

Introductory remarks by Anne Gilliland, Professor and Chair, Department of Information Studies, and Director, Center for Information as Evidence, UCLA

**Monash University
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We have gathered you all here today, Indigenous community members, archival professionals, educators, and students, because we hope that you will help us in a project we have been working on for the past 18 months that has been looking at the role that archival education plays, or should play, in preparing professionals and scholars to address the needs of Indigenous, ethnic, and marginalized or under-represented communities and groups in regions around the Pacific Rim.

Our project makes the case for the development and delivery of archival curricula and associated pedagogy that are inclusive of local knowledge and practices, and are culturally sensitive and responsive. It also argues that such knowledge and practices should be integrated into the global paradigm within which archival theory and practice is situated, thus making that paradigm more inclusive and empowering.

In looking at how archival education, and the theory and practice it imparts and supports, can be extended to be more inclusive of the needs, practices, and ways of knowing, keeping, and remembering of these communities, there are several fundamental aspects that come into play:

- What should the content of that education be and who should determine it?
- What sort of pedagogy should be used?
- How should the education optimally be delivered and where should it be located or accessed?
- Who should be the students?
- Who should be the teachers, and what role could community members such as Elders play in education and training?

Before introducing the program to you, I would like to give you a little bit of background on the project that started this whole initiative. That project is called “Pluralising the Archival Paradigm: A Needs Assessment for Education in the Pacific Rim Through Education,” and is funded through a seed grant from the University of California’s Pacific Rim Research Program and is a collaboration that brings together Professor Sue McKemmish here at Monash University, Professor Zhang Bin at Renmin University of China in Beijing, and me. It draws upon and extends several projects in which each of us and some of our students and colleagues in the community have been engaged, and we are hoping that this workshop and a follow-up one to be held in June at UCLA will lead to the participants and interested attendees developing an action plan that will include educational development, community outreach and collaborative research initiatives.

Sue McKemmish and I ourselves were particularly interested in pursuing this work because of our experience with archival education at both the master’s and doctoral level

at Monash and UCLA respectively. Situated in Melbourne and Los Angeles, both programs are located in some of the world's most multicultural metropolitan areas, with student bases that are increasingly drawn from a plurality of Indigenous, immigrant and diasporic communities across the Pacific and elsewhere.

On both campuses, there has been increasing critical dialogue among faculty and students as to whether the body of archival theory and practice taught in the programs is inclusive of, and informed by the practices, ontologies, identities, and belief systems of these communities, and is relevant to their specific experiences and needs.

The central point at issue is the following: if one agrees that archivists play a more or less conscious and key role in the preservation of community memory, the formation of a national historical legacy, and ensuring institutional accountability through what they decide to preserve and how they describe and promote it to users, then surely they must be educated to reflect upon their own cultural perspectives, beliefs and experiences, and how these might come into play in their work, as well as be aware of and sensitive to the value systems, forms of documentation, interpretive methods, conceptual frameworks, and linguistic needs of those who have different cultural perspectives, beliefs, and experiences? Given this thesis, we decided to explore whether other archival education programs in the Pacific Rim were encountering or addressing these issues in order to begin to develop a more informed dialogue about these concerns among educators and within the profession and community more generally.

In addition to this motivation, it has been our experience, from what we have been hearing and learning from meetings and research projects such as the memories, Communities and Technologies (MCT) Conference that was held by Monash and King's College London last October in Prato, the Trust and Technology Project here, and studies undertaken by some of UCLA's doctoral students with members of the Chamorro population in Guam, with Native American communities in the United States, as well as some of the work that will be reported by Kelvin White and Andrew Lau later this morning, that there are considerable commonalities as well as diversity across different settings and situations. These commonalities include issues relating to:

- How trust is established and understood,
- Diversity in ways of knowing and keeping,
- Submergence of identities, heritage, and ultimately power in smaller or under-represented communities located within dominant communities,
- Sustainability of community-based or oriented programs that address the preservation of heritage materials and recording of oral histories
- Engaging community members in identifying, preserving and knowing their own heritage from within their own homes, communities, and perspectives, and
- Underscoring the important role of recordkeeping in supporting sovereignty and redress movements, land and benefits claims and recording the activities of community organizations, Indigenous legal systems, and activist groups.

What we are hoping is that our discussions and your responses over the course of these two days will broaden this discussion, bring in Australian, Maori and other Indigenous perspectives more directly, and provide us with insight and advice about how to move forward with increased scope, participation and momentum.

Now to our program today and tomorrow:

Our first presentation is by Yang Lu, who is in the process of completing her doctoral work at UCLA and who was responsible for working with Professor Zhang bin to collect and translate data from archival educators in China. Yang is going to review the research design we have used and present some of the data we have gathered about the current state of archival education around the Pacific Rim. In fact, prior to this study, we did not know a lot about what had been going on outside of each of our own domains. It turns out that while there is tremendous growth going on in programs in various locations in the Pacific Rim, they remain quite mainstream in their coverage and are also very vulnerable due to insufficient numbers of qualified educators. Moreover, there are areas of the region that do not have their own archival education programs, especially among the Pacific Island Nations. Most existing programs are closely tied to national priorities, especially enterprise priorities, and have not engaged very directly with the kinds of groups and needs in which we are interested here today. Although this presentation relates to the entire Pacific Rim area, we hope it will set a relevant context for today.

Next, Kelvin White is going to talk about how he is extending this work through his doctoral dissertation research to look at communities in Mexico's Costa Chica area who are of African heritage. These people, although populous, are not legally recognized as distinct ethnic or racial communities, but are nevertheless marginalized in daily life and are invisible in the official historical record of Mexico. Kelvin is particularly interested in whether ethnicity or race could be used as a valid framework through which to examine these issues in an archival context.

Finally, this morning, Andrew Lau, a first year Master's student at UCLA, is going to discuss the case of how contemporary Hong Kong, which does not have its own internal archival education system and is now finding its way under Chinese, rather than British colonial rule, exemplifies some of the issues that we have been trying to probe, especially those which relate to how archives support identity construction and collective memory in complex post-colonial settings.

In the afternoon, we are going to have a panel that specifically discusses education and training needs for Indigenous communities in Australia, and then tomorrow, we are going to review what we covered today in order to move toward the development of an action agenda. In particular, what we want to focus on are the kinds of pedagogical approaches that might work best in terms of community-based, located, or developed programs as well as the larger, more wide-ranging programs such as those at Monash and UCLA that try to address the needs of multiple communities and constituents.