



Maintainers III

MONDAY

Reconfiguring Archives (Panel)

(Anne Wells, Snowden Becker, Mark Matienzo, Rachel Mattson, Alexandra Chassanoff (moderator))

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Anne Wells: annewells@unc.edu

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SPEAKER BIOS

- Snowden Becker (she/her) holds a BFA in Printmaking from the Maryland Institute, an MLIS from UCLA, and most (but not all) of a PhD from UT Austin's School of Information. From 2012 to 2019, she managed the graduate programs in media archiving and library and information science at UCLA. Becker regularly teaches and consults in the areas of heritage preservation, collections administration, and professional development.
- Mark A. Matienzo is the Assistant Director for Digital Strategy and Access for Stanford University Libraries. An archivist by training and a technologist by trade, Mark's work focuses on strategy, development, and maintenance supporting the access, use, and reuse of cultural heritage resources.
- Rachel Mattson is an archivist and public historian who recently left her homeland of Brooklyn New York and moved to South Minneapolis, Minnesota, where she is the Curator of the Tretter Collection in GLBT Studies at the University of Minnesota. She holds a PhD in U.S. History from NYU and an MLIS from the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign.
- Anne Wells (she/her) is an Audiovisual Processing Archivist at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, where she is working on a multi-phase Andrew W. Mellon Foundation grant funded project to preserve and make accessible the analog audiovisual holdings found in UNC's Wilson Special Collections Library. Before that she was Collections Manager at Chicago Film Archives, a regional film archives dedicated to preserving and presenting Midwest moving images. Outside of work life, she hosts a weekly new age adjacent radio program; grows and eats edible things from her garden; and is finally embracing the fact that she is a cat person who works in the library field.

RELATED READINGS:

[American archives and climate change: Risks and adaptation](#) (2018).

[Records and their imaginaries: imagining the impossible, making possible the imagined](#) (2015).

NOTES

Tension between possibilities and realities

- universal access versus resourcing limitations, etc etc etc

Alexandra:



Infrastructure is invisible until it breaks, making care workers hard to study and appreciate.
There are infrastructural limitations on doing the work that this panel wants to problematize
Broad themes:

- Climate change
- Neoliberalism and austerity
- [Best] Practices, Processes

Rachel Mattson: Neoliberalism: worldview and practice that favors capitalist. A focus on metrics to measure efficiency, competition is defining characteristic, people defined as consumers

Three largest journals, 40% of budget

Here because we can imagine there must be a different way to do this work

Labor is essential to address

Our systems are maintained by people who can't actually afford to live their lives

Ways we can think more creatively about doing this work

Mark Matienzo: best practices, from digital preservation community perspective, what is the role and impact of best practices in daily processing archival materials

Emergence of digital forensics, from law enforcement and computer security

Jeremy John: Principle's, sounds familiar though clinical

Disk imaging project, pull file structure and save as a file for later emulation. Introduces significant deferred maintenance. Struggling what forensic processing lends themselves to processes, though they do give us insight to those materials, but only when used at scale. Clinical nature of tools doesn't match how we think about being less objective. Move towards tendency to minimally impact evidence at the trade off of erasing the archivist's role. Clinical practice suggests using tools that only obfuscate our work further.

Anne Wells: what see in in a/v collection building and processing. In role in technical services, wonder how to feel empowered as processing archivist. Curators choose and then it lands on my desk - how can these decisions be made cross-departmentally?

"Distributed network" of how to make decisions across departments, how to bring ppl in early in conversation before stuff even arrives at institution- why and who is it serving?

Need to be more involved in decisions outside of our role. Happening more holistically at UNC with new director. Curator's subject knowledge is super important. Explore how maintenance positions can be brought in early and to feel more empowered to make decisions that will directly affect their work lives. Move away from traditional gatekeeper mentality, to build meaningful collections that more intentionally serve our communities, how to get them more involved.



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A lot of a/v work is done at item level, stuck in access and preservation systems...how is this work sustainable? Like once their grant is up, what then? Having active discussions now.

Referenced Chela Weber/OCLC blog, Hanging Together (<https://hangingtogether.org/?p=7479>), which casts a wide net on folks processing or involved with AV collections. We need to work together to advocate and figure these things out.

Snowden Becker: evidence and archival imaginary, how archivists work to produce evidence, epistemological implications of archival, how do we know what we know, what undergirds our understanding. Archivist working with home films, media not represented in archival record, home films: crimes in progress, jfk shooting

When law enforcement is make videos for evidence, bystander recordings, public and private surveillance systems, who is maintaining this stuff, for short or long term. As archivists, what can we learn from them? In neoliberal age, market these skills, driven mlis degree holders get city jobs with pensions in law enforcement? Also, about finding shared interests, wanting to have allies in file format, what makes a digital file, shared recognition we use words across communities, what is the evidence? In legal writing, evidence is testimony, a person speaking to the value of an object. Likewise, defining archive, “the archive” in derrida’s sense, not in the place I work.

There’s a wide gap between material interventions we make, legal duty to preserve, active interventions of determining admissibility, what’s included, provenance, chain of custody, these words, evidence, records, reliability, trustworthiness, historical record (as just one more point of view

appraisals and agenda making, not neutral

Defining these objects as “not bring records” but are considered “evidence”

Rachel Mattson: I am called a curator, points to how neoliberalism pushes all power to top, I don’t get to work with technical services, it takes a brave leader to not do things the ways they’ve always been done and going to prioritize time for this thing that hasn’t been a priority

Anne Wells: how is this work sustainable and how can it reach more people?

For Session Notetaker:

Basic data

- WHO were the maintainers/care workers mentioned in the paper/session?

Mostly archivists, some who work with technology, but also some archival scholars

- WHAT kinds of work do these people do?

Providing access to records

Repatriation of archives

Curation and collection development

Working with born-digital records

Processing audiovisual records

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home movies

- HOW do they do it?

Context

- What elements (time, place, populations, technologies, methodologies) of the paper/session stood out the most?
 - Broad themes
 - Climate Crisis - presents a real threat to everything archives are and do
 - Neoliberalism and austerity
 - a worldview and set of practices that favor market-based solutions to challenges
 - favors solutions that consolidate power and favor already powerful
 - sees competition as defining characteristic of human behavior
 - Budget cuts - sustained cuts over time, how does this affect staffing, time, creativity, etc.
 - Where is money spent - journal packages make up a huge percentage of budget
 - [Best] Practices, Processes
 - Digital forensics as the baseline assumption for processing digital records
 - introduces significant deferred maintenance
 - Do forensic processes actually lend themselves to providing access? Does the clinical nature of these tools match the way that archivists think about their work? Does it erase the role of the archivist?
 - AV collection processing
 - Disruption of collecting practices
 - Looking for ways to involve maintainers in collecting materials.
 - A lot about power -
 - How can we make collaboration sustainable?
 - Evidence and the Archival Imaginary
 - Home movies. The most famous of which are evidence of crimes in progress.
 - Who is maintaining the evidence that law enforcement is creating/collecting?
 - If they are doing a good job, what can we learn from it as archivists?
 - What do we talk about when we talk about evidence? Do the same words mean the same things across domains?
 - Evidence, archive
 - What recommendations or conclusions did the speaker/s offer?
 - Broader involvement in decisions which affect work of role but are “outside” of particular role, for example collecting and curator/archivist roles.



- Looking critically at best practices, access and preservation systems that don't require high-touch item level work. Much of this may go back to appraisal
- Engaging with turn in archival literature/practice that acknowledges and perhaps even centers archival interventions. i.e. to stop promoting the erasure of our labor
- What significant connections do track chair, audience, and/or speakers make to other presentations at MIII, or to other issues/articles/media outside of MIII?
 - [Collective Responsibility](#)
 - [Scale & Risk: Discussing Challenges to Managing A/V Collections in the RLP](#)
 - [Project ARCC](#)

Information Maintenance in Archives (Panel)

(Ciaran Trace, Aisling Quigley, Chelsea Gunn, Shannon K. Supple, Chela Scott Weber (moderator))

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Chelsea Gunn: cmg100@pitt.edu | twitter: @cheegunn

Shannon K. Supple: ssupple@smith.edu | twitter: @mazarines

SPEAKER BIOS

- Ciaran B. Trace is an associate professor at the School of Information at the University of Texas at Austin. Ciaran's research focus is studying what constitutes a literate society, and the role that recorded information plays in creating and sustaining literate environments. Her work is shaped by an interest in the study of written records, those information objects that are the byproducts of personal and organizational activity, and that subsequently serve as a form of data or as evidence for scholarly research.
- As of August, Aisling Quigley is the postdoctoral fellow in the Digital Liberal Arts at Macalester College in St. Paul, Minnesota. In this role, Aisling consults with other faculty on their digital projects, leads workshops, and is creating a new undergraduate course about collections as data. In May, Aisling earned her PhD from the School of Computing and Information at the University of Pittsburgh, where she recently worked on the 2018-2019 NEH ODH Sustaining DH institutes.
- Chelsea Gunn is a PhD candidate in the School of Computing and Information at the University of Pittsburgh. Her work explores the issues and questions associated with personal records throughout the history of the archival profession. She is currently involved in the NEH-funded Sustaining DH institute and Art on Campus, a survey of public art on the University of Pittsburgh.
- Shannon K. Supple (she/her) is lead steward of the Mortimer Rare Book Collection at Smith College (Massachusetts, USA). She teaches, provides research support, conducts outreach activities, and curates collections of rare and curious printed books, literary archives, artists' books, and graphic arts. Shannon believes that we have the power to create a world in which we want to live if we learn from the past and work together toward a better future.

