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Real Vs. Imaginary Users:
Measuring the Impact of Home Movie Collections on Historical Scholarship

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Real Vs. Imaginary Users:
Measuring the Impact of Home Movie Collections on Historical Scholarship

by

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Abstract

Real Vs. Imaginary Users:
Measuring the Impact of Home Movie Collections on Historical Scholarship

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In the past thirty years, a growing community has emerged to advocate for the preservation and recognition of home movie collections based on their historical significance. Despite the significant cost of preserving and providing access to these collections and the myriad challenges they pose to archivists and researchers, no substantive research exists that evaluates their actual scholarly use or impact. Through a publication analysis and a survey of the Association of Moving Image Archivists, I sought to determine if there is a difference between whom archivists think should be using home movie collections and who is actually them. Though my findings suggest that home movies have yet to impact the scholarly work of historians, I offer recommendations for future research and professional development that may encourage increased scholarly use as well as increased collaboration between archivists and historians.

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"Doesn't this thing have any sound on it? You're clearly saying something!"

- Jimmy to Jack Donaghy *(30 Rock*)

Chapter 1: Introduction

In a 2009 episode of the comedy series *30 Rock*, aging television executive Jack Donaghy watches digitized home movies of his tenth birthday party with the hope of discovering the contents of a gift that made him so excited he vomited. Though Jack's home movies serve a narrative (and comedic) function within this television episode, the journey Jack undertakes to understand these movies and the challenges he encounters along the way highlight significant difficulties present in the actual use and study of home movie collections. Through a nostalgic journey to understand his own personal history, Jack confronts a series of common and frustrating barriers that occur when watching home movies including their lack of context, the mystery of their narrative, as well as their silence. Faced with the byzantine content of these movies, Jack must enlist the help of his friends, experts, and finally a lip-reader to uncover the content and thus the "meaning" of this footage: "You're saying Apollo! Apollo! Apollo! Oh my God, you puked!"[1]

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1 *30 Rock*, "Apollo, Apollo," Season 3, Episode 16, NBC, first broadcast March 26, 2009, directed by Millicent Shelton, written by Robert Carlock. The toy Jack received was an Apollo Command and Lunar Module.

Other viewers might follow a similarly sentimental (if somewhat less madcap) path when attempting to watch and understand their own home movies. Within the public imagination and popular culture, the home movie is typically viewed as an intensely personal document that serves a largely nostalgic or commemorative function. They are usually stored in a closet or attic until they are brought out for screening at family reunions, anniversaries, and memorials. With the possible exception of the Zapruder film (1963), which captured the assassination of President John F. Kennedy, the public tends to consider the home movie's ability to preserve personal rather than collective pasts. When serving this very personal and nostalgic purpose, viewers might be able to forgive the home movie's narrative anomalies and technical imperfections such as under and overexposure, focusing problems, and shaky footage. As actors in these movies or relatives of their creators, they might be able to fill in contextual gaps left by their silence, peculiar editing, and confusing imagery. Viewers may not seek out the assistance of a lip-reader, but might be able to call upon an aunt or a cousin to piece together a timeline or story.

These practical challenges of content, context, and quality were largely ignored when, in the early 1980s, a group of archivists and enthusiasts began to advocate for home movie preservation based on collective rather than personal significance. Aiming to move the home movie from the obscurity of the living room to the scholarly library and archives, this group's efforts focused on establishing the cultural significance of the home movie, its ability to reveal voices neglected in traditional historical documents, and its power to visualize everyday lives being lived. Perhaps caught up in the establishment of the home movie as a "serious" and "scholarly" component of the historical record, members of this community largely ignored the difficulties scholars and researchers

might encounter in using them. More than thirty years later, moving image archivists continue to make proclamations about the historical significance of home movies but have yet to evaluate their impact. Despite the cost of preserving and providing access to these materials, the movement to promote home movies as cultural heritage has remained narrowly focused on establishing their importance rather than systematically evaluating or addressing the numerous challenges they pose to both archivists and scholars.

