THE ARCHIVE OF FOLK CULTURE IN THE AMERICAN FOLKLIFE CENTER:
ETHICAL CONCERNS AND IDEOLOGIES FACING FOLKLORE ARCHIVES

by

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Dedication

This project is dedicated to my wonderful wife Chelsey who picked me up every time I was down, and to my incredible son Dorian whose smiling face gave me the final push to complete this project.

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I would like to thank all of the many relatives, friends, colleagues, and supporters who helped me create this project. My incredible wife, Chelsey, whose support and belief in me was unending and unfaltering, and who was ready to help me in any way I needed; my parents, Rob and Marie, who let me choose my own path, make my own mistakes, and learn from experience as well as books; Connie and Frank Dunkerson who always found interest in my ideas; my project panel: Dr. Margaret "Peggy" Yocom and her fateful words "Did you know we have a folklore program?" that let me to this opportunity; Dr. Debra Lattanzi-Shutika whose words of advice always came at the right time; and Dr. David Taylor whose creative ideas and suggestions were so much a part of the final product.

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Abstract

THE ARCHIVE OF FOLK CULTURE IN THE AMERICAN FOLKLIFE CENTER:
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George Mason University, 2010

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The Archive of Folk Culture in the American Folklife Center has been managing a collection of folklore materials for more than eighty years. Throughout its existence, the Center has encountered challenging situations that have created discussions of ethics and how ethics relate to collection management. The project herein is a discussion of the Center's principles regarding ethics in collection management, and it focuses specifically on the areas of security of private information, intellectual property, and ethical versus financial responsibility. This project brings together the principles of the American Folklife Center which were learned through interviews with staff members, and the practice of records management which was learned through an internship in the Archive of Folk Culture in 2006.

Introduction

Intellectual curiosity comes from somewhere, but it is not always easy to know its exact origin. For example, I have researched the game of pool, and I know my love for and interest in the game came from watching my family play it when I was younger. My interest in ethics, however, is more difficult to pinpoint. It does not share the same definitive origin as my interest in pool, but instead it seems to have grown and developed slowly over the years.

As an undergraduate, I was exposed to ethics, ethics committees, and institutional review boards as I took psychology courses, and I learned about seminal studies like the Milgram studies and the Stanford prison study where ethics became a major central focus (Benjamin 2009; Zimbardo 2007). When I continued on to my graduate studies, the interest really flourished in a place I never would have expected: fairy tales. More specifically, it was the Grimm brothers and Folklorist Maria Tatar's discussion of their work that really helped me understand how diverse a discussion of ethics can be.

When I encountered Tatar's work, not only did I start to realize how significant the differences among versions of fairy tales can be, but I was also introduced to debates over editing practices and what types of factors might influence someone to change versions of a story (Tatar 1987; Briggs 1993). Since my only prior experience with fairy

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tales – and folktales, too – came from Walt Disney, I naively assumed Disney's versions of the stories were the way the stories went. I did not even consider the stories already existed long before Disney made them into motion pictures. It was after reading some of Tatar's scholarship that I began asking questions about ethics in Folklore, and although Tatar is not necessarily structuring her arguments solely in an ethical framework, an ethical argument is certainly present.

What really made me home in on questions about ethics in Folklore was a class I took on Folklore history in which I was exposed to James R. Dow and Hannjost Lixfeld's book *The Nazification of an Academic Discipline: Folklore in the Third Reich* (1994). As I expressed my interest in ethics in Folklore to my professor, she recommended I read Alan Dundes' plenary address from the 2004 AFS conference (2005). Although I cannot pinpoint exactly where my interest in ethics began, it was while taking this course that my curiosity in Folklore ethics grew as it did. Coincidentally, I also had a growing interest in archives and collection management, and it was then that I learned of some of the opinions about collection practices (Filene 1991), maintaining collected materials (Toelken 1998; Dundes 2005), and possible reasons to change what was collected (Tatar 1987). I took courses in archive management, and I learned about how ethics integrate with collection management. My interests met as I began studying ethics as it relates to Folklore archives. Ethics are challenged in every field from science to religion, and as folklorists, especially those who conduct fieldwork or maintain collections of materials, we have a responsibility to our informants to ensure we treat the materials entrusted to us in an ethical manner while safeguarding information from being misused.

When I began doing research for my thesis, my original intent was to conduct a case study at the Archive of Folk Culture (the Archive) in the American Folklife Center (the Center). When I looked for a location for my research, my experiences with the Center and the City of Alexandria's Archive and Records Center (Alexandria, VA) made those places my top two choices. I chose the Center for several reasons. First, I had the opportunity to do a practicum for the City of Alexandria's Archive and Records Center when I took an archive course in the spring of 2006, and the experience and discussions of ethics I had with the staff were excellent. However, its holdings are all documentation, so it does not have the added challenge of working with items like photographs or sound recordings whereas the Center does. Secondly, the Records Center is not related to Folklore, and the materials they receive are all documents originating from the daily goings on of the city as opposed to ethnography and fieldwork. Finally, staff members it the Center are already working with groups like the World Intellectual Property Organization on issues of ethics, and I thought the staff would have the most current information to help me learn about what Folklore archives can do to avoid as many ethical issues as they can.

The case study I originally thought of doing would examine two or three collections and explore how acquisitioning, processing, and storage of materials intersect with ethics. The Center's holdings include "three million photographs, manuscripts, audio recording, and moving images" (AFC 2009), so it was clear that there were no lack of materials for my research. As it turned out, there was more information than I could process and organize, and I eventually got bogged down with information overload. I

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had thought I could compose one, all encompassing thesis on ethics in Folklore archives, but the topic is too diverse. The task was so big that I actually was ready to quit because I was not making any progress.

When the opportunity to change from a thesis to a project arose, I thought it was exactly what I needed to keep moving and reorganize. The resulting project herein is an outgrowth of the work I did during my internship with the Center, during the summer of 2006, combined with the research I conducted while working toward a thesis. The goals of my project were to learn what the Center's philosophy is regarding managing ethical situations with their collections, and I also wanted to see how that theory is put into practice. I wanted to learn what types of ethical situations the Center has already encountered and what some of the more common concerns are. In order to gather my information, I chose to interview staff members of the Center who have been involved with ethics in one fashion or another. Some were involved in ethics in a theoretical framework while others were involved in a hands-on fashion in the Archive.

As an intern in the Center in 2006, I was initially assigned seven boxes of materials from the International Storytelling Festival that I needed to unpack, examine the materials to determine how to classify them, house them in appropriate folders or photo sheets, and organize the boxes to prepare them for permanent storage. My boxes contained photographs, newspaper clippings, legal documents, correspondence, and press releases among other things. I worked in the Archive from May until August of 2006, and I logged 200 hours. Primarily I worked with my collection, but at times I was also able to assist on other projects such as a tale-typing project and helping some of the staff

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prepare for a presentation they were giving at the Society of American Archivist's symposium. It was not until I began doing research for my project that I was able to look back at my experience in the Archive and see some of the practices coincide with the theory I was learning about through my interviews. Although I discussed ethics with a colleague in the Archive during my internship, it was not until I interviewed other staff members that I started seeing the bigger picture.

A Brief Background about the Center and the Archive

The Archive of Folk Culture was originally called the Archive of American Folksong when it was founded by Robert W. Gordon in 1928 (AFC, *About the American Folklife Center* 2010). It was not until 1978 that it changed to the Archive of Folk Culture as it became part of the American Folklife Center (AFC, *Collections and Research* 2009). Since its inception, the Archive has grown to hold more than three million items that include traditional items such as documents, photographs, and audio recordings, but it also contains not so traditional items such as wax cylinders, musical instruments, and at least one board game. Some of the collections in the Archive include the Jane Day Abb collection of ghost stories and belief tales in Maryland; the John Henry Faulk collection of Texas prison songs; the David Ingle collection of drinking and temperance songs; and the Karen A. Morris collection of her research notes and songs from Niger, West Africa (AFC, *List of Collections* 2010). The collections themselves vary widely in size and scope, and where one collection, such as the Alan Lomax collection, may be extensive with numerous types of materials, others are much smaller and may only contain one item such as in the Peter Feldmann collection of the First Monterey Folk Festival.

The Center employs twenty-five people including the staff from the Archive and the Veteran's History Project. Peggy Bulger, the Director of the Center, oversees the daily operations of the entire Center, and she relies on Michael Taft, as the Head of the Archive of Folk Culture, for his expertise in successfully managing an archive. The Archive has several collection processing technicians with whom I had the opportunity to work such as Valda Morris and Marcia Segal. Other staff members lend their hand where needed such as Todd Harvey who worked on the arrangement of the International Storytelling Festival documents, and Judith Gray whose experience with Native American collections makes her well aware of ethical considerations. All of the employees in the Center and the Archive have important functions that help the Center manage its collection; the people I mentioned are simply those who provided the bulk of the information for this project.

