

# Remembered History, Archival Discourse, & the September 11 Digital Archive

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# Memory Boom: Jay Winter

- 1890s – 1920s: First generation of the 20<sup>th</sup> century memory boom
  - Remembrance of the First World War
- 1970s – 1980s: Second memory boom
  - Remembrance of the Second World War and the Holocaust

# Remembered History: John Lukacs

- History is the remembered – and not merely the recorded – past.
- The remembered past – a much larger category than the recorded past.

# Evolution of Historical Inquires

- 18<sup>th</sup> century: the narrative past
  - Written and read as literature
- 19<sup>th</sup> century: the recorded past
  - Examined and scrutinized as science
- 20<sup>th</sup> century: the remembered past:
  - Studied as a form of thought



# Foundation of Archival Discourse

- History as the recorded past
- Association of the meaning of history with the meaning of records
- Value of records as historical evidence should be assured, not assumed
- Archival methods to preserve the historical value of records

# New Archival Discourse

- Traditional: maintaining the natural course of production and accumulation of archival records
- New condition: generating records that document the “present representation of the past”
- New archival discourse: embracing recorded history as well as remembered history

# Case Study

- The September 11 Digital Archive  
<http://911digitalarchive.org/>
- The formation of collections
- The nature of records
- The pattern of representation

# Formation of Collections

- Coherent theme
- Contributing records community
- Memory collecting/storage mechanism
- Long-term preservation strategy



# Nature of Records

- Experience, recollection, and reflection
- Moment of experience and moment of documentation
- Memory - refreshed and reinforced by commemorative activities to stimulate a new moment of documentation

# Pattern of Representation

- Repository – purpose and scope
- Category – media or material type
- Collection – originating source
- Digital object – content and context

# Conclusion

- Soliciting voluntary contributions to a theme-based collecting repository
- Recording recollections and reflections of personal experience
- Organizing and representing collectively-contributed, memory-based records