

Session thirteen: Advocacy and outreach

INFO 7401 Archival Appraisal, Arrangement, and Access



How do non-archivists understand archives?



American Historical Association

@AHAhistorians



The AHA has written a letter expressing concerns regarding the National Archives and Records Administration's planned research room capacity across its facilities, including presidential libraries, as the agency begins to reopen following pandemic closures.

AMERICAN
HISTORICAL
ASSOCIATION

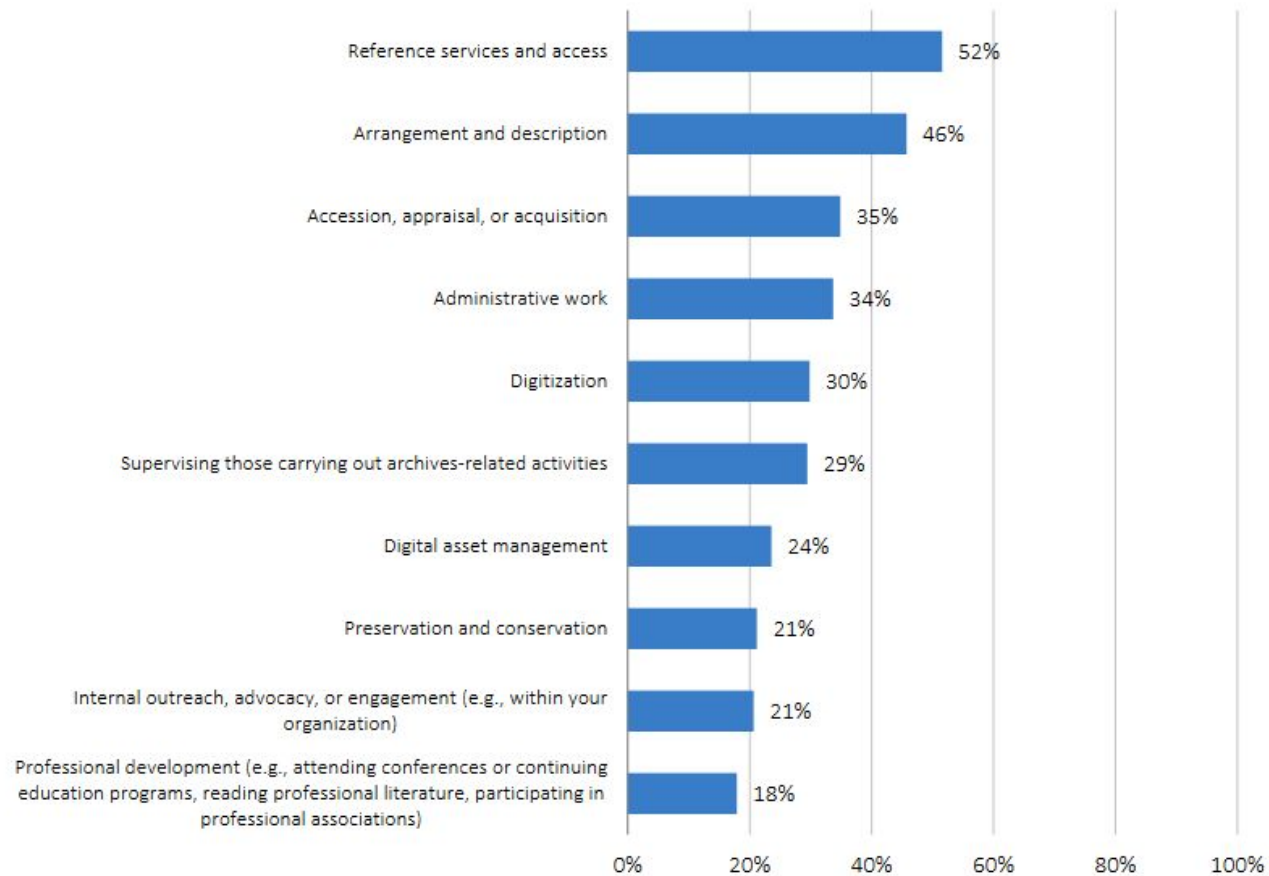
[historians.org](https://www.historians.org)

AHA Letter to NARA and Update (August 2021)

10:45 · 8/3/21 from Earth

15 Retweets 264 Quotes 59 Likes 37 Bookmarks

Figure 23 - Identify the functions you have spent the most time on during your primary employment within the last 12 months. Please select up to five items.



Two questions you will have to answer again and again in a million contexts:

Why do archives matter?

Why do *your* archives matter?