The Security of Private Information

During graduate school, I worked as a security officer at a credit union in Alexandria, VA. Part of my job was to train the staff on the importance of keeping members' personal information (i.e., social security number, account numbers) safe and secure, and I demonstrated how the smallest error in judgment could cause a member or the credit union financial and emotional strain because information was misused. Although the credit union maintains the security of more than 34,000 members, the security of information in this context is actually a fairly easy task because the staff is always on alert, and they look at the same information while asking the same questions. Through a predefined pattern of questions, detecting people who want to steal information becomes fairly easy. However, security of information is not so easy to manage in every context, as is the case with the Archive of Folk Culture that manages more than 4,000 collections. What this means is that the Archive must use the experience of the staff, and approach each situation as a unique opportunity to answer researchers' requests for information as I learned during my internship and during my research.

While I was completing my internship, I had the opportunity to work with different archival materials, but the bulk of the materials I worked with were documents of one sort or another. One of the questions I had while I was working was what happens

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if some of the information contained in the collection documents may not be suitable for the general public. The intent with processing a collection is to make it available for the public to look at, examine, and research, so it is impossible to tell how many people could access the information. The particular collection I was working with had vendor agreements, rental agreements, and even insurance documents, which had account numbers and policy numbers on them. What does the Archive do or what is the Archive's policy relating to the security of private information?

To explore these issues, I interviewed Dr. Todd Harvey, a Folklife Specialist in the Center as well as a librarian, and at the time of our interview, he had been working in the Center for five years. As we talked about ethics in Folklore and fieldwork, he told me how vital it is for the Center to safeguard information in a collection, and he also spoke about the differences between processed collections (those that the staff has organized, cataloged, and made ready for storage and researcher use) and unprocessed collections (those that are still in the process of being organized). One of the goals of the Center is to provide unfettered access to processed collections to everyone, but when inquiries are being made about unprocessed collections, protecting information can become a more difficult issue because staff members may not know the full extent of the contents of the collection (Harvey 2007). Although this is the case with any unprocessed collection, Dr. Harvey used the Alan Lomax collection to illustrate his point: "We have this broad aim with the collection to process it and to remove things from the collection that contain personally identifiable information; things that are inappropriate to the collection. Things that should not have been sent to us in the first place" (2007). This does not mean the

Center is trying to distance or to separate the collector or donor from the collection itself, but rather, the Center wants to ensure the information a collection contains is pertinent to the collection. Information such as social security numbers or bank account numbers may be in a collection, but it is unethical to disclose this type of private information to a researcher. The information is not relevant to the collection in general; in addition, the information may still be valid and infringe upon the rights of the collector or the donor to his or her privacy. The Center looks at information in the context of preserving the owner's rights to his or her privacy, and in the best interest of the collection donor or owner, it will remove the information from public access.

It is certainly easier for the Center to protect an individual when potentially damaging materials are removed from the collection prior to taking possession of it. To process a collection, the technicians organize the materials, conduct any preservation practices needed, and make them ready for long-term storage, but they are not necessarily examining every item to see if the collection contains information like bank account or social security numbers. Since the processing technicians cannot examine each part of the collection when it arrives at the Archive, it is better for donors to remove sensitive information prior to acquisitioning. Many times, though, that is not the reality, but when it is, the burden that is taken from the Archive is significant. Dr. Harvey recalled another situation with the Lomax collection for which he was thankful that materials had been taken out by the family before they donated them to the Archive:

> Well, with the Lomax collection, I think they held back or they didn't include in the collection certain things that were inappropriate or weren't a part of Alan's professional life. For

example, his personal journals that weren't related to his fieldwork. They were, you know, his psychoanalysis, things like that that were inappropriate, and I was surprised that they even existed. But when we had our symposium, Alan's daughter read from some of them, and I was like, "Wow, this is powerful stuff." And I was glad they didn't send it to us. (2007)

From the perspective of managing a collection, it is certainly easier when a donor has already combed the collection for information that he or she may not want to have included. In the Lomax case, Dr. Harvey was grateful the information Alan's daughter presented at the symposium was not even in the collection when it came to the Center; the information she had was just simply not pertinent to the collection.

When private information is contained in a collection, the Center has to analyze it and decide what needs to be done. If the information is a bank account number or a social security number, the Center can blacken those out so the information is not made public. However, different personal items such as private letters might in the collection, too. This type of situation is more likely to occur when someone other than the collection creator donates materials. If the collector has died, and his or her heirs inherit the collection, they may decide to donate it while not knowing exactly what it contains. When considering any type of personal information, the Center works in the best interest of the donors as Dr. Harvey explained with a collection I will refer to as Collection A[1].

The collection...it's not an issue because it's all film based, and we are going to assume that there is nothing really personal in there.

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[1] During our interview, Dr. Harvey's comment about whether to spend money on digitizing the collection when the owner may not want anyone to know a tape exists made me apprehensive about including the name of the collection owner in this essay. To ensure I did not overstep my boundaries, I have decided to keep the name of the collection and its owner anonymous. The collection consists mostly of sound recordings dating back to the 1930s and obtained from numerous parts of the world.

When I was going through creating the finding aid, I found a collection of unprocessed sound recordings [the owner] had given us in the 1980s. Included in there were some very early family recordings. Just the family sitting around talking, things like that. When I asked [the owner] if I could include those in the public finding aid, the answer was "I'd rather you didn't." Now, there is no deed of gift. So this is new information, new ethical information that we are including in the collection. And it's never been processed, so I think it's certainly within [the owner's] right to say that, and we wouldn't do that anyway, even if we had a Deed of Gift because they are the rights holders to that information. So, I think it's a tough call. Do we give the tape back to [the owner]? Do we spend our preservation dollars digitizing it when [the owner] prefer that no one even know it exist? (2007)

There are two issues that Dr. Harvey raises regarding Collection A: the first is what does the Archive do with the materials when there is no Deed of Gift? In the context of an archive, a Deed of Gift is "a formal, legal, agreement that transfers ownership of, and legal rights in, the materials to be donated" (SAA 2010). Perhaps the Center has the right to include the tape in the collection, but when working with a collection, the Center looks at the whole picture. Rather than focusing on what their legal rights are with a collection, the Center maintains a relationship with the donor. The legal rights are certainly important, but protecting donors from the misuse of information is the ethical ideology the Center promotes.

The second issue becomes one of expenses. Dr. Harvey asked, "Do we spend our preservation dollars digitizing it when [the owner] prefer that no one even know it exist?" Like all institutions, the Center has a budget, and it has to determine the best way to control expenses. Should the Center spend money digitizing the tape or save those funds for other collections? For the Center, it is better to return the items to the owner which

eliminates the budgetary issue altogether. The Center tries to ensure the information they manage is the information donors want the public to see.

Much of what Dr. Harvey and I talked about revolved around processing and noting how the Archive looks out for the safety and the security of personal information. Looking back at my internship, I see where the Center's goals of protecting information are put into practice regarding the International Storytelling Collection documents I worked on. All of the boxes I processed held storytelling festival documents of one sort or another, but one in particular had information about the grounds, vendors, and budget. It also contained vendor agreements that had personal information on some of them. As I questioned Dr. Harvey about ethics and information security, I learned how the Center and the Archive work to secure information. As I recounted my internship, I saw how the practice of protecting information become a reality. When I encountered information that was personal such as account numbers, I was instructed to notate those particular documents so the numbers could be blackened out and removed before processing was complete, thus safeguarding the International Storytelling Center and its constituents from potential misuse of information.

In certain situations, the ethical course of action is easy to determine. However, the Center and the Archive are not always dealing with easily remedied situations. There are often questions of who even has the right to say what happens to items within a collection, and every situation is different. These questions are about the intellectual property rights.

Intellectual Property and Situational Ethics

As I talked with Dr. Harvey about the collections in the Archive and how the

Center works to protect the donors (and sellers at times) of the collections, we got more

involved with some of the operations within the Center. We started to discuss the

intellectual property rights of the collection owners, the importance of the issue to the

Center, and what the Center does to ensure intellectual property rights are not being

violated. As defined by the World Intellectual Property Organization, intellectual

property rights are "the legal rights which result from intellectual activity in the

industrial, scientific, literary and artistic fields" (WIPO 2010). When Dr. Harvey says the

Center is looking out for the rights of the collection owners, one of the specific rights he

is referring to is the legal use of the materials in the collection. The Center wants to

ensure that a researcher who would like to have copies of something from the Archive is

not going to use those materials to his or her own financial advantage or in a way that

would infringe upon the rights of the collection owner. As Dr. Harvey and I discussed

this issue more, he recommended I speak with Judith Gray who has worked on numerous

projects in the Center and has firsthand experience working with researchers.

Ms. Gray has been working in the Center for twenty years, and one of the first

projects she was a part of was the Federal Cylinder Project. She helped preserve the

recordings of Native Americans from the wax cylinders on which they were originally recorded to tape. Since she began working at the Center, she has become a valuable resource for researchers who are investigating collections from Native Americans.[2] As we discussed her role in the Center, it was clear that one of the things she must be aware of is the use to which a researcher intends to put any materials he or she is requesting. Ms. Gray is cautious when people or groups come to her and request copies of materials, and her level of caution is related to the material requested.

