

ONE BOOK



ONE PROFESSION

“**ONE BOOK, ONE PROFESSION**” is a group reading initiative sponsored by the Publications Board of the Society of American Archivists (*see archivists.org/one-book-one-profession*). Join your colleagues in reading, talking about, and building on ideas from the 2019–20 selection, *Archival Values: Essays in Honor of Mark A. Greene*. To assist in facilitating your discussion, the first three questions pertain to the whole book. The questions after that correspond to the various essays grouped by the respective core values of archivists.

General Questions

1. How has your perspective on archival work changed because of these essays? How did they challenge your assumptions about the core values?
2. Which core values do you find most useful in your daily work? How do you apply them?
3. How might you use the ideas in *Archival Values* to help educate resource allocators?

On History and Memory

4. How do you see the core value of History and Memory serving as a source of archival power—whether real, symbolic, or imaginary—in your own work?
5. Does reframing the core value as Story and Meaning have significance for your own work? Why or why not?
6. How does the core value of History and Memory / Story and Meaning empower you as an archivist? How might it shape the future of archives and the work of future archivists?

On Social Responsibility

7. Do you agree or disagree with the Core Values Statement on Social Responsibility? Should archivists focus instead on their own institution's needs and those of its researchers and donors?
8. How would you balance your institution's needs and expectations regarding selection, appraisal, and access with concerns for the public good?

On Diversity

9. How can diversity be improved within SAA and the archival profession?
10. How have you and your institution actively worked toward diversifying the archives workforce and collections?

On Accountability

11. How do issues of accountability affect the professional lives of archivists? How do they affect decisions about preservation?
12. How can archivists play a role in making sure a government is transparent to its citizens?

On Responsible Custody

13. The trust section of the SAA Code of Ethics concludes with the statement: "[Archivists] strive to balance the sometimes-competing interests of all stakeholders." Kenneth W. Duckett's approach to the Harding letters at the Ohio Historical Society was nearly the opposite approach from how the Idaho State Special Collections and Archives handled their photographs of Native American tribes. What other solutions would have modeled Responsible Custody?
14. Ownership of the archival record can be challenging as the state of North Carolina learned while trying to recover historical records, or the American Heritage Center experienced while trying to transfer unwanted collections. Do such approaches create a tension with other aspects of the core values or Code of Ethics?
15. Thomas Staley's acquisition of international archival collections for the Harry Ransom Research Center is not unique, and the removal of records from their native lands has received increased scrutiny in recent years. Does the removal of archival collections conflict with the core values? In what cases would such removal be appropriate?

On Selection

16. How can selection strategies, such as the Minnesota Method, help us to realize collecting goals, such as bringing a greater degree of diversity to the archives?
17. What are the advantages of implementing a selection strategy like the Minnesota Method? What might be the challenges?

On Access and Use

18. What is the difference between “physical access” and “intellectual access”? “Equal access” and “equitable access”?
19. How does the sheer volume of digital data complicate physical and intellectual access? What steps can your repository take to mitigate barriers to accessing digital archives?
20. How does digital data complicate privacy protections? What steps can be taken to mitigate privacy violations in the use of large sets of digital archives?
21. What roles does outreach lay in providing access, especially to commonly overlooked documentation?

On Preservation

22. What is the correlation between digital preservation and environmental sustainability? In what other areas of professional practices might our carbon footprint be noticeable?
23. Does the correlation between digital preservation and energy usage warrant a reevaluation of professional practices? If so, what practices would be the easiest to give up? What outcomes would your users accept?
24. Other associations have included Sustainability in their core values. Should SAA codify Sustainability as a core value? What would be your paragraph description of the Sustainability value?

On Advocacy

25. In Chapter 18, a conflict arose when Nancy Freeman wanted to keep sensitive records—with an extended privacy restriction—in the archives while legal counsel wanted to return the records to the donor organization. How would you have handled this conflict? How might you handle other conflicts with advocacy activities?

On Service

26. Why is it critical for an archives to grow its institutional influence and impact in for-profit organizations?
27. Why is the concept of servant leadership a viable strategy for an institutional archivist to employ?

On Professionalism

28. Respond to the critical theory interrogation of the concepts of profession and professionalism that judges them to be elements of social control and tools of oppression. Should professionalism be defined in this manner and should it be included as one of the core values?