

Archival Products

NEWS

Engage for Preservation Week

by Jeanne Drewes

ENJOY WORD PLAY AND LIKE TO use words that have multiple meanings then use that to play off the meanings. English is as interesting in that way as are other languages. For example, I love the word “still” meaning motion (as in continuing) and non-motion (as in still air). But lately my favorite word has been “Engage” which can mean enticing, inviting; to attach or energize; to touch as in “make sure the gear is engaged;” to consume all of one’s attention; to hire; and of course it could mean pledge as in “engaged to be married.” All of those varied meanings have application for Preservation Week.

How are you engaged in Preservation Week? I have been engaged as in committed and energized for over three years as someone who helped to conceive, design, establish and now continuing to participate. I found the Preservation Week engagement energizing, absorbing, fulfilling, touching, consuming, attracting and binding. That’s right I promised myself that I would remain involved with Preservation Week, long after I rotated off the Working Group, even after the initial glow of success in the first years. Why stay



Elizabeth Rideout answers questions. Dartmouth College 2011

engaged? Because I see such value in the mission and purpose of Preservation Week.

And so many others in the preservation community have done the same, embraced the idea as a national effort beyond their own institutional or personal effort and they have remained engaged with the promotion of Preservation Week, adding it to their already full work schedules. Why? Why the engagement of the cultural heritage community and the preservation community? Because engaging the public in a broader understanding of what preservation means to

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2010 stakeholders meeting.

individuals is an important and rewarding engagement that can lead to a partnership of a lifetime, even longer if we preserve those things that live long after us. You engaged yet?

The need for widely distributed responsibility for preservation was a major finding of the 2005 Heritage Preservation Health Index—and the need to spread knowledge and enthusiasm for preservation was among the most repeated and highest priorities of participants in a Library of Congress Preservation Education symposium in May 2008. Recognizing this need, the Association of Library Collections & Technical Services, a division of the American Library Association created the first national collections Preservation Week (May 9-15, 2010) to raise the general public’s awareness of preservation issues and the role libraries, museums, and archives could play in

providing connections to information and expertise. In November 2009 the Library of Congress convened a Stakeholders invitation planning meeting which brought together a broad range of engaged organizations to help identify need, design outreach and collaboration. The outcome of that meeting was the support of the cultural heritage community and the preservation community in all areas.

Initial Developments

The initiative began by creating a website with useful information, of connecting to other ALA public outreach venues including the @your library campaign; creating promotional information for use by libraries and other collections; providing helpful hints for preserving the collections of individuals, families and community organizations; and distributing ideas for special locally organized events to highlight preservation and celebrate collecting. The initiative reached out to stakeholders like SAA, AAM, AASLH, AIC, Heritage Preservation and federal agencies with cultural heritage responsibilities to publicize national Preservation Week. The result was not a small, slow start but an engaging first year and an even broader participation in the second year.

Preservation Week Comparison: 2010-2011

Type of Institutions	2010 Total	2011 Total
Academic Library	26	47
Archive	4	5
Company	1	2
Fed/State Library	7	9
Historical Society	3	5
Law Library	1	1
Museum	1	5
Public Library	20	35
Regional Center	0	3
Other	0	1
Collaborative	12	10

	2010 Total	2011 Total
Webinars	2	3

Regions		
Regions	2010 Total	2011 Total
Midwest	17	57
Northeast	31	27
Southeast	6	8
Southwest	8	3
West	4	3
Hawaii	0	1

Totals		
	2010 Total	2011 Total
Events	66	99
States	22	32

2010 Events	2011 Events	States	Region
7	14	TX	Southwest
4	8	NY	Northeast
7	8	IL	Midwest
2	5	MI	Midwest
0	5	VA	Northeast
1	5	NC	Southeast
3	4	IN	Midwest
4	4	DC	Northeast
2	4	MD	Northeast
4	3	MA	Northeast
5	3	NJ	Northeast
3	3	GA	Southeast
2	3	CA	West
2	3	WA	West
1	2	IA	Midwest
0	2	KS	Midwest
0	2	MO	Midwest
3	2	OH	Midwest
2	2	CT	Northeast
5	2	PA	Northeast
0	3	CO	West
0	1	NE	Midwest
1	1	WI	Midwest
0	1	KY	Midwest
5	1	NH	Northeast
0	1	RI	Northeast
0	1	AL	Southeast
0	1	FL	Southeast
1	1	AZ	Southwest
0	1	OK	Southwest
0	1	OR	West
0	1	HI	HI
1	0	LA	Southeast
1	0	SC	Southeast

