

Infrastructure and the Archive: Supporting Information Management Practices in the Humanities

CIARAN B. TRACE

Abstract: Research libraries and archives, as well as groups from within the humanities disciplines themselves, are being tasked with providing robust support for information management practices, including helping to engage humanities scholars with appropriate digital technologies in ways that are sensitive to disciplinary-based cultures and practices. However, significant barriers impede this work, primarily because the infrastructure (services, tools, and collaborative networks) to support scholarly information management is still under development. Under the aegis of the Scholars Tracking Archival Resources (STAR) project we (Ciaran B. Trace and Unmil P. Karadkar) are studying how humanities scholars gather and manage primary source materials with a goal of developing software to support their practices. This poster reports on our findings from interviews of twenty-six humanities scholars, in conjunction with a set of initial requirements for a mobile application that will support scholars in capturing documents, recreating the archival context, and uploading these documents to cloud storage for access and sharing from other devices.

About the Author:

Ciaran B. Trace is an associate professor at the School of Information at the University of Texas at Austin and the editor of *Information & Culture: A Journal of History*. Ciaran has a PhD in Library and Information Science from the University of California, Los Angeles and a postgraduate Diploma in Archival Studies from University College Dublin. Ciaran's overall research focus is studying what constitutes a literate society, and the role that recorded information plays in creating and sustaining literate environments (both professional and personal). Her research includes studies of the development and evolution of conduits of information (both information objects and institutions), the use and deployment of information in everyday and in professional settings, and the impact of information on the lives of individuals and of groups. Her work is shaped by a particular interest in the study of written records, those information objects that are the byproducts of personal and organizational action, and that subsequently serve as a form of data or as evidence for scholarly research.