled by linked data. More voices can lead to greater discovery, as patrons with varied experiences and domain knowledge will have a broader descriptive landscape to query. Of course, this could also lead to conflicting description coexisting within the same information landscape. Archives can limit their discovery systems to query only “verified” or “authorized” linked data sources, but there is nothing stopping a linked data

developer or “power-user” consumer of linked data from incorporating linked data published by an archive into a search system with their own sources of description. This can lead to more varied use of resources. As described earlier, archives can only anticipate a limited number of uses and describe their collections accordingly. As more voices are involved, the use and description of resources can increase dramatically as historically marginalized groups find themselves more equitably represented in the description of archival materials.

Linked data has the potential to aid in serendipitous discovery, and archives and special collections have the most to gain in this area.<sup>12</sup> Since access to materials is typically mediated and supervised, remote users are limited to the information they can cull through the archives’ discovery systems. Linked data and its associated query technology (SPARQL)—along with a search interface that includes linked data namespacing—will allow a user to tailor a discovery environment that meets their personal information needs. Traditional library OPACs present users with a web-based search interface that queries a single bibliographic data store. A linked data catalog built using the same model can include the option of querying not just the local RDF triple store, but other linked data graphs distributed across a wide range of linked data publishing platforms. Data about materials can be collocated from a variety of linked sources, enabling searches across several institutions or even knowledge domains. The ability to navigate beyond the strictures of provenance and institutional boundaries could enable a more thorough information experience. Hidden connections between collections and materials would be more readily apparent. Data silos can be minimized, and our users will be empowered to make surprising discoveries and interesting connections between collections.

Archives are uniquely situated to be productive participants in extending the graph of the semantic web. While there has been a more robust exploration of linked data on the library side of the information sciences, their holdings are largely non-unique and overlapping. Additionally, local cataloging practices tend to put limits on the amount of time and description applied to each resource. The amount of information libraries can add to the linked data graph is naturally limited. Though vast, the number of published resources are finite and libraries’ collections often duplicate and overlap one another. Archives, on the other hand, have a wealth of unique collections and in the past revisited and refined description practices to fit new sources of information or changing user needs.<sup>13</sup> The contributions of archivists could grow and continually update and refine the linked data graph.

Archives also receive many benefits from publishing and consuming linked data. Archival description built on top of linked data triples can be enhanced by including triples published by other groups or institutions.<sup>14</sup> This more robust description would be a boon to local discovery, guiding users to resources from external data sources. Additionally, external discovery is positively impacted when description of another institution’s collections is connected and linked with the description of collections at the local institution.

Currently, the production of linked data is difficult because tools tend to be technical and application specific.<sup>15</sup> Most institutions creating linked data do so by converting existing data,<sup>16</sup> but EAD is not a great source candidate for conversion into RDF. Karen F. Gracy notes, “EAD privileges the narrative character of the finding aid”<sup>17</sup> over the atomized access points required

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<sup>12</sup>Getaneh Alemu, Brett Stevens, Penny Ross, and Jane Chandler, “Linked Data for Libraries: Benefits of a Conceptual Shift from Library-Specific Record Structures to RDF-Based Data Models,” *New Library World* 113, no. 11/12 (2012): 549-571.

<sup>13</sup>Though this is less common post-MPLP.

<sup>14</sup>Enriching those records created by following MPLP.

<sup>15</sup>Alemu et al., 557.

<sup>16</sup>Jinfang Niu, “Linked Data for Archives,” *Archivaria* 82 (Fall 2016): 83-110.

<sup>17</sup>Karen F. Gracy, “Archival Description and Linked Data: A Preliminary Study of Opportunities and Implementation Challenge,” *Archival Science* 15, no. 3 (September 2015): 249.

by RDF. Some modern digital asset management systems use RDF internally, and there is no technological reason why all archival management software cannot create and publish RDF automatically and in parallel to the routine activities of archival arrangement and description. As producing and consuming linked data becomes a more common practice, better tools and more accessible workflows will be developed.

In the meantime, there are steps archivists and archives can take to plan for future linked data creation. If an archive has technological resources, they can ask developers to begin exploring RDF and related technologies. This will ensure the institution is prepared when publishing and consuming RDF becomes more feasible. Within the community, archivists can ask for guidance and exploration of linked data solutions from peers and professional associations. Encoded Archival Description (EAD) has only limited support for key features of linked data such as URIs, and that same support in EAD3 is merely experimental.<sup>18</sup> Collective interest can drive future revisions of EAD to be more amenable to linked data uses. Finally, as institutions look towards transitioning to EAD3, workflows can be examined to see if some linked data features can be incorporated. The University of Florida Libraries (UF) recently updated those XSLT stylesheets that generate HTML from EAD to include RDFa attributes in their HTML finding aids.<sup>19</sup> RDFa is a method of embedding RDF triples in HTML. Now, users with the corresponding technical skills can scrape UF's HTML finding aids to harvest the triples embedded within and develop a graph of the UF Libraries' collections. Relatively minor actions such as these can prepare institutions and the profession for the next development in information discovery and retrieval.

Development of the semantic web is an ongoing process. The library and archives communities have much to offer the overall endeavor, but limited resources and expertise hold them back from participating fully. Archival institutions—which have the most to contribute and the most to gain—have made only tentative advances in exploring linked data. Linked data provides archivists an opportunity to rethink how they record and interact with archival description. The data model underlying linked data and the semantic web is very different from the top-down hierarchical model familiar in archival practice. A rhizomatic data model offers many benefits as well as challenges, and, in many cases, will involve archivists offering intellectual control to others. This prospect might be frightening, but it brings with it a fuller, richer, and more dynamic information environment.