Delayed while Pending Some Action: The Information Backlog as Deferred Maintenance



- Boom in the development of information infrastructure
- It is the archive that works as a research laboratory
- Historias initiated the
- Archives contain byproducts of human activity - storehouse of social life and social institutions
- Archives are where people go for evidence
- The notion of the archive embodies a part of the psyche to understand and research
- Archives exist to secure information systems
- In all these notions temporal dimensions move fast
- Combo of infrastructure and time -- UPKEEP
- Upkeep is synonymous to maintenance
- Archivists as technicians for the humanities
- The archive exists as information production
- a steady form of information

Information labor exists to set information in context
Mediation is necessary

Archivist arrange or re-arrange

Repair is EVERPRESENCE

“The notion of repair is ever present here. Creators’ original recordkeeping structures atrophy when removed from their original context, and materials themselves succumb to the elements and degrade over time. Thus, archival maintenance also “occupies” and “constitutes” what Jackson calls “an aftermath”

Both the information and the infrastructure are HIDDEN

On the one hand, the notion of deferring maintenance on collections has long been normalized, if only internally. The term ‘backlog’ forms part of the lexicon in archival glossaries and manuals and has recently been reified in the architecture of digital preservation systems. But the backlog has often been hidden from external view, with the presence of unprocessed collections elided from catalogs and thus from the users of the archive.

“Archivists have sought their way into the public consciousness by declaring the presence of the backlog”

Indeed, the conflict in the story of the backlog highlights the fact that the archive is a contested space, a space where competing narratives emerge of what it means to maintain and invest in infrastructure.

Ciaran B. Trace: archive as research laboratory
Archive as infrastructure foregrounds temporarily
Upkeep, state of being, action, means, end



What things persist and why

Archives maintain networks,

Information, consumption, distribution

Archivist as mediator

Artifacts removed from context

Arch it's maintain connection among record and context

Processing in privacy, concealed tool, evidence is stabilized and prepared for use and discovery

Restore them to place and time when they had the most meaning

Backlog

Right of flow between creator and archive is continuous

But between archive and archivist, the flow is leaky

Backlog, hard to know how far back

National archive, one million cubic feet of records

Backlog is critical point of failure, deferred maintenance

Archival backlog is that failure played out over time, dearth of funding and investment of care

Backlog is hidden

Deferred maintenance turned outward by archivists declaring attention to the backlog

Archival silence

Meisner, more product and less process (?) 2005 article

Jolt to the field

Enemy is us, infrastructure undermined from within, not just failure to maintain, but failure to innovate.

Neoliberal agenda

Archive is Contested space of what it means to maintain and invest in infrastructure

Memorialization as Maintenance

Memorialization of our own personal experiences

1. 2017 - Friend died suddenly - Erased most of her traces before dying by suicide.
2. 2015 - A friend died too. Fiercely dedicated collective group

Digital memorials - Website, hybrids, legacy social media profiles (acts of care that contribute to sustainability) Samples for 1. Standalone websites and 2. Legacy social media profiles

1. World Wide Cemetery (Standalone of website require subscription / Pay fee
2. In Facebook you can remove and add legacy contact on Facebook.

- Memorial websites allow one to leave virtual flowers to leaving messages / monetary contributions are required



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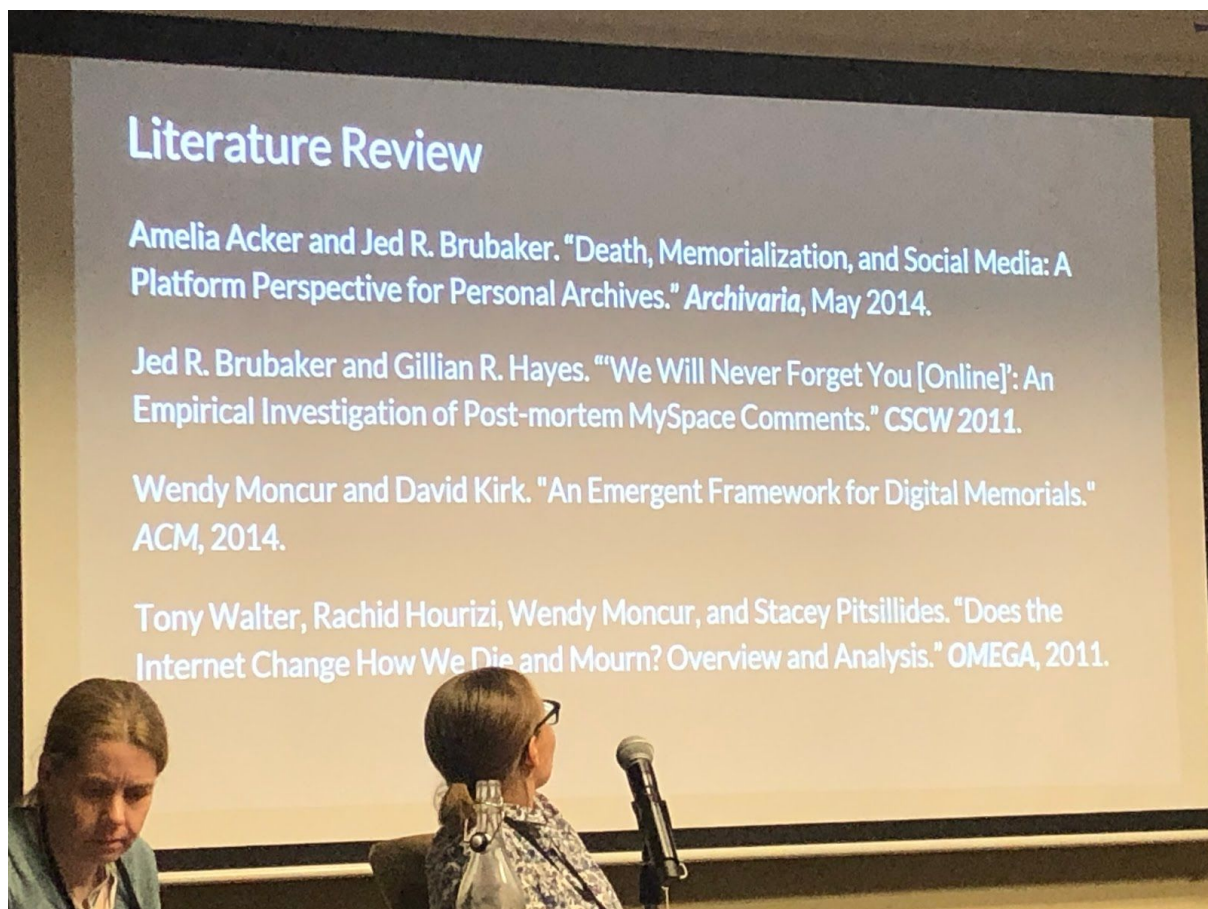
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- Contributions to online profile decrease with time
- opposing digital non digital is not precise nor useful
- Non digital memorials are increased

Chelsea Gunn & Aisling Quigley: memorialization and traces of loss

Friend's suicide, cremated, left few physical traces except Facebook
Collective grief on Facebook through her memorial profile

Digital sustainability



Standalone memorial sites,
Cyber memorials or virtual cemetery
World wide cemetery and legacy.com

legacy social media profiles,
Profile of people who have passed, from live to legacy
Facebook signals when a profile shifts to legacy status with people marked to contact

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Acts of care in memorialization

Service provider must continue to exist and provide continuity of service

Someone must maintain the memorial

Tools and technologies impacting memorialization practices

Real value is derived from intimate actions of sharing a story or photo

Many sites require fees, memorial site are dependent on third party

Monetary contributions are required for maintenance of guest books

Social media posts, contributions slow over time, spikes on anniversary of death

Community is central concern in memorialization

Non-digital spaces

Ways non-digital materials are maintained

Ghost bike for memorials for bikers killed by cars, seasonally cleaned and decorated with real or fake flowers

Small acts of maintenance, act of establishing memorial on part of process, but require continual upkeep as well

Shannon Supple: When You Collect Across Time and Space, How Do You Fit the World in Your Pockets?

Growth has become exponential

“[Our] imagination is trapped, like capitalism and industrialism and the human population, in a one-way future consisting only of growth.” — Ursula K. Le Guin

What happens when the archive or the earth reaches capacity

Resource allocation, collection growth. We cannot keep collecting at this scale. We don't see the energy.

Five provocations

1. Collection need to for our capacities, not the other way around. - Make space for the future. Any collection building needs to fit our staffing capacity and energy
2. Rare book collection should be reconceived as cross institutional collective collections. Focuses on network and collective development. Special collection libraries have models in place to lend stuff, but it's rarely done outside of exhibitions
3. What if what we have been looking for has been inside of us all along? Special collection libraries can hold so many materials that aren't explored
4. Are we just recreating status quo? We are creating a monoculture while the experiences of some populations are so lacking. It's a failure of imagination



5. Success can look like something other than growth.

Basic data

- WHO were the maintainers/care workers mentioned in the paper/session?

