Archivists building and working with local popular music collections typically root their work in the foundational theory, methodology, and practices around appraisal and acquisition, collection development, and donor relations. As documented in the literature of local music archives, archivists regularly look in particular to documentation strategy and related embedded archival practices as a key approach in creating popular music collections. The Society of American Archivists (SAA) defines the much-discussed, and debated, documentation strategy as a "methodology that guides selection and assures retention of adequate information about a specific geographic area, a community, a topic, a process, or an event that has been dispersed throughout society," and that is "typically undertaken by collaborating records creators, archives, and users." SAA notes that a key element of the strategy is analysis of the subjects to be documented.[1]

While documentation strategy, or elements of it, remain valuable for archivists working with local music collections today, we are challenged to visit questions around the enduring value of meaning and memory-making in musical materiality and documenting hidden or underground cultural spaces and networks, which are not wholly addressed through documentation strategy. While documentation strategy was conceptualized in part to address what we now call "contemporary collecting" and to fill gaps in who and what is documented in the archives, it was also intended to evolve along with changes in the manner and types of records created in contemporary society.

One way of augmenting our work and evolving the documentation strategy approach is to look outside the archival field for theories, methodologies, and practices that can enliven, enrich, and modernize our foundational systems, especially as the archival field continually makes efforts to be more inclusive and equitable. Through the lens of the New Brunswick Music Scene Archive (NBMSA), this article considers the scenes approach to popular music studies as a relatable and effective approach that can build upon the common local music archives' use of documentation strategy in developing, appraising, and conducting outreach. "Scene" at its most basic refers to cultural roles and practices, often in a musical context, that encompass producers, consumers, and locales in a particular geographic location. A scenes approach emphasizes relationships, memories, and meaning-making among scene participants; pays careful attention to inclusivity; and emphasizes the importance of cultural spaces, physical and virtual.

This article opens with an articulation of scene theory and the scenes approach to popular music studies. From there it moves into a literature review that looks briefly at key points in the history of documentation strategy. It then focuses on the literature of local music archives that utilize components of documentation strategy. The article next turns to how the NBMSA developed

with an eye to the scenes approach, and concludes with several examples of how the scenes approach can be applied through the lens of the NBMSA: documenting underground, hidden, and virtual networks that archivists, even embedded archivists, may not be privy to; considering affect in collection development, appraisal, and outreach; and recalibrating the advisory board concept. The article concludes with some preliminary thoughts on other areas to explore using the scenes approach.

Scenes Theory and How It Relates to Documentation Strategy

The word "scene" first came into use in the 1940s in journalism to describe the jazz demiworld. It wasn't just about the music—it was the clubs, the manner of dress, and the attitude, all coming together and mixing. It was the musicians, the promoters, the fans—the producers and the consumers. Will Straw first articulated the scenes approach in 1991 in defining scenes as "geographically specific spaces for the articulation of multiple musical practices."[2] Straw posits that the term *scene* "compels us to examine the role of affinities and interconnections which, as they unfold through time, mark and regularize the spatial itineraries of people, things and ideas."[3] Scenes in their broad definitions break down barriers between performers and audiences, producers and consumers.[4] An archives developed through the concept of scene invites the range of scene participants to interact with elements of the scene in a way they might not otherwise. It offers a holistic view of a locale that includes creators, spaces, and fans—the diverse goings-on in a given place.

Building on Straw, Andy Bennett and Ian Rogers theorize music scenes as "cultural spaces in which the past and present remain aesthetically linked."[5] They present two key ideas about the scenes approach that were front of mind in conceptualizing the NBMSA. First, the scenes approach presents a powerful way to access "meaning-making, identity-making, creative practice, collaborative cultures and varied communities (ad hoc or otherwise) commonly found—or directly formed alongside—popular music."[6] Second, Bennett and Rogers emphasize that a scene's "primary use has been to map out new and illusive spaces previously undocumented and seldom considered by the academy."[7] Both points, which share similarities in purpose to documentation strategy, are reflected in the overall purpose and ongoing development of the NBMSA. The latter point, in particular, as this article will explain, speaks to the NBMSA's treatment of the New Brunswick basement scene, as well as to efforts to fill in the archival gaps with more inclusive collecting practices and community. These approaches will give a fuller sense of who has made music and meaning, and when and where, in New Brunswick's musical undergrounds.

Again, a scenes approach can enhance documentation-strategy-based approaches. Documentation strategy does not "break down barriers" to the same extent as the scenes approach. I would argue that it still privileges and lauds archival authority and knowledge, even when connecting or embedding within a community, or when advisory or expert boards—a key component of documentation strategy—emphasize "expertise" (be they heralded community members or other archivists) over the makers and doers. Additionally, documentation strategy's emphasis, indeed appraisal's overall emphasis, on intrinsic and enduring value in terms of history and research, downplays the affective nature so valuable among record creators and users, and which can inform and explain aspects of culture and society. Affective considerations, so crucial for scenes, could be deployed in a new iteration of documentation strategy. Last, documentation strategy asks archivists to emphasize geographic area—a difficult task, especially when the geographic area is large or unspecific, as case studies have borne out. Scenes can help us expand the notion of geography by examining networks and layers of scene-making activities in a specific area—emphasizing depth over breadth.

Literature Review

While this review is not comprehensive in its consideration of the extensive literature around documentation strategy, it is important to provide some background and grounding in its history before looking at the literature of local music scene archives that engage in elements of the approach. Ideas that led to documentation strategy began percolating in the 1970s, documenting underrepresented people, places, and activities as well as "the everyday," which at the time were not systematically documented in archival repositories. The strategy also considered how archivists could better determine what materials are of enduring value. Documentation strategy was not formally proposed and tested as a new concept until the 1980s, when a handful of seminal articles outlined the concept, proscribed models, and presented results of case studies of documentation strategy.