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<sup>18</sup>Kelcy Shepherd, "Using EAD3," in *Putting Description Standards to Work*, ed. Kris Kiesling and Christopher J. Prom (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2017): 178.

<sup>19</sup>Allison O'Dell and Matthew Miguez, "Linked Data for Archives and Easy Steps to Linked Archival Metadata" (presentation, Society of Florida Archivists Annual Meeting, Savannah, GA, October 14, 2016).

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# Challenges to Creating and Promoting a Diverse Record: Manuscripts and University Archives at Florida State University Libraries

Robert Rubero, Sandra Varry, Rory Grennan, and Krystal Thomas

*This article is adapted from a session presented at the joint meeting of the Society of Florida Archivists and Society of Georgia Archivists in Savannah, Georgia in October 2016.*

The Special Collections & Archives Division at Florida State University Libraries (FSU) is home to many diverse collections, including Sumerian and Mesopotamian clay tablets dating back to 4,000 BCE, 18<sup>th</sup> century logbooks for the armies of Napoleon Bonaparte, political correspondence on the Wage and Hour Bill of 1936, and collections documenting FSU's precursor institutions, the Seminary West of the Suwannee River and the Florida State College for Women. In recent years the division has grown exponentially in its online presence, with 34 collections currently residing in DigiNole: FSU's Digital Repository. Due to this increase in demand for digitized materials, including collections with complicated legacy descriptions, the digital work we engage in is driven by the need to question how we interact with and provide access to materials. As an institution of learning with its home in the American South, stewardship of our diverse records presents a unique set of challenges for our university:

- What material do we select for digitization and how do we describe it so it is discoverable?
- How do we handle outdated modes of collection description that reflect defunct views on race?
- How can we utilize collections that contain materials espousing controversial views on race in an educational and informative manner?
- How can we collect and present an institutional history for future generations that balances the predominantly white past<sup>1</sup> of the university and the growth of FSU into an

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<sup>1</sup>Seminary West of the Suwannee (1851-1901), Florida State College (1901-1905), and Florida Female College/Florida State College for Women (1905-1947) for white women, though some Latina women did attend. Florida State University (1947 - present). FSU's first black student, Maxwell Courtney, was admitted in the fall of 1962.

institution that was recently presented its second “Diversity Champion” award in the summer of 2017?

This article represents our continued exploration in answering the broader question: How do we improve upon current methods and develop new solutions to positively promote and engage our patrons with diverse historical material?

### **Selection and Description in Digital Projects and the Archivist’s Responsibility**

The materials we choose to digitize and the ways we describe digitized materials can create false pictures of our collections. This can occur through exclusion, both conscious and unconscious, misrepresentation by description, or a lack of description that prohibits discovery. Once materials are digitized, the manner of organization and description can either help users discover diverse materials or, perplexingly, hide them from users if the archivists are either unaware of their own biases or not thinking through the implications of their organizational and descriptive decisions.

Because context is often lost when we digitize and put materials online, the materials we select and describe for digital collections is a key component to telling a complete story. To showcase campus diversity over time, it is important to examine which collections need to be made available. Prioritizing digitization of such materials is necessary to give a diverse and authentic historical picture of Florida State University. At this point, the archivist needs to stop thinking on a collection level, which can be difficult to do, and instead think on an item level. Specifically, what items need to be digitized from individual collections that will help tell a more complete narrative of the University?

Moreover, when working with digital collections, selection is critical because there is not one “main door,” or single point of entry, to a digital library as there is to a reading room or museum. If a user does come in the “main door,” which, in our case is the digital library home page, they link to the site directly and browse through the curated collections. At FSU, we try to organize collections as usefully as possible, but the digital content is not always reflective of the physical organization of the collections on our shelves; therefore, the physical context of items within the collection may be lost. Topical digital collections, such as the Civil War Era and Florida History & Heritage digital collections, lose physical collection context because they combine materials from numerous book and manuscript collections. These collection titles allow our users to easily discover materials from the Civil War. To prevent the loss of physical context, and meet archival standards, we need to maintain the original context of each item in a mixed collection. To do so in DigiNole: FSU’s Digital Repository, we use an item’s metadata. Original collection information and a link to the appropriate finding aid is noted with each item, so users know where the item came from in our physical collections.

Users who do not access our digital collections via the “main door” may discover materials through Google, other search engines, or our library catalog and go directly to an item, neatly bypassing any sort of organizational decisions we made to help give the item context at the collection level. Most, if not all, of these discovery pathways are out of the archivist’s control once the object is online. The challenge then becomes, how do archivists select and catalog items that can tell the diverse story of FSU outside of any sort of curated context? Again, metadata comes to the rescue when both physical and intellectual context are lost. However, we now have a new challenge: How do we help maintain intellectual context using metadata?

