

Utilizing Focus Group Research Data to Create Preservation Curricula for Veterans

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During the past year, the Virtual Footlocker Project (VFP) team created two curricula—one for active-duty military and veterans and another for cultural heritage workers. The former curriculum is designed to provide military personnel with the skills and knowledge to identify important personal records, prioritize items for long-term storage, apply basic strategies for organizing and preserving their records, and locate additional resources. The latter curriculum provides cultural heritage workers with a foundation in the key challenges of personal military records, how to implement best practices when working with veterans, how to utilize the VFP veterans curriculum, and how to design and implement community-based projects focused on veterans. The proposed presentation will discuss how the VFP utilized its prior focus group data to design the two curricula with specific attention on the feedback mechanisms created for its future use.

About the authors:

Edward Benoit, III is Associate Director and Associate Professor in the School of Library & Information Science at Louisiana State University. He is the coordinator of the archival studies and cultural heritage resource management programs. He received an MA in History, MLIS and PhD in Information Studies from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. His research focuses on participatory and community archives, non-traditional archival materials, climate change, and archival education. He is the founder and director of the **Virtual Footlocker Project**, which examines the personal archiving habits of the 21st century soldier in an effort to develop new digital capture and preservation technologies to support their needs.

Allan A. Martell is an assistant professor at the School of Information and Library Science at Indiana University. His research centers on social memories of violence such as civil wars, genocides, or dictatorships. In his work, Martell traces the interactions of youths with historical representations of violence in cultural heritage organizations — such as memorials, museum exhibitions and archival records — and how the curatorial decisions around such representations shape these interactions. He received an M.S. in Digital Media from the Georgia Institute of Technology and a Ph.D. in Information from the University of Michigan.