



The title of our talk is “Finding Common Ground: Introducing Early Career Librarians to Archival Work”

Anastasia will lead off our presentation by providing an overview of Resident Librarian programs generally and specifically the program at Temple University Libraries. Then I [Jessica] will discuss how members of the Special Collections Research Center within Temple Libraries developed a project plan for Anastasia’s residency rotation in that department; the methods and tools we used to train and educate her on archival practice; the project deliverables; and the lessons learned. Then I [Jessica] will turn the presentation back over to Anastasia to share her own reflections about the project and its impact on her current work.

Residency Programs



- Early-career postgraduate programs
- Limited-term positions (1-3 years)
- Approximately 45 other programs in the United States
 - Some specialize in archives (ex, 2015 L.A. as Subject Archival Residency)

Association of College & Research Libraries Residency Interest Group (2017). *Programs*. Retrieved from http://acrlala.org/residency/?page_id=2723

A little background on library residency programs: These are limited-term positions aimed at early-career postgraduates. Many have a stated purpose of launching early-career information professionals into practice. Most last 1-3 years. The majority are in academic libraries, though there are others in federal libraries, public libraries, archives, and other research centers as well.

Some, such as mine, are structured to allow residents to explore by rotating through various areas. Others are specialized; I know of at least two residencies intended for archivists, including the LA as Subject Archival Residency which was hosted by multiple institutions in the LA area in 2015, and the University of Chicago's residency, which was advertised as a digital archivist residency in 2015.

The Association of College and Research Libraries has a Residency Interest Group, which maintains a website with a robust directory of existing programs in the US, and boosts residency job postings. If you look at a combination of the current program directory, which was last updated in Fall of 2016 and the most recent job postings, there are an estimated 45-50 active programs in the US at this time.

Temple Libraries Residency Program



- 0 Program is in pilot phase
- 0 2-year appointment with built-in mentorship
- 0 1st year: rotations through multiple departments
- 0 2nd year: plan and execute a major project
 - 0 Rights statement evaluation for digital items in PA Digital (service hub to Digital Public Library of America)

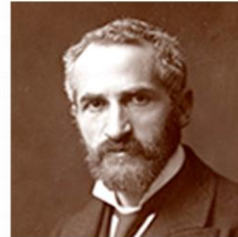
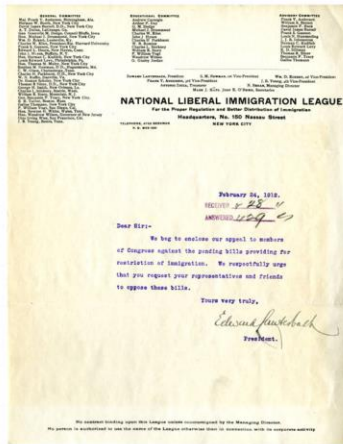
The residency program at Temple, started in the fall of 2015, is a two year post graduate appointment for early career librarians and serves as an opportunity to develop skills and professional growth in academic librarianship. Residents have the opportunity to participate in library committees, councils, and task forces and are encouraged to engage professionally by delivering presentations, attending conferences, or even writing for professional publications during the residency. The first year of the residency consists of four 3-month rotations where the resident librarian is embedded within a particular department. During the second year, residents commit to working in a single department with the intent to work on a project based on the resident's interests and the needs and priorities of the department.

Framing the Project

- 0 12 week rotation @ half time = 6 weeks of work time
June-September 2016
- 0 Survey, process, and create access tools for a small collection
- 0 Select, scan, and create metadata for subset of collection for folder level digitization

Discussions about the scope of Anastasia's rotation in the SCRC began approximately 6 weeks prior to the rotation start date. With the knowledge that she had a strong interest in technical services and in particular metadata and digital libraries, the decision was made early on to have a digitization component. Although I would serve as Anastasia's supervisor for the project, the director of the SCRC, Margery Sly and the Coordinator of Technical Services, Katy Rawdon, who also served as Anastasia's mentor for the duration of her residency were part of the initial project planning process. We agreed that to construct a truly comprehensive experience, it would be beneficial for her to participate in virtually all steps of the arrangement and description process from surveying the collection to creating full descriptive access tools. We ambitiously planned to incorporate these elements into a 12 week project timeline that was in reality only 6 weeks because Anastasia was splitting her rotation between two departments: the SCRC and Digital Library Initiatives.