Here are two examples of how Ms. Gray executes caution, and they illustrate how different researchers can be:

> We've done a lot of work with a project in West Virginia, some relating to mountain top removal, mining, and the effect of mining activities on traditional activities. So, at one point we got an inquiry from a mining company that wanted to use one particular photo, which is online, of a miner. It's a group shot, but there's one person who is sort of front and center.

> We were not about to say, blankly, "Go ahead," not knowing the relationship between that particular miner and that particular company. If that particular miner happened to be a union rep and happened to be someone with whom there's been conflict with that particular company, we would not know that. So, this is one situation for sure where we wanted the mining company to contact the miner directly since it was not quite a portrait shot, but it's enough of one person showing. There are people in the background, but you can clearly see this guy. So, it still seemed, to us, that was one place where the mining company needed to try to contact him to see if it was okay with him if they used his image on their annual report…I mean, it may have been perfectly fine with the miner, but that was not our call to make. (2007)

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[2] Ms. Gray pointed out that, although she works a great deal with Native American collections, ethical practices and concerns of ethics extend to all the collections in the Archive. Thus everything we discussed during our interview is not specific to Native American collections.

In her first example, she takes some caution with the mining company that wants to use the photograph, and she notes that the company has disclosed to her why they wanted the photograph. It is clear this photograph is going to be disseminated among a certain group of people, so anyone who is privy to the annual report (e.g., stock holders, employees) would see the photograph. Ms. Gray is certainly looking out for the rights of the individual in the photograph who seems to stand out more than the others. She does not want that particular miner or someone who knows the miner or possibly a union representative to get upset that the Center allowed the company to use the photo without the miner's permission. However, even though she does not express it here, there may be a second person to consider: the photographer who took the picture. There is the possibility that the photographer (or his or her heirs if deceased) owns the usage rights for that image, which means he or she might be entitled to monetary compensation for use.

The particular photograph Ms. Gray and I discussed presents a situation that occurs often, and it is a situation I encountered during my internship. While I worked on the collection, I saw numerous photos that may have been taken of one specific person or place, but other people were captured in the photo, too. Some were publicity photos of performers that were specifically intended to be viewed by the public, and most of these only required the proper credit be given to the photographer or the studio that took the picture. Other photos were of such things as tents and festival grounds, and similar to the photos of the performers, these photos could be used with proper credit given. Many of the photographs I worked with involved group settings and pictures of storytellers either

practicing on stage or performing. The principles that I learned with these photos coincide with what Ms. Gray and I discussed.

The Center's belief for working with photographs such as the group photo from the mining company or from the International Storytelling Festival is to protect the rights of the performers, photographers, and the people in the photo themselves. With regards to researchers giving credit where credit is due, the Center wants to make sure the individuals responsible for creating the photo and those individuals in the photo are recognized, but achieving this in every case is unreasonable. As Ms. Gray and I talked, she told me about a situation with Morris dancers. One of Ms. Gray's colleagues was asked to give a webcast on May Day rituals and wanted to include video clips from a Morris dancing collection. The legal counsel at the Library of Congress told the Center, however, that they could not put the presentation online until release forms are received from all the dancers. Ms. Gray noted that this particular community is one that enjoys showing itself off at public events, and these particular dances were done in public. Furthermore, getting release forms from every individual is not only an arduous task, but an impossible one. Ms. Gray also noted that there are zoos and festivals that now have posted placards that read, "If you go past this point, be aware that your image could be picked up by a camera and you could be webcast" or something along those lines. She believes that "you have to take the context of the community" (2007). In other words, if performers are promoting their group by dancing in public, and if the group is trying to gain publicity and awareness, it does not make ethical sense to hold back information or require impossible tasks like gathering permissions from every person to be completed.

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The second example of possible misuse Ms. Gray offered involved collections of

Native American nations. This case involves intellectual property rights. She stated:

> So, today someone writes in saying he wants copies of some of the
> [Frances] Densmore, Lakota cylinders. I write back and say we
> need to know the use to which you plan on putting this. He says he
> wants to give copies to the ceremonial drum so they'll know the
> older version of the songs. Now you are talking about
> dissemination. That means you'll need to get permissions from the
> communities from which the song came. (2007)

Ms. Gray drew my attention to this particular case not only to demonstrate the

variety of questions and reasons for use that she may encounter, but also to illustrate the

importance for her that the intended outside use of any of the materials in the Archive be

understood. In this particular case, the requestors may have been part of the communities

who would be able to get copies and use the songs, but automatically making this

assumption has the potential to cause a great deal of trouble. Ms. Gray's experience with

assisting researchers has helped her, too, and she noted that she often gets calls and

requests from California residents who want to use Native American songs in a film.

Noting that there are plenty of public use songs that can be found, she encourages

filmmakers to go that route since obtaining the permissions from tribes that may no

longer exist is a very difficult task.

Ms. Gray helped me understand how important intellectual property rights are and

how the Center strives to ensure researchers do not violate the rights of the donors. As I

look back on my internship and the work I did on the International Storytelling

Collection, I see how the Center and the Archive take preemptive steps during collection

processing to try and avoid any issues that could arise after the collection is ready for

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researchers. By taking the time with processing, and by understanding the significance of what is in the collections, the Center approaches records management in favor of protecting the rights of donors and ensuring those people involved with creating a collection receive the credit (scholarly or financial) they deserve.

Before I began my research, I already knew that collections are seldom in beautifully organized condition when they are acquired. I was fortunate that my research led me to learn more about how the Center acquires its collections, and what they look at before determining whether or not to accept a collection. The process involved in acquisitioning a collection is a discussion I had with Michael Taft.

Ethical and Financial Responsibility

I began my internship in the Archive on May 9, 2006, and as I stated above, I worked on a portion of the collection that was donated by the International Storytelling Center. More specifically, the collection I worked on contains documents from the International Storytelling Festival, a large, public festival that has been held in Jonesborough, Tennessee, every year since 1973. The bulk of the collection was acquired in 2001, and it is "one of the largest and most important archival collections of modern storytelling in the world" (Smith 2001). Since that time, additional increments of the collection have been acquired. The Center's processing archivists have a very good idea about what they will find in incoming boxes. For each addition to the collection, the Center tries to carry out an inspection in order to ensure the documents and materials in the additions are in acceptable condition.

When I was conducting my research, I met with Dr. Michael Taft, the Head of the Archive of Folk Culture, and we talked about ethics in collection management on several levels. One of the areas we focused on was how an archive might look at a collection in terms of the cost of processing it. As it happened, he had recently experienced a conflict that provided a practical example of some of the challenges he faces. He received a call from a museum that has a collection of folklore materials, but the museum is not used to

dealing with the kinds of materials in the collection. The materials are going to deteriorate as all materials do, but there is fear that in this case, they will deteriorate much quicker because the museum is unaccustomed to working with them (Taft 2006). The question for Dr. Taft was whether the Center should acquire the collection to preserve it since its staff has a better working knowledge of how to care for the materials. Answering the question was not easy.

Dr. Taft has to consider whether the collection fits into the scope of the Center's purpose. That is, does the collection contain materials that are in line with what the Center collects? Some of the collecting priorities for the Archive include field documentation of bearers of traditional cultures, manuscript records of folklorists, rare commercial recordings of traditional music, and recordings from folk festivals (AFC, *Folklife* 2010). Just because the Archive of Folk Culture is a folklore archive, it does not mean that it will accept any collection relating to folklore. For example, if the cost to preserve the materials in the collection is too great, the Center may not have the financial resources to accept and preserve it. The Center also must consider whether it has the storage capacity for a collection if the collection is large. In this particular case, the Archive was unable to take the collection because it did not quite fit into the scope of the Center's collection.

A question then arises: is it ethical to knowingly allow a collection to remain with an institution that is unfamiliar with the materials and techniques to preserve those materials? The question may be a bit oversimplified, but the answers are not. I believe any folklorist who has it in his or her power or ability to help would do so, but when the

folklorist is also responsible for the collections at a formal institution, he or she is bound by the institution's policies. If an archive is operating independently such as a non-profit organization, accepting collections that do not fit the mission of the archive could result in the organization losing its non-profit status and its tax exemptions. Typically an archive exists as part of another agency. For example, the Archive of Folk Culture in the Center is part of the Library of Congress, and the National Archives and Records Administration is part of the Federal Government. When an archive exists like this, it might be bound by specific laws and regulations that govern what it will collect, and in the case of the Archive of Folk Culture, the Library of Congress has a great deal of influence in what the Center collects. This is why questions of ethics can be difficult. Allowing a collection to remain where it may have a faster rate of deterioration is not necessarily an ethical question. The ethical argument might be more along the lines of not referring the collection to another archive whose mission statement might make it a better fit for the collection. Those individuals who must deny a collection are not acting unethically if they are operating within the regulations of their institution. Prior to acquiring a collection, staff members of the Center examine it to determine its overall condition. If a collection is in poor condition, the archivist needs to weigh the financial cost of preserving the collection against the intellectual cost of losing the collection. It is certainly not an easy decision, and as I worked on my collection, I saw how that principle of managing preservation costs is put into practice.