In 1986, Helen Samuels called on archivists to reexamine their role as selectors as they sift through an ever-expanding amount of documentation and the complex patterns that created it. She delineated four components of documentation strategies: "Choosing and defining the topic to be documented; selecting the advisors and establishing the site for the strategy; structuring the inquiry and examining the form and substance of the available documentation; and selecting and placing the documentation."[8]

Samuels argues that the "integrated nature of society's institutions and its recorded documentation must be reflected in an archivist's efforts to document

those institutions."[9] She rallied archivists to rethink their established practices and notions around appraisal, acquisition, and their perceptions of institutional collections as well as personal papers. She cited the necessity of continual documentation of an "ongoing issue, activity, or geographic area."[10] As a nascent idea, Samuels laid out what she admitted were challenges to documentation strategy, such as funding and resources for ongoing, regularly reevaluated projects, and the difficulty of balancing an institution's legal and institutional responsibilities while trying to acquire materials more broadly and in a collaborative manner.

Larry J. Hackman and Joan Warnow-Blewett took up Samuels's call to reevaluate archival practices in the context of documentation strategy. They developed a rather complex model and presented the first case study of documentation strategy in practice at the American Institute of Physics. They felt that documentation strategies could broaden analysis and encourage shared expertise and greater communication and coordination in appraisal and acquisition work. Hackman and Warnow-Blewett emphasized, though, that documentation strategies call for extensive adjustments to some of the core work, especially collection development, of archivists. For example, documentation strategies "imply the need for archivists to collectively influence the creation of new institutional archives where needed" and must consider the "interrelatedness of documentation and documentation decisions."[11] Overall, they echoed Samuels by encouraging "the archival community to reconsider established approaches to the identification and selection of archival documentation."[12]

In implementing a documentation strategy case study in western New York state, Richard Cox found that communication and cooperation were two overarching positives in the implementation, but found challenges around the significant effort and discussions required, as well as obstacles in trying to capture a broad area and its many and overlapping human activities. He noted that focusing on the geographic could mean overlooking the topical. Cox, too, recognized that implementing documentation strategies without adequate funding is problematic. Terry Abraham and Scott Cline denounced documentation strategy as an unachievable "Holy Grail" and also argued that the approach was really no different from established collection development practices. Furthermore, they saw archivists' participation in the records creation process to "ensure complete documentation" as conflicting with the "archivist's role as 'honest broker.'"[13] Abraham is yet another archivist who noted the lack of time and resources to pursue documentation strategy as Samuels, Hackman, and Warnow-Blewett established it.

In 2008, Doris Malkmus published an article in which she reflected on documentation strategy practices and critiques, and reevaluated documentation strategy for the digital age. She describes how, after Abraham's denouncement, documentation strategy faced further critiques, and due to a lack of

entirely positive results in Cox's and other studies, "consensus on its impracticality swept the profession in the mid-1990s."[14] While Malkmus recognizes that a lack of resources continues to hold up most documentation strategy projects, she argues that while it remains the best way to document localities, it is also "still one of the most conceptually satisfying approaches to documenting social movements," whether in physical or virtual environments, such as the LGBTRAN online project she analyzes.[15] Malkmus is a proponent of fully engaging documentation strategy to achieve success. Through a series of case studies, she recognizes, like Abraham, that it is neither a Holy Grail nor a relic of a past turn in archival theory and practice, but argues that documentation strategy works for narrowly focused, institutionally well-supported and funded projects, and when community and discipline experts provide leadership.[16] She also sees documentation strategy as an effective tool for outreach and promotion.

Even within Malkmus's parameters, documentation strategy seems like an unattainable, magical unicorn for many archives. Local music archivists have innovatively looked beyond the challenges of implementing a full-on documentation strategy and instead have contributed to salvaging and adopting elements of the approach. While local music archivists might be criticized as being less rigorous and more focused on a single repository than documentation strategy intended,[17] I would argue that they are reclaiming relevant parts of a strategy that has generally been deemed unattainable anyway. Abraham and Cline even notably point out that there are important parts of documentation strategy worth undertaking.[18]

As early as 1989, Ellen Garrison saw the benefit of engaging in the spirit of documentation strategy.[19] Her article on documentation strategy at the Center for Popular Music at Middle Tennessee State University focuses on filling gaps, presenting a "picture of the whole," and serving as "a microcosm of the varied ways in which American culture has been expressed by and through music."[20] While the Center for Popular Music used an advisory group, it was more informal and off the cuff than pure documentation strategy would command. Garrison saw benefits in the specific practices they adopted: broadly collecting, adopting processes outside the Center to manage multimedia collections, and establishing cooperative institutional and individual relationships.

In her 2002 article, René Boatman elucidated how the Downtown Collection based at New York University's Fales Library serves as an expanded model of documentation strategy. It adopts practices such as continual donor engagement, emphasizing geographic and subject metadata (that meets documentation strategy's emphasis on social networks and community context), and flexibility, which, Boatman states, allow them to acquire in related but new directions.[21] At the same time, she contends that they "open up" traditional archival models, and much of this is done against the background of and to

augment documentation strategy. This "opening up" includes decentering the archives with several points of physical and virtual locations and access, emphasizing inclusiveness (for example including extensive name indexes and reference materials to provide a variety of types and levels of intellectual access points), actively promoting collections, and filling in gaps in collections through judicious use of oral histories with creators. Boatman views the Downtown Collection and the efforts it makes to "open up" older models as reflecting the avant garde nature of the collection.