When I began working at the Texas Archive of the Moving Image (TAMI) in Austin, Texas, I was an unquestioning home movie enthusiast. After viewing countless hours of home movies, I still believe that these materials offer enormous research potential to a range of scholars, but I have become skeptical of their actual scholarly use. Such skepticism has prompted me to view home movies through the lens of an enthusiast as well as a scholar and ask questions about how these materials might be used or discarded. Viewing a family's Christmas as an enthusiast, I envision a resource for scholars specializing in gender and religious studies, fashion, and architecture. From this perspective, I might ask, "What can we learn from the types of presents the children receive?" "Who is operating the camera, mom or dad?" "Which rituals are unique to this particular family and which are common to other families of this region or period?" Viewing this footage as a potential researcher, however, I face challenges of quality, content, and context that are difficult to ignore. Footage is over-exposed and out of focus. Individuals appear onscreen and mouth words at the camera operator, but the film is silent. The ability to capture information outside of the frame becomes difficult. To provide just one example of the many challenges a home movie can present to researchers, consider the following scene depicted in an 8-mm home movie I recently viewed at TAMI:

> An attractive woman, who appears to be in her early 30s, sits in the shade of a tree holding an armful of puppies. The woman reaches into her blouse, retrieves what appears to be a handful of paper money, smiles, and mirthfully throws the money into the air.

There is no information, either on the film's container or within the rest of the collection, that hints at the motivation for this peculiar action. The film is silent and the words the woman mouths to the camera operator are unclear. Without contacting the family (or perhaps a lip-reader), there is no way to know who shot this film or the significance of this particular scenario. Watching this and similar films, I began to wonder if home movies offered research *potential* that was overshadowed by numerous barriers to *actual* use. I wondered, if home movies were actually being used as primary sources in scholarly research or if archivists—acting out of their own enthusiasm and preconceived notions about archives users—had created an imaginary audience for home movies.

By continuing to operate under the historic and "impressionistic" views of archives users as scholars, archives risk allocating dwindling financial resources to the costly preservation, digitization, and processing of materials that may ultimately see little use. A better understanding of who is using these materials, how they are being used, and for what purposes, will enable archivists to not only improve professional practice but to also develop new systems and tools that will more efficiently facilitate use and impact. With the present study I sought to add to the existing literature by evaluating the actual impact of home movie collections on the scholarly work of historians. Though existing research into archives users has myopically studied the information-seeking behaviors and needs of historians at the expense of other user groups, I chose to focus my own research on historians for two key reasons: (1) Home movie preservation is typically

justified by their alleged historical and scholarly value. (2) Little has been published concerning *any* users of moving image archives or home movies. The guiding research questions for this study were:

1. Have moving image archivists and home movie enthusiasts overstated the scholarly value of home movie collections?
2. Are historians using home movie collections as primary sources in their research?
3. What are historians' opinions regarding the value of home movie collections as primary sources?
4. Is there a difference between how the archival community believes home movie collections are being used and how they are actually being used?

To investigate these questions, I conducted a systematic analysis of history journals (1990-2012) and conference proceedings for professional history organizations (2001-2014). To better understand the perspectives of moving image archivists working with home movie collections, I also surveyed members of the Association of Moving Image Archivists. Based on a thorough review of the literature, I anticipated a low incidence of usage of moving image media by historians with particularly low levels for home movies. I predicted that there might be higher levels of usage in more recent publications due to increased digitization efforts and online availability of moving image media. Finally, I believed that I would find increased citation of home movies or other moving image materials in niche or specialty journals and conference proceedings for professional organizations.

DEFINITIONS

Because professionals and the wider public use numerous terms to refer to moving image media (e.g. film, video, movie, and cinema), I will first briefly discuss the terms that I will use in this paper. A variety of factors influence the terms people use to describe these materials, including profession, familiarity, region, and deference to format. Some may refer to any material as a "film" regardless of its original or viewing format. Others may refer to "artistic" works as "films" while they refer to more popular entertainment as "movies."