As I sorted though some of the documents of the International Storytelling Festival collection, I consistently encountered newspaper articles and advertisements in

newspapers and magazines that promoted the festival. Newspapers and magazines are not unique records; that is to say, either of these types of documents could be replicated or acquired from libraries or the organization itself. These records are mass produced, so unlike a one-of-a-kind sound recording of an interview, for example, there are numerous copies of these records. As I processed the newspaper articles in particular, I asked what the Archive's practice is regarding how to preserve them. Often I came across the same article several times, so I also wanted to know about the policy regarding duplicate items. The Archive needs to be cautious about the costs of the materials they use to preserve newspaper clippings, so we would act sparingly about photocopying the articles on acid-free paper. Likewise, putting every newspaper article into Mylar housing is not cost-effective. I was instructed that we would not keep originals of every article that was duplicated, only three or four so if one deteriorates quickly, others will be readily available. When we put the articles in file folders, we added acid-free sheets of paper between them to make sure the deterioration of the newsprint was as slow as possible.

As I continued to speak with Dr. Taft about his role in the Center and in the Archive, and about the ethical concerns he faces, the conversation turned toward the practice of collecting materials. We talked only briefly about proper fieldwork techniques, because that was not the focus of our talk, but rather it was about what archivists face when contemporary standards were not used on previously collected materials. As more and more institutions require release forms as part of the Institutional Review Board's approval to conduct research, archivists could see fewer collections that

do not have release forms, but that day is far in the future. Having a collection without

release forms is quite common. Dr. Taft stated:

> Within folklore archives, the same thing of course, but there you expect
> the archivist to be more aware of the legal and ethical considerations. But,
> an archive like this one here, much of our material here predates the
> release form era. Or we get in collections of material without release
> forms. And, we take it in, we don't say, "Oh, no we can't take in a
> collection because you don't have release forms." Because, you're caught
> between two competing responsibilities if you are an archivist in that
> position. One is the knowledge, the information, the traditions that are in
> that body of material you want to take in and you're responsibility to take
> it in because you want to preserve that. On the other hand it was, in a
> way, collected unethically, if not illegally, because there were no release
> forms, so you are taking in pirated material. There's no way around that.
> (2007)

Dr. Taft illustrates how there are these competing factors that are difficult to

reconcile from time to time, and he believes denying a collection on account of a lack of

release forms is not necessarily the best course of action. There might be a lot of

knowledge and scholarship within the collection, but if you consider the materials to be

collected unethically, will anyone ever be able to use the collection? One of the things

Dr. Taft would like to see in the Center is a person whose job it is to seek out collection

owners or their heirs and obtain release forms which would, in turn, make it easier for

researchers to come to the center and obtain copies of materials. The Center would

benefit because that person would work to ensure collections were ready for researchers

to look at and possibly use information from them. In our interview he said the idea of

having someone to do that type of work is great, but there are so many factors involved

including the age of the collection, the type of collection, the context of the fieldwork, and the donors themselves that make the task daunting, and maybe unattainable.

There is no easy way to reconcile ethics and constraints associated with managing an archive. The archivist may be presented with a collection that fits into the scope and the mission of the archive, but the preservation costs are too high. Is it ethical to deny the collection? Actually, the question is wrong. To contextualize the question within this essay, it is better to ask whether it is ethical to accept the responsibility of managing a collection when, in fact, the long-term cost to the archive and other collections is so high.

Conclusion

After I completed my internship with the Center, it was difficult to leave. The staff members in the Center and in the Archive are so passionate about what they do, and they are so excited about the events that are going on. They have the knowledge, experience, and resources to help anyone with folklore questions. There were times when I heard some of the staff members interact with researchers, and at one point, I joined two employees to help a researcher find specific types of stories. It was easy to see how the Center and the Archive work together and pursue the reconciliation of principle and practice.

Ethics is certainly a broad subject with a wide array of possible sub-topics. As I sat and listened and watched the staff of the Center, I realized that ethical questions can be commonsensical. If a researcher comes to the Center and wants to get a copy of a song for a CD he or she is publishing, the Center is not simply going to let the researcher walk out with the copy since the goal is mass production. Instead, the Center guides the researcher to where he or she needs to go to get permission to use the song in such a manner. It would not be ethical to allow the researcher to profit from a recording when the performer should be given credit, too.

Sometimes, however, ethical questions are not easily answered through common sense. Is it ethical to play an archived copy of a sound recording of a Native American storyteller after his or her death? Perhaps in American culture we enjoy watching videos of loved ones who have passed on, but in other cultures, like the Navajo, someone's voice should not be heard after they pass on. It is part of their religious beliefs, so would it be forcing American views on the culture to play the recording?

The point is that every situation is different, and the Center recognizes there are times when ethical decisions are clear cut and times when they are not. However, the practice of the Center is to act in the best interest of the donors. The Center protects donor information and rights, and if a situation is not clear, they err on the side of caution by having researchers secure permissions of use from the donor. The staff will help out in any way they can, but they cannot seek permissions for every researcher.

Ethical situations are abundant, and one simply needs to turn on the news to see ethics being questioned in every field. Folklore archives are great resources for scholars, and as I have discussed, there are several ethical challenges they must face. Managing a collection, especially one as large as the Center has, is not an easy task. As the Archive and the Center demonstrate, being aware of the challenges and the ethical implications of how information could be misused is one of the best ways to ensure archives will make the best decisions for their donors.

Appendix[3]

Tuesday, May 9, 2006

Today was the first day of my internship at the American Folklife Center in the Library of Congress. Eventually, I will be in the Center's archive where I will help process part of the International Storytelling Collection. The collection, which was acquired in 2001, is from the annual storytelling festival that is held in Jonesborough, Tennessee during the first week in October. Today, however, was mostly an introduction to the Center and the Archive, so I did not get into my project just yet.

The morning hours were spent with introductions and other formalities of working at any new job. I met with Ann Hoog who introduced me to the staff in the reading room, and I also met one of the other interns. We filled out some paperwork, and soon I was off through the underground corridors of the Library of Congress to obtain my security badge. When I returned, Ann took me on a tour of the reading room, and as we walked, she talked about the Center's role in research and the sponsorship of public events. She talked about the Archive's goal which is to help researchers, and I asked how the process works. When researchers need information, they are encouraged to call before they visit. By calling in advance, the research staff has time to gather information about the researcher's subject of interest. Of course, if researchers come in unannounced, they are still welcomed, but they may not get the same volume of information they would

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[3] During my internship, I had the privilege to work with several staff members on different projects, so some of the information in this appendix has been edited to include material that is most relevant to my project and ethics in archives.

have if the research staff had more time to prepare. When the researcher arrives, he or she is "served" a folder containing information about his or her subject. The Center keeps a copy of the folder on hand because they believe if one researcher has inquired about a subject, another researcher may, too. At this point, Ann showed me the file cabinets where the folders are kept.

There are two sets of cabinets in the reading room. One set contains information about people and events. Many of the professors and authors who we read during our folklore classes, such as Barre Toelken, Carl Lindahl, and even our own Professors Yocom and Shutika, have folders in these cabinets. Other items researchers may find in these cabinets include events such as the International Storytelling Festival or local folklore festivals. The other cabinets contain subjects such as festivals, holidays, songs, and stories.

Shortly after noon, I was introduced to the staff of the Archive. Immediately I was drawn in and began discussing the International Storytelling Collection with my direct supervisor, Valda Morris. Valda, a graduate student in library sciences at Catholic University, has worked on this collection with Todd Harvey since its accessioning. She was thrilled that I had some archival experience from the City of Alexandria's Archive and Records Center, regardless of how limited it was, and she was even more excited that I was interested in the specific collection. She and I discussed the collection, how it was accessioned, and the numbering system of the collection.

Later in the afternoon, Valda introduced me to Michael Cheyt, a former student of Folklorist Alan Dundes. Michael is a cataloguer for the Library of Congress who

attended a presentation of Todd and Valda's regarding the storytelling collection shortly after it was accessioned. Since part of the collection includes sound recordings of stories being narrated at the festival, Michael was interested in whether or not these stories would be (or have been) tale typed. That is, have they been cross referenced into categories of the Aarne-Thompson Tale Type Index? He believes that researchers who are investigating a specific tale might want to hear an actual performance of it. After he spoke with Todd and Valda, he and Valda began working on a project to classify the stories being told into categories based on the Aarne-Thompson Tale Type Index. When Michael learned that I had an interest in narrative, he asked if I would be interested in learning about tale typing. I said I would, and we will begin working on tale typing on Tuesday the 16th.

Tuesday, May 16, 2006

Most of the work I did today involved digging deep into festival documents that were created by Carla Papy, one of the administrators at the Storytelling Center. The documents I worked on today were primarily articles and advertisements from newspapers and magazines. Carla worked with publishers to promote the International Storytelling Festival, and among the records I processed were advertising proofs, complimentary copies of magazines in which her advertisements were listed, and newspaper articles that ranged from small snippets of information to full-fledged articles about the festival; these articles were the most interesting of the records because they helped me realize how well-known the festival is.

