

A & D @ the Research Forum: Trends in Arrangement and Description Topics over the Last 10 Years

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Abstract: Research constitutes a structured approach to understand and address problems in a field. An essential component to research is the ability to share the results of those efforts to the larger community in order to increase collective knowledge. The Research Forum has served this function for the past ten years. On a yearly basis, researchers and practitioners use the Research Forum to explain new approaches and investigate problems in arrangement and description. While we have the opportunity to experience annually the development of new research projects, we do not often reflect on the development of research over time and how that content reflects new ways of thinking about arrangement and description. This project will survey and analyze the past ten years of presentations and posters given at the Research Forum to illustrate patterns that will form the foundation for an analysis of arrangement and description research. The presentation will begin with an overview of topic distribution from the past ten years of presentations and posters. It will then focus specifically on topics related to arrangement and description. The intention of this survey is to identify problems considered important in arrangement and description research when the Research Forum started ten years ago, how that emphasis has changed and how it has remained the same over the past ten years, and suggest what direction research might be heading in the future. This project seeks to identify specific trends in research that align more broadly with changes in the archival endeavor.

About the Author:

Katherine M. Wisser is Associate Professor and co-Director of the Dual Degree program in Archives and History at the Graduate School of Library and Information Science at Simmons College. Previously, she served as the Director of Instructional Services at the School of Information and Library Science (SILS), UNC-Chapel Hill and worked professionally in New Hampshire and North Carolina. She was a teaching fellow at the SILS from 2001-2009. She teaches courses on archival description, abstracting and indexing, metadata, and the history of libraries. She has a MA in American History from the University of New Hampshire, a MSLS and a Ph.D. in Information Science from UNC. She served as Chair of the EAC Working Group, which released Encoded Archival Context – Corporate Bodies, Persons and Families (EAC-CPF) in March 2010 and currently serves as co-Chair of the Technical Subcommittee for Encoded Archival Standards.