

Reappraising Our Professional Identity: Addressing the Knowledge Gap with Tenure and Promotion for Academic Archivists

RACHEL WALTON, ELIZABETH SCOTT, HEIDI ABBEY MOYER, and REBECCA HANKINS

Abstract: According to the 2017 WARs-SAA Salary Survey, approximately 39% of archivists and records managers are employed in academic institutions. In a 2012 MARAC membership survey, 43.3% of respondents work at a college or university. The most recent A*Census Survey in 2004 revealed that 35.8% of archivists worked in academia, but the survey did not address tenure-track status. Although planning for A*Census II is underway, there is no current public data that accurately quantifies how many archives professionals work in academia or hold tenure-track positions.

Considering the absence of key metrics, this panel of four archivists will discuss the gaps in the professional literature and knowledge base as they relate to the following issues: 1) the availability of tenure-track archivist positions; 2) the standards, or lack thereof, by which tenure-track archivists are promoted and/or tenured; 3) the challenges and inequities experienced by tenure-track archivists; and 4) the importance of leadership and mentoring that support both tenured and tenure-track archivists throughout their careers. In addition, each panelist will offer ideas about new initiatives for improving advocacy for current and future tenure-track archivists. Information is a powerful ally in this pivotal work; furthering this research could lead to increased transparency in the tenure process for archivists and help to even the playing field for those who are traditionally marginalized in our profession.

About the authors:

Rachel Walton is the Digital Archivist and Records Coordinator at Rollins College in Winter Park, Florida. In that role, she works to preserve and provide access to digital resources and historical artifacts in the College Archives and Special Collections. In her liaison activities Rachel teaches information literacy classes and archival research sessions with primary source materials. Rachel's professional research interests include website usability and user experience, data management and data literacy, digital humanities, and pedagogical practice.

Elizabeth Scott is the Archivist & Special Collections Librarian and an Assistant Professor at East Stroudsburg University where she is responsible for the university archives and special collections, the university art & sculpture collection, and the Al Cohn Memorial Jazz Collection. Additionally, she teaches library instruction sessions and is a liaison to various academic departments on campus. Elizabeth's research interests include web archiving, service-learning in archives and libraries, and issues related to archivists and tenure.

Heidi Abbey Moyer is the Archivist, Humanities Reference Librarian, and Coordinator of Archives and Special Collections at the Penn State Harrisburg Library, Middletown, PA. She is a tenured faculty member and liaison librarian to the School of Humanities. Moyer's librarianship and scholarship focus on themes of interdisciplinarity, including American popular culture, archival advocacy and outreach, art and art history, oral history, and rites of passage for women (especially motherhood, fertility and infertility, and weddings).

Rebecca Hankins is the Africana and Women's Studies Archivist and Librarian at Texas A&M University where she holds the Wendler Endowed Professorship. Rebecca is a Certified Archivist and

SAA Fellow. Her research, which intersects with her professional practice, centers on the African Diaspora, Women's and Gender Studies, diversity as it is viewed broadly, and the use of popular culture as a pedagogical method in new approaches to the study of Islam. This year Rebecca was awarded the SAA Diversity Award for her outstanding contributions in advancing the diversity of the profession.