I was amazed and impressed at the coverage of the festival. The papers ranged from small, local publications to nationally recognized ones, such as <u>USA Today</u> and <u>The New York Times.</u> The local Jonesborough newspapers such as <u>Herald & Chronicle</u> had articles about the festival and advertisements about admission, hours, and location. The larger newspapers did not have any of the advertising, but there was plenty of prose written about the festival. Part of this may be attributed to geographic concerns and budget; it does not make much sense to advertise a festival in Jonesborough, Tennessee in <u>The New York Times.</u> However, the local articles about the festival did provide information including who was performing, background information about the festival, and what a visitor could expect to see or hear while attending the festival. Ray Hicks was featured and photographed in most of the articles; he is obviously a crowd favorite.

In the afternoon, I attended a full staff meeting. During the meeting everyone went around the room to keep one another abreast of what projects they were working on and what projects may be coming up. One of the other interesting projects that I enjoyed hearing about was the Veteran's History Project which collects personal accounts of American war veterans. Currently, the staff members are still collecting stories from veterans and processing them.

Unfortunately, I was unable to meet with Michael and Valda to work on tale-typing. Another meeting came up for the two of them, and we are going to postpone our first tale typing meeting until next Tuesday. Since we were unable to meet, I continued processing the collection from Carla Papy for the remainder of the day by removing

documents from boxes and determining if they should be categorized as administrative or publicity.

Tuesday, May 23, 2006

The first thing I did this morning was to complete categorizing the documents in one box of Carla Papy's papers. This box, in particular, had miscellaneous festival papers from 1991 to 2001. Once again, there were many records in line with advertising, budget, travel, and advertising proofs. It also had photographs that I needed to learn how to store as well as a guest book and a binder. I have never worked with any other types of records than documents, so I will consult with Valda on the Archive's process.

I worked with Michael and Valda on tale typing for a couple of hours this morning. We all met in the conference room where there was a CD player, and Valda brought several CDs from the 1988 Storytelling Festival. Michael and Valda completed the tale they worked on during their prior meeting. They explained to me that they listen to several stories during their meeting, discuss and look up several motifs or patterns, and cross reference motifs into the Aarne-Thompson Tale Type Index. Many of the stories they hear have established tale types, but others are not found in the index. The reason for doing this type of work is to help researchers who are studying a particular tale. If, for example, someone is studying tales of humans being transformed into animals, he or she might look at the index, find the specific type of tale, and search through records in the Archive to find tellings and variations of the tale.

Today we listened to stories from Len Cabral and Bill Harley. The first story was "A Penny a Look," and in this story two brothers, opposite in demeanor, seek out one-eyed people to keep in a sort of circus show. As it turns out, the brothers get captured by the one-eyed people and are put in their circus. Although this tale has several motifs (e.g., one-eyed person/people, hunter(s) become hunted), there is not a tale type. We then went on to three other stories, the first of which was "Boots of Seven Strides," which did not have a tale type, and then we heard a coyote creation/explanation story. We started a second coyote story, but something happened during the transfer to CD because the CD cut out just after the story began. Finally, we started a story called, "The Witch on Stone Mountain," and it was narrated by Ray Hicks. I am sure anyone who attended one of his sessions and saw his face and body movements would have understood him better in person than we could from the recording. Ray's Appalachian accent on the CD is very thick, so the recording was a little difficult to understand. In Jack in Two Worlds, Joseph Daniel Sobol mentions how his friend, Kathleen Zundell, could not understand much of what Ray said when she first heard him, but as she was drawn in more and more to Ray's story, his accent and dialect seemed to disappear and she understood everything

Thursday, May 25, 2006

I spent the majority of the day removing documents from the boxes to see how they needed to be categorized. I am pleased the work is moving along as well as it is. Many of the documents are in folders already, and I do not have to do much preservation work. Currently, I only work on arranging and describing the documents contained in the files, but as soon as this is completed, I will be working with the database. All the information I use to describe the materials, including box and folder numbers, will be entered into the database so information is easily accessible. The boxes and folders will be stamped with the collection number (this collection is AFC 2001/008 meaning the eighth collection accessioned in 2001).

Much of my work during the morning consisted of categorizing and describing one box of festival documents ranging from 1997 to 1999. These included media invitations, vendor agreements, snack shop documentation, and permits. The most interesting things were the flyers and brochures from each festival. After this, I began working on another box which will be quite time consuming because it contains so many newspaper clippings. When discussing newspapers with an archivist, a conflict arises. Many archivists will confirm that their responsibility is to preserve unique records. This is the problem with newspapers: they are not unique. No matter how small a newspaper is, the issues it produces are not unique records, and Carla Papy kept numerous newspapers and newspaper clippings because they either advertised the International Storytelling Festival or did an article about the festival. In some cases, Papy added a Post-It note to the paper to indicate why she kept it, but in most instances she did not. I

am going through each paper to try and find the article or advertising, and I am cutting these out, if possible, for better preservation. It is best to copy the articles to acid-free paper and remove the original. Newspaper breaks down at a much faster rate than regular paper, and by using acid free paper, the deterioration rate slows and the information is preserved even longer. As tedious as it can be, it is kind of fun because it is like trying to put a puzzle together and finding the best way to preserve the materials.

After lunch today, I began working with the photos in the collection. After gathering supplies I spent time talking with Valda about how the Archive stores photos. To begin categorizing the photos, I will separate them into black-and-white and color photos for storage. Storage rooms are climate controlled, but since the deterioration rates of photos differ, color and black-and-white photos are stored separately to slow deterioration as much as possible. The first photos I will be working with are publicity shots, and these will be easy to categorize and describe because the names of the performers are already printed on them.

Tuesday, May 30, 2006

Today was a busy day of processing. Valda was not in today, so I continued to work on the two boxes in which I was already involved. One box is primarily newspaper articles, so it is going to take some time to complete the initial re-housing of the documents. The other box contains photographs, and my work on it is progressing well.

Todd Harvey came into the Archive today, and he and I spoke about the work I was doing. I briefed him on where I thought I was in the project in regards to the initial

description and arrangement of the papers, and I showed him a couple of examples of the boxes I had completed. As we were reviewing the boxes, Todd and I began to talk about the titles for each folder. One of the categories we are using is "administrative." There was definitely a barrier in our communication during the onset of this project because I understood "administrative" to mean anything that came from an administrator of the Storytelling Center. As Todd and I talked more about the classification system, he said he could understand how that could happen.

The actual definition of "administrative" was not clear to me, so we talked about what his and Valda's definition of it was when they created the processing guidelines for the collection. When Valda comes back on Thursday, I will discuss it with her, and we will figure out the best way to proceed. What I learned from this, though, is just how important it is that everyone who is involved with processing understands all the parts and definitions of it. There is no uniform way to categorize every collection because each collection is different. For example, some of the boxes I am processing have photos, where a different collection may contain nothing but sound recordings. What the staff has to do is decide what kind of categorization each individual collection will have, and ensure everyone who might assist in processing is aware of any categories. Likewise, it is equally as important for someone who may be coming to assist with the collection, like interns, to ask questions and make sure they fully understand the classification system.

The majority of the day was spent processing a box of photos. The box primarily contains publicity photos, but there are also festival photos. All the photos were

somewhat organized, so the bulk of the processing entails separating prints, slides, and negatives for proper housing. Because of the different deterioration rates, as I am separating the prints, slides, and negatives, I am also separating each of these into color and black and white.

Thursday, June 1, 2006

Today's work began with the continuation of photo processing. Since I had a couple of questions for Valda, we talked as soon as she arrived. Specifically, we talked about the labeling of the folders, and how to fix the problem of "administrative" being written on each folder. Since I have subcategories on each folder, Valda was pleased to say that correcting the subject headings would be easy.

We also talked about housing slides. One of the issues that face so many archives today is space. Archivists want to take in collections, but they also want to maximize space usage. The slides I have encountered so far (approximately fifteen or twenty) all share the same problem: there is only one slide per storyteller. Each box contains several folders, and each folder is specific to one storyteller. This means there is only one slide in some folders which is a waste of space. I talked with Valda about it, and she gave me the go ahead to do what I think is best as an archivist. My plan is to use one slide sheet which can house up to twenty to twenty-five slides (depending on the sheet manufacturer). I will use the columns and rows on the Mylar sheets as locations for each slide, and I will create a one-page cross reference table to be added to the collection that shows who is in each place on the Mylar sheet.

Today we also worked a bit more on tale typing, and I was able to use the Aarne-Thompson index some more. I was given a crab and snake story, and I had to find the tale type for it. First I looked up "snake" and "crab" in the motif index, and discovered there are almost six pages for snake. However, the returns for crab were much fewer, so I started looking through them. I was able to find motifs, but I was not able to locate a specific tale type. When Michael, Valda, and I meet again for tale typing, we will discuss what each of us found, and we will also share how we came to our conclusions.