Challenges to understanding archives

- Common misconceptions/pop culture stereotypes lead to skewed perception of archival roles and functions, plus
- Very often archives programs are viewed as low-priority within institutions; a “value add” but not an absolute necessity,
- **Contributions and value of archival programs not always successfully explained to stakeholders**

Outreach

- activities and programs that **promote use** of archives, archival resources, and archival collections
- activities and programs that **educate about and advocate** for archives and archivists

Outreach

- “Awareness”: Very general but valuable
- Message: understand us/change your perception of us
- Targets:
 - Records creators/donors
 - underrepresented/diverse communities
 - Historical researchers/users
 - supporters/friends


American Archives Month


SAA launched American Archives Month in October 2006 as an annual nationwide celebration that could be adapted by any group to suit its needs and resources, but that could also stand as a unified effort to promote archives and the work of archivists.

In 2014, in conjunction with American Archives Month, #AskAnArchivist Day was introduced to provide an opportunity via Twitter for archivists to talk directly to the public about what they do, why it's important, and the interesting records with which they work.




@qc.archives


 queenscollegearchives
Original audio


 queenscollegearchives 🎵 A-R-C-H-I-V-E, please send a question to me!! 🗣️


#AskAnArchivist day is TOMORROW!! if you have a question about archives, archivists, Queens College or CUNY, tomorrow's your chance to get it answered!


#archives #archivist #cuny


8w


 she2ry Haha I love this!!
8w 1 like Reply

 sarahelbow_ 🍌🍌🍌
8w 1 like Reply




 poestiche omg this is too cute
8w 1 like Reply


 hamlethologram CAITLIN 🌈 im obsessed
8w 1 like Reply


 sophistihippie 🍌🍌🍌
8w 1 like Reply


 dorijoo Iconic
8w 1 like Reply

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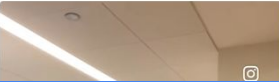
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[@queenscollegearchives](#)

Inreach

The activities conducted by an archives **within** its parent institution to raise awareness and gain support for its programs

Inreach

- Targets:
 - Institutional management
 - Institutional groups that affect the archives program operation
 - Institutional groups that can benefit from/use the archives program
- Goal: **build a collaborative, supportive web of stakeholders, contributors, and champions around the archives**

Everyday archives awareness and advocacy

- Implementation and responsibility for archives awareness should be at every personnel level
 - Students
 - Part-timers
 - Full-timers
 - Specialists
 - Senior management

To build relationships successfully:
Say yes!

To build relationships successfully:
Say no!

To build relationships successfully:
SHOW UP

LGBTQ Journal Party (May 2023)



“Inreach” efforts for Journal Party

- Collaboration with GLASA
 - Fellow attended meetings and spoke with current members
- Co-sponsorship with Student Affairs, LGBTQIA+ Consortium
 - Marketing, materials
- Co-sponsorship with Counseling Services
 - Tie-in to mental health and self-care
- Emails to GSLIS students, library faculty and staff

Queering the Archives staged reading, collaboration with What Will the Neighbors Say?

QUEERING THE ARCHIVES

a new verbatim performance piece

Compiled by

Pablo Aranela
Quinn Canales
Emily Cronin
Crystal Diaz

Samantha "Safi" Fernandes

Prince Hurst
Aylin Johnson
Cris Nieves
Nyx Pena

Deianeira Rodriguez

With words from

the historic Queens College Gender, Love, and Sexuality Club Journals
from 1987-2017

and contemporary writing from current Queens College students

Script Supervised by

Alan Wong

Dramaturgy by

Aniko Szucs

Facilitated and Conceptualized by

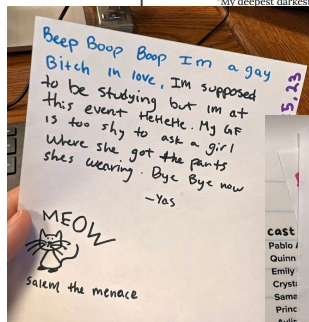
What Will the Neighbors Say?