A variety of terms are also used to describe home movies including family films/movies, home films, private films, and home video. To further complicate matters, home movies are also frequently included under the larger category of amateur film. It is important to realize that these terms are not synonymous. Participants at the 2010 Center for Home Movies Digitization and Access Summit arrived at some useful definitions for the terms home movie and amateur film that focus on intention, production, and audience.[2] The 2011 final report defines home movies as "'home made' motion pictures created by individuals primarily for an intended audience of family members and friends within the immediate circle of the home." They also provide a number of characteristics common to home movies including common subject matter: "family members, family events, and family activities"(11). In contrast, they define an amateur film as one that "aims for a wider audience in settings such as film-making classes, film festivals, or local broadcast, or by means of mechanical reproduction in the form of multiple prints or

[2] Center for Home Movies Digitization & Access Summit, *Final Report*, 3, January 2011, http://www.centerforhomemovies.org/ Home_Movie_Summit_Final_Report.pdf. This summit was funded by a grant from the Library of Congress to discuss the role of digitization and online access in the understanding of amateur filmmaking.

copies made available to a public outside of the film-maker's immediate circle of friends and family."

Within this paper, I will use the term "home movie" in keeping with the above definition. I believe that an awareness of the original as well as viewing format is significant to understanding any particular work. Therefore, when possible, I will identify a work by its format. When the format is unknown, I will refer to it as either a "moving image" or a "movie" (with no insult intended by the term). It is significant to note, however, that most of the current moving image scholarship has excluded videotape or digital video and that much of the works discussed concern the value of home movies shot on film.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

TOWARD AN UNDERSTANDING OF ARCHIVES USERS

Beginning in the early 1980s, a growing group of archivists began discussing the importance of studying the archives user.[3] In 1984, Elsie Freeman challenged her colleagues to begin to learn "systematically, not impressionistically" about archives users (112).[4] The timing of this movement is not necessarily surprising given concurrent changes in funding for cultural heritage institutions and the increasing role of electronic records and systems in libraries and archives. Seeking to promote their relevance in the so-called "information" and "digital age" as well as compete for increasingly results-oriented grant funding, the more forward-thinking individuals in the archives community began to consider the need to evaluate use and impact. Though archivists have continued to decry the dearth of user-based research and have published numerous research agendas concerning access and use, there remains today an overall paucity of systematic research into the needs of archives users and particularly the *impact* of archival collections on scholarship. Twenty years after Freeman encouraged her colleagues to embark on more systematic user research, Duff et al. found that many archives continued to rely on informal and anecdotal methods of assessment.[5] This lack of assessment becomes more apparent when evaluating the state of research into online users and the impact of digital

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3 For examples of this discussion, see Elsie T. Freeman, "In the Eye of the Beholder: Archives Administration from the Users' Point of View," *American Archivist* 47 (Spring 1984); Paul Conway, "Facts and Frameworks: An Approach to Studying the Users of Archives," *American Archivist* (Fall 1986); William J. Maher, "The Use of User Studies," *The Midwestern Archivist* 11 (1986); Lawrence Dowler, "The Role of Use in Defining Archival Practice and Principles: A Research Agenda for the Availability and Use of Records," *American Archivist* 51 (Winter/Spring 1988); Richard J. Cox, "Analysis of Archival Research, 1970-92, and the Role and Function of the American Archivist," *The American Archivist* 57 (1994); and Wendy M. Duff, "Archivists' Views of User-Based Evaluation: Benefits, Barriers, and Requirements," *The American Archivist* 71 (2008).

4 Freeman, "In the Eye of the Beholder": 112.

5 Duff, "Archivists' Views of User-Based Evaluations."

archival collections. In 1998 and again in 2011, researchers observed that digital systems were being created without an understanding of existing or potential users.[6] This limited research into archives users in the online environment has favored usability studies of institutional websites and finding aids.[7] Research into digitized materials has historically focused on the development of best practices, the veracity of digital surrogates, implications of mass digitization projects, and the properties of born-digital objects rather than the use or impact of these materials. In their 2011 study, Allison-Bunnel et al. stated that archives currently providing access to digitized materials continued to operate under the unsupported supposition that mere "exposure of materials will naturally build broad audiences for collections" (68).[8] Only more recently have archivists begun to study the use and impact of digital collections. A well-attended panel at the 2013 annual meeting of the Society of American Archivists, "Exploring the User Experience with Digital Primary Sources," featured presentations that discussed the role of understanding user needs and usability assessment in the building of a positive user experience with online primary sources.[9] At the 2014 Texas Conference on Digital Libraries, archivists and librarians