Thursday, June 8, 2006

I began the day today by working with the remaining publicity photos. Each envelope the photos were originally in was marked with a range of letters to indicate which photos were in which envelope. After I finished the third envelope, marked "T-Z," I reorganized the boxes in which the photos were housed into alphabetical order. Many of the folders were transferred to other boxes, so I also had to correct the box and folder assignment numbers on each folder. This involved erasing some thirty to forty file numbers and renumbering the entire publicity photo collection so the photos I found today were in their proper position in the collection.

There were several other envelopes from the same box that needed to be processed, and each of the envelopes noted the contents as festival photos. In actuality, only one envelope had photos of the festival, in the rest I found almost one hundred more publicity photos. Therefore, all the work I had just done needed to be done again. I am sure every archivist, during his or her career, has had a similar experience, so I would

pass this along to future archivists: never assume a folder, box, envelope, or any other type of container holds what is listed on the outside of it when you receive a collection.

After I completed organizing these photos, I learned a bit about some of the processes involved in digitization. The audio recordings of stories that are coming into the Center from the festival arrive on a variety of media. Some are on cassettes, some are on reel-to-reel tapes, and some are on compact disc. Part of the work going on in the Archive is the digitization of all these stories; eventually many of them will be available online for researchers. All the stories will hopefully be housed together so researchers who come into the center are able to access the complete range of stories quite easily.

One of the procedures within the digitization process includes verifying that the digitization was successful. The Archive is supplied a group of files containing the digitized stories. Using a computer program, Valda looks at each story in a wave file format to find possible problems like long breaks of silence or peaks of sound that are outside the audible capabilities of the program. If these peaks are short (less than a quarter of a second) it is acceptable, but only if there are very few of these. These peaks can be the result of many things, like an audience member's cough, or even a skip on a vinyl record. Since these peaks happen from time to time, it makes sense to accept some of them without trying to digitally fix them. If these peaks last longer, Valda needs to listen to these parts of the story and find out why. Microphone feedback can cause these peaks, too, and generally the storyteller stops speaking while the feedback is ringing. These types of peaks can be digitally removed, although I am not certain if the Center

wants that to happen. It seems better (and more true to the original recording), to leave the recording exactly as it is, and to make a note for researchers about the noise.

Another error Valda looks for is a timing error, that is when the digitization started, but the tape did not. It can also occur when the tape may have stopped, but the digitization continued. These are either removed, or the file is re-digitized. I talked to Valda, and she is going to see if she can set up a time for me to meet with the digitization team to watch and help them with their recording.

Tuesday, June 13, 2006

Today was a very busy day. I finished the mislabeled envelope of publicity photos, and I worked a little bit more with the newspaper articles. I especially concentrated on the Teller in Residence program articles.

Valda and I worked on tale typing again with Michael today, but this time we started off a little differently. Together, we read a story called "Bakhtyar and Badbakht" that Michael found. The story is about two brothers, one of whom is good and the other bad, who venture out into the world to seek their fortune. After reading the story, we worked together to find a tale type in the Aarne-Thompson index. We discussed different items from the story that we could look up, and one of the items that came up was the names of the brothers. Michael, who has been doing this for quite some time, said you could look up names, but they are almost never in the index. We discussed looking up "brothers", but we decided to try and narrow our focus even more. After a bit of discussion, we decided to look up "overhearing" in the index. In the story, Bakhtyar (the

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good brother) makes his fortune because he overhears animals talking about where money is hidden. With this knowledge, he is able to obtain the money and live richly. Bakhtyar tells his brother the means of his wealth, and his brother tries the same thing. This time, however, his brother overhears the animals talking about his own presence, and the animals kill him. I know I would never have thought to look up "overhearing" in the index, so this exercise was very helpful to me especially considering it lead us in the right direction, and we found the type. Now, that is not to say there are no other means to the same end, but really thinking about a story and all of the elements it contains is so important to tale typing. The researcher cannot overlook anything in the story or else he or she may miss the type.

All three of us agreed this was definitely worth doing again, so at each future meeting, we are going to do the same thing: we will read a story together and find the tale type together. Today we listened to Brenda Wong Aoki tell three stories. Michael mentioned that he and Valda had already heard these stories from the same festival, but they are on another CD. Aoki obviously told the stories on one day of the festival and retold them again on a different day. Rather than discussing tale types, we discussed differences from telling to telling and how the storyteller will make changes in every telling. In this case, Aoki may have had some different aged children in the crowd because, according to Michael, in the previous telling she chose words better suited to adults than children. This makes sense because the audience is never going to be the same, and the teller may decide to censor him or herself depending upon who is present.

Thursday, June 15, 2006

Today was mostly filled with working on newspaper articles and with festival photos. Valda and I worked through the last three envelopes in one of Carla Papy's boxes, and these contained photos from the 1997, 2001, and 2002 festivals. The photographs only have three real categories: documentation, organizational documentation, and publicity. Documentation refers to documentation of the festivals themselves, and those were the photos I was dealing with today.

Valda and I sat together this morning with the stacks of photos and tried to determine what, exactly, was being photographed. Some of the photos are relatively easy to identify as specific tents, but others took a bit more work. We broke the pile of photos into one pile of tent photos and one pile of set-up photos; if anything remained we put those to the side to process later. Out of the pile of tent photos, several had some sort of sign that let us know what we were looking at. Once we separated those from the pile, we had to use them as points of reference to try and figure out what else we were looking at. There were photos of Sister's Row and the Tent on the Hill, which were great because one tent was striped and the other had very tall spires on it. These were our two major reference points, and we were able to decipher the remaining photos based on photos of these two tents combined with a map of the festival site from a brochure. After we completed this part of the project, we decided it may be helpful to look at a blueprint of the festival grounds even though the layout varies from year to year. After looking at the blueprint, I was pretty amazed that we made the amount of progress we did just based on two tents; the festival grounds are pretty big, and the tents are not necessarily centralized.

As we moved on to the 2001 photographs, I learned that the same tents are not used every year. The festival has the same storytelling areas in roughly the same places each year, but the blue-and-white striped tent in Sister's Row that helped us so much in the 1997 photos was not the same in 2001. This year the blue-and-white tent housed the bookstore. By the time we got to the 2002 photos, I felt as if I had been to the festival because I was recognizing the food court and the tents by site location rather than by colors and signs.

The remainder of the day was spent trying to complete the organization of a box full of newspaper articles about the 2004 festival. All of them addressed the Teller in Residence program, and they were already separated quite nicely. For each storyteller there was a biography, an article about his or her types of stories, an advertisement in the Johnson City Press, and a schedule of events listing the teller as that week's Teller in Residence. This work is very repetitive; I cut out the articles, photocopied them, and put them in their folders.

Tuesday, June 20, 2006

I got in to the Archive pretty early today, and I began working with the photo collection once more. There were still some negatives, slides, and compact discs that needed to be housed, so I started to process them. While I was doing this, some new boxes for housing photographs arrived. These boxes are about half the size of regular archive boxes. Once these came in, my focus turned away from the negatives, slides, and compact discs, and toward getting the overall collection ordered more accurately.

I re-housed all the black-and-white photographs, and this time I left ample room for new photos just in case any surprises arose in other boxes. When I was done, I had re-housed nine boxes of black-and-white publicity photos. I looked in the boxes from the previous years and found out that duplicates had been saved, and I was a bit surprised. I had been removing duplicate prints with the idea of discarding them; I did not see the point of retaining duplicate photos. First of all, I had enough duplicates to fill another box, so it does not make sense to take up shelf space with duplicate records, and secondly, the materials used for housing duplicates could have been used elsewhere which would be better from a budget standpoint. However, since the practice to house duplicates was already in place, I housed all the duplicates. As I expected, they took a full box. By the time I finished the duplicates and the re-housing, I was ready to move onto other things.

Next on the agenda was a box containing Teller in Residence newspaper clippings along with other miscellaneous festival clippings. I did the typical preservation of photocopying and replacing the original newspapers with copies on acid-free paper, and then I housed them in the new box. Valda and I talked about one box that contains nothing but newspapers and newspaper articles, and we decided to hold off on working with this box until we could meet and discuss it with Todd. We are meeting with Todd on Thursday, so we will get his opinion regarding the best way to process this box. There are larger archival boxes in which we could store the entire newspapers, or Valda and I can devote one day to tackling this box. I like the second idea because it would get this box completed leaving only two remaining. We will decide for certain on Thursday.

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Thursday, June 22, 2006

Valda and I spent our morning with Michael, and we discussed tale typing. Just as we did last week, we read a story aloud and then attempted to classify it. This story was a Kurdish tale called "Ahmed and the Three Swindlers." It is a story about a woman who gets swindled by three brothers (each of whom is more deceitful that the last), and how her husband got revenge.

After we read the story, we discussed how to type the tale. We talked about a couple of elements of the story, and we decided to start by looking up "revenge" in the motif index. It did not help. We picked other elements such as deceit, donkey, gold from excrement, and swindler, but each of these led us nowhere. Finally, Michael looked in the Aarne-Thompson index and found the deceit/deception category (category K). As he perused through it, he found the tale type: 1539 Cleverness and Gullibility.