Archivists, particularly processing archivists

Rare book collectors

Friends of those who have died

- WHAT kinds of work do these people do?

Process archival collection

Provide resources (ie fees, etc) for maintenance

Make decisions about what/what not to collect

- HOW do they do it?

Context

- What elements (time, place, populations, technologies, methodologies) of the paper/session stood out the most?
- What recommendations or conclusions did the speaker/s offer?
 - Shannon's talk has five of these
- What significant connections do track chair, audience, and/or speakers make to other presentations at MIII, or to other issues/articles/media outside of MIII?
 - Aisling Quigley and Chelsea Gunn presented a list of people doing previous work (we can add this from the presentation)

Shannon K. Supple: when we collect across time and space, imperative to grow as measure of success

Imagination is trapped, like capitalism and industrialism and the human population, one way future consisting only of growth" Ursula leGuin

#1 Collections need to reflect our capacities, not the other way around. Can't keep collection at this pace. Fit our Space energy and staffing capacities. Applies to what we already have. Can't keep collecting without removing and realigning,

What are the most essential and useful materials? Keep those

Appraisal at scale, can't keep it all, accept we are active agents of the past by making choices

Meet obligations to donors and public Make space for future.

#2 rare book collections should be reconceived as cross-institutional, cross collection, lending collections, shipping materials or scanning files, our role as keepers of historical memory, but collective models create networks of knowledge



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#3 what if what we've been looking for has been inside of us all along? over focus on new, limited attention, some evidence gets more attention. Learn our collections better than accumulating more

#4 stop recreating the status quo in what we collect, add varied voices and perspectives, not more copies of same

#5 success can look like something other than growth, what do we collect preserve and make present so ppl can learn grow and create. How do we measure this? New knowledge? Use to understand their world. Think deeply about what we are measuring and what it means to succeed

Reckon with shrinking capacities, create space for change

Memorials providing community and purpose isn't lasting memorialization

Shannon, role as curator, build collection, stewards, teaching and outreach. Say no so often and people get mad, and keep looking to mission of institution, liberal arts college, no grad programs, offered local community resources or duplication of materials from voices already represented, looking for other voices not just about different people but by different people, collection development strategy guides

Suggestions on how to manage colleague's emotions, offer intentional rationales to create space to do your work and placate naysayers, having so much to do don't have time to do creative work (referring to earlier panel), continue to ask what capacity do we have right now and let those answers lead curatorial projects

Practicing Care: Exploring a Maintenance Schema for Sustainable and Compassionate Academic Library Work (Panel)

(Mary Broussard, Joel Burkholder, Donna Witek, Jeremy McGinniss (moderator))

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Donna Witek: donna.witek@scranton.edu | Twitter: @donnarosemary

Joel Burkholder: jmb7609@psu.edu | Twitter: @fromtheshelves

Mary Broussard: broussm@lycoming.edu

For Session Notetaker:

Basic data

- WHO were the maintainers/care workers mentioned in the paper/session?
 - Academic Library workers
- WHAT kinds of work do these people do?
 - Reference and instruction to serve the teaching and research mission, critical information literacy instruction
- HOW do they do it?
 -

Context



- What elements (time, place, populations, technologies, methodologies) of the paper/session stood out the most?
 - To create a space for innovation, instead of being replaced by innovation. Innovation used to elide doing more with less
 - They offered a schema for thinking about sustainability and care in academic library work. Schema elements:
 - Resources - material sources of support - budget, tech, space, collections. Things that collectively help us do our work, but also require maintenance individually
 - Platform - non-material circumstances that affect power to act - relational, social and political, policy
 - Energy - personal and collective elements required to sustain an activity - ability, commitment, morale, stamina
 - They offer a vision - the practice of recognizing and responding to the interdependence of the elements of this schema. See this as aligned with care.
- What recommendations or conclusions did the speaker/s offer?
- What significant connections do track chair, audience, and/or speakers make to other presentations at MIII, or to other issues/articles/media outside of MIII?
 - Critique of existing systems in order to build the conditions we want
 - Dealing with austerity
 - Organizational staffing models and the distribution of power in them
 - Connections drawn to Interrogating the Ethic of Care in Information Maintenance session/Info Maintainers paper

Jeremy McGinniss, sept 2016 LIU lockout of faculty

Emily drabinski and eamon tewell protesting

Maintenance schema so people keep going

Find language and names to protecting people working in, mitigate against burnout, why necessary, create space for innovation instead of being replaced by innovation

Innovation: doing more with less, transcend limitations of time, space and financial resources

“Material organization of the everyday”: Deborah cohen

Joel Burkholder: resources, material support of resources, how interconnected we are
Budget, technology, space, collection, recognizable things which allow us to collectively do our work, but each has to be maintained, see working conditions in library and where most obvious lack of support, where see greatest impact with the least investment

Joel works for penn state , 24 campuses of various sizes, he is *the* reference and instruction librarian, we instituted virtual chat in 2012, but didn't make a plan to maintain it. In 2017, instituted auto-prompt in the



discovery tool. Had a huge impact, doubled usage (I think, didn't get numbers), didn't devote new infrastructure or new services to maintain the level of service necessary, least favorite hour every week. Now will have to build into job descriptions. Lack of resources makes it hard to maintain in the long term, connects to energy required of individuals who take on this service, hard to turn it to more than a triage service much less some pedagogical tool

Donna; platform, no material circumstances that affect power to act, social and political (roles on campus, higher ed culture)

Relational, colleagues, departments

Policy (library, university)

Engagement with platform should be built into critical practice. Info lit coordinator, one-shot model, course integrated model. Onboarded two new librarians, fall 2017 how courses faculty engage instructional librarians, lack of assignment, lack of notice, lack of respect for librarians

Qualitative approach of gathering information, organized feedback: concerns assignment, timing, expectations, workflows

Created a spreadsheet with problems and possible solutions, solutions collectively reached, faculty status of librarians needed to be made more explicit, created online request form and best practices, literally shaped communication, form requires file upload of assignment, using literal platform, form created schema for facilitating communication, time to track down info to prepare for course has decreased, also demonstration of care by donna for her staff and faculty, improving working conditions. Without tech resources couldn't have made the form and without Human Resources may not have gotten critical feedback

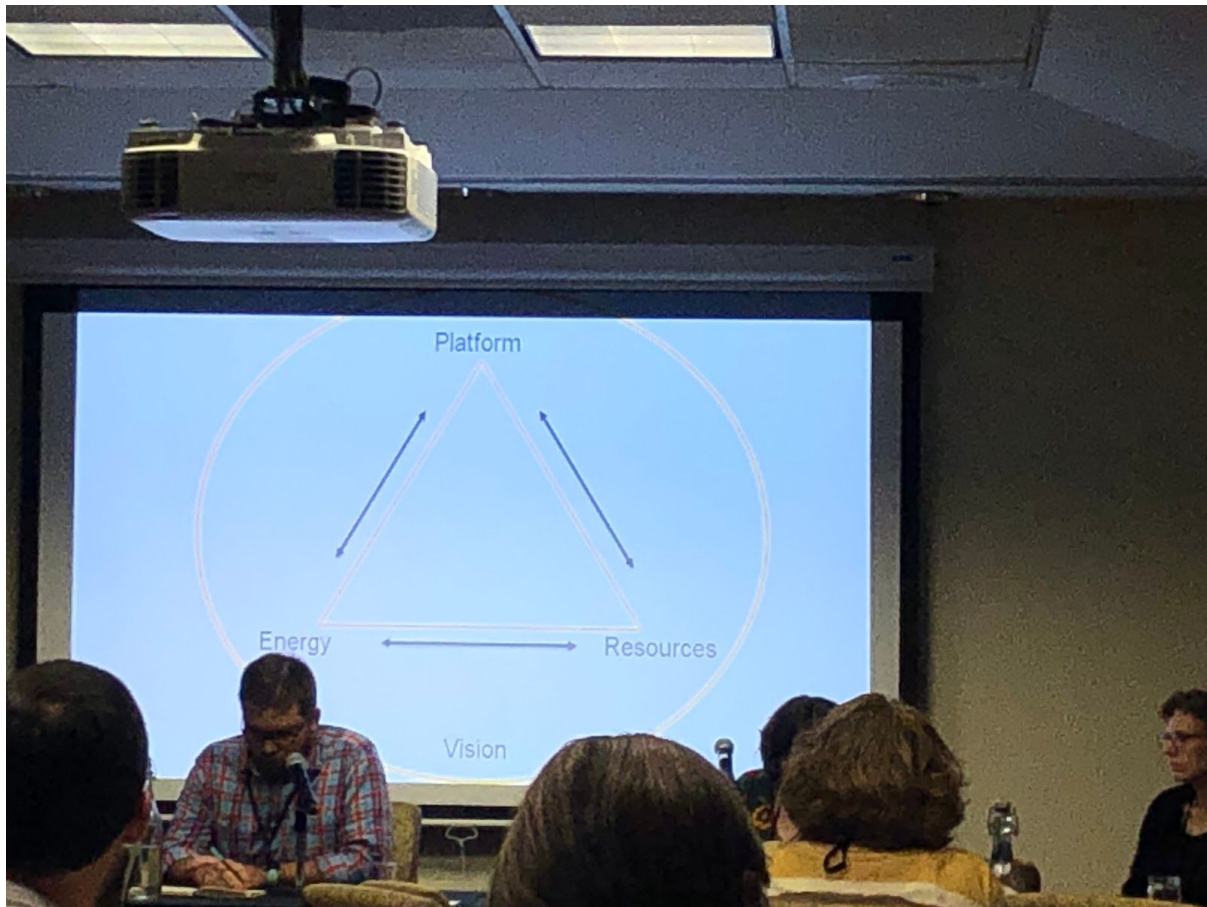
Mary Broussard: energy, personal and collection elements needed to sustain an activity, includes, morale, commitment, morale, stamina

Very very busy, found out she has chronic illness which takes time to address and where treatment makes illness worse before it gets better, most people take time off to recover

In academia you commit to things so far in advance, hard to pull out. Hasn't felt pushback when said no, but still maintaining. So if Mary cuts back someone else will have to do that work, also one time staff did such a could job covering for a sick staff member and they cut her job

Social energy of building relationships with faculty

Neoliberal work ethic? Life and work experiences determine amount of energy staff have, any schema has to account for fluctuations in energy in a way that is people centered



Vision, way a mechanic looks at an engine. Effective way to engage with another person, multi sensory way of understanding,

Point structures out to change them.