Lynne M. Thomas (2012) examines documentation strategy through the embedded curator lens that, as in the Downtown Collection, can have the effect of decentering the archives and focusing on relationships. Thomas contends that such relationships and connections can be fruitful for collections. As defined by Thomas, an embedded curator "uses his or her physical and virtual presence within a selected community to document that community while simultaneously serving as a resource to it,"[22] and this requires engaging with at least some aspects of documentation strategy. Embedding in such a way, especially when it comes to more at-risk popular cultural materials (here, science fiction and fantasy materials at Northern Illinois University), can be helpful to creators who may not see their work as desirable to an archives. Thomas attributes Northern Illinois' success in acquiring authors' papers and related materials to its embedded approach and the adoption of documentation strategies related to community involvement and connections. These include engaging with community members on social media, not to mention Thomas's genuine interest as a fan and community participant. Thomas does, however, recognize that documentation strategy's often-critiqued drawbacks of cost, time, and effort in personal commitment on behalf of the curator/archivist are part and parcel of embedded curatorship.

Archiving Cities' Musical Lives through Documentation Strategy

In recent years, numerous local and regional[23] music archives have emerged around the United States in academic institutions and public libraries. This portion of the literature review looks at several archives and how they have used elements of documentation strategy. Unlike libraries that have engaged the scenes approach,[24] local music scene archives have adhered to documentation strategy, yet often stretch it in ways that suggest a scenes approach, without articulating it as such.

Michele Casto and Bobbie Dougherty cofounded the DC Punk Archive in 2014 as a collection that "would not only meet traditional archival goals of preserving materials as a resource for students, researchers, and fans of local

music culture" but situate the DC Public Library "as an institution supportive of local music past and present, a space for local music discovery, and an innovator in community engagement in collection building and preservation."[25] To generate interest, the cofounders emphasized community involvement through working closely with members of the local music scene before even formally announcing the founding of the archives. In the article "Punk at the Library," the cofounders state that "outreach and community involvement were fundamental elements of the project from the beginning."[26] Staff have shifted from merely collecting the past through recordings, flyers, zines, photos, and other products of the scene to supporting the current scene.[27] For example, in one of its most popular outreach activities, the DC Punk Archive hosts shows featuring local bands, sometimes including performers who have contributed materials to the archives in the basement of its library building. As part of its emphasis on community, the archives has also engaged locals as volunteer "community archivists" to help with the everyday archival work of arranging and describing as well as digitizing the donations it receives.[28] Engaging the community and hosting basement shows at the library goes further than documentation strategy's view of community engagement. Stakeholders are invited into the space of the library, where they have agency and bring their knowledge and experiences as punk producers and consumers to the work of arrangement and description, surely imbuing the archival collections with a deeper insight and meaning. This feature of the DC Punk Archive also speaks to the scenes approach and its attention to networks in that the library becomes a node in the scene and a cultural space where stakeholders can continue to animate the music scene.

In their chapter in *Music Preservation and Archiving Today*, "Building Punk Rock Collections at UCLA Library Special Collections," Megan Fraser and Melissa Haley describe the successes and challenges of documenting the Southern California punk rock scene. Instead of a one-curator approach, they formed a collective of a variety of library staff interested in the Los Angeles and Southern California music scenes who are also musicians, fans, and historians in the scenes. Even the choice of the term "collective" speaks to a scenes approach, as it is more inclusive than "advisory board" or "expert panel." Like Lynne Thomas, their embedded archivist approach is a useful path to collecting, in which those working to build the collection "embed" themselves in or are already embedded in a scene, which can help build trust with scene participants. The group had a general interest in "acquiring material that shows use or creative intent or product, such as business and financial records, artwork, lyrics, set lists, contracts, calendars or journals, and show flyers."[29] Both the structure of the collective and the array of materials its members collect, along with the embedded nature of the staff members who make up the collective, reflect a scenes approach.

The collective was inspired by and modeled itself on Cornell University Library's Hip-Hop Archive. Taking a cue from the Cornell staff's acknowledgment

that some in the hip-hop community might find it problematic or inappropriate for the collection to be in Ithaca, New York, the UCLA collective made sure "to acknowledge and compensate for this (concern)" among its own stakeholders, emphasizing that "one of their major efforts was to build community and foster goodwill with creators and enthusiasts."[30] Cornell has also endeavored to show that while it is committed to documenting and preserving hip-hop culture, it is not interested in co-opting the community's story. UCLA similarly keeps this approach in mind and sees donor relationships "as perpetual and evolving and hope to instill in donors the understanding that we are stewards of their collections but not in the business of taking over or deciding for them how their materials should be interpreted."[31] Fraser and Haley note that, for the most part, people are happy to donate and have their materials be preserved, made publicly available, and be used to contribute to scholarship. But others see even a "public and accessible" institution as "too corporate or too establishment to feel comfortable donating their collections."[32] So, even an embedded curator approach might backfire. Bennett and Rogers argue for "a refinement of the cultural memory approach that assigns back to the individual a greater level of agency in forging musical meanings—one that accounts for nuances and specificities of place, and the influence of these on individual and collective memory."[33] The DC Punk Archive's approach, sort of a reverse embedding, might be a better way to build trust and understanding. Embedded curatorship runs the risk of still privileging the curator/archivist and their work and ignoring the views, feelings, emotions, memories, and meaning-making of those they feel compelled to document.