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6 Anne J. Gilliland-Swetland, "An Exploration of K-12 User Needs for Digital Primary Source Materials," *The American Archivist* 61 (Spring 1988): 136-157; Jodi Allison-Bunnell, Elizabeth Yakel, and Janet Hauck, "Researchers at Work: Assessing Needs for Content and Presentation of Archival Materials," *Journal of Archival Organization* 9 (2011): 67-104.

7 For examples, see Burt Altman and John Nemmers, "The Usability of On-Line Archival Resources: The Polaris Project Finding Aid," *American Archivist* 64 (Spring/Summer 2001):121-131; Elizabeth Yakel, "Encoded Archival Description: Are Finding Aids Boundary Spanner or Barriers for Users," *Journal of Archival Organization* 12 (2004):63-77; Christopher J. Prom, "User Interactions with Electronic Finding Aids in a Controlled Setting," *American Archivist* 67 (Fall/Winter 2004): 234-68; Cory Nimer and Gordon Daines, III, "What Do You Mean it Doesn't Make Sense? Redesigning Finding Aids from the User's Perspective," *Journal of Archival Organization* 6 (2008): 216-232; Joyce Celeste Chapman, "Observing Users: An Empirical Analysis of User Interaction with Online Finding Aids," *Journal of Archival Organization* 8 (2010): 4-30; and M.G. Daniels and Elizabeth Yakel, "Seek and You May Find: Successful Search in Online Finding Aid Systems," *The American Archivist* 75 (Spring/Summer 2012): 143-170.

8 Allison-Bunnell, Yakel, and Hauck, "Researchers at Work" 68.

9 Jody L. DeRidder, Roger C. Schonfeld, Donghee Sinn, Rachael Hu, and Sherri Berger, "Exploring the User Experience with Digital Primary Sources" (panel, the Joint Annual Meeting of the Council of State Archivists and the Society of American Archivists, New Orleans, LA, August 2013).

from the University of Houston[10], the University of North Texas[11], and Southern Methodist University[12] presented research that focused on measuring the impact or use of digital special collections. A recent study by researchers at the University of Alabama Libraries explored the needs of expert users (e.g., humanities scholars) using online primary source materials.[13]

Whether in the physical or digital environment, however, the existing body of research has nearly exclusively focused on the use of textual materials or still images at the expense of other formats such as moving image media.[14] An extensive search of the literature yields few results concerning the users or impact of moving image media. Responding to the lack of publication concerning moving image digitization projects, Karen Gracy in 2012 initiated a rare investigation into the practices of moving image archives.[15] Though her study aimed to assess the state of digitization projects, Gracy's study also uncovered a lack of user-assessment within moving image archives. In 2013 Gracy expanded her research and found that few institutions were aware of who was

10 Michelle Reilly and Santi Thompson, "Finding Roots, Gems, and Inspiration: Understanding Ultimate Use of Digital Materials" (paper, Texas Conference on Digital Libraries, Austin, TX, April 2014).
11 Laura Waugh, "Measuring Value and Impact" (paper, Texas Conference on Digital Libraries, Austin, TX, April 2014).
12 Cindy Boeke, "Who is Using Online Special Collections? The CUL Digital Collections Case Study" (poster, Texas Conference on Digital Libraries, Austin, TX, April 2014).
13 Jody L. DeRidder and Kathryn G. Matheny, "What Do Researchers Need? Feedback on Use of Online Primary Source Materials," *D-Lib Magazine* 20 (July/August 2014).
14 For examples of research into the users of still images, see Irene M. Herold, "Digital Archival Image Collections: Who are the Users?," *Behavioral & Social Sciences Librarian* 29 (2010): 267-282; Paul Conway, "Modes of Seeing: Digitized Photographic Archives and the Experienced User," *The American Archivist* 73 (Fall/Winter 2010): 425-462; and Paul Conway and Ricardo Punzalan, "Fields of Vision: Toward a New Theory of Visual Literacy for Digitized Archival Photographs," *Archivaria* 71 (Spring 2011): 63-97.
15 Karen Gracy, "Distribution and Consumption Patters of Archival Moving Images in Online Environments," *The American Archivist* 75 (Fall/Winter 2012): 422-455.