Maintenance incorporated as a value and to be evaluated

Values to be evaluated as such, locate practices that will protect individuals upon which that labor rests

Question: Does this work? Are people taking the actual ethics of care into the practice of caring?

Starting to see concepts of maintenance have more traction. Will take work, need a language for advocacy, doing more with less, innovation etc are happening, trying to create a language around which we can advocate, helps make sense of our own institution, anecdotally, to give a language to discuss things. There is a Value of having parts of work articulated. Making a distinction in a way to have language to speak with more granularity. More proposal is less a formula but more a way in which to make sense for yourself, then your teams, then people above you to help be more precise

Question: Framework as a way to communicate with ppl at your level or below, but is this the language you would use to communicate up?



Haven't had to do it yet. But libraries suffer from inferiority complex, not that what we do is wrong, but tend to react instead of allowing us to go beyond service oriented mentality and to understand how we can impact actual student learning, tell admin that we're not a mere service, we're an active and vital part of education. Strategically understanding Maintenance provides opportunity to prioritize what we'd like.

Maintenance

Domains of Information Maintenance (Panel)

(Kate Dohe, Erin Pappas, Celia Emmelhainz, Nathaniel Stanton, Chad Weinard, Juliana Castro (moderator))

Chad Weinard cw11@williams.edu @caw_
buckystanton@gmail.com @buckystanton

(2:50-3:00) Maintaining the Future of Museums

Chad Weinard is a technologist and strategist for museums. He's currently Manager of Digital Initiatives at the Williams College Museum of Art, where he leads a three year project to enhance engagement through digital collections and data. Most recently he was director of digital media at the Balboa Park Online Collaborative, where he led a team developing mobile, web, video and in-gallery experiences for museums. His background is in fine arts, design and web development; he studied the history of modern and contemporary art at the Institute of Fine Arts, NYU (ABD) and design and technology at ITP, NYU.
— [*Maintaining the future of museums*](#), [*Data as Medium*](#)

Call for maintenance of core technologies rather than innovation
“Data” as a truth/objective is a lie. Using photography as a metaphor for data
Museum collection data.

- processes of “cleaning” or normalization, some of which are technological
- collection data as concrete poetry, not prose (performance)
- innovation buzzwords have more relevance for maintainers
- Recording the lives of objects

Institutional collections data records the lives of collections as well as the lives of the organization and people within it

(3:01-3:11) Understanding the Saboteur in the Academic Library:

Erin Pappas is the Research Librarian for various humanities departments at the University of Virginia. She is the co-editor of the recently published #DLFTeach Toolkit: Lesson Plans for Digital Library Instruction, and for a forthcoming volume on the decolonization of area studies from Library Juice Press.

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Antonym of maintenance is sabotage (not innovation)



Sabotage is about powerband inequalities

Sabotage can be evaluated by what it seeks to overthrow

Behavior of academic libraries looks a lot like classical definitions of sabotage

- Academic library norms can be manipulated against it. In other words, we are sabotaging our own best interests

What motivates sabotage

- Interpersonal bullying
- resource scarcity - act of self preservation
- toxic leadership

Sabotage works, but the cost is to our morale and selves

Kate Dohe is the Manager of the Digital Programs & Initiatives department in the University of Maryland Libraries. Kate's team oversees day-to-day activities related to digital repository management, digital preservation, research data services, and electronic publishing. Select publications include "Care, Code, and Digital Libraries: Embracing Critical Practice in Digital Library Communities" (In the Library with the Lead Pipe), and "Linked Data, Unlinked Communities" (Lady Science). —The saboteur in the academic library

(3:12-3:22) Nathaniel Stanton: Representational Maintenance: Surveying, Representation, and Labor in Archeological Knowledge Production

N. Bucky Stanton is a PhD Candidate in the Science Technology Studies department at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (RPI). His dissertation research focuses on the valuation of excavated archeological materials. This project is an "ethnography of the underground" which has led to two summers of participant observation as a topographical survey assistant on the Mt. Lykaion Excavation and Survey project in Arkadia, Greece. —surveying, representation and labor in Archeological Knowledge production

[Tweets](#)

Resectioning - requires repeated and painstaking work to maintain a data set

Mirroring materiality in digital systems

- Archaeological systems actually bring destroyed sites into existence (once sites have been excavated they are changed forever)
- Shift to digital environments is usually meant to make things more fluid, but in this case it makes things LESS fluid
- archaeological expertise passes through non-archaeological expertise BEFORE being interpreted by archaeologists

For Session Notetaker:

Basic data

- WHO were the maintainers/care workers mentioned in the paper/session?

Museum technologists

Academic library workers

Archeologists

- WHAT kinds of work do these people do?



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Create and maintain data about museum collections

Blow shit up

Maintain coordinates of archaeological sites

- HOW do they do it?

Context

- What elements (time, place, populations, technologies, methodologies) of the paper/session stood out the most?
- What recommendations or conclusions did the speaker/s offer?
 - many of the ways in which academic libraries behave can be classically categorized as sabotage
- What significant connections do track chair, audience, and/or speakers make to other presentations at MIII, or to other issues/articles/media outside of MIII?
 - connections (semantic and otherwise) between innovation and maintenance
 - Invisibility of the expert labor of maintenance

Behind the StoryCorps Broadcast: Maintaining Stories in the Archive and On the Air (Workshop)

(Camila Kerwin, Maria Santiago)

Camila: ckerwin@storycorps.org @ckerwin1020

SPEAKER BIOS

- Camila Kerwin is a radio producer at StoryCorps. She researches, pitches, and edits stories for StoryCorps' weekly broadcast on NPR's Morning Edition. She also loves to illustrate, and can play a little banjo.
- Maria Santiago is an archivist of oral histories at StoryCorps and an independent oral historian. She has received training in oral history ethics and methodology from the Columbia University Center for Oral History Research; the U.C. Berkeley Oral History Center Advanced Summer Institute; and Suzanne Snider's Oral History Summer School. Her independent practice focuses on cross-cultural oral histories, many with survivors of state-and ethnically-sanctioned violence. As an archivist, she's interested in the intersection of oral history, metadata, and technology; ethics; and project design. Maria has been with StoryCorps in various capacities since 2016; her prior work experience includes work on the Brooklyn Historical Society's Voices of a Generation collection; and on Dr. Dan Royles' African American AIDS Activism Oral History Project. She received her MLIS in archives from Pratt in May 2018. She lives in North Stamford, Connecticut.

StoryCorps was built by radio producers, not archivists. There isn't a collecting strategy per se, they aim to be an archive of American voices, so they take whatever comes in.

For Session Notetaker:

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Basic data

- WHO were the maintainers/care workers mentioned in the paper/session?

StoryCorps producers and archivists

- WHAT kinds of work do these people do?

Recording, metadata creation, audio production, logging, editing/curation, fact-checking

- HOW do they do it?

Context

- What elements (time, place, populations, technologies, methodologies) of the paper/session stood out the most?
 - “Fact checking is an act of love” - want to protect their speakers with a brand that is known for truth
- What recommendations or conclusions did the speaker/s offer?
- What significant connections do track chair, audience, and/or speakers make to other presentations at MIII, or to other issues/articles/media outside of MIII?
 - Capacity and knowing what you have the resources (ie time) to give something what it deserves
 - Thinking about reinforcing stereotypes and/or erasing nuance. In effect they do make representational/curatorial decisions but they happen in the process of publication/airing, not collecting
 - Small is okay, resisting tendency to “Bt

TUESDAY

No Gods, No Masters, and Instead Coalitional, Honest, Kind, Non-Abusive, Anti-Opressive, Real-Deal, On the Ground, Radical Librarianship (Panel)

(Kate Adler, Violet Fox, Kit Rashid, Lacey Torge (moderator))

Kate: kadler@mcny.edu @xsublibrarian

Kit: krashid02@gmail.com, @RashidKit

Lacey: ltorge28@gmail.com, @librarianlacey

Violet: violetfox@gmail.com, @violetbfox

SPEAKER BIOS

- Kate Adler is the Director of Library Services at Metropolitan College of New York. Kate’s professional research interests pivot around the intersection of libraries, social justice and community empowerment and engages histories of poverty, labor and social movements.. Kate has written and presented on these topics and on Critical Reference . Kate is a co-editor of *Reference Librarianship & Justice: History, Practice & Praxis* and of a forthcoming special issue of *Library Trends Journal*. Current research focuses on the libraries and community activism during the War on Poverty. A forthcoming chapter in *Borders and*



Belonging: Critical Examinations of Library Approaches toward Immigrants highlights some of this work along with an examination of the progressive era .