In their article entitled "Saving All the Freaks on the Life Raft: Blending Documentation Strategy with Community Engagement to Build a Local Music Archives," the team that founded and continue to build the Louisville Underground Music Archive (LUMA) at the University of Louisville Archives and Special Collections delineate the history of how they developed an archives that is similar in origin, goals, collecting, and challenges faced in the NBMSA. LUMA seeks to "address the gap in the historical record related to this culture by collecting, organizing, preserving, and providing access to a wide variety of materials from a diverse community of bands and musicians, venue and store owners, recording studios and label managers, and fans to maintain the entire story from a broad range of perspectives."[34] The LUMA team collects ephemera, interviews, photographs, audiovisual materials, and manuscript materials that document and help to fill the gap in the historical records of Louisville's underground yet highly influential indie, punk, and hardcore scenes. LUMA also uses an advisory board of various stakeholders on whom staff hoped to rely for advice on whom to reach out to and what to collect, but also for help making inroads in the community and gaining trust.[35]

As noted, the LUMA experience hews closely to that of the NBMSA, not only in the origin and materials that the two archives collect, but in the challenges faced in building the archives and working with donors and the community. Indeed, in their article, the LUMA team adeptly outlines the challenges and surprises of developing a local music scene archives, paying special attention to the unexpected, both positive and negative.

Background and Methodology of the New Brunswick Music Scene Archive

New Brunswick, New Jersey, home to Rutgers University, is a city with a long-thriving musical life. Birthplace of composer and stride pianist pioneer James P. Johnson and early musical base for singer, actor, and activist Paul Robeson, New Brunswick, and more specifically Rutgers, evolved into a site of experimental, proto-punk, punk, and rock music by the mid-twentieth century. For example, Lenny Kaye, a Rutgers alumnus who would later join the Patti Smith Group, played for a Rutgers fraternity with his first band, the Vandals, in 1964.[36] Two years later, the Velvet Underground performed on campus, with Andy Warhol projecting films in the background.[37] Bruce Springsteen played his first of several shows at The Ledge, the student center precursor, in 1971.[38] Meanwhile, the New Brunswick band Looking Glass, comprised of Rutgers students, hit number one on the Billboard Hot 100 chart with their enduring hit, "Brandy (You're a Fine Girl)."[39]

By the 1980s, New Brunswick was home to several live music venues including The Court Tavern, The Melody, and Patrix. During this era, college radio stations such as Rutgers's WRSU promoted and popularized "college rock," epitomized by New Brunswick bands such as The Smithereens and Crossfire Choir. The New Jersey hardcore scene also took root in New Brunswick in the 1980s, with bands such as Pleased Youth, Bouncing Souls, and Headstrong, which in turn led to the growth of all-ages "house party" shows in the city.[40]

In the early 1990s, even more venues began to open throughout New Brunswick, including a renewed version of The Roxy, The Bowl-O-Drome, Down Under, and Club 357. Enterprising young music fans in the city began to start music labels, including Well Primed Records, Jiffy Boy Records, and Powerbunny 4x4 Records, issuing local music on cassettes, CDs, and vinyl. Bands with heavier sounds, such as Lifetime, Deadguy, and Buzzkill, reached audiences beyond New Brunswick. As the 1990s progressed, the city's landscape underwent major changes due to downtown redevelopment and the expansion of corporations and the health-care industry (Johnson & Johnson World Headquarters is located in New Brunswick). By the end of the decade, between the loss of venues and

police crackdowns on house shows, the music literally moved underground—to basements.[41]

The New Brunswick basement scene took shape in the early 2000s, with shows held in off-campus student rentals. The scene caught the attention of music fans, Rutgers students and otherwise. Basement show veterans like Thursday, Screaming Females, and The Gaslight Anthem became critic and fan favorites. Don Giovanni Records, founded in New Brunswick in 2003, was the label of choice for numerous basement scene bands.[42] The label has found national success while continuing to represent a number of seminal basement scene musicians.

Rutgers Special Collections and University Archives had passively documented the history of the New Brunswick music scene from the late nineteenth century through most of the twentieth century. This documentation takes the form of sheet music, advertisements, concert programs, broadsides, and photographs. The business records of the National Musical String Company are part of the Manuscripts Collection. The Rutgers University Archives holds records of the music that has emanated from the university through the decades—bands, orchestras, glee clubs, and choirs. Campus concerts are documented in Rutgers yearbooks as well as in photograph collections.

Historically, though not explicitly stated in collection development policy, curators have had leeway to bring their own collecting interests and concerns to their positions within the greater mission of the Rutgers Special Collections and University Archives, which is to document and preserve all aspects of New Jersey history and culture. As curator of the Sinclair New Jersey Collection, a comprehensive print and audiovisual collection on New Jersey history and culture, and one of the largest collections of its kind in the country, I discovered gaps in the collection that I wanted to address.

One glaring absence was documentation of the long-lived and thriving local music scene—the independent rock, hardcore, and punk that has been associated with the city and Rutgers since the 1970s.[43] The small amount of twentieth-century material I encountered included a run of the influential zine *Jersey Beat*, which editor Jim Testa started in the early 1980s while a Rutgers student. I also found a small batch of flyers for shows by 1990s New Brunswick–based bands hidden and undescribed in the New Jersey Broadsides Collection. We held some issues of New Jersey music newspapers *Splatter Effect* and *East Coast Rocker* (later, *The Aquarian*), which sometimes documented New Brunswick music.