Key Goals

Key goals have been and continue to be

- Increasing preservation awareness
- Growing library, museum and archives capacity to provide preservation information
- Strengthening community partnerships for preservation

Who to engage? Everyone sees value in something, and it is the “something” from physical objects to virtual that holds memories and engages us to take action steps to

preserve. When asked what are the most valuable items to preserve one teenager said “Facebook” and I couldn’t agree more because it is that arena that holds memories of ideas, pictures, moments shared, very like the photo albums of earlier days, or diaries and letters. We still want to remember, and the ways of recording the present to share with the future is really what Preservation Week is about. The catch phrase “Pass it on” is more than a clever catch phrase. It is action driven. You can’t pass on what doesn’t exist and you can’t pass on without exerting some energy. It is a simple idea that is understandable and can start the chain of actions that result in carrying forward into the future our understanding and memory of today.

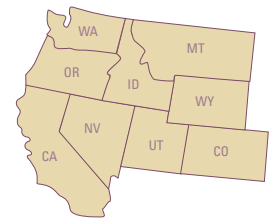
What can you do?

Engage with others, plan now for 2013 April 21-27, and engage now for Preservation 2012 April 22-28. Plan an event, share with others your knowledge of how to preserve, learn more about how to preserve, ask questions about what people value, and then offer how they might pass it on for others or keep it for themselves into the future. From toy cars to photos, digital or material to wedding dresses, books, paper and ceramics, there are things that hold value for the public. The value is how that “thing” sparks memories, returns us to a past or helps us image the future. Preservation Week is about a week in the spring but more than that it is about how we as individuals can work together to build the wider engagement of preserving across cultures, geography and time.

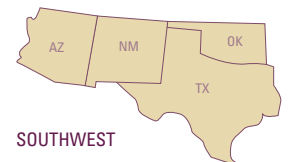
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Engage any way you want, but join the scores of others who are engaging the public to broaden their understanding of the need to preserve and the means to pass it on!

Go to the Preservation Week website for ideas
 Create links to the public site at
<http://www.atyourlibrary.org/passiton>
 Join the Facebook page and add comments
<http://www.facebook.com/preservationweek>
 Tweet #preswk



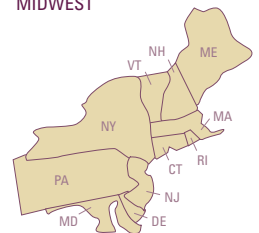
NORTHWEST



SOUTHWEST



MIDWEST



NORTHEAST



SOUTHEAST

Interdependence: Continuing Role of Print in a Context of Digital Delivery

By Gary Frost

Perhaps it is time for library preservation to contend for a third stance; that print collections and digital resources depend on each other.

Interdependence Surprise

The book now spans both print and screen formats. Attention to this circumstance of mixed transmission and delivery options reveals a surprisingly complementary and interdependent relation between the two reading modes and a third stance going forward. Academic book studies and studio book arts are moving toward a position of interaction between print and screen books. Other, wider sectors of publishers, educators and authors are also taking a composite stance.

Perhaps it is time for library preservation to contend for a third stance; that print collections and digital resources depend on each other. This is a proactive contention that neither print or screen books, nor physical or virtual collections will fulfill literary transmission alone. This is an overt position with large implications. If the two book transmission and delivery options actually do enhance and then sustain each other, we will be rewarded for audacity. If not, this stance will at least counter some immediate risk to collections.

Interdependence Suggested

The concept of interdependence is suggested as publishers anticipate an eventual stabilization of paper and ebook interaction; something inevitable like the equilibrium between radio and television. Such equilibrium would not be based on print or screen units sold but on market fulfillment for each delivery/display type. This could end up with multiple magnitudes of screen units per print units sold yet each sector sustainable and neither



restrained from its full market realization. The total book market could be stabilized into two charmed portions.