At FSU Libraries, we use subject headings to orientate users to the main intellectual context of items. These headings can also lead a user to other items that fit their interests in DigiNole, whether part of the same collection or not. There is one caveat—those connections are only as good as the description provided with an item. So, if not enough information, or the

wrong kind of information, is provided, the item can remain hidden in plain sight to users. Search engines are not magical; they need to be given the right information in order to return a user the right search results. During digitization, it is the archivist's responsibility to ensure item description is strong enough to be discoverable in search engines. To do so effectively, we must be aware of our own biases when describing materials for the digital environment. What are we accidentally hiding in our digital collections because we used ambiguous language or failed to provide accurate descriptions? For example, if you search in DigiNole for "African American" within our Heritage & University Archives photograph collection, only one result will be returned. If you search for "blacks," more than one photograph will be found, but not the one returned with the first search. Making decisions about a common, diverse vocabulary and creating documentation to ensure it is used consistently in a system will guarantee that archivists are not unintentionally hiding digital objects due to poor, misinformed, or inconsistent metadata.

Once an item is correctly described, there is one last question we must grapple with: what is our responsibility to the user in terms of our description? Providing context for an item is one thing; editorializing, or even being too politically correct or incorrect, can be damaging to discoverability. In DigiNole, we hold the Bradford-Eppes Family Papers. The collection includes the manuscript "The Real Reason for the Assassination of Abraham Lincoln," by Susan Bradford Eppes.<sup>2</sup> Though the document is authentic, it is not factually correct. While working on metadata for this collection, FSU faculty discussed how to deal with this object and others like it in DigiNole. Did we want to include a disclaimer in the object's metadata? Alert the user to its biased point of view? In the end, we decided not to address these issues in the metadata. We agreed that it was not our role as archivists to decide for the user what is and is not useful. This decision puts the onus on the user to be resource savvy, just as we would expect them to be in our reading room. The controversial manuscript led us to create FSU's digital collections policy, which neither restricts digital access to nor labels digitized materials with content that has become questionable over time.

### **Race and Legacy Descriptions in Manuscript Collections**

In late 2015, Special Collections & Archives staff began a review of finding aid language that did not conform to modern usage. Many scope and content notes and biographical sketches had not changed since first composed for print finding aids in the 1960s. Like other long-established repositories, our descriptive language was a product of its time and outdated for modern users. Typically, print finding aids are written with a specific context in mind—that the researcher will be in a particular location, with access to a particular repository's staff, and thus able to identify local cultural cues that inform descriptive terms. Having migrated many of our finding aids to an online database, we felt it was time to re-evaluate some of our descriptive practices. This would allow us to move away from the geocentric and ethnocentric biases that are inherent in our local knowledge systems and cater to a nonlocal research public.

Archivists at the FSU Libraries sought to follow the example of other repositories in keeping descriptive terms up-to-date and accessible to researchers.<sup>3</sup> It is fine for our holdings to be seen as historical but not for the repository, its descriptions, and its staff to be perceived as behind the times. For example, in our print finding aids, the terms "black," "African-American," "Negro," and "colored" had each been used equally to refer to the same demographic group. While all four were once in polite, popular usage in the United States, the last two are now considered dated and could be deemed offensive by archives users.

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<sup>2</sup>Susan Bradford Eppes, "The Real Reason for the Assassination of Abraham Lincoln Literary," 1927, 1938, MSS 86-17, Box 682, Folder 6, Susan Bradford Eppes fonds. Florida State University Libraries, Tallahassee, Florida.

<sup>3</sup>Jeffrey Beall, "Ethnic Groups and Library of Congress Subject Headings," *Colorado Libraries* 32, no.4 (2006): 37-44.

The terms “colored” and “Negro” occurred in titles of works in our collections<sup>4</sup> and in proper names of entities, notably the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). Therefore, direct quotes from those works appear in our collection and item descriptions. In discussing these works, the concern was that changing supplied titles or direct quotes would hamper discoverability of these resources and perhaps misrepresent their content and the intent of their creators. As Gregory Hunter notes, a good finding aid is clearly worded and “objective about the collection.”<sup>5</sup> Modifying titles and proper names would hinder the finding aid on both counts. It was decided that these works would stand as written in order to preserve their historical integrity.

Other instances of outdated terminology occurred in descriptive text devised by Special Collections & Archives staff, such as scope notes and biographical sketches. Some of these required only simple substitutions, such as using the term “black” or “African-American” in place of an offensive term. Some instances required more consideration before editing descriptive text. For example, the scope note for an 1814 manuscript description of runaway slaves describes the eight slaves as “negroes belonging to the Estate of Colonel Lewis.”<sup>6</sup> A simple substitution of “blacks” for “negroes” would be accurate, but perhaps not correct; simply noting the race of these individuals does not properly or concisely describe their relationship to Colonel Lewis or the document being described. In the case of our 1814 escapees, it was decided that the most accurate substitute for “negroes” was “slaves.”

Similarly, a biographical note for one collection of family papers noted that a family member had been “murdered by a Negro.” The race of his murderer was judged to be nonessential context to the biography and could potentially be seen as inflammatory. As such, the current version of the biography notes only that he was “murdered near Pine Hill Plantation on September 3, 1904.”<sup>7</sup>

Occasionally, an ethnocentric bias can create a lack of appropriate description. Take for example the personal papers of noted mathematician and quantum physicist Paul A.M. Dirac. Among the artifacts in the collection is a souvenir paper fan from a 1929 dinner at a restaurant in Japan.<sup>8</sup> This particular fan was illustrated and autographed by Dirac’s dinner companions Werner Heisenberg, Yoshio Nishina, and Sugiura Yoshikatsu, each also a notable name in the history of physics. However, until late 2017, descriptive text at the series- and item-level in the Dirac Papers finding aid noted only the autographs of Dirac and Heisenberg. The finding aid has since been edited to include references to their Japanese colleagues.