Supported by

Queens College Special Collections and Archives

and

The CUNY LGBTQIA+ Consortium





Teach-in and demonstration (2025)

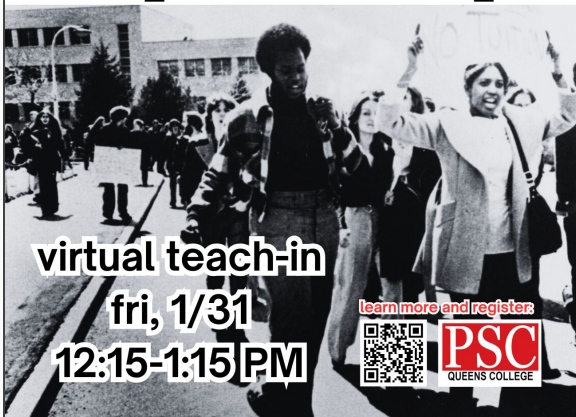
know your rights



know your history



free speech on campus



virtual teach-in

fri, 1/31

12:15-1:15 PM

learn more and register



“Inreach” efforts for teach-in and demonstration

- Collaboration with PSC-CUNY
 - Worked quickly with organizing committees of faculty and staff at QC to plan and execute a virtual teach-in and in-person demonstration highlighting history of activism at QC and hypocrisy of the institution’s spotlighting of only certain histories
 - Made teaching materials/posters
 - Planned an activist walking tour around campus
 - Provided historical context for the Henderson Rules (free speech restrictions) to both union members (faculty and staff) and students

Pedagogies of Place at Queens College conference

Place-Based Pedagogies

Locating ourselves in Queens



Dr. Johnathan Thayer is Assistant Professor at the Graduate School of Library and Information Studies, Queens College, CUNY, where he is Coordinator of the MLS/MA Dual Degree in Library Science and History. He is the former Coordinator of the Advanced Certificate in Archives and currently teaches courses in Archival Studies, Public History, and Community-Engaged Local History. His current book project is titled *Preserving Maritime New York City: Engaging Public History in the Port of New York and New Jersey* (under contract with SUNY Press).



Caitlin Colban-Waldron (she/her) is a Queens College archivist and teaches courses about archives as an adjunct instructor in the Queens College Graduate School of Library and Information Studies.

ABOUT

Facilitators: Lindsey Albracht, Eric Goldfischer, Soniya Munshi, and Ar Wan

Dates: June 10-12, 2025

Location: Muyskens Conference Room, in the Summit [[see campus map](#)]

Queens: an Urban Palimpsest

November 20, 2025

Resource Type: Module
Instructor: Lee Norton
Title: Lecturer
Department: English
Course: ENGL 110 course, "Collective Memory: Sites and Stories"

Overview:

"Queens: an Urban Palimpsest" is a 2-3 week module about community archives, primary source research, and the importance of place in collective memory. It is centered around the digitally-accessible archival documents hosted by the Queens Historical Society in Flushing, NY.

This resource is offered in three parts: most second, a list of additional resources to see kicks off the second of three units in my C ways of continuing beyond this module: an individual unit compositions and a collabora

Engaging with the Archives to Engage with Our Communities (Andrea Efthymiou, English)

Course: 200-level writing class
Resource Type: Assignment

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Advocacy

Activities in which archivists and their allies engage to gain support for:

- archival records
- the institutions that manage these records
- archivists
- the archives profession

Advocacy

- Focused, purposeful message to a targeted audience to effect a positive change
- “Consciously aimed to persuade individuals to act on behalf of a program or institution (archives)”
- Well-planned, carefully executed advocacy action is **essential to develop and maintain fiscal and operational health and management of archives program**
- Can include:
 - Asks/needs as they come up during the course of your work
 - Broader planning initiatives

Strategic planning

Strategic planning is an organization's process of defining its strategy or direction, and making decisions on allocating its resources to attain strategic goals. It may also extend to control mechanisms for guiding the implementation of the strategy.

Strategic planning

1. Where do we want to go?
2. How do we get there?
3. How do we measure success?
4. How did we do?
5. How can we improve?

Strategic planning

1. Forecast and analyze emerging developments before they become unanticipated crises
2. Determine whether and how those changes may benefit or threaten your organization
3. Plan for addressing those developments
4. Have a set of goals (initiate changes on your own)
5. Set concrete, time-delimited objectives for implementing goals
6. Consider and flexibly respond to large forces impinging on unit (ie don't lose the forest for the trees)

Strategic plans

- [CUNY Lifting New York 2023-2030](#)
- [CUNY Office of Library Services Strategic Plan 2022-2027](#)
- [Queens College Special Collections and Archives Strategic Plan 2023-2028](#)

Art of the ask

- Advocacy efforts need:
 - Well-defined goal (be specific!)
 - Clear sense of audience to whom appeal will be made (stakeholders? Supporters? Opposition? internal/external?)
 - Who are they?
 - What matters to them?
 - What can I do for them?
 - Set of actions that are most likely to achieve the goal