The Collection



In preparation for the rotation, I reviewed a half dozen collections as potential candidates for processing before the decision was made to use the Louis Edward Levy Family Papers as the basis for the project. It was selected for a number of reasons: 1. at only 4.5 linear feet, the size of the collection made it a feasible option to process in the time allotted 2. the content and topics covered in the collection were of high research value, and at least in part were of personal interest to Anastasia 3. it complimented another collection in our repository that was recently processed by a project archivist 4. was a good candidate for folder level digitization given the date range, format, and relative condition of the records in the collection.

The Project Plan

- 0 Overview of project goals
- 0 List of action items
- 0 Reading list
- 0 Week by week schedule

In order to create some structure, I developed a project plan to serve as a reference point for Anastasia throughout the project. Drafted to resemble a syllabus with a weekly schedule, the project plan outlined the main objectives, the various action items to be completed, and a bibliography of assigned readings on archival fundamentals, theory, and standards. The plan also contained pointers to the location of institutional information Anastasia might need during the rotation such as templates and guideline documents on our shared network drive and the location of archival supplies in the building. This was done in an effort to allow Anastasia to work as independently as possible.

A Day in the Life

A blue speech bubble with a white outline, containing the text "What do archivists do?" in a black, handwritten-style font. The bubble is positioned in the center of the page, below the title "A Day in the Life".

At the outset of the rotation before any processing activities began, the department staff conducted an orientation tour a sort of walking tour of our working environment as a way to both introduce Anastasia to staff and see the collection storage spaces, but also to allow each staff person to spend approximately 15-20 minutes casually talking about his or her daily work activities and responsibilities. This provided an opportunity for Anastasia to both hear and at least in some respect see the breadth of work being done across the department. This included everything from collection development policies and accessioning procedures to circulation of materials from our off-site storage facility and digital forensics. The impetus for the tour was to give Anastasia a broader sense of what we do and how the activities of the other staff might connect or influence the results of the processing and digitization activities as part of her project.

The Readings

- Fundamentals series
- Schellenberg
- Greene and Meissner: MPLP
- Code of ethics
- SAA glossary
- DACS
- And others



Instead of conducting a complete training program at the outset of the project, we opted to take a more iterative approach combining education and training throughout the project as each element or next step of processing and subsequently digitization occurred. Even with the limited project timeline, assigned readings on archival theory and standards were a key component to our project plan as it was a way to present and reinforce the ways in which archivists arrange and describe materials as opposed to the more traditional library or museum approach. We felt this would help set the foundation for thinking archivally.

The Hands On

- 0 Manuals and templates
- 0 Systems training
- 0 Tutorials
- 0 Lots of examples

I relied heavily on established documentation at our institution to aid me in walking Anastasia through the process of creating various documents ranging from a survey record and archival processing plan to a finding aid. By using the document templates in conjunction with completed examples during training, I was easily able to illustrate how the end product of her work should look. Although I provided Anastasia with guidance on how to create this documentation, the decision making still fell to her. Mini tutorials and step by step instructions on handling and physical processing activities such as sorting, selecting enclosures, and labeling were provided on an as needed basis.

The Processing

- 0 Survey collection and create record in collections management database
- 0 Create and implement processing plan
- 0 Arrange, describe, and rehouse collection
- 0 Identify and prioritize materials for folder level digitization
- 0 Create access tools: finding aid and collection level MARC record

Although not a significantly complex collection, rehousing of the Levy Family Papers had been done at some point prior to the project. Original folders had been replaced and there were no folder titles except for dates. Since it was a family papers collection, there were multiple creators and materials related to both personal and professional activities of the family members. During the initial survey, these factors did not appear to be significant, however in hindsight, I believe they contributed to increasing the overall time spent processing the collection and complicating the creation of the descriptive access tools.