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<sup>4</sup>Carla Rider Hayden, “Our Colored Lady of Shallot,” n.d., MSS 01-06, Box 149, Folder 2, Carla Rider Haden fonds, Florida State University Libraries, Tallahassee, Florida.

<sup>5</sup>Gregory S. Hunter, “Description,” in *Developing and Maintaining Practical Archives* (New York: Neal-Schuman, 2003), 152-153.

<sup>6</sup>Description of Runaway Slaves fonds, MSS 0-288. Florida State University Libraries, Tallahassee, Florida.

<sup>7</sup>Pine Hill Plantation Papers fonds, MSS 0-204, Series 2, Item 352. Florida State University Libraries, Tallahassee, Florida.

<sup>8</sup>Autographed Japanese paper fan belonging to Paul A.M. Dirac, 1971, MS-1989-009, Box 100, Folder 1, Paul A.M. Dirac fonds, Florida State University Libraries, Tallahassee, Florida.



*Japanese Souvenir Fan, 1929, Series 3, Box 100, Paul A. M. Dirac Papers, Special Collections & Archives, Florida State University Libraries, Tallahassee, Florida. [http://purl.fcla.edu/fsu/MSS\\_1989-009](http://purl.fcla.edu/fsu/MSS_1989-009)*

In light of these discoveries and necessary edits in our finding aids, Special Collections & Archives staff have considered how to guide future descriptive practice in an effort to remain clear and objective regarding race and other demographic terminology. A few guidelines will be carried forward:

- Descriptive text should reflect current societal and academic nomenclature. This guideline is part of keeping finding aids clear, objective, and consistent with researcher needs. It is widely accepted in our field that archival description can be iterative, and this is certainly a case where revisiting and improving description is beneficial.
- Descriptive text should be suitable to and consistent with the purpose of any note or field in a finding aid. Details of an individual's appearance or demographic identity may not always be necessary or appropriate.

- Direct quotes from archival materials and supplied titles should always retain the original text when it best represents collection content and creator intent.

These rules of thumb would certainly be applicable to other subject areas and to other repositories outside Florida State University. Admittedly, FSU's instance of the Archon database was exceptionally useful in finding cases of outdated description; a repository that only had description in print would certainly face a larger investment of time. However, any investment that renders archival material useful to a wider audience will certainly pay dividends down the road for any repository.

### **Controversial Material in Political Papers Collections**

The Claude Pepper Library was opened in 1985 as the home of the Pepper Papers, a collection documenting the 45-year career of U.S. Senator and Representative Claude Denson Pepper. Since its opening, the library has become the political papers repository for the FSU Special Collections & Archives Division. It currently maintains 22 collections, including those of the National Organization for Women (NOW) Tallahassee Chapter, former governors LeRoy Collins and Reubin Askew, and the *Haynes et al. vs. Shoney's Inc.* racial discrimination case files. The contents of these record groups are as diverse as the history they document. Researchers are able to view primary source material ranging from correspondence surrounding Social Security and the Equal Rights Amendment to a pair of rooster spurs that are believed to have been a good luck charm of Governor Spessard L. Holland.

One potential challenge facing the Claude Pepper Library concerns the makeup of some of the older collections currently available for research. Notably, portions of these collections clearly document sentiments of support for institutionalized racism and other views that have since been deemed detrimental to positive social growth. A review of the holdings revealed a predominantly white, male representation of political history in the State of Florida, with the inclusive dates for the majority of the collections at the Pepper Library falling between 1930 and 1960. The 1930s saw a steady increase in race-related crimes that precipitated the proposal of yet another anti-lynching act by the U.S. Senate in 1938. Although the United States would become a global power during World War II, racial injustice and segregation were still firmly in place in the United States even as the war was fought to end bigotry and oppression in Europe and Asia. The Civil Rights movement arose in the 1950s and 60s, fueled by the events of the previous decade and such brutal actions as the murder of 14-year-old Emmett Till in 1955. Senator Pepper and Florida Supreme Court Justice William Glenn Terrell were in positions of national and statewide prominence as the Second World War and the beginnings of the Civil Rights Movement were taking place.

While a freshman Senator, Pepper joined many of his southern colleagues in a filibuster of the Anti-Lynching Bill of 1938. Speaking for approximately seven hours, over two days on the floor of the U.S. Senate, Pepper was quoted in the Congressional Record as saying "...God knows how many million American citizens, are walking the streets unemployed, in spite of our tremendous relief rolls, and when America is sitting on the crater of a bursting volcano, we come here and dabble with an anti-lynching bill."<sup>9</sup> Pepper's decision to disregard the civil liberties of large portions of his constituency and filibuster the Anti-Lynching Bill was unfortunate, and he would later admit to this in the pages of his autobiography, *Pepper, Eyewitness to a Century*.<sup>10</sup> The event would eventually come to serve as a reminder that the ideologies of politicians can evolve and change over time. Pepper's Senate career ended with the 1950 midterms when he lost a highly contested election to his former protégé, George A. Smathers. After a twelve-year hiatus

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<sup>9</sup>Remarks by Claude Pepper on the Anti-Lynching Bill of 1937, 1937, MSS 1979-01, Series 203, Box 1, Folder 7, Claude Pepper fonds, Florida State University Libraries, Tallahassee, Florida.