Rather serendipitously, a Rutgers media studies PhD student, who performed in New Brunswick bands throughout the 1990s and ran a local record label, approached SC/UA. He planned to conduct interviews with local record label founders for his doctoral research and was looking for a place to deposit the interview recordings and materials he hoped to collect from the label

owners. He thought Rutgers Libraries would be a logical, if not ideal, repository as a research institution. Additionally, he maintained his own personal archives and connections to others who would potentially be interested in donating to Rutgers Libraries. After some preliminary discussions, we decided we could collaboratively create an archives that would meld our respective expertise, connections, and interest in the context of Will Straw's concept of a scene as encompassing multiple musical practices. The New Brunswick Music Scene Archive was formally founded in the fall of 2015 with the conscious choice to use the term "scene" in its name. From the start, we envisioned the archives as a repository for the constellation of local music recordings and ephemera generated by the ever-changing music scene in New Brunswick.

Making Sense of the Scene through an Archival Lens

In the following examples, this article looks at three areas noted in the introduction that go beyond documentation strategy. One thread that runs through these examples is the archives as cultural space, one of many nodes in a networked scene, which, to reiterate, is a key element in the concept of scene. Conceiving of the archives as a scene locale is not something that documentation strategy takes into account. The scenes approach allows us to designate the physical archives itself and the archives' location in a library that is open to the public as well as the Rutgers community as a cultural space within the scene. From the start, we visualized the NBMSA as another scene locale, a space in the nearly vanished milieu. The venues, most of which in New Brunswick are gone; the record stores—many also gone; the basements in the constantly shifting landscape of student housing; the Rutgers campus; the favorite late-night, postshow diner; and now, the physical space of the archives, are all a part of the network that makes the scene.

The Scenes Approach beyond Documentation Strategy: The Politics of Archiving the Underground and the Scenes' Emphasis on Networks

New Brunswick's basement scene has been a central element of New Brunswick's larger music scene for the last two decades. While known among students, alumni, some locals, and a network of national and international touring bands, it is necessarily secretive. The music quite purposefully and literally moved underground as venues around town began to close. Names of houses where shows take place might be part of the local parlance, but to learn the location, one must be tied into the network or, following the instructions

of the scene tagline, "ask a punk." Like the broader DIY punk scene, the New Brunswick basement scene shifted to a paradigm of self-reliance and DIY networking. The basement scene developed in defiance of a university and city that some musicians felt were unsupportive of their work and sound. The basement scene is elusive in that it is also a shifting landscape of a transient Rutgers student population and its dorms and rental houses, an additional aspect that makes it difficult to document. While we are eager to document this key microscene, in part because it is important as a nurturing, supportive environment for numerous bands that have gone on to careers beyond New Brunswick, we recognize the challenges and accept that the NBMSA is not necessarily who should or can tell the story.

As Angela DiVeglia observes, "understanding the archives can be construed as an instrument of power, one begins to understand the complex and often uneasy relationship between archives and oppressed or marginalized communities."[44] Like the founders of the UCLA Punk Archive, the NBMSA founders understand a natural mistrust of an archives based at the very institution that has rejected them in not providing venues or support, even leading to situations where police would be called to a house to break up a basement show. Indeed, "many members of marginalized communities (not unrealistically) conflate archives with universities and the state."[45] Given these difficult dynamics, the New Brunswick basement scene is not necessarily a place where an archivist could, or should, embed. In its scenes approach, though, the NBMSA respects and embraces the authenticity and artistry of bands that play in the basement scene without invading and revealing their underground spaces. We must acknowledge and further secure the participants' sense of authenticity and identity, as well as their ideological and creative stances. The NBMSA can perhaps work to create a space for these bands and not just collect and document, but, like the DC Punk Archive, actively support and engage. As members of the scene ourselves (though not the basement scene), the NBMSA founders are invested in helping build community and supporting a scene authentically. For example, because of our desire to respect the current basement scene, we have accepted flyers from donors from older basement shows, once any need to be secretive has passed.

Through bringing performances that might normally occur in a New Brunswick basement to the library or another safe space on campus, perhaps the NBMSA can convey that the library/archives is independent enough of the university to be an authentic and legitimate stop, literally and metaphorically, on basement scene tours. Then the NBMSA can support the basement scene and honor its ethos by documenting, collecting, and preserving these bands' creative output according to their values and preferences.

By conceptualizing itself as a cultural space open to basement scene participants, the NBMSA might also invoke the scene's approach to perhaps even situate itself as a "site of resistance,"[46] as Kate Eichhorn argues archives and special collections can be. But, she contends, the onus is not just on special collections librarians and archivists, but on the researchers "working both inside and outside the academy to ensure that activist collections of all kinds continue to be activated in the present and for the future."[47] Eichhorn's idea speaks to the inclusive space the NBMSA aims to create for various stakeholders who can enter the archives and "activate" it as cultural space and in so doing, respond to Eichhorn's call to activate this material in the present and for the future by making it available for engagement by the public.[48]

The Role of Meaning and Memory

Bennett and Rogers note that ephemeral objects, such as souvenir ticket stubs, are nearly worthless as physical items. Yet, they found in conducting case studies, their respondents considered ticket stubs "as an essential part of the concert (a token) and as a record of concert particulars (dates, support acts, venue, etc.)." They observe an "excess of signification, importance and remembrance attached to physical souvenirs."[49] Along with vinyl, CD, and cassette releases, the NBMSA has acquired all manner of objects including a guitar, jacket patches, t-shirts, and set lists on scraps of paper. Items in an archival collection are suffused at the physical level with memory and meaning, and so even their materiality alone serves a purpose when engaging with a scene.