- Kit Rashid is new to the library profession (MLIS University of Alabama 2018) and has an academic background which includes the history of medicine and applied statistics. Currently living in Asheville, North Carolina, Kit's interests include knowledge organization, library ethics, issues surrounding neurodiversity, the history of technology and science, and the potential of the library as a site for radical empathy and inclusivity. In a previous life, Kit studied at the University of Pennsylvania, University College London, the University of Toronto, and Carnegie Mellon University. When not actually in a library, Kit enjoys playing the bagpipes.
- Lacey Torge is Analyst for Strategy for Library Juice Press, Litwin Books, and Library Juice Academy. Prior to joining Library Juice, she worked as a librarian in Digital Initiatives and Outreach in public, community college, and university libraries. She comes to librarianship with a critical perspective, motivated by intersectional and Marxist politics. Before working in libraries, Lacey received her M.Phil. and M.A. in Performance Studies from NYU, where she also taught for six years. Working as an interdisciplinary humanities scholar, Lacey specialized in the history of popular entertainments, theories of spectatorship, and early American avant-garde performance. Lacey was proudly the GSO-UAW representative at NYU when negotiating the first graduate assistant contract at a private university.
- Violet Fox is a librarian who spends her time traveling between Minnesota and Washington, DC.

[ADD YOUR NOTES BELOW]

After keynote, if Choi said care is not control, we could ask if that means control is care weaponized

Lacey, from Library Juice: False choice between choosing between challenge to address imperial overreach and having to prove our relevance. Also false choice of having to choose between enacting values and managing infrastructure

Make an effort to embody the practice we want to see.

Violet: Make work of cataloging more visible.

The work catalogers do is seamless by design. It makes easy to lay off people when budgets are tight. Cataloguing work should be more visible. Library classification has unexpressed values that we need to surface and questions. Want to think about unpopularity of Dewey

The way libraries catalog is inherently biased

Librarianship based on structures/standards created 150 years ago and based on efficiency.

Unstated goal of classification = universal recall. Should universal recall be our overarching goal?

Descriptors are meant to be neutral

This insistence of neutrality does not mirror human's nature.



Goal of efficiency has led to cuts in labor including catalogers
It has also meant we rely on one controlled vocabulary
We've offloaded to one institution in service of efficiency

Begs the question of literary warrant, rather in order for something to be classified, it has to be published.
This assumes all knowledge that exists in traditionally published works, which we know isn't true.

Question: is literary warrant moral?

Likewise, universal recall, the idea of making everything accessible. Should universal recall be our overarching goal?

How can we have conversations when so much professional knowledge has been lost through attrition and downsizing?
So much expertise in this area has been lost in attrition and downsizing of tech services departments. So how do we fix classification problems [when the workers/expertise no longer exist]?

Violet Fox: Surfacing hidden assumptions in cataloging and questioning them (much of this in the context of DDC)

Literary warrant - is this moral?

Should universal recall be our overarching goal?

How can we maintain these systems when they are often the target of downsizing?

Kit:

Cutter's vision of the library 1883

Automated storage and retrieval, ASR. Given names like book bot.

The problem isn't the technology, it's why we think we need it. Technology is a tool that facilitates our actual goal: a seamless process linking people with resources in a well-maintained, intentional way.

When we think on the price of storage in libraries, we need to think on the value (for the patrons) of the objects that are displayed

Robotic storage & retrieval is seen as a proxy for the collection by neoliberal admins. But collection policies are the true infrastructure of collections.

Question we need to ask is how does ASR relate to patron needs?



Kit Rashid:

About infrastructure of library storage and retrieval
library storage and retrieval as critical infrastructure

Cutter's vision of the library - a technological solution to storage in proximity to use

Measuring the worth of the library as metrics like size and monetary value

Interrelated physical and digital infrastructures - getting a book off the shelf involves digital technologies before and after.

Library as place contains inequalities, we have to reimagine those inequalities if we want to reimagine library as place

Kate: MUTUAL AID:

Infrastructure forms things from the inside out, not just with care, but of care.

voluntary, reciprocal, non hierarchical, non-bureaucratic, egalitarian, cooperative, intended for mutual benefit. Mutual aid is genuinely participatory.

Built out of a web of care based on practical needs and interdependence

Nonprofit industrial complex

work that addresses the conditions the movement seeks to address...

Mutual aid can push against the tyranny of neoliberal capitalism

When you look at what is embedded in librarianship, it's clear we've been gifted quite a placeholder,

Mutual aid is born from a history of community built and community run library services

Black panthers and young lords

Langston Hughes library in nyc, color coded classification system that was intuitive to community

Kate Adler: infrastructure for librarianship base in mutual aid. Infrastructure as something that shapes things from the inside.

Looking to history of librarianship built on mutual aid - a way to push against neoliberalism. Looking to radical activist organizations like Black Panthers and Young Lords as examples (breakfast program, educational programs). Anarchist and socialist educational schools at turn of 20th century. Langston Hughes library.

Public libraries came to be in a time of class conflict and were intended to be a civilizing force

We have infrastructure (i.e. a shared history), and we can decide what to do with it

Lacey: THE PROFESSION



Tactical coalition-building among progressive librarians/archivists

sincere, embodied, connected practice, channel collective energy... eliminate status hierarchies

Take existing projects and link them into something sustainable

Care and hospitality

- generosity
- the spirit of inquiry

Lacey Torge:

The foundation of librarianship as a profession of care leading to the neglect of care for library workers

Care work of capitalism vs caregiving of commons

“Capitalist-sponsored care” a driverless system where root causes are denied, only sanctioned responses... promises changes with no material transformation

Professional development as an act of care for the profession and colleagues

How do the ways in which we collaborate shape our profession?

The care that we profess as a profession is bound up with an offering of hospitality:

- Everyone is welcome here vs. rules around who is welcome (Derrida, On Hospitality)
- How open are our doors really to our “unstable” colleagues (i.e. people whose identities are in flux) to people who are already inside

Violet Fox: Surfacing hidden assumptions in cataloging and questioning them (much of this in the context of DDC)

Literary warrant - is this moral?

Should universal recall be our overarching goal?

How can we maintain these systems when they are often the target of downsizing?

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“Capitalist-sponsored care” Professional development as an act of care for the profession and colleagues

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Library workers

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Context

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The profession of librarianship as platform

“Capitalist-sponsored care” - Lacey: promising change without offering much to actually catalyze it”

- What recommendations or conclusions did the speaker/s offer?
- What significant connections do track chair, audience, and/or speakers make to other presentations at MIII, or to other issues/articles/media outside of MIII?
 - [Big Door Brigade](#)
 - Labor, labor, labor
 - Growth of the library (shout out to Ranganathan’s vision of the library as a growing organism) and associated problems
 - Collection development as something other than just growth
 - Intentionality in building the kind of practice we want to see
 - See Kate Adler’s slide for some examples
 - The Revolution Will Not Be Funded

Information Infrastructures (Panel)

(Jen Liu, Daniel Greene, Rory Solomon, Hillel Arnold (moderator))

Jen: jl3835@cornell.edu, @uilnej



- Jen Liu is a researcher, designer, educator, and artist, depending on the context. Her current research is on the environmental impact of technology development and the relationships between computing and land use as a way to move towards a more livable, equitable, and just future. She holds a Masters in Tangible Interaction Design from Carnegie Mellon University and a BFA in Fiber Arts from the Maryland Institute College of Art. Prior to graduate school, she ran a makerspace in a museum. Jen is currently a 2nd year PhD student in Information Science at Cornell University.
- Rory Solomon is a doctoral candidate in the Department of Media, Culture, and Communication at New York University. His research focuses on mesh networks, wireless infrastructure, and the media archaeology of software. He holds Bachelors of Arts degrees in Computer Science and Mathematics from UC Berkeley, and a Master of Arts in Media Studies from The New School, where his thesis was a media archaeology of the stack, an excerpt of which can be found in the open access journal *amodern*.
- Daniel Greene is an Assistant Professor of Information Studies at the University of Maryland. His research focuses on the technologies behind the future of work, the values built into them, and the institutions that dictate who is included in or excluded from that future. His forthcoming book from the MIT Press explores how 'learn to code' became our dominant response to the problem of poverty.
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Jen Liu - When discussing digital agriculture its important to consider internet access. Many agricultural areas have limited internet access.

Sensors used to identify where to put resources, some tractors have these attached, some don't - they also aren't always strongly attached and can fall off in the field

Many required steps - get sensor, install it, get a GIS specialist, print out the map and farm manager analyzes - takes 2 weeks

Opens up questions about control of information - does that data belong to the farmer or microsoft?

Jen Lui: Digital Agriculture sensor systems - internet of things systems as a starting point - but Internet is still very patchy in Upstate New York, some folks using satellite data. Two areas of focus: integration and scale.