<sup>10</sup>Claude Denson Pepper and Hays Gorey, *Pepper, Eyewitness to a Century* (San Diego: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1987).

from public office, Pepper ran for and won the 13<sup>th</sup> congressional district seat in Miami, Florida, beginning his service in early 1963. Later that same term, Representative Pepper would be alone among his colleagues in the state of Florida to vote for passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

In 1954, *Brown vs. the Board of Education* declared that the segregation of public schools based on race was unconstitutional. This decision was met with much resistance in the south and many elected officials were among those in opposition. In an October 1955 edition of the Miami Herald, Justice Glenn Terrell gave his opinion on the U.S. Supreme Court's decision in the case of *Brown vs. Board of Education*: "States with segregated schools have them from a deep seeded conviction. They are as loyal to that conviction as any other philosophy to which they are devoted. They are as honest and law abiding as the people of any state where integrated schools are the rule. Convinced of the justice of their position, they will not readily renounce it if they are required to forfeit abruptly their conviction."<sup>11</sup> Terrell's stance, that he would oppose desegregation as long as possible, was backed by a substantial portion of his constituency as well. There are over 100 pieces of correspondence included in the collection that supported continued segregation. One piece of correspondence, from a resident of Tampa, Florida, reads: "We must have this leadership [opposition to desegregation] if our good Negroes and our wonderful generations of white children are to survive. The root of this NAACP must be found and destroyed before they exploit the lives of us all for some selfish gains a few men are trying to get."<sup>12</sup> Those "gains" were equal access to education and resources that would equip young people of color for a better future in an uncertain time.

In light of the aforementioned information, the question on some minds might be, "What should be done with this material?" For archivists, the challenge is to find opportunities to utilize these resources in an educational setting by providing context and meaning. While material of this nature may not reflect positively on the legacy of the person(s) responsible for its creation and promotion, it is essential for repositories to retain this information to meet that challenge. At the Pepper Library, we set aside a portion of our instruction sessions to talk with students about the impact of legacy, in particular the events surrounding the Anti-Lynching Bill of 1938. The layout of the Pepper Museum naturally focuses on the Senator's many and varied achievements in the public arena and the tendency for many students and visitors is to focus on these. While striving to remain respectful to Pepper's legacy, the current instruction program also sheds light on examples of controversial material to give more context to that individual's (Pepper, Terrell, etc.) place in history.

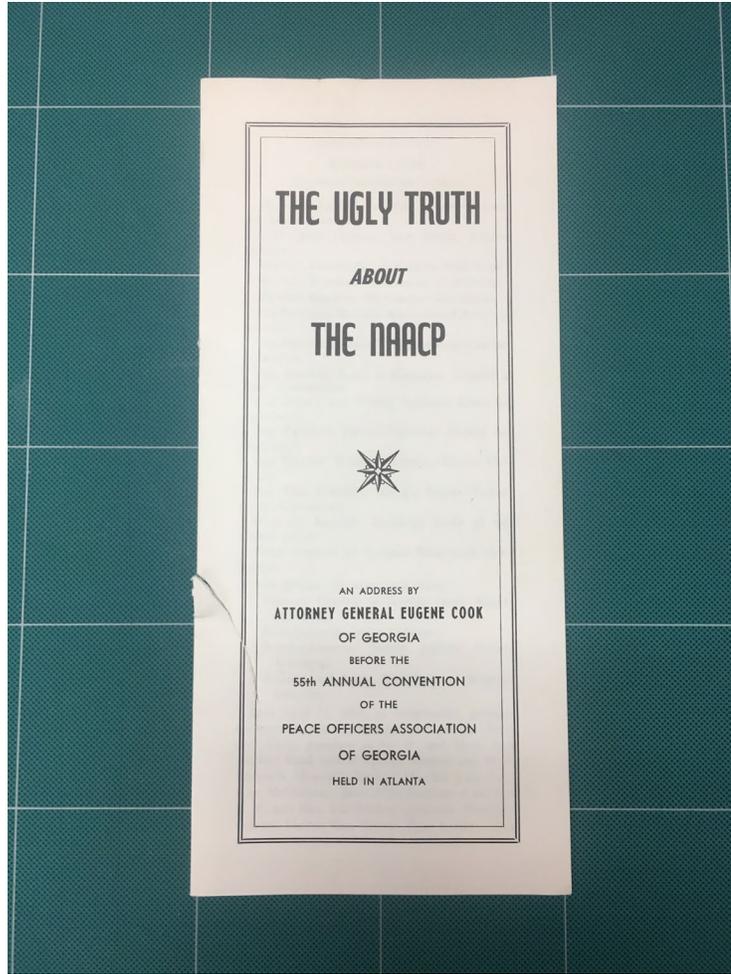
Presently, the Pepper Papers are undergoing a records survey to address preservation needs that have arisen over the 35-plus years in our possession. The Senator's journals (1937-1985) and roughly 6,000 still images (none of which feature depictions of controversial action) are available for viewing in our digital library. In his journal, Pepper does address his involvement with the Anti-Lynching Bill, though he offers no deep insight, nor do his entries reflect his words from the filibuster in the Senate chambers. Given these circumstances, this material is available to researchers with enough provided context to describe the time in which it was created. As of yet, for logistical purposes, no portions of the Terrell Papers have been digitized.

Given these circumstances, we openly prioritize addressing this material with classes and researchers when they visit the Pepper Library and when appropriate to their research. Making students and researchers aware that this information is available and accessible allows them to observe the changes that can occur over time in the ideology of politicians and elected officials.