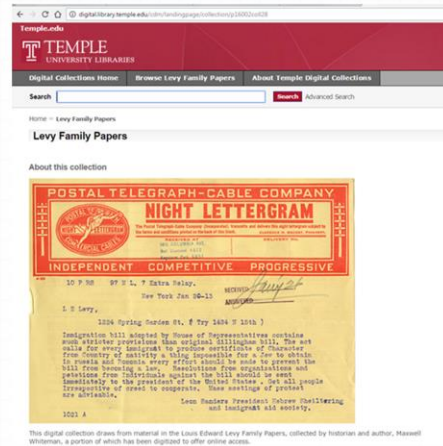
The Digitization

- Create workflow and metadata template
- Scan collection materials
- Create folder level metadata
- Upload content/metadata to content management system
- Perform quality control
- Create landing page for collection

The full extent of the digitization component of the project was not outlined in the project plan. Although we anticipated digitizing some subset of the processed collection, we were unable to project just how much material would be scanned. Although Anastasia had some familiarity with the content management system we use at Temple for our digital collections, which is Contentdm, it was still necessary to train her on institutional scanning practices and folder level metadata creation. This training was done in conjunction with members of the our Digital Library Initiatives department and another archivist who happens to be on the panel today, Courtney Smerz, who was previously involved with another folder level digitization project at Temple.

The Results

- 0 Collection processed
- 0 Access tools created
- 0 8 folders digitized
- 0 Blog post



Overall, the project was very successful, however we did not stick to the timeline in our project plan. The physical processing of the collection took longer than anticipated and as such did not leave enough time within the defined rotation to complete final revisions of the access tools and certain elements of the digitization component beyond selection of content, systems training, and creation of the folder level metadata template. Work on the project continued after the formal end of the rotation on a limited part time basis for an additional 7 weeks. During that time, Anastasia did complete all major tasks outlined in the project plan, with just a few minor tasks completed by myself in the weeks following which were both components of the digital collection.

Lessons Learned

- 0 What led to our success
- 0 Would we could have done differently...if we had more time

Beyond the common sense lessons of being well prepared and organized before the outset of the project, there are a few things I think were integral to our overall success: 1. the support and assistance of colleagues for portions of the training and during the project planning process took some added pressure off myself as the supervisor, made it more of a collaborative experience overall, and allowed additional voices to be part of the project 2. the one on one nature of the project allowed for significant time and attention to be paid if and when Anastasia had questions about processes or procedures that could be addressed relatively quickly 3. and finally buy in. Anastasia came to the project with a willingness and openness to the overall process and the work generally

There were, however a number of things I think could have improved the overall training experience for both Anastasia and myself. 1. Creating a test processing exercise. I did consider doing this, but scrapped the idea thinking the time necessary to prepare such a practice exercise would not be worth the effort, however after completing the project, I feel as though even with a limited timeline such an exercise would be valuable given how difficult it can be for first time processors to grasp certain concepts like original order and arrangement. 2. Group discussion of assigned readings with other archivists on staff. This is actually something we are currently doing with another resident librarian who is completing a rotation in the SCRC, although that rotation is focused on primary source instruction and archival literacy. This has been very successful and generally a rewarding experience for those who

participate 3. Some form of qualitative assessment. Although I very informally asked Anastasia for any feedback she may have, there was no structured or formal assessment component integrated into the project. Even a few carefully crafted questions about learning objectives at key points of the project process could have provided me with valuable feedback about how successful or useful elements of the training were.

Now I'll turn the presentation back over to Anastasia to share her thoughts about the project.

Reflections from the Resident Librarian

- Challenging concepts:
 - Arrangement and original order
 - MPLP
- Challenging logistics:
 - Half-time rotation
 - Afternoon time slot

I found a few things particularly challenging, some of which had to do with being a first-time processor, and some of which had to do with the logistics of the rotation.

Reflections from the Resident Librarian

- Fun & gratifying aspects:
 - Background research
 - MARC record
 - Blog post
 - End-to-end experience

The parts that I enjoyed or found gratifying greatly outnumbered the parts that I found challenging.

Reflections from the Resident Librarian

- Influences from librarian background:
 - Item-oriented
- Influences on present projects & career goals:
 - Present collaborations (PA Digital)
 - Planning for rights training (PA Digital)
 - Future goals - digital librarianship

My experience with this rotation was strongly influenced by my background, and in turn, this rotation has strong influences on my current work and future goals.