In a review of three recent publications that examine music preservation and archives (including a selection on regional music archives at the University of Illinois in *Music Preservation and Archiving Today*, the same volume that features "Building Punk Rock Collections at UCLA"), Adriana Cuervo notes that DIY and community archives do consider such an "emotional response" in building their archives and suggests that such meaning-making could be incorporated into traditional appraisal. In reviewing sociologist Sarah Baker's two books on DIY and community archives, Cuervo considers Baker's assertion that in DIY music archives, affect—feelings of love, emotion, and connection—are privileged and are a large part of cultural preservation. I agree with Baker and Cuervo that "we should think of ways to incorporate affect as a category of analysis as we assess the enduring value of potential acquisitions, or as another vital tool in outreach and information literacy activities."[50] Indeed, who among us as archivists has not had an emotional, powerful, visceral experience when encountering a document or object in the archives? For Cuervo, it was an interaction with personal effects of Ella Fitzgerald at the Institute of Jazz Studies at Rutgers–Newark.

In collection development policies and appraisal work, including in documentation strategy, archivists look for boundaries. But scenes are porous and contain many overlappings that, ironically, reflect documentation strategy's understanding of modern record creation. Is there a benefit, then, in loosening a collection development policy and appraisal work to allow for such a refashioning? Shifting the paradigm from value to meaning, or at least including meaning (to the creator, donor, and user), is an important consideration when developing a music archives. When we meet with donors, we collect their stories of scene participation, like mini oral histories, for preservation within the NBMSA. We record the creator's/donor's memories surrounding the items being donated. While these mini oral histories currently reside in a source file, they are open for research, will eventually be linked in the finding aid, and have the potential of future exhibition and social media use.

Accounting for meaning and memory in collection development and appraisal "assigns back to the individual a greater level of agency in forging community meaning."[51] Collections exist over time and can serve different meanings for different people but unite individuals by situating them in a site of shared memory—again, a cultural space. In the NBMSA, we endeavor to create a meaningful space, both physically and virtually through social media. With the assistance of donors who give the "stuff" they created and collected and that has held so much meaning for them in a certain space and time, the NBMSA links past and present meaning. In turn, donations to the archives also take on a new meaning—these materials are activated, in Eichhorn's term—as they enter the archives and become, for example, curricular resources for new generations of Rutgers undergraduates.

Cuervo also recommends archivists find a way to incorporate some measure of affect into public programming, because "making meaningful connections with the public we serve is as important as applying arrangement and description standards to our finding aids."[52] Through hosting stakeholders in public programs, the NBMSA creates a space for creative work that often goes beyond the music itself, but ties to the scene. (For example, the NBMSA has hosted documentary film screenings and a book talk.) As part of panel discussions around the New Brunswick music scene and archives, we ask each discussion participant to bring a meaningful scene-related item with them and to talk about it as a way to kick off the discussion. The panelists can donate the item if they wish, and some have. Items that have animated these discussions have included recordings, original artwork, jacket patches featuring local band names, and zines. One panel discussion participant even brought a painted door, an iconic item from the recording studio she co-runs. Such meaning-focused outreach and programming can drive future collecting and go beyond mere

preservation and access to demonstrate the value of a local music archives as an inclusive space of "participation and belonging."[53]

Advisory Boards as Anathema?

Advisory boards are a key component of documentation strategy and, as noted, have been used by numerous local music scene archives. But boards may come with their own issues around authority and privilege if their makeup emphasizes just "leaders" and "experts." This begs the questions: Who counts as an expert? Who gets left out of the conversation? The potentially privileged nature of an advisory board, even if it is formed with the best intention of a broad selection process, can take away from documentation strategy's concept, also key in a scenes approach, of local music archives as inclusive spaces. Doris Malkmus emphasizes documentation strategy's view that board members are crucial not only in "defining the topic, evaluating existing documentation, and writing the strategic plan," but their expertise, stature, and community contacts are what will make or break successful documentation strategy.[54] Unfortunately, this nearly end-all, be-all view of a "high caliber" board of advisors almost goes against documentation strategy's 1970s roots and its bottom-up instead of top-down approach. A scenes approach expects, even demands, that archivists remember that "by inviting amateur archivists and DIY repositories to participate in the larger archival narrative, we acknowledge their contributions to our broader mission, where meaningful musical activity is happening."[55]

Instead of an advisory board, UCLA opted for what it calls a "collective" to work on collection development and acquisitions in its punk archives. The collective includes numerous staff members and rotating faculty, staff, and students who have "long-standing knowledge of and experience with the Los Angeles music scene (or punk in general) as community members, fans, historians, and musicians."[56] This collective approach seems much more in the spirit of punk, modern archival practices, and, as at Rutgers, scenes. The NBMSA is shepherded by an archivist who came to the project largely because of her interest in local music and longtime participation in the local scene as a fan and, later, as a musician. But we recognize that our own knowledge and networks are limited, especially temporally. The NBMSA does not have an advisory board, but a significant network of informal advisors, even some involved in the basement scene, reflecting a diversity of roles in the scene, ages, races, and genders. The NBMSA values these advisors because of their differing perspectives and experiences within the scene at different times, in person and virtually, and because of their own virtual networks that we are not privy to, but which they use to inform us of goings-on. These advisors assist us with what Bennett and Rogers

call the "intangibles"——for example, online communities and varieties of uses of the music (e.g., in YouTube documentaries).[57]

It must be recognized that the NBMSA cofounders are also in a privileged position and that not every archivist building a music scene collection will already be embedded in the scene. Certainly, an approach like the DC Punk Archive's community archivist program, what I earlier referred to as a reverse embedding, can serve as a fix if archivists are not already embedded in a scene. That approach can also ensure that a variety of individuals and subcommunities, like the New Brunswick basement scene, are represented.