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<sup>11</sup>Correspondence re. desegregation to Justice Glenn Terrell, 1955, MSS 92-25, Box 15, Folder 1C, Justice Glenn Terrell fonds, Florida State University Libraries, Tallahassee, Florida.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid.



*Anti NAACP pamphlet from the Justice Glenn Terrell Papers, Box 16 Folder 1 MSS 1992-25*

### **University Archives & the Heritage Museum: How We Collect and Present Institutional History**

Heritage & University Archives maintains FSU's official repository of historic university records and other materials. The archive holds publications, records, photographs, audio-visual and other material in physical or digital form created by or about the University. The archives and Heritage Museum also include student experience materials created by alumni at the time of their enrollment at the University or collected over time. Since 1851, Florida State University has been many institutions in name and makeup, but it has always been one of higher learning, in the South, and of a mostly white population. Although our collections are diverse, they have not caught up with our current student demographics, and will not for some time due to the older age of typical donors, and an overall lack of collecting in the past.

Near the eve of FSU's 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2001, it was realized there were few records to consult or use for planning a celebration. Several alumni and staff began working towards a program that would eventually become Heritage Protocol, and later Heritage & University Archives. The program began collecting in earnest in 2007. The majority of our donors are typically aged 60 years or older, or their records have been donated by their heirs or friends. Alumni within these categories attended the university near or before integration, which impacts the racial diversity of our collections. As a collecting initiative focused on alumni

donors, the motivation of Heritage Protocol, whether conscious or unconscious, relied heavily on existing alumni groups and those closely associated with the University, which inadvertently decreased the diversity of the collections. On a positive note, collecting from those older alumni led to a natural focus on the Florida State College for Women (1905-1947). This gives FSU an exceptional collection of women's history and a distinct view into the educational and social lives of women in one of the largest schools of its kind in the southeast during the first half of the 20th century.

In the past, FSU's donation agreements often included language regarding digitization of the received materials. This means the majority of donated material was included in both our physical and online collections. With few donations coming from minority groups or organizations, the online collections mirror the physical collections in terms of the lack of diversity. By focusing on some of our more recent acquisitions, such as our Black Student Union and Pride Student Union collections, we will begin to diversify our online presence in the coming year. Additionally, we continue to consciously seek out materials from underrepresented groups to diversify our collections overall.

*“At a baseline level, diverse audiences may not be comfortable going where they are not reflected – from the exhibits to the museum’s professional staff.”<sup>13</sup>*



*Florida State University Heritage Museum, Dodd Hall. Open to the public Monday-Thursday, 10am to 4pm.*

The Heritage Museum opened in 2011 as an exhibition space for the archive's collections, with the intent of also serving as an event and development space. The downside was that it was open irregularly and not advertised as a study or public space. The Libraries, specifically Heritage & University Archives, took over management of the museum in mid-2014, with some remaining control held by University administration. Since then, it has been open regularly during the week, with at least one thousand visitors and students studying per semester. There has also been an increase in outreach and events.

<sup>13</sup>Angela Thorpe, "Rethinking Diversity: Introduction," National Council on Public History, 2014. <http://ncph.org/history-at-work/rethinking-diversity-introduction/>.

Students and faculty alike have commented on the lack of diverse representation in the museum. When the Libraries assumed management of the space, approximately 400 images made up the “permanent” exhibit; less than 10 were people of color and none were representative of other than a heteronormative gender identity. Given a review of the exhibit itself and the existing records and news articles of the development of the space, there was likely a conscious bias to use imagery that current and potential donors would identify with most. There also may have been an unconscious bias to disregard the presentation of more diverse materials, not just because donors were seen as the priority group to engage, but also considering the fact that the exhibit mostly reflects its creators’ demographics. After a comprehensive review, we removed approximately 100 images and added 50 images and objects that more accurately represent the campus community over time. Diversity and related initiatives are in vogue at most institutions and for good reason. But how is diversity expressed in our initiative to collect, preserve, and provide access to our collections? Diversity without action will be less impactful and provide less lasting change in our archives and museum. Describing diverse materials must include those we are collecting about; underrepresented communities must have a voice in these processes. With several initiatives growing on FSU’s campus, the potential for interesting collaborations and positive results remains strong.

It is our priority that all students feel a sense of belonging in the museum by being able to identify with the exhibit. Additionally, we continue to expand our hours and outreach activities in the museum in order to be more accessible, which ensures that our museum space is used to better connect with the FSU community.

### **Looking to the Future**

In the summer of 2017, a curators’ working group was formed to better coordinate our efforts across the Special Collections & Archives Division. A key goal of this group is finding a unified approach to address concerns across our varied holdings. Despite the proliferation of unique issues and the lack of common solutions, being able to pool our expertise has proven invaluable in the promotion of our diverse records. Opportunities to engage our campus community—as well as communities far beyond Tallahassee—with our unique and sometimes problematic resources, also continue to increase.

Last year, Heritage & University Archives formed a partnership with FSU’s Black Student Union to preserve and give representative voice to that organization’s history. Collection development and outreach activities continue with respect to the Emmett Till Archives at FSU Libraries, documenting the life, death, and memory of Emmett Louis Till. Curators have been conscientious in including Tallahassee community members as well as faculty, staff, and students from Florida A&M University, our neighboring Historically Black University, in any events related to our civil rights collections. The Pepper Library is currently in the planning stages for initiatives targeted at outreach to the College of Social Work at FSU and the local African American research community in Tallahassee.