Although this is only the second session of tale typing in which we have done this exercise, I am already becoming much more familiar with the process. Today we learned that the motif index is a nice place to start because a researcher can look up so many things, but it will not necessarily lead the researcher to the tale type. It is the knowledge of what the books and indexes contain that is really going to be beneficial to a project like this. By that I mean it would have been very easy to put the motif index down and conclude that the story did not have a tale type, instead we analyzed the story some more and Michael's suggestion to look up "revenge" worked. Since Michael is much more knowledgeable about the indexes, he had the idea to look through the first volume of Aarne-Thompson, and he found the type very quickly.

The rest of the day was spent working on the boxes for the collection. I opened the two final boxes from Carla Papy, and I got a great surprise. One of the boxes contained a plethora of mixed photos. However, as I was assessing what else was in the box, I ran across a small, manila envelop. There was no writing on the outside, but there was something very hard on the inside. I opened it, looked inside, and saw a couple of rocks. My first thought was maybe these were rocks from a groundbreaking ceremony of the new storytelling center. Since many of the photos I worked with were of the construction of the center, I thought these were some sort of memorabilia from the ceremony, but a piece of paper came out that read, "Arrowheads made by Ray Hicks from flint." I thought that was really great because these were probably boxed up and no one has seen them for years. I do not know how long these boxes have been sealed, but from the looks of them, it has been several years. So it was really great to be the person who found these in the collection. One other interesting thing this box contained was a board game about storytelling. I have not opened it since I was simply taking an inventory of the box, but I will describe it later when I really get into this part of the collection.

Thursday, June 29, 2006

Today I began working on the box that only contained newspapers. It was just a mess. Some articles were clipped from papers with no reference to date or source, and they were merely thrown into the box and had become folded and crinkled. In some instances, entire issues of newspapers were kept even though they only contained a single article about the festival. Working on these newspapers was time consuming because I had to look through the entire issue to locate what particular article caused Carla Papy to keep the paper.

While I was finding articles and trying to restore folded articles to flat, manageable documents, I was also organizing them by year. Todd suggested we do this so we can cross-reference these articles with some that are already in the Archive. We agreed that processing any duplicates was a waste of time and resources. To make the cross-reference part of the project go much faster, I entered the folder descriptions into an Excel spreadsheet. From this, we will be able to search for that particular article in the final Access database.

Thursday, July 6, 2006

Today I spent a lot of time learning the different databases the Archive uses. All of them are in Access, and the bulk of my experience with Access is a Microsoft Office class I took at NOVA Community College several years ago.

Each collection has its own database, and within each database there are more databases for different types of materials. For example, in the Storytelling collection,

there is one database for manuscripts and a different one for photos, but both are in the main database for the International Storytelling collection.

Today I also broke into a new box that was really a combination of miscellaneous forms and records, and all the items were types of manuscripts. It appears this was the box that got all the documents that could not be classified when the collection was being packed.

I started to go through it, and I was able to find some themes and some categories, but it kind of bothered me to rearrange the entire box. Last semester I took Dr. Bruce Ambacher's Introduction to Archives and Manuscripts class at George Mason University. Dr. Ambacher works for the National Archives and Records Administration, and one of the first things we discussed was provenance and original order. We discussed the typical manner in which archival institutions receive collections. Many times the collection does not seem to have a deliberate or rational order. Dr. Ambacher suggested an archivist has to look at the collection, and try to keep the original order. However, when boxes come in like this one, there is just no way to keep the documents in order because no order exists. I had to take everything out, group items as I saw fit, and reorganize and categorize the box. The original order of this box was completely lost, but in order to make things more navigable, it had to be done.

Tuesday, July 11, 2006

Early this morning, Valda and I discussed the tale-typing project, and she showed me the database into which she and Michael have been entering all the tale types from the International Storytelling Festival. Michael provided us with a twenty-six page document containing titles of all the stories he and she have typed, along with the stories I have helped with. Either on Thursday of this week or starting next week, I will be working on the data-entry for the information. Although twenty-six pages sounds like a lot, there are only a few stories on each page; this project should, realistically, require only a few hours for data entry.

Later in the day, Valda, Michael, and I met to conduct our weekly tale-typing meeting. Within minutes after we began, one of the Folklife specialists in the Center came in with a researcher who needed to use the tale type index. The researcher is from Annapolis, and she is an author of children's books. She was on a mission from her editor and publisher to find the sources of the stories she was planning to use in a compilation. After a few questions, we learned that she really wanted to know copyright information so neither she nor the publishing company would be sued. That led into a discussion of story origins, ownership, and folklore versus literature. It was a great discussion, and when she left almost an hour later, she was elated and overwhelmed with all the information we were able to provide regarding tale types and motifs for her compilation.

After she left, we continued our tale-typing meeting, but we were only able to

make it through one story[4]. As we looked for the tale type, we decided to look up the

motif of fish coming from dry land. I found that exact information in the motif index, but

there was no cross reference to the Aarne-Thompson Tale Type Index. However, when

we looked up "fish" in the index of the tale type index, the entry that Michael read was

verbatim to what I read in the motif index. Of course, his directed us to the tale type. I

thought this was so frustrating that we were on the right track in one book that has so

many cross references to the tale type index, but this one was not there. It just reinforces

the lesson that researchers cannot simply use the motif index or the subject index to try to

find the tale type; both indexes should be used along with any other resources before

determining there is no tale type.

Later in the afternoon, there was a full staff meeting, and everyone gathered to

talk about the projects that are currently taking place. Just like the first staff meeting I

attended, I was amazed by the number of projects going on at the American Folklife

Center. There were certainly administrative processes and projects, but the collections

being sought for acquisition and the boxes of collected material that need to be processed

just seem to be endless.

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[4] This story was about a farmer whose wife asks why he does not pray to be safe from the wiles of women.
He suggests women have no wiles, so she makes a fool out of him by making him believe there are fish in
the farm land he plows every day.

Tuesday, July 18, 2006

Most of the afternoon was spent with my hands in a box of newspapers again, and I was able to complete that box. Since this particular box was so crammed with newspapers, I arranged them by date and put them in temporary housing. Actually, all the work I am doing right now is intermediate. The boxes will go through one more housing, and during that process the files will be stamped with permanent ink to designate the collection and box/folder position. Before I got the papers into their temporary housing, I put them in boxes to see exactly how many linear feet I had; I had four archive boxes totaling two feet. Then, I cross referenced all the newspapers to the oversized boxes which means I was able to cut out two of the four boxes and transfer them to the oversized shelves where there is much more room.

During the remainder of the day I began entering information from the tale typing project into the databases. What is interesting is just how few of the tellers actually tell traditional tales. Most of them tell personal experience stories, jokes, or songs, and out of the thirty pages I had in front of me, only about ten were traditional stories. Another interesting point is that the retelling of stories is quite prevalent. For example, during the 1998 festival, Brenda Wong Aoki told her story of the prisoner swan twice. This seems to be pretty typical since tellers tell their stories at multiple times during the festival.

Thursday, July 20, 2006

The Society of American Archivists is having their annual meeting in a couple of weeks, and the Archive is getting a presentation ready. Valda, Sarah, Judy, Marcia, and Nora will conduct a panel discussion on material preservation, and I am helping them time and edit their presentation. Today all those who are part of the team gathered to listen and make recommendations about the group's presentation. They have one hour for the presentation, so the panelists are going to take about ten minutes each and talk about one area of preservation.

During the presentation, Valda will be discussing how collections vary in size and format by illustrating what the Archive has done with the International Storytelling collection. She had been gathering photos from some of the boxes I have been working on to show in her part of the presentation. It was great to see some of my work be a part of the presentation, and it was also interesting to see the before and after photos of my work. Most of the time I am so immersed with the work that I do not step back and see what I have accomplished.

For the remainder of the day, I kept working on the box of manuscripts that was still lingering, and I started thinking about what I will do with the final box of photos. I should have this box of manuscripts done by Tuesday of next week.

Tuesday, July 25, 2006

Today started off by working back and forth between the database and my collection. I continued my data-entry tasks, and I did a little bit more re-housing as I was

doing data entry. As I was entering information into the database, I would see folders that I thought could either be titled better (more descriptively) or could be broken down into smaller components. I continued working this way for a couple of hours, and at ten o'clock we had our tale-type meeting.

In the Kurdish tale we read for today, (named "I am going to see God"), a poor man takes a journey to meet God, strikes him three times, and asks him why the man is poor. I suggested to Michael that no matter which version a listener hears, he or she will probably be exposed to several of the same elements: a poor person taking a voyage, gathering questions from people who the traveler meets along the way, and asking God questions. These are elements that could all help with tale typing because the core of this tale consists of these three events. Michael said the more tales a person reads, the more prepared he or she will be to discuss which elements are different from tale to tale. It makes sense to me, however, that any tale could be analyzed in regards to what its core and peripheral elements are after an initial reading or two. I am not suggesting it is perfect or exact, and it is certainly not as beneficial as reading multiple versions of a story. However, when a researcher is trying to find a tale type for a story, I do not know how practical it is to find countless versions of the story, read them all, and analyze what elements would be best used to determine the type tale. It certainly would depend on the goals of the researcher.

