



# NEWS RELEASE

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Contact: Jenny Schooley  
312.606.0722 or [jschooley@archivists.org](mailto:jschooley@archivists.org)

## **Paul Conway Receives Writing Award from the Society of American Archivists**

CHICAGO—The Society of American Archivists' (SAA) Fellows' Ernst Posner Award will be awarded to Paul Conway during a ceremony on August 26, 2011, at *ARCHIVES 360°*, SAA's 75th Annual Meeting in Chicago.

Conway, associate professor in the School of Information at the University of Michigan, was honored for his article "Modes of Seeing: Digitized Photographic Archives and the Experienced User," in *The American Archivist* (vol. 73, no. 2). Established in 1982, the award recognizes an outstanding essay dealing with some facet of archival administration, history, theory, and/or methodology that was published during the preceding year in the journal.

Conway examines the transformative nature of digitization and posits a new theory for understanding how highly skilled researchers derive meaning and value from digitized photograph collections. He brings a variety of disciplinary perspectives to bear to set the research context. The methodology is carefully rendered and its application ably illustrated. The archival values derived from a digitized photograph collection are convincing and the exegesis of the interview transcripts concise and apt. Although the research is keenly focused, the implications are important and broadly applicable.

As one Awards Committee member attested, "The cogent outcome is a new theory of archives—modes of seeing—that exhorts archivists to look beyond advanced technical specifications to a better understanding of the variety of expectations that experienced users place on the digital surrogates in drafting best practices for digitized photographic archives. Conway's article is well organized, thorough, and of significance to any archives planning digital projects."

Another Awards Committee member noted that "The importance of the article lay in its assertion that, 'As a qualitative exploration of user perspectives on the digitized photographic archive, this research lays the groundwork for a quantitatively grounded study of end-user behavior.'"

The award is named for Ernst Posner, an SAA Fellow and former president as well as a distinguished author. Previous recipients include Scott Cline of the Seattle Municipal Archives, Geoffrey Yeo of University College London, and Magia Ghetu Krause and Elizabeth Yakel of the University of Michigan.

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*Founded in 1936, the Society of American Archivists is North America's oldest and largest national archives professional association. SAA's mission is to serve the educational and informational needs of more than 6,000 individual and institutional members and to provide leadership to ensure the identification, preservation, and use of records of historical value. For more information, visit [www.archivists.org](http://www.archivists.org).*

17 NORTH STATE STREET, SUITE 1425 | CHICAGO, IL 60602-4061 USA

TEL 312.606.0722 | TOLL-FREE 866.SAA.7858 | FAX 312.606.0728 | WEB [www.archivists.org](http://www.archivists.org)