Liu's research focuses on normalized difference vegetation index sensors - measures difference of near-infrared and red light; helps understand plant health in ways that are not visible to the eye

Thinking about who gets access to this system? Thinking about the relationship to land grant institutions, extension programs.

Sensor loan systems exist but it's an expensive technology. Most helpful for monoculture farms
How sensors are getting integrated into farming equipment what kind of data is being collected and how that data is being used? Who owns and has access to the data?



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Do technologies translate well to permaculture and other modes of agriculture that aren't giant monocultures

- some automation and tech may not actually be saving time
- Lots of roles and steps to getting data

Repairs to equipment: who owns the tools (metric/US tools)?

Using German and American built tools = you have to carry wrenches in metric and US

Standardized readings require straight roads for clear readings - but the roads were built by horse and plow (not straight)

Ag has been mechanized since the industrial revolution - this is a continuation, not a new phenomenon

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Rory Solomon - Bringing DIY ethos to building the hardware of online communications

Communication is far too centralized, distribution creates a mesh network of communications

Network diagrams as power relations: who is connected to whom

Messy node: "meshiness" diagrams are more accurate, "Meshy"

Internet infrastructure - DIY ethos to the physical stuff of networks. Enthusiasts with differing degrees of expertise and different motivations. Networks composed to dis-intermediate centralized intervention.

(Baran diagram again)

MESH networks: use routers modified to work outdoors and for longer distances.

Not interested in thinking of connection as a binary - but who is connected to whom, how, how reliably: "Meshiness"

Drip Loops - need to make a dip in the line so that rain water will drip off the line and not come in through the hole drilled through a wall.

Crimping - attaching jacks to ethernet cable. A way of ensuring tech hierarchies

Tidying Up - tidying up is a level of care that community-driven projects

Service Loops - leaving slack for the future, a caring and thoughtful gesture toward the maintenance to come

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Network requires an ethernet cord from the antenna on the roof to the hardware in the home. The network requires allowing data to flow freely and block out other things (e.g. water through the ethernet cord hole)
Crimping = adding a jack to the ethernet cord, delicate work often done on rooftops during installation
Cannot do this in advance since the length of cable is determined based on the location of antenna and hardware in the home

What incentivizes the care to clean up the cords? Telco companies leave cords abandoned and wild. Mesh members staple and zip tie cords to organize them

Local culture does have an effect on a locations ability to implement mesh networks. US often focuses on “How do we incentivize participation and infrastructural investment” This just brings us back to the same capitalist problems

Internet infrastructure - DIY ethos to the physical stuff of networks. Enthusiasts with differing degrees of expertise and different motivations. Networks composed to dis-intermediate centralized intervention. (Baran diagram again)

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Dan Greene

Internet infrastructure is managed by real estate companies, not tech companies

3 classes of internet landlords - Internet exchange points, carrier hotels (this is the home of much of the 90s .com boom), and data centers

Private equity bought up digital realty after the 90s bubble burst.

Is the internet a real place? Is renting digital server space the same as renting physical land? The IRS decided that yes, it is

Rent is set globally, unlike traditional realty where rent is set locally

These buildings require massive amounts of energy. Malls are repurposed as data centers - sturdy networks close connection of internet landlords and private equity

Is there an alternative to paying the internet landlords? Not unless you're a “nutso billionaire” willing to make your own internet

Instead of ‘opting out’ find the non-profit or co-op based internet



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The actors managing critical internet infrastructure as real estate

Equinix - the internet's biggest landlord - 100s of properties on multiple continents

Markley - something of an anomaly in that they're a boutique firm,

Internet infrastructure is managed by real estate companies, not tech companies

Physical Internet Space:

Internet Exchange Points - where internet networks physically connect

Carrier Hotels - where content providers and network purveyors tap into each others' networks to offer better speeds, etc.

Data Centers - which store and transmit tenants data for those who don't want to support their own server networks

Private Equity grows internet landlords - bought up spaces when the tech bubble burst in 2001, built from there.

REITs are basically mutual funds for real estate investments. These are important tools in digital realty, debate about whether renting servers is renting space or renting something else.

Fear of locations that are only infrastructure - because need is global, could turn specific localities into server farm cities

At the core of the new economy is one of the oldest - Landlords

For Session Notetaker:

Basic data

- WHO were the maintainers/care workers mentioned in the paper/session?

Farmers, agronomists

community mesh networks, commercial network maintainers

real estate companies

- WHAT kinds of work do these people do?
- HOW do they do it?

Context

- What elements (time, place, populations, technologies, methodologies) of the paper/session stood out the most?
- What recommendations or conclusions did the speaker/s offer?
- What significant connections do track chair, audience, and/or speakers make to other presentations at MIII, or to other issues/articles/media outside of MIII?
 - Uneven distribution of infrastructure
 - The genre of tech demos across time
 - What is community participation driven by? Do we have a language of cooperation versus language of incentivization?

Software Curation: Intersection of Policy and Practice (Panel)

(Daina Bouquin, Brandon Butler, Seth Anderson, Zach Furste, Jessica Meyerson (moderator))

[ADD YOUR NOTES BELOW]

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Framing question: Who is responsible for maintaining all the paratextual materials needed for making meaning of software in a reuse context?

Discussion topics:

- Maintenance and community-own infrastructure
- Post-custodialism and software curation
- Developer norms vs stewardship norms
- Metadata handoffs between roles in the ecosystem
- Law + policy intersections w/ evolving practice
- Organizational policy challenges and building capacity

Post-custodial model means the librarian/archivist no longer gets the ‘stuff’

There’s an assumption that software created by large institutions (e.g. NASA) is safe, but those large institutions don’t necessarily value preservation

There’s a lot of legwork around promoting a service like EaaS in addition to creating the service and being ready for adding new users - users who have needs that you may not anticipate

What software is being left behind? Right now the market is driving those decisions

Much of preserving software relies on us having legal rights to that software

Software subscription = you don’t have the software, it’s in the cloud

If you don’t ‘have it’ you can’t preserve it

Lots of communities want to preserve software but are hesitant to do so without explicit permission

“Frankenstein software” where software has been created and modified by different people

I baked a bunch of proprietary Unix libraries into my software - if you don’t have a license to the underlying dependencies how do you preserve the software? can you?

“Infrastructure is built based on the assumption that the underlying context is fixed” - said in relation to architecture infrastructure, but also very relevant to software

What are we talking about when we talk about building software? Who are we excluding?

Traditionally we are terrible at recognizing and giving credit for care work. We are just now creating standards, so now is the time to encourage the communities to identify what should be preserved and how credit should be provided. Let the communities decide, rather than leaving it to the memory institutions

Software is culture - it helps us understand who we are

Software tells us about software - history

Software is a tool to open files

Key discussion questions:

- Maintenance and community-owned infrastructure
 - Licensing
 - Curation involves not just the object, but also looking at the tools and resources necessary to make those objects available



- Post-custodialism and software curation
 - work is distributed, networked, no longer firmly under control of librarians and archivists. our work is now a service.
 - facilitating preservation work BY scientists
- Developer norms versus stewardship norms
 - Current developer norms are not necessarily sympathetic to stewardship
 - “paratextual” documentation of how to use/operate software
 - Infrastructure is built assuming that the ground around it is fixed, but in reality it’s changing rapidly
- Metadata handoffs between roles in the software preservation ecosystem
 - Where and when can handoffs for documentation occur?
 - When does software transition to an “archival” state? First release? Stable release? Sunsetting?
 - Different people are going to make different decisions about this, how do we support those decisions?
- Law and policy intersections with evolving practice
 - Many arguments in favor of software preservation are built on us having lawful possession. Post-custodialism creates an issue for this argument. This is also true for data and text mining.
 - Code for best practices to articulate shared values and norms around fair use.
 - Underlying code is not always clearly licensed - “transitional objects” - layered code and dependencies
- Organizational policy challenges and building capacity
 - Challenges of figuring out where the community of practice is and what their skill level is
 - Current EaaSI members tend to be early adopters and well-resourced

For Session Notetaker:

Basic data

- WHO were the maintainers/care workers mentioned in the paper/session?

Software curators and preservationists

- WHAT kinds of work do these people do?
- HOW do they do it?

Context

- What elements (time, place, populations, technologies, methodologies) of the paper/session stood out the most?

Software curation and preservation is turtles all the way down

- What recommendations or conclusions did the speaker/s offer?

Strengthening our “entitlement”, particularly to fair use - documentary film makers are a community of practice to look to.

