

Archives is the New Pink: A Content Analysis of National and Regional Archives Conference Presentation Topics

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Abstract

Conferences provide an essential venue for archival professionals, educators, and students to network, collaborate, and share insights into current priorities, challenges, and themes. This study seeks to understand the field's evolving trends by conducting a content analysis (Krippendorff, 2013) of conference papers, presentations, and panels presented between 2018-2021 at national and regional conferences organized by the Society of American Archivists, New England Archivists, Mid-Atlantic Regional Archives Conference, Midwest Archives Conference, Society of Southwest Archives, Northwest Archivists. Not only will this research provide broader insight into the change and continuity of topics, priorities, and challenges in the field over time, thereby suggesting what topics the field collectively finds most vital, but by spanning the pandemic it will also explore how this global event impacted the focus of the field and the sheer number of papers, presentations, and panels included. Additionally, a content analysis of professional venues provides a useful data point to be juxtaposed with graduate syllabi to determine the level of thematic alignment between professional and educational perspectives.

About the authors:

Ashley Todd-Diaz, Ph.D., is Assistant University Librarian for Special Collections and University Archives at Towson University in Baltimore. Her research interests are libraries and archives as organizations, graduate archival education, and archival literacy. Her dissertation explored the physical and virtual power structures and dynamics surrounding archives and libraries that exist within a parent-child organizational relationship, and how those dynamics are communicated to and perceived by external stakeholders. She is incoming Chair of the Society of American Archivists' (SAA) Archives Management Section and incoming Vice Chair of SAA's Committee on Education. She holds a PhD from Emporia State University, an MSIS with a concentration in archives and records management from SUNY Albany, and an MA in English literature from New York University.

Alex H. Poole is an associate professor at Drexel University's College of Computing and Informatics. He studies archives and records management; diversity, equity, and inclusion; social justice; digital curation; and digital humanities. Poole has received the Donald G. Davis Article Award from the American Library Association (ALA), the Justin Winsor Library History Essay Award from ALA, the Jesse H. Shera Award for Distinguished Published Research from ALA, the Bob Williams History Fund Best Research Paper Award from the Association for Information Science and Technology (ASIS&T), the Arline Custer Memorial Award for Best Article from the Mid-Atlantic Regional Archives Conference (MARAC), and the Theodore Calvin Pease Award from the Society of American Archivists (SAA). He was educated at Williams College, Brown University, and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