Conclusion and Notes on Future Uses of the Scenes Approach

In creating any archives, it is incumbent upon archivists to consider who is left out, as well as to realize that we may not realize who is being excluded. Bands in the New Brunswick music scene have been overwhelmingly white, male, and heterosexual, and the archives currently reflects this history. Again, drawing on Will Straw: an archives can reinforce stabilization of local historical continuities, and it can disrupt such continuities. While admittedly a rather vague consideration at this point, how might archivists use or even take inspiration from the scenes approach, with its "underpinning notion of the scene . . . to allow more activity into view"[58] to disrupt problematic continuities in the archives and dominant archival narratives? One example of a potential approach archivists can deploy in disrupting problematic continuities such as archival privilege and power is, again, to assign greater emphasis on meaning and affective value in collection development and donor relations.

Scenes can help archivists to get beyond the original limits of documentation strategy as far as geography and to better contend with documentation strategy's less-than-successful call for cooperative, networked collecting. The original notion of a scene, much like documentation strategy, focused on a specific geographic region. But that original concept has evolved into what Richard A. Peterson and Andy Bennett name "translocal" scenes, which consider the fact that local music scene participants are often in contact and making exchanges with local scenes elsewhere. Those connections are now more than ever made virtually."[59] Indeed, Doris Malkmus notes that "digital connectivity . . . facilitates the communication and collaboration called for with a documentation strategy approach."[60] Further research is needed into how scene thinking, applied to documentation strategy, could potentially allow archivists to connect their unique local music scenes to translocal and virtual scenes. Archivists might look to Boatman's experience "opening up" the archives at NYU, but apply that approach to digital spaces. What other fields and theories might help archivists contend with our ever-expanding networks and digital connections and myriad

other challenges? We do not have to adapt other approaches and theories whole-sale (which we have not always done with our own documentation strategy), but consider outside approaches as ways to augment, update, or expand our own. Likewise, archivists might look to gaps in other fields or areas of librarianship where archival theory could make a contribution.

Additional research might be done on how archivists can use the scenes approach to "open up" our own professional spaces and networks to work collaboratively to help alleviate one of the constant criticisms of documentation strategy, namely, lack of resources and funding, as well as deepen meanings and connections for stakeholders and create new outreach and research possibilities.

While it does not completely shift the paradigm, a scenes perspective or approach in developing a local music archives, and certainly in just about any contemporary collecting, enriches documentation strategy and an embedded archival approach, both of which numerous local music archives use. In connecting the scenes approach with documentation strategy in archival cultural memory work, this article contributes to emerging discourses on the questions of what matters in terms of musical community; the relationship between place, location, space, and scene; and archival inclusivity. As Andy Bennett and Ian Rogers state, and as the NBMSA takes up as its core work, through the concept of scene "we can facilitate a deeper understanding of the significance of scenes as cultural spaces of collective participation and belonging."[61]

Notes

[1] Society of American Archivists, *Dictionary of Archives Terminology*, s.v. "documentation strategy," https://dictionary.archivists.org/entry/documentation-strategy.html, captured at https://perma.cc/9T6X-4MNV.

[2] Will Straw, "Scenes and Sensibilities," *Public* nos. 22–23 (2001): 249, https://public.journals.yorku.ca/index.php/public/article/view/30335.

[3] Straw, "Scenes and Sensibilities," 253.

[4] Straw, "Scenes and Sensibilities," 254.

[5] Andy Bennett and Ian Rogers, *Popular Music Scenes and Cultural Memory* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), 2.

[6] Bennett and Rogers, *Popular Music Scenes*, 33–34.

[7] Bennett and Rogers, *Popular Music Scenes*, 34.

[8] Helen Willa Samuels, "Who Controls the Past," *American Archivist* 49, no. 2 (1986): 116, https://doi.org/10.17723/aarc.49.2.t76m2130txw40746.

[9] Samuels, "Who Controls the Past," 112.

[10] Samuels, "Who Controls the Past," 115.

[11] Larry J. Hackman and Joan Warnow-Blewett, "The Documentation Strategy Process: A Model and a Case Study," *American Archivist* 50, no. 1 (1987): 46, https://doi.org/10.17723/aarc.50.1.uxr6766121033766.

[12] Hackman and Warnow-Blewett, "The Documentation Strategy Process," 47.

13 Terry Abraham and Scott Cline, "Collection Policy of Documentation Strategy: Theory and Practice," *American Archivist* 54 (1991): 52, https://doi.org/10.17723/aarc.54.1.v2323483077xr227.

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15 Malkmus, "Documentation Strategy," 408.

16 Malkmus, "Documentation Strategy," 385.

17 Malkmus, "Documentation Strategy," 390.

18 Abraham and Cline, "Collection Policy," 52.

19 Ellen Garrison, "The Very Model of a Modern Major General: Documentation Strategy and the Center for Popular Music," *Provenance, Journal of the Society of Georgia Archivists* 7, no. 2 (1989): 31, https://digitalcommons.kennesaw.edu/provenance/vol7/iss2/3.

20 Garrison, "The Very Model," 29.

21 René Boatman, "A New Archival Model? An Examination of Documentation Strategy Via the Fales Library and Special Collections' Downtown New York Collection," *Journal of Archival Organization* 1, no. 2 (2002): 45, https://doi.org/10.1300/J201v01n02_03.