Taking entitlement “up the food chain”



- What significant connections do track chair, audience, and/or speakers make to other presentations at MIII, or to other issues/articles/media outside of MIII?
 - [EaaSII](#)
 - Code for best practices to articulate shared values and norms around fair use - IDK where this is but Brandon mentioned it

Maintaining Information in/with Software (Panel)

(Alex Gil, Ruth Tillman, Este Pope, Juliana Castro (moderator))

Este: epope@amherst.edu, @stellesky

SPEAKER BIOS:

- Ruth Tillman is the Cataloging Systems and Linked Data Strategist at the Penn State University Libraries. She leads a team to improve the Libraries' catalog and discovery interfaces while maintaining underlying structures. She works with others in the DLF Labor Working Group to pursue structural changes and dream of better futures for contingent workers in libraries, archives, and museums. Ruth also mends her own jeans.
- Este Pope is Head of Digital Programs for the Amherst College Library, where she leads the work of the Digital Programs department in building, maintaining, and preserving digital collections. Este is involved in the open source software community through her work with the Fedora Commons software and the Islandora Collaboration Group. Este has a background in library systems, digital libraries, digital humanities, library instruction, and educational technology.
- Alex Gil is the Digital Scholarship Librarian at Columbia University. He is among the founders of the Studio@Butler at Columbia University, a tech-light library innovation space focused on digital humanities and pedagogy; co-founder and moderator of Columbia's Group for Experimental Methods in Humanistic Research, a trans-disciplinary research cluster focused on experimental and mobilized humanities. He is the senior editor of *small axe archipelagos*, a journal of Caribbean Digital Studies, and co-wrangler of The Caribbean Digital annual conference series. Current projects include *Wax and Ed*, minimal computing prototypes for cultural and scholarly work; *In The Same Boats*, a series of visualizations of trans-Atlantic intersections of black intellectuals in the 20th century; and the nimble tent intervention, *Torn Apart/Separados*, mapping out the carceral and financial infrastructure of ICE in the United States. He is constantly preoccupied with reducing the many costs of our data hungry world.

[ADD YOUR NOTES BELOW]

Este Pope: should we turn off our institutional repository?

Institutional repositories as the intellectual work of the library

Labor of maintaining institutional repositories is largely invisible

Technology is seen as magical

Systems should have values embedded in them at the level of code and design



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Repository work is holistic, not just picking the right solution

Amherst context

- Low submission rates
- no human processes surrounding the infrastructure

Looking at digital technology and code through the lens of care

Ruth Tillman

Three generations of library catalogs on the web looking at labor

The Integrated Library System - manages all the business functions of a library

Telnet

- Library workers were very integrated into the Telnet infrastructure

Catalog as web applications

- limited customization opportunities
- redeveloped elements of the card catalog experience
- reflected practices of the early web: not responsive, session timeouts
- More complicated services integrated

“Discovery system”

- single search interface across multiple databases
- role is to update data

Software as a Service

- moving to the cloud
- causes a lot of additional work and employee trauma
- Making choices to NOT participate in the SaaS ecosystem also has costs in terms of introducing new systems to maintain: caught between large fees for software or large maintenance burdens for worker

Alex Gil: eliminate constant generation, our job to preserve static document, one iteration

Minimal Computing - reducing computation and other costs to make technology accessible

Wax - digital exhibitions

Ed - editions of primary sources

Lever for reducing cost

- Control - can you store the results of your labor on a portable device
- Energy - how much computation does it take to do our work
- Bandwidth and data - network transfer costs money
- Internet access - not everyone has it, it's not always fast
- The maintainers - who is going to pay off that debt?
- The readers - visually appealing
- The learners - systems have a role in promoting learning
- Producers - who produces the stuff?

In countries without unlimited data plan, if your digital collection is heavy, what about planetarity, Gayatri Spivak, systems of connections for global digital universe



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Accruing enormous debt, diaspora won't have luxury to maintain this world
Minimal computing

Readers

Learners, everything needs to be user friendly, there are some things we need to

Producers, wax is easy to shape, minicomp.github.io/wax

Our job is to counter surveille and undue damage of library of Congress classification

Make it free

Comment: can't win grants by maintaining systems, what we reward are innovation, that's the incentive to let things die

Ruth: Loot infrastructure and tax the rich

Alex: let it die, let it learn how to die, art of dying, how to be a fugitive, dream of eternal life and eternal access is killing us, it's the definition of colonialism

Este: let things die we can't fund, but if we commit to maintaining something then commit to funding it

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 - <https://jisc-pub.org/articles/abstract/10.7710/2162-3309.2203/>
 - Bethany Nowviskie, Joan Tronto
 - Uneven distribution of aspects of infrastructure
 - “learning how to die” i.e.

Standards and Accessibility (Panel)

(Greg Bloom, Kristy Darby, Julie Hochgesang, Emily Shaw, Chela Scott Weber (moderator))

bloom@openreferral.org, @greggish / @open_referral (Twriters)

julie.hochgesang@gallaudet.edu, @jahochcam (Twitter)

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SPEAKER BIOS:

themaintainers.org



- Julie Hochgesang is an associate professor of linguistics here at Gallaudet University. She has been dreaming of setting up digital archives here ever since she was a graduate student in 2004. Given her work with language documentation, Julie does a lot of work with videos to make them accessible to the research and signing communities, especially through annotation (ELAN) and textual representation of signed languages (for example, the ASL Signbank).
- Greg Bloom is the founder of Open Referral, which is promoting open access to information about the health, human, and social services available to people in need. He is also a visiting scholar at Indiana University's Ostrom Workshop on the Commons. Previously, Greg managed communications for Bread for the City in DC.
- Emily Shaw is an associate professor at Gallaudet University. Her research interest in documenting language variation and change in American Sign Language led her to the quandary of how to responsibly handle vast amounts of video data. Through Julie's expert tutelage she is convinced digital data maintenance is vital for scholars who are interested in analyzing sign languages to share data and partner with deaf communities.
- Kristy Darby is a digital collections librarian in the Digital Content Management Section at the Library of Congress. Her work focuses on supporting acquisition of open access content for the Library and working on policy and guidance surrounding digital content acquisitions and management.

For Session Notetaker:

Basic data

- WHO were the maintainers/care workers mentioned in the paper/session?

ASL archivists, AS practitioners

Social workers

Technologists

City and state agencies

Archivists

- WHAT kinds of work do these people do?

Archiving ASL videos and providing meaningful access to them

Building data specifications

- HOW do they do it?

Context

- What elements (time, place, populations, technologies, methodologies) of the paper/session stood out the most?

- Who is responsible for data (Greg Bloom) - testing multiple models, may need different solutions for different situations

- Centralized open platform - data utility
- Service registry by authority (like a funder)
- Crowdsourcing
- Federated Network - data Co-Op

- What recommendations or conclusions did the speaker/s offer?



- What significant connections do track chair, audience, and/or speakers make to other presentations at MIII, or to other issues/articles/media outside of MIII?
 - [Austin Principles](#)
 - ASL Signbank
 - Gallaudet University Documentation of ASL (GUDA)
 - Open Referral Initiatives
 - Making the case for institutional support
 - Cultivating understanding of necessity of work
 - Finding ways to measure relevance of work - things like web traffic alone won't do it.
 - OpenReferral - moving from systems to ecosystems, i.e. moving data between systems
 - LoC Formats - Sustainability categories as a structure for thinking about format durability

Maintaining THE STORIES OF THE DEAF COMMUNITIES at Gallaudet University

<https://shwca.se/GUDA>

ASL does not have a conventionalized written system. Instead we use video to capture our stories, which we have been doing since the advent of video cameras. In 1913, Veditz said “We wish to preserve our sign language in the form in which these masters used it for coming generations. Many have learned their signs from the masters and many have tried their best to preserve and pass down the language. The only way in which this can be done is by means of moving picture films.” —

George Veditz, 1913 (Translated by Padden, 2004)

Deaf people use signed language to communicate. There are over 200 signed languages in the world. In the USA, we use American Sign Language and even there, there are different variations of ASL. We wanna represent those variations. Here we want to capture those stories.

(Shows a video with different people signing in ASL in different kinds of scenes) Most of you don't know ASL but you can see in this video compilation that there's rich diversity in our stories. The ASL videos we have at Gallaudet are numerous (into the 1000s). Collecting the videos is not an issue, instead it's is maintaining the videos we have. They are all all over campus, processed differently (if at all).

For the most part these videos of our ASL stories are just in drawers or shelves and are basically inaccessible - “digital detritus” (Bird and Simons, 2003).

Our current needs / desires are to store and archive these videos. Make sure they are accessible and make sure the content is searchable. This is problematic because there isn't a conventionalized written system for ASL - This is a problem for content / navigation.

I'm a linguist and I'm interested in language use. The data that we study needs to be accessible. I want to access the signed data itself and not just the metadata. And that's an issue for how to access the information. So, we can use something called glossing which means we use another written system to represent ASL. For

example, we could use an English word in all caps to represent an ASL sign. This is problematic. We have a temp fix which is something called ID GLOSSING (Johnston 2010). We can store the labels in a database so that we have isolated ASL signs linked to their ID glosses (labels in written English). Here's an example (see presentation in link above)

ASL Signbank - <https://aslsignbank.haskins.yale.edu>

Image (Add)



. ASL is its own language, separate from English. In my work I can use ELAN (<https://tla.mpi.nl/tools/tla-tools/elan/>) to add annotations to the videos. When I use ELAN with the ASL Signbank, every time I tag a sign, you see the ASL video from the ASL Signbank which minimizes the reliance on English. It's a bit better than just glossing alone. As a linguist, this lets me do fun things like counting words: lexical frequency. It seems that THAT, NOT and LOOK are pretty frequent based on the data I currently have.

So with the need to store and organize videos digitally, armed with ideas of language archives and the guiding vision of the Austin Principles of Data citation and ID glosses stored in the ASL Signbank - we can do something like what we've been starting to work on - Gallaudet University Documentation of ASL (GUDA). We're interested in finding all of those existing ASL video collections and making sure they have a stable URL then pointing to them on a landing site. Once there, we'll have consistent metadata (done in similar format); terms of use; annotation to make the videos searchable.

But there's a lack of institutional support for projects like this and a lack of understanding for the work/needs.