At the time of our presentation, we were at the beginning stage of addressing our shared challenge - creating and promoting a diverse archival record. Our selection and description processes, and how we present our collections, continues to evolve. It is reassuring that other archival repositories are also working to find solutions to these same challenges. While archival theory and practice will inevitably continue to change, a key imperative will be to ensure that our collections continue to reflect the diversity of their creators, the users who access them, and Florida State University as a whole.

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***Voices from Mariel:***  
***Oral Histories of the 1980 Cuban Boatlift***

By José Manuel García. Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 2018. 177 pp. Softcover.  
\$24.95. ISBN 978-0-8130-5666-1.

*Voices from Mariel* is a collection of oral history interviews about the Mariel boatlift—the six-month period in 1980 during which over 125,000 Cuban refugees left Cuba to come to the United States. Collected during the creation of a documentary of the same name, the interviews in this book complement the 2011 film. García himself came to the United States from Cuba as a teenager during the Mariel migration, and the book includes a lengthy personal essay about his experience, as well as an interview with his uncle.

The book begins with a short introduction to the Mariel boatlift and the historical Cuban context, which provide a useful framework for the interviews that follow. García's story comes next, followed by an interview with his uncle who traveled to Cuba from the United States in an attempt to retrieve his family during the boatlift. The remainder of the book consists of individual oral histories. Eleven "Marielitos" (Cubans who came to the United States during the boatlift) describe their decisions to leave Cuba, the experience of leaving, the voyage from Cuba to Key West, and their arrival in the United States. A few touch on their later lives in the U.S., although the focus is squarely on the experience of the boatlift itself. The final four oral histories feature "Other Voices." These include a Cuban American who lived in South Florida at the time of the boatlift; a Peruvian diplomat; a Peruvian journalist; and a CIA analyst. (The Peruvian embassy in Havana played an important role in the Mariel boatlift, hence the interviews with the diplomat and journalist.) The book concludes with two appendices: a collection of photographs of García and the documentary team in Cuba during the filming of the documentary, and a chronology of events in the Mariel boatlift.

Like many oral history collections, the strength of *Voices from Mariel* is the personal and emotional tone of the subjects' recollections. Historical events such as the Mariel boatlift are often discussed in terms of large-scale social trends or geopolitics; therefore, the concrete stories of individuals' experiences have added weight and importance. Many of the interviewees provide visceral descriptions of the conditions they faced while leaving Cuba that are quite moving. By the last few interviews, there is a slight feeling of repetition, but that repetition is meaningful in its own right, showing the common nature of the individuals' experiences. Of course, oral histories are also subject to the perspectives and biases of the subjects, and the limited number of interviews in this volume cannot show all facets of such a complex phenomenon and how different groups of people experienced it. Nevertheless, the book does include a fairly diverse range of subjects. Additionally, the inclusion of four interviews with non-Marielitos helps provide additional perspectives.

Photographs of each oral history subject, as well as historical photographs from individuals and the State Archives of Florida, illustrate the text. These images intensify the immediacy and personal strength of the oral histories and assist the reader in entering in the stories. One particularly striking photograph is an image from the State Archives of a boat landing in Key West, exactly as an interviewee described. Conversely, the appendix with

photographs of García in Cuba feels disconnected from the main text and does not add appreciably to the book.

García tells us in the introduction that interviews were conducted in both English and Spanish, and that he has translated them and made “minor editorial changes” for publication.<sup>1</sup> Information about translation and editing is not provided in the narratives themselves. Given the individual nature of the oral histories, more information about these changes and which interviews García translated would have been preferable; instead, the editorial work remains completely hidden.

Overall, *Voices from Mariel* provides a compelling introduction to the story of the Mariel boatlift and the experiences of the individuals who lived through it. Although it cannot stand on its own as a complete history of the Mariel boatlift, the oral histories within it give great depth and texture to this important historical event. *Voices from Mariel* will be of interest to scholars of Cuba and the Cuban diaspora, as well as those interested in using oral history to document complex historical events.

Elliot Williams  
Digital Initiatives Metadata Librarian  
University of Miami, Miami

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<sup>1</sup>José Manuel García, *Voices from Mariel*, (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 2018), xiii.

***Anna Madgigine Jai Kingsley:  
African Princess, Florida Slave, Plantation Slaveowner***

By Daniel L. Schafer. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2018. 223 pp. Paperback.  
\$19.95. ISBN 978-0-8130-5653-1.

Daniel L. Schafer's book, *Anna Madgigine Jai Kingsley: African Princess, Florida Slave, Plantation Slaveowner*, is the riveting story of Anna Madgigine Jai Kingsley's life, an African princess captured and sold into slavery, and the history of slavery in Florida under both Spanish and American rule. Originally published in 2003, this revised and expanded edition includes new information Schafer learned from descendants of Anna Jai's family in Africa. According to Schafer's research, Anna was born in 1793 in Jolof, Senegal, to Mba Buir Nyabu, eventual ruler of Buurba, and Madjiguène Ndiaye, a descendant of the royal Ndaiye family. In 1806, when she was thirteen years old, Anna was captured, sold to a slaver, and transported to Havana, Cuba. It was in Havana that Anna was purchased by Zephaniah Kingsley, Jr., who brought her to his Florida plantation on the St. John's River where, within the year, Anna bore the first of several of Zephaniah's children. Zephaniah, who eventually married Anna, petitioned the Spanish authorities "to issue emancipation papers for an enslaved 'black woman called Anna, around eighteen years of age'"<sup>1</sup> and her three children George, Martha, and Mary. Zephaniah also identified himself as their father.