22 Lynne M. Thomas, "The Embedded Curator: Reexamining the Documentation Strategy of Archival Acquisitions in a Web 2.0 Environment," *RBM : a Journal of Rare Books, Manuscripts, and Cultural Heritage* 13, no. 1 (2012): 38, https://doi.org/10.5860/rbm.13.1.368.

23 For the sake of simplicity, I refer primarily to "local" music archives throughout, but "regional" is implied.

24 In Sean Luyk, "Scene but Not Heard: Collecting Local Music," *CAML Review/Revue de L'ACBM* 41, no. 1 (April/Avril 2013) Luyk builds a case for the usefulness of the scenes approach as a way for music librarians to build local music collections. Luyk views the scenes approach as a modern way to document a range of musical practices, from performance to distribution to fan activities. In Stacy Allison-Cassin, "A Scenes Approach to Metadata Models for Music," *Journal of Library Metadata* 16 (2016) Allison-Cassin examines the scenes approach as a potential remedy for the problem that current metadata models for music cataloging do not take into account key aspects of music production and consumption and therefore neglect the importance of networks and place and how they impact music-making.

25 Michele Casto and Bobbie Dougherty, "DC Punk Archive: Origins," *Library as Incubator Project*, March 31, 2015, http://www.libraryasincubatorproject.org/?p=16340.

26 Michele Casto and Bobbie Dougherty, "Punk at the Library," *American Libraries* (May 1, 2017): 16, https://americanlibrariesmagazine.org/2017/05/01/punk-at-dc-public-library.

27 Casto and Dougherty, "Punk at the Library," 16.

28 DC Public Library, "DC Punk Archive," https://www.dclibrary.org/punk.

29 Megan Fraser and Melissa Haley, "Building Punk Rock Collections at UCLA Library Special Collections," in *Music Preservation and Archiving Today*, ed. Nora Guthrie and Scott Carlson (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2018), 49.

30 Fraser and Haley, "Building Punk Rock," 50.

31 Fraser and Haley, "Building Punk Rock," 50–51.

32 Fraser and Haley, "Building Punk Rock," 55.

33 Bennett and Rogers, *Popular Music Scenes*, 4.

34 Caroline Daniels et al., "Saving All the Freaks on the Life Raft: Blending Documentation Strategy with Community Engagement to Build a Local Music Archives," *American Archivist* 78, no. 1 (2015): 239, http://dx.doi.org/10.17723/0360-9081.78.1.238.

35 While LUMA staff hoped the board would remain involved during down times between meetings, the advisory board has been less engaged than expected (p. 253).

36 Kevin Coyne, "It's Only Rock'n'Roll (but He Loves It)," *Rutgers Magazine* (Spring 2017), https://magazine.rutgers.edu/features/its-only-rock-n-roll.

37 Victor Bockris and Gerard Malanga, *Up-Tight: The Velvet Underground Story* (New York: Cooper Square Press, 1983), 26–28.

[38] "The Sound of Music," *Rutgers Magazine* (Fall 2016), https://ucmweb.rutgers.edu/250magazine/social-life/the-sound-of-music.html, captured at https://perma.cc/JC46-AEKS.

[39] "Looking Glass," *Billboard*, https://www.billboard.com/music/looking-glass, captured at https://perma.cc/4J98-VSZ4.

[40] Christine A. Lutz et al., "Going Against the Archival Grain: Case Studies of Pop Culture Archives of a Music Scene, Regional Zines, and Local Beer," *Archives and Records* 41, no. 3 (2020): 256–57, http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/23257962.2020.1810005.

[41] Lutz et al., "Going Against," 257.

[42] Don Giovanni Records, https://www.dongiovannirecords.com.

[43] It should be acknowledged that New Brunswick also has active jazz and R&B scenes. New Brunswick has been and is home to significant Hungarian and Polish populations and African and Latino diasporas. To date, any documentation of these music scenes in Rutgers's SC/UA has primarily been passively acquired.

[44] Angela L. DiVeglia, "Accessibility, Accountability, and Activism: Models for LGBT Archives," in *Make Your Own History: Documenting Feminist and Queer Activism in the 21st Century*, ed. Lyz Bly and Kelly Wooten (Los Angeles: Litwin Books, 2012), 72.

[45] DiVeglia, "Accessibility," 72.

[46] Kate Eichhorn. *The Archival Turn in Feminism: Outrage in Order* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2013), 160.

[47] Eichhorn, *The Archival Turn*, 160.

[48] Eichhorn, *The Archival Turn*, 160.

[49] Bennett and Rogers, *Popular Music Scenes*, 135.

[50] Adriana Cuervo, "Review Essay: DIY Music Archiving," *American Archivist* 81, no. 2 (2018): 520, https://doi.org/10.17723/0360-9081-81.2.516.

[51] Bennett and Rogers, *Popular Music Scenes*, 4.

[52] Cuervo, "Review Essay," 523.

[53] Bennett and Rogers, *Popular Music Scenes*, 2.

[54] Malkmus, "Documentation Strategy," 397–98.

[55] Cuervo, "Review Essay," 520.

[56] Fraser and Haley, "Building Punk Rock," D49.

[57] Bennett and Rogers, *Popular Music Scenes*, 146–47.

[58] Bennett and Rogers, *Popular Music Scenes*, 34.

[59] Andy Bennett and Richard A. Peterson, "Introducing Music Scenes," in *Music Scenes: Local, Translocal, and Virtual*, ed. Andy Bennett and Richard A. Peterson (Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 2004), 9.

[60] Malkmus, "Documentation Strategy," 408.

[61] Bennett and Rogers, *Popular Music Scenes*, 2.

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