A classic model for interplay of print and screen books is presented by Western papermaking and Western printing. These technologies intersected from origins of relative isolation. However, by the 19th and 20th centuries products of paper and printing eclipsed prospects of either medium alone. The fabulous circus broadsides of the 19th century come to mind or the 20th century daily newspaper. An accentuated interdependence of technologies, markets, and uses merged paper and printing into a single transmission system of print publication. Potential for interaction of print and screen books is equivalent.

Media history is loaded with transitions that originate in uncertain interaction before achieving a more coherent coexistence. We now benefit from a long, mutual interplay of scroll and codex and manuscript and print. At the moment, we are experiencing the intersection and interplay of print and screen books. Themes from media history will apply here as well.

Interdependence Inherent

Given a tendency for communication technologies to merge and redefine each other, we should be suspicious of reports of outright supercession of print by screen books. What is eerie is not the conflict, but a stunning complementary fit of attributes of screen and print books. Print insularity and screen connectivity combine to encompass every agenda; those that maintain bibliographic entities and those that dissolve these entities. Print attributes of content fixity, manual navigation and persistent access across time all pair nicely with screen attributes of live content, automated search, cloud repository and electronic delivery.

A self-authenticating nature of the print book is the perfect complement of the self-indexing nature of the screen book. Does anyone mention such a surprising interdependence? Can such a self-organizing ecology ever be explained?

The concept of inherent interdependence helps to put trivialities in their place. Many projections of the future of the book just toy with distinctions between the print and screen book. As you know, print book advocates always mention smell and feel of real books. Ebook fans, on the other hand, always

mention a good story or the importance of disembodied content. Each party accentuates rather trivial attributes of their own display format. The ebook projection is always explosive growth and magical convenience. Serious projections of electronic book capabilities are missing. Paper book advocates always grasp at material qualities without advancing real attributes of the constraints of print. You rarely hear print advocates even mention refinement and constraint achieved by book designers, typographers, editors, printers or bookbinders. You never hear of fundamental attributes of haptic prompts to comprehension.

Interdependence Routine

Can we arrive at more substantive narratives of the interdependence of print and screen books? We know some interdependencies of print and screen books from our own daily preservation routines. The continuing role of the paper collections in context of their screen delivery includes back-up, mastering and authentication functions.

Back-up is capacity for regeneration of the screen copy as may be needed due to item or collection deletion. Examples of such access denial include proprietary or provider take

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down, censorship take down, or copyright infringement take down. Mastering is capacity for augmentation, enhancement or perfecting of faulty screen copy. For example, adding missing pages, foldouts or color to Google book copy, adding a missing image of the book cover, or increasing image resolution or enhancement. Authentication is capacity for resolution of forensic, production or provenance questions. Authentication enables distinctions such as those between copy and source faults, or it can confirm evidence of copy manipulation or sophistication, or authentication can simply verify size, margins and edges.

If the interplay of print and screen is familiar, a shift to preservation of digital collections should also be familiar. But we are still in the middle of changes, not at any conclusive outcome. This circumstance is elegantly described by Paul Conway in his recent essay; “Preservation in the Age of Google.” He has noticed that just as the Florence flood motivated generations of changing and expanding library preservation services, so also the “deluge of digital data” motivates new waves of preservation advance.

Just beginning is validation and certification of digital repositories as well as the establishment of co-operative print reposito-



ries. We are well aware that both print and screen library book collections can be faulty and we are uncertain of functions or disciplinary agendas that can clearly link preservation of physical and virtual collections. Faculty survey reveals great enthusiasm for ebooks and, at the same time, reluctance to adopt their use. Preference for print persists in scholarly monographs and even in textbooks. Such ambiguity is a disconcerting kind of interdependence.

A legacy tether to physical collections can also be a preservation distraction. The physical and virtual collections both need care going forward if their futures are interdependent. Now screen collections drive interest in audio and video content and focus concern on analog magnetic and film media. The larger precept of interdependence also emerges with digital research as a driver of new meaning inherent, and then resolved, in physical collections.