In 1811, Anna purchased a plantation, including eleven slaves, near Zephaniah where she lived for the next twenty-five years. Anna and her children's freedom were threatened when Florida was ceded to the United States in 1821. As Schafer discusses in the book, Spain had relatively liberal policies regarding issues of race [liberal as compared to those of the United States at the same time] where enslaved people could be freed either through emancipation or by purchasing their freedom. Once Florida became part of the United States, freed people of African descent faced increasing racism and a belief that society consisted of "only two castes: free whites and enslaved blacks."<sup>2</sup> Schafer does a good job of writing about the issue of slavery—looking at the topic through the eyes of people in the story. His discussion of the difference between Spanish and American views of slavery adds another level of complexity to the book.

By October 1837, Anna and her children were forced to leave their Florida home migrating to Haiti to avoid losing their freedom. Just prior to his death in 1843, Zephaniah changed his last will and testament, bequeathing the bulk of his Florida fortune, including land, slaves, and various properties, to Anna and their children still living in Haiti. At the time of his death, Zephaniah was an extremely wealthy man. His estate encompassed over 32,000 acres including four plantations and more than 200 slaves. Anna was forced to return to Florida in 1846 to fight Zephaniah's white relatives who contested his will. Although eventually winning

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<sup>1</sup>Daniel L. Schafer, *Anna Madgigine Jai Kingsley: African Princess, Florida Slave Plantation Slaveowner*, (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2018), 1.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid, 81.

the legal battle, Anna lost most of the inheritance in the Civil War. From 1865 until her death in 1870, Anna lived with her daughter, the wealth she inherited from Zephaniah gone.

Schafer's book is more than just the story of Anna, Zephaniah, and their children. This book is a great introduction to Florida history, particularly northeastern Florida, in the years before and after Florida was under Spanish rule. *Anna Madgigine Jai Kingsley: African Princess, Florida Slave, Plantation Slaveowner* provides insight into the history of slavery, the slave trade, and race relations in Florida under both Spanish and American rule. The work also touches on Florida plantation architecture, the history of the area around St. Augustine (including the establishment of a free black community in Duval County, Florida), and early Florida politics. One of the real strengths of this book is Schafer's use of archival sources—the book has twenty-four pages of notes and a twelve-page bibliography. He weaves his extensive use of primary resources into the story, using historical information to compel the story forward without bogging the reader down. This book requires two books marks, one to mark the place in the story and one for the notes in the back of the book.

Schafer's research into the life of Anna Jai Kingsley began in 1972 after visiting the Kingsley plantation at Fort George Island. He has been researching and writing around this topic for twenty plus years providing him with a plethora of information about Anna and Zephaniah. The complicated nature of their story and Schafer's in-depth storytelling can, at times, become confusing. Schafer introduces a number of Anna and Zephaniah's descendants into the story, often going back and forth in time from one chapter to another. This is where the endnotes and bibliography are particularly useful. This book is a page-turning look at fascinating historical figures with compelling stories that are the history, good and bad, of Florida.

David Benjamin  
Head of Special Collections & University Archives  
University of Central Florida Libraries

## About the Contributors

**Krystal Thomas** is the Digital Archivist at Florida State University Libraries, under Special Collections and Archives. She was active in the development of and migration to the current FSU Digital Library and she continues to participate in the Florida Islandora development project. Thomas' work is a mix of digital project creation and management, supervision of the Digital Library Center, and consultation activities for digital archiving projects across campus. Thomas holds a MSI from the University of Michigan and a BA from Gettysburg College.

**Matthew Miguez** is the Metadata Librarian at Florida State University Libraries. In this position he manages the production and quality of metadata created for DigiNole -- FSU's Digital Repository -- and provides metadata expertise to the broader university community. His professional interests include digital preservation, information politics, and technology and information access. He completed his MLIS at Simmons College in 2014 and his BA in English at the University of New Orleans in 2008.

**Robert Rubero** is the Political Papers Archivist at Florida State University's Claude Pepper Library in Tallahassee, Florida. In this role he manages the manuscripts, photographs, audio/video recordings and memorabilia by and about U.S. Congressman Claude Pepper (1900-1989), as well as other major collections of former Florida governors, judges, litigators and social action groups. Rubero holds a MLIS from Florida State University and has been an active member of the Society of Florida Archivists since 2014. His research interests include American history, sports history, and archival instruction.

**Rory Grennan** is the Manuscripts and Instruction Archivist at Florida State University Libraries in Tallahassee, Florida. He holds an MLIS from San Jose State University and is a Certified Archivist. His research interests include public services, archival literacy and instruction, and intellectual property. Grennan has been an active member of the Society of Florida Archivists since 2015 and is delighted to contribute to this inaugural issue of SFAJ. He is also a member of the Society of American Archivists and the Comics Studies Society.

**Sandra Varry** is the University Archivist at Florida State University where she collects, manages, and provides access to FSU's archive and manages its Heritage Museum. She holds an MFA in Photography from UNC at Chapel Hill and a MLIS from the University of South Florida. She became a Certified Archivist in 2013 and a Digital Archives Specialist in 2014. She is currently the Chair of the Visual Materials Section of the Society of American Archivists, and Chair of the College & University Archives Section of the Society of Florida Archivists. She taught traditional and digital photography for 13 years before becoming a full-time archivist, specializing in historic photograph collections.