With all of that the GUDA has the potential to be a maintainer of our stories, those of the Deaf communities in America.. It makes sense to do that HERE because Gallaudet University is the only university that serves deaf and hard of hearing students

Greg Bloom - Community Resource Directory

Open Referral initiative



The problem - It's hard to see the safety net
Bread for the City - Social Workers - A system of

It's complex - Organizations: multiple services
Services: elaborate eligibility requirements
Language: vocabularies vary widely
Jurisdictions: federal, state, local
Public and Private: government vs charity

“Why don't you build the killer app?”

We needed different logic to get ourselves out of this problem.

Vision: A healthy information ecosystem in which people can find what they need in whatever way works best for them

Open referral objective is to develop data standards and open source tools that make it easier to share, find and use information about health, human, and social services.

Interrogating the Ethic of Care in Information Maintenance (Panel)

(Monique Lassere, Ana Ndumu, Mark Parsons, Ruth Tillman, Patricia Hswe (moderator))

SPEAKER BIOS:

- Ruth Tillman is the Cataloging Systems and Linked Data Strategist at the Penn State University Libraries. She leads a team to improve the Libraries' catalog and discovery interfaces while maintaining underlying structures. She works with others in the DLF Labor Working Group to pursue structural changes and dream of better futures for contingent workers in libraries, archives, and museums. Ruth also mends her own jeans.
- Mark Parsons is a research scientist at the Tetherless World Constellation at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. He is interested in issues of mediation or sharing information across difference. He has a long history in scientific data management, especially in the Earth sciences, and he was the first Secretary General of the Research Data Alliance. He is a geographer and likes to ride bicycles. <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7723-0950>

Monique: practical and sustainable ways to make an ethic of care

Lots of technical debt in her current job - tried to assess why/how that came about - challenges related to power, labor, lack of understanding about roles and positions doing this work. Strategic decision making happening at an extremely high level, removed from the on the ground and maintenance work, resulting in bad outcomes. Applying Caswell's framework to working with sensitive data.



Ruth: I don't formally subscribe to an ethic of care - it intersects with my faith practice from Mennonite church. She's coming from an adjacent perspective. Torn between concrete ways the paper recommends, and the more squishy language of what care is. Tronto's work on care.

In it's best way, it describes being in a relationship of mutual care, but workplace structures are inherently power driven place - what does it look like to be in care relationship with someone with more/less power. What does it mean to receive or reject care in power imbalanced relationships.

Dr. Anna Ndumu - works with black diasporic immigrant communities, which do not match our template of what immigrants look like. Immigrant communities do agricultural and domestic work, they care for us. A central part of care work is coalition building. Caring can be misguided and can infantilize people. One example is making assumptions about (lack of) exposure to internet and other technologies. Care ethics runs the risk of egoism, heroism. How can we practice care in a way that privileges relationships? She was missing this in the document.

QUESTIONS

- Camille Acey of the Brooklyn-based Collective for Liberation, Ecology, and Technology about how we build this "maintainers" movement and improve the lives of workers
- Question from Alex Gill: what does success look like? How can we trust our administrations to take this on and not bastardize this?
 - Patricia: some indicators might be grant makers funding in a maintenance category; administrators actually getting it when you talk about it.
 - Lacey: sometimes naming something, even if aspirational, allows us to hold ourselves/each other accountable
 - Monique: speaking plainly is important to doing this work collectively, make sure we know what we mean and say what we mean
- What similarities and differences between your practice of an ethic of care in your profession versus another?
 - Ana: we say it, it's a little bourgeois and squishy, when others say it, it is risky. We need to risk something if we're really going to live this, how do we give up our privilege or share it? How do we invite others to co-own this work?
 - Ruth: look at how organizers look at strikes - how do you communicate with your community, how do you make sure people get housed and fed with no wages coming in?
- How do you distinguish between ethics of care that is about mutual aid with situations in which you are asked to enter into effective relationships with institutions?
- Sam Winn: how are we going to move this practice forward without centering whiteness? white folks - are we ready to give that up?

Looking at info maintainers white paper

Mark parsons: fundamental concept in social science is power, care is a balance of power

Follow nel noddings,



Info Maintainers Collaborative Notes Document

themaintainers.org

Avoid work that encourages things like patriarchy, sometimes work against systems

Potluck, invitation, want other perspectives, goal is to provide a context

Define terms of maintenance: repair people and things that include many things

No fixed definitions for care

Practices Principles and values

How we demonstrate care at scale

Many gaps and contested spaces

Monique: maintenance hinges on visibility

Issues of power and labor that are interrelated

Started work and inherited lots of technical debt, systems and information that wasn't maintained

Why?

Not enough FTE to do this work

Decision to steward work without FTE to do it

Maintenance problems related to decisions made at high level, like having no input from practitioners

Bad results from strategic decision making without practitioners at the table or even understanding what they do

Underrepresented people.

Obsolete media like floppy discs, privacy issues

Focus on paying attention communities and what they want from that data

Caswell's radical empathy

In applying EoC in archives, need to be more precise and pay attention to private or sensitive data, but how will you do that? Need to pay attention to this

Need to right size decisions with capacity and ability to do work ethically in mind

Ruth: doesn't subscribe to ethic of care, it intersects with faith practice, same with mutual aid, recognized from Mennonite adjacent perspective

Highlight assumptions, find boundary and border



Concrete ways to demonstrate it

Joan Tronto, stages of care,

Tronto divorced from feminized practices

Challenges in area of labor and disability

Talk about the workplace, ethic of mutual care, see other people's needs and meet them

But workplaces have hierarchies, what expectations can we have of each other

Power to receive and reject care

Invisible disabilities, how does requesting for help work in workplace power relationships

Anne: thinking about black diasporic immigrants

Think about care, think of scapegoated communities, but remember these communities are also caring

Acknowledge that reciprocity

Like assuming all immigrants are information poor, when actually internet is modern day compass

Risk of egoism and rescue narratives

Are we considering what care means to different communities, especially with regard to different solidarity models built within them

Comment: goal is to make it a movement, take action. What's our goal? Help organization help adopt standards in line with maintenance and care

Anna: Assign this as a reading. Have individual code of ethics, but this is interdisciplinary and applicable, for emerging professionals, give a model of what care at work looks like, current and novel

Ruth: where we move forward with this, can use this as a resource, to ask questions

Monique: had a brown bag lunch, said read the paper, let's eat lunch together, wasn't a venting session, articulated practical activities. Advocacy toolkit to talk to administration

Comment: university took it on, under regime of tyranny of care, happened with diversity

Ruth: look to the Tronto, recognizing the need,



What does success look like?

Foundations and founders prioritizing maintenance

Monique: Speak as plainly as possible, ppl don't know what this carework is,

Mark: tried to deal with the ambiguity for ethics of care with examples

Comment: outsider question, what are the differences or similarities we find in similar carework practices, teacher strike

Anna: care is risky, give up or share the privilege to do this work, to do this work might not be able to do it and stay comfortable

Ruth: look to labor strikes

Comments: distinguish between ethics of care as mutual aid versus care/affective relationships were forced into as employees

Ruth: why it's worth looking at other communities and see how they manage it

Comment: how move this practice forward without centering whiteness? Are we ready to give that up?

Information Track Reports Out

WEDNESDAY Report-Out Prompt:

Format of reports out:

5 min: reports/provocations

10 min: talk at tables

15 min: open discussion

Reports out from Devon and Jess (Farrell) spoke about the challenge of info maintenance in light of disciplinary identities and the need to be compensated for visible and invisible work performed. Themes of orientation needed in light of colonialism and neoliberalism. How will change really happen, if even the goal? Unionization? How do we get leaders in the room the next time we meet? How do we center non-white people in this process? This would help ensure that there are approaching our work on an *ethic of care* that is not co-opted by neoliberalism.

Open discussion: tables discussed inclusivity and communication. How and why to communicate? For what purpose? Fundraising, but how do we do that without succumbing to capitalism? Discussion of how big and small conversations are shaped by gender and race in terms of what appears to be active



participation v. complicity. Someone else brought up class as a factor, given the relationship between maintenance and class relations. Lee brought up organizational change and labor, and the need for consciousness raising among different organizations such as the Maintainers. How do we get leaders on board? We can bring on board info professionals but also leaders (e.g. library dean, academic dean), but we also need pressure from below at a grassroots level, and think about enrolling leaders early on to keep the momentum going. Laura James brought in role of power, respect, and service mindset that is necessary--can we learn from other service oriented professions for inspiration? Or maybe we should let things break and die in order for others to have respect for what matters and is of value in info maintenance? Another table brought in a nursing perspective, and also what about maintainers of different classes and different educational backgrounds? "One world transform" concept of putting 30% of investment into "run" bucket, to allow room for maintenance but also risky and transformative paths. Raquel asked what it means to let things "break and die," and what burden is placed on people when things break/die? Who are the ones who are paying the price? What does it mean we "allow things to break" versus "actively break"? Chela, in response, discussed the work of Meg Wheatley, being intentional about letting things go and the resources that allow this, and what skills are necessary for maintenance. Mehdi discussed striking in France, where folks cannot properly go on strike yet continue to do maintenance work, displaying the impossibility and it actually sheds light on their work as a single point of failure.

Devon at end: the importance of working on multiple levels at once.