Tuesday, August 1, 2006

   Much of today's work consisted of going back and forth between the files that I have already completed and the database. I also spent a little bit more time on the tale-typing database. I feel that, after looking at my files again, there are places where I can make the folders more descriptive and accurate. One example is a folder that I originally titled "Festival Setup, 2001." The folder contains a wealth of information about setting up the 2001 festival, but the folder still seemed to be a bit too thick and the documents too cramped. So, I broke it down into smaller folders that were even more descriptive. It was broken down into "Rental Agreements", "Vendor Agreements", "Insurance", and "Tellers." This really helped, and I feel a researcher can get more out of his or her time researching the festival or the organization itself.

Tuesday, August 08, 2006

   Today's activities consisted mostly of working with the remaining box of photos. Since I had previously managed to separate the photos into general categories, the morning hours were spent creating more specific categories.

   Originally, there were more than five hundred photos in the box remaining. This morning at least four hundred and fifty still remain. Some of the photos were still in the original envelope from the developer, some were in envelopes from the storytelling center, some were in plastic sandwich bags, and some were not in bags at all. I would also say at least eighty percent of the photos all had one thing in common: no labels or dates.

As I was examining the collection, I noticed a theme throughout many of the photos. I saw several photos of the Storytelling Center's grounds and of construction. As I dove deeper into the collection, I found an envelope that said, "Al Gore visit, October 7, 1995." I was excited until I opened the envelope and found no such photos inside. However, as I was looking through other envelopes, I found the photos of Al Gore shaking hands with the residents of Jonesborough and the staff of the Storytelling Center. It was great because it gave me a date as a starting point for the rest of the construction photos. I started separating the construction photos from the rest of the pack, and I tried to decide what kind of categories could fit the photos. I honed the process more and more as I went along, and before too long I had a stack of construction photos, a stack of landscaping photos (before, during, and after construction), and I had a stack of events and people. At the end of the day today, I had managed to process all of construction photos and all of the landscaping photos. The rest will wait until Thursday.

Today we had some issues regarding supplies. Several weeks ago, water damage happened in the supply room. Rain managed to find its way to the supply room where it sank into the drywall and created several large holes in the wall. Unfortunately, there is asbestos behind the drywall, and since it is an extremely dangerous product, no one is allowed to go into the supply closet. The photos I am currently working on are of a variety of sizes, but the vast majority of them are 5x7. I have managed to exhaust our supply of 5x7 Mylar sleeves, so we need to get some out of the supply room. Since the supply room is off limits, we went to the supply clerk of the Veterans History Project, and he gave us a few packages of Mylar. It was great for him to be generous, but he

could not spare as much as we needed. We had to keep searching for supplies. Luckily, Judy Ng, another processor in the Archive, had a large box containing at least fifteen packages of Mylar, and she said we could use it all. There are twenty-five sheets in a package, and two photos can be inserted in each sheet. I have already used eleven packages, which amounts to housing more than five hundred photos, and I am still not done with the box.

Thursday, August 10, 2006

I started working this morning where I left off with the photo collection on Tuesday. My goal was to get through the oversized photos because they would take a bit more time due to cross referencing. Anytime I remove a record from its place in the collection, I have to create two cross reference sheets. One goes in the folder where the item would normally be located, and the other stays with the item. These particular photos had been glued to a large matting board, and that is why they were classified as oversized. When I asked Valda about the oversized boxes, she looked at the photos and was able to free them from the backing without damaging them. So, I was able to process them as regular photos.

Before I was able to begin processing the newly freed photos, Valda said she wanted me to talk to a group of visitors with her, Sarah, and Judy. Basically, she wanted me to let the visitors know how I got to where I was at the Archive. I said it would be no problem and asked when we were doing it. About fifteen seconds later, Michael Taft and David Taylor came in with the group. We took turns telling the group how we got to

where we are, and we also told them a little bit about the collections we were processing. After they left, I asked Judy who they were, and she told me the group was part of a program that introduces minority and underprivileged people to the multitude of jobs in the government. Today they were touring several government sites including the Library of Congress, and the American Folklife Center was on their list.

Throughout the rest of the day, I worked on the remaining photos that still had not been completed. I think I have made it through all the prints in the final box. The only media forms I am still working with are negatives (color and black-and-white), slides, and electronic media. There were six or seven floppy disks in the collection that I have already completed, and they were all Kodak disks from the late 1990s. Five of them contain duplicates of other photos, so I had to make cross-reference slips for them while they are in their temporary housing. These, like the other electronic media, will be housed away from the photo collection itself since their deterioration rates are different. On Tuesday I will finish processing the remaining media, and I will also work to ensure the database and all the cross reference slips are accurate and complete.

Toward the end of the day, Valda and I discussed the remaining items in the final box. Its contents include a ceramic tile/coaster, a metal pin that says "I Love Jackie" which is for storyteller Jackie Torrence, arrowheads and flint from Ray Hicks, and a board game from Golden entitled "Once…" We talked briefly about the best way to put these together, and on Tuesday, we will get these in their temporary housing.

Tuesday, August 15, 2006

All of this morning's work focused on clearing up the remaining negatives and slides from my final box. The process was easy, but it took a bit of time because of the volume of negatives. Each sheet had to be placed in its new slide housing, then into its folder, and then cross-referenced to the actual print folder, if there was one. Since I had recently processed the prints, the negatives were easily identifiable, and the process was completed by noon.

Somewhere in the neighborhood of ten or eleven o'clock this morning, the computers went down. Apparently the server had a problem, and for the majority of the day no one was able to access the main network. None of the databases were accessible, and no one could communicate with each other through email. Much of the work I was doing with the negatives would have been easier and faster with the database, but it was not necessary. All I had to do was find the exact box that was holding the prints and create an appropriate cross reference sheet.

In the afternoon, the computers were still not up and running, so I was able to complete my "miscellaneous" box of media. During my internship, I have been setting aside everything I was unable to house immediately. Most of the contents in this box were CDs containing photos of tellers and the Storytelling Center. There were a couple of print photographs remaining that merely needed cross reference sheets, but mostly I was working with digital media.

Since the computer network was down, I was only able to access the drives on my computer, but it was enough to open the files on the CDs that were remaining. Since I

had a few hours to work, I made a detailed cross reference sheet for the CDs which includes the general contents of the CD, the subfiles, and the sub-subfiles (down to the name of each individual teller on the CD).

Thursday, August 17, 2006

This is the final entry in my journal, and I am writing about my overall experience at the Archive of Folk Culture in the American Folklife Center. Two things to consider are what I have learned and how have I broadened my experience.

The Archive is a well-rounded organization that handles and processes a huge array of materials, and they do so with a high level of knowledge and resources. While I have been working on my internship, I have seen ceramics, wax, photo prints, negatives, documents, and metal pins come through the Archive. Each member of the staff has his or her own area of expertise, but none operate only within the realms of their own knowledge. No one knows exactly what will be in a box or satchel or case when a collection is acquired, so the Archive staff must know a bit about dealing with many kinds of materials.

I have learned so much more about archives, tracking systems, database management, and processing during my time here. I have a better idea of what type of organizational skills it takes to be able to examine a collection and find the best way of processing and numbering it. I have especially learned how different materials are processed. Prior to my internship, I had only worked with manuscripts (including newspaper), but now I can add experience in dealing with photographs, negatives,

artifacts, digital media, and slides to my résumé. The most interesting to me was the photograph collection because I had to do a bit of detective work to learn which festival the photos depicted.

The biggest way my own experience has been broadened is through the reconciliation of my thoughts on original order. As I stated in a previous journal entry, when I took my archives class, it was pounded into our heads that a collection should be kept in its original order. This is important, but it is just not possible for every collection. If a collection has an order that can be maintained, it should be, but when there is a box of documents that makes no sense and photos that add to the confusion, it is time for a different approach. As I worked my way through these papers, there were times when I could tell what order the documents should be in (some were organized by date, and others by vendors), and during those times I kept the order. Yet, too often there were times when I opened a new box and had to figure out what type of theme was present, and inevitably, I failed to see a theme or an order because there was none. As an example, the final box of photos I processed had packets of festival brochures that had no order at all. In this situation, I had to take the initiative to create a logical order based on what I saw. As difficult as it was, I did it and was finally able to reconcile myself with the problem of original order.

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Curriculum Vitae

Aaron M. Hibbard graduated in 1992 from Bonneville High School in Idaho Falls, Idaho. He began his higher education by attending Northern Virginia Community College where he received his Associate in Arts degree in December, 2002. He transferred to George Mason University in January, 2003, and in May of 2005, he was awarded Bachelor of Arts degrees in English and in Psychology. He worked for an Alexandria credit union, and was a contractor for the National Museum of the American Indian while completing his Masters Degree. In 2010, Aaron received his Master of Arts of Interdisciplinary Studies with a concentration in Folklore and sub-concentration in public administration from George Mason University.