Art of the ask

- What do you want to change and why?
- What outcomes are you seeking?
- Identify:
 - a. Need/action
 - b. Audience
 - c. Outcomes
 - d. Benefits

Queens College Special Collections and Archives

Proposals for funding, JC Carlson and CUNY LGBTQI+ Consortium

Proposal 1: Programming consultant to organize “Talking Through Time” event: \$3,200

Proposal 2: Partnership with *What Will the Neighbors Say?* theatre company for performance at “Talking Through Time” event: \$2,000

Proposal 3: Queer at QC oral history program: \$2,500

- Matched by Freda S. and J. Chester Johnson Civil Rights & Social Justice Archives Fellowship Endowment for \$5,000 total

Total potential funding request: \$7,700

Proposal 1: Programming consultant to organize “Talking Through Time” event

Cost: \$3,200

Proposal 2: Partnership with *What Will the Neighbors Say?* Theatre company for performance at “Talking Through Time” event

Cost: \$2,000

Combined total cost, Talking Through Time event: \$5,200

Defined need: As a culmination of the work of the 2022-2023 Freda S. and J. Chester Johnson Civil Rights & Social Justice Archives Fellow and a celebration of the ongoing collaboration between Queens College Special Collections and Archives, GLASA, QC’s Office of Student Life, and the CUNY LGBTQI+ Consortium, an in-person program will “launch” the various archives collections and materials documenting queer life at Queens College, recognizing the efforts of all stakeholders and publicizing the extraordinary contents of the collections.

A short performance of curated selections from the archival GLASA journals will be the centerpiece of the event, tying together past and current queer QC students and their experiences, memories, struggles, and passions. The theme, “Talking Through Time,” emphasizes the cyclical natures of queer experience and college life and explores the impossible human urge to reach back through years and across worlds to our previous selves, through a uniquely queer lens.

A consultant is needed to do the crucial curatorial/creative preparatory work for this event, with time also allotted for assistance with logistical operations.

A partnership with documentary theatre group *What Will the Neighbors Say?* is needed for directorial/

Goal: Successfully plan and host “Talking Through Time” in Queens College Library to celebrate GLASA collection.

Details: Consultant

- 90 hours at \$35/hour
- Work to be done over three months: June-August 2023
- Event date TBA; most likely late September/early October 2023 (LGBT history month)
- Collaborative work with current GLASA members and potentially Queer Writers at QC and/or other creative entities on campus (i.e. *What Will the Neighbors Say*)

Details: *What Will the Neighbors Say?*

- 20 hours at \$75/hour: \$1,500
 - 16 hours rehearsal/preparation
 - 3 hours tech
 - 1 hour performance
- \$500 audiovisual budget: most likely sound design in-house at *WWTNS?*
- Work to be done primarily in month leading up to event

Successful funding proposal

Example: “We need to clean up a backlog of processing projects”

What are you **actually** asking for?

- Need: our collection is of research interest, so must be accessible to researchers. This requires processing collections, which requires staff and money to pay the staff.
- Audience: administration.
- Outcomes: usable collections, findable collections, reduced backlog.
- Benefits: more researchers will be aware of the collections and will come and use them, increasing archives use in general

Example: “We want to digitize some of our collections.”

What are you **actually** asking for?

- Need:
- Audience:
- Outcomes:
- Benefits:

What do you do with problems or challenges that feel or are actually too big for you to address on your own?

Collective action

UNIONIZE YOUR
WORKFORCE BABY



Archives/cultural heritage professional organizations

- [Society of American Archivists \(SAA\)](#)
- [Archivists Round Table \(ART\)](#)
- [Library Association of the City University of New York \(LACUNY\)](#) and [Archives and Special Collections Roundtable](#)
- [Metropolitan New York Library Council \(METRO\)](#)
- [New York Archives Conference \(NYAC\)](#)
- [Mid-Atlantic Regional Archives Conference \(MARAC\)](#)
- [American Alliance of Museums \(AAM\)](#)
- [Museum Association of New York \(MANY\)](#)
- [Art Libraries Society of North America \(ARLIS-NA\)](#)
- [Association of Moving Image Archivists \(AMIA\)](#)
- [Special Libraries Association \(SLA\)](#)

Circling around and back again

The same lesson here as when we started the course:

- To be an effective advocate for and an effective practitioner of archives, **YOU** have to know:
 - Your institutional priorities
 - Your department priorities
 - Your own practice, ethics, motivations



nifmuhammad 🌟 19h



**the bad news is that it's a lotta work,
the good news is we get to do it**

Why do you want to do this job?

thanks my guys



who r all of u