Interdependence Leverage

Meanwhile both print and screen collections continue to grow. Digital storage is ever more efficient, but the long-term retention of research collections means ever increasing accommodation of all formats. For example, the extent of continuing growth of legacy magnetic and film collections is not yet realized. Libraries may also be adventuring

into new cost regimes. Print fuses storage and display into a single, one-time cost. The digital decoupling of storage and display separates and compounds costs of both prerequisites. The trend to higher density and purpose built storage for print book and archive media collections has risks too, and not just those of adverse incidents. High-density storage arrived with a rather incidental discard of shelf classification, but just as melancholy is a shift of status of print from a mode of knowledge transmission to an inert commodity.

A pattern of service routines inherent in interdependence of print and screen needs emphasis. We are not preserving print for the sake of print or digital collections for their exclusive values alone. Specialized services for authentication of transfers, from slide cleaning prior to digitization to posting foldouts missing in on-line books to production of virtual exhibits will position services exactly between physical and digital collections. We should specialize in services of interdependence.

But what exactly will services of interdependence then leverage? We should not hesitate to assert that preservation is the product. Let library administrators understand the preservation logic, integration and efficiency, based on sustainable interdependence of physical and virtual collections.

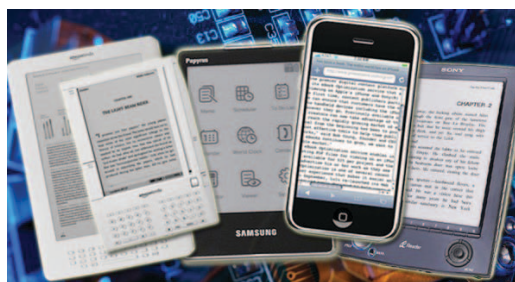
Interdependence Now

We should project preservation as the product quickly. What appears different this time is the quickness of the transition. The pace has increased from centuries to semesters. We, in our time, are witnessing a momentous historical transition.

The preservation community was disconcerted by the end of the graduate training program specializing in library and archives work. The closure was sudden, but not whimsy. Each new generation of library and archives preservation practitioners needed a

different education as routines and methods of one generation became divergent from those of the previous. This trend has continued. Today the single generation of practitioners must literally shift careers and retrain multiple times. The resilience and intelligence needed is great and the work is exciting and challenging, but the momentous trend, from stable apprenticeship to on-the-fly invention, does need some scrutiny.

The history of books and the nature of their qualities, both paper and screen display, offer perspective and continuity in a situation of disconcerting change. Crafted experience of historical structures and technologies can calm distress over disruptions in the workplace. Paper in daylight and screen in the dark evokes an even more timeless duality.



(The first screen, white dots on a black field, was the night sky.) Perhaps hidden in book history is a practical approach to library and archive preservation training. The model of art conservation practice haunts this idea; conservators of art usually come to their practice from advanced training in art history.

It is also timely to get out ahead of other quick changes such as dissolving collection partitions. Print repositories, currently assembling “last copy” collections among consortia will convert “general” to “special” collections as all physical collections take on a merged transmission function in a context of screen delivery. Physical materials are either potential screen collections in waiting or materials that support, augment, and validate digital collections and their integrated safe

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Preservation is crucial in times of transition.

retention, both special and surviving general collections, is inherent.

Finally, it is timely to advocate for print in a context of screen delivery. Some will argue for physical collection decommissioning and discard with space allocation to “learning commons” or “information arcades.” The rationale is provision of technology amenities as if revamped facilities and instruction will assure learning. If technological determinants rule the library future why are these so indeterminate? Students appear intent on doing education on their phones. There is also a student inclination to run off copies; on average 14 pages per hour on-line. End user copying is not counted as print circulation, but it is.

Preservation support can be challenged by the abundances of screen discovery and display and their gratifications. Immediate enthusiasms for digital research can mask longer-term consequences. Even the errors, deletions or outright interruptions of screen

display will not necessarily associate with the need for preservation or with a lurking dependence on physical collections.

Preservation is crucial in times of transition. It is up to preservation workers to look exactly between delivery formats at the elaborate ampersand. Through focus on interdependence of print and screen collections we can help to assure the future of libraries.

Reference

¹Conway, Paul (2010). “Preservation in the Age of Google: Digitization, Digital Preservation, and Dilemmas.” *The Library Quarterly* 80 (1): 61-79.

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