

Enhancing Evidentiary Work through the Lens of Human-Centered Computing

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Abstract: The Augmented Processing Table project (APT) is an ongoing, iterative study that is producing results in terms of designing and rethinking archival technology, processes, and methodologies. The project is collaboration between researchers in Archival Science (Ciaran B. Trace) and Human Computer Interaction (Luis Francisco-Revilla) to pioneer the use of large interactive surfaces and tabletop computing as tools to aid in the teaching and practice of archival processing. The APT work to date has included the development of two prototype large-scale surface computing devices for processing and making accessible collections of digitized material. In the process, the project has proposed and evaluated novel archival practices (digitize-first, process-second), furthered the understanding of current archival arrangement practices (for both paper based and digitized material), introduced explicit metrics for evaluating arrangements (from the perspectives of narrative, record keeping, perspectives, materiality and coherence), and identified patterns of activities that people follow when arranging collections, and correlated them with the quality of the resulting arrangements. This presentation will discuss some of these findings from the formal evaluation of the second APT prototype.

About the authors:

Dr. Ciaran B. Trace is an assistant professor at the School of Information at The University of Texas at Austin where she teaches courses on archives and records management. As part of the study of material culture, Ciaran's research examines the relationship and intersection of people and everyday objects in society. An ongoing research focus is the study of the nature, meaning, and function of everyday writing, recording, and recordkeeping (with a particular focus on organizational document creation and use, and the role of written literacies in the lives of children and young adults). Another research strand looks at how and why individuals and institutions collect material culture, the intersection of material culture and information behavior, and digital materiality (including the study of the artifactual nature of computers, computer systems, and digital objects). Her research also looks at the nature of archives and the archival profession (with a particular focus on studying the current state of archival education, and on studying contemporary archival work and work practices through the lens of human-centered computing). Ciaran has a postgraduate Diploma in Archival Studies from

University College Dublin and a PhD in Library and Information Science from the University of California, Los Angeles.

Sarah Buchanan is a doctoral student in Information Studies at the University of Texas at Austin. Her research interests in archival studies include archival arrangement and description of special collections, community archives as sources of identity and memory, and interdisciplinary research in digital classics and the digital humanities. She is interested in researching provenance and preservation of archival materials and archaeological artifacts. Currently she is a member of the Augmented Processing Table research team investigating arrangements of paper and digital materials. Sarah has also served as an archivist with the Neon Museum as well as with academic and museum collections. She is active in the Society of American Archivists and helped launch the Bruin Archives Project (BAP) in 2008 as co-president of the SAA Student Chapter at UCLA. She received an M.L.I.S. from the University of California, Los Angeles and a B.A. with Distinction in Classical Studies from the University of Pennsylvania.

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