accessing their digital collections or for what purposes.[16] This lack of research into the use of moving image users suggests that, at present, moving image archives lack a culture of assessment and continue to operate under anecdotal or "impressionistic" evidence regarding the use or impact of their collections whether in the digital or the analog environment.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE HOME MOVIE MOVEMENT:

Beginning in the 1980s, diverse groups of people ranging from archivists and media studies scholars to filmmakers and politicians began lobbying for the recognition and preservation of amateur moving image materials, including home movies.[17] In 1994, the Librarian of Congress included home movies in the list of films in need of federal protection.[18] The first home movie was added to the National Film Registry in 1996.[19] In 2002, a group of archivists established Home Movie Day—a now annual international event that is advertised as a "celebration of amateur films and filmmaking."[20] From the start, the discourse surrounding home movie preservation has heralded these materials as a means of providing new perspectives on historical events and for recovering histories

16 Karen Gracy, "Ambition and Ambivalence: A Study of Professional Attitudes Toward Digital Distribution of Archival Moving Images," *The American Archivist* 76 (Fall/Winter 2013): 346-373.

17 For early discussions of amateur film and the amateur film movement, see Patricia R. Zimmerman *Reel Families: A Social History of Amateur Film* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1995) and the 1986 issue of the *Journal of Film and Video*. For a more recent exploration, see Karen L. Ishizuka and Patricia R. Zimmerman, eds., *Mining the Home Movie: Excavations in Histories and Memories* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2008).

18 Library of Congress, Redefining Film Preservation: A National Plan, Rep. (1994). http://www.loc.gov/film/plan.html

19 The National Film Registry was established in 1988. Each year, the Librarian of Congress names 25 "culturally, historically or aesthetically" significant films to the Registry. The first home movie to be added to the registry was the Zapruder film (1963). For a complete list of films added since 1989, see the National Film Preservation Board's website: http://www.loc.gov/film/registry_titles.php?sort=inducted

20 Center for Home Movies, http://www.centerforhomemovies.org/hmd/.

neglected in traditional historical resources. The stated mission for the Center for Home Movies (CHM), established in 2005, is to "transform the way people think about home movies by providing the means to discover, celebrate, and preserve them as *cultural heritage* [emphasis added]."[21] Referring to the historical value of home movies and their significance as cultural heritage has become common practice. The Library of Congress' 2008 press release concerning the addition of an amateur film to the National Film Registry stated (without evidence) "home movies have assumed a rapidly increasing importance in American cultural studies as they provide a priceless and authentic record of time and place."[22]

Despite these numerous statements of value and cultural significance, home movies have received little attention within the moving image archives literature as compared to the broader category of amateur film. It is worth noting, that though the home movie movement has focused on the ability of home movies to visualize everyday lives being lived, the "home movies" selected for inclusion in the National Film Registry were not the mundane birthdays and weddings of everyday families but rather people and events already deemed socially significant or works that might be better characterized as "amateur films." There has likewise been little discussion of their actual impact. Though home movies have made a fairly quick ascension from cultural refuse to cultural heritage and the moving image archiving community continues to praise their cultural and scholarly value, there remains a dearth of research into how these materials are actually being used.

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21 Center for Home Movies, http://www.centerforhomemovies.org/about/.

22 "Cinematic Classics, Legendary Stars, Comedic Legends and Novice Filmmakers Showcase the 2008 Film Registry," Library of Congress, last modified December 30, 2008, http://www.loc.gov/today/pr/2008/08-237.html.

Unfortunately, this lack of reflection within the moving image archiving community has allowed us to continue celebrating home movies while ignoring questions concerning their impact: If home movie collections are so culturally significant and so valuable to the construction of a new history—on par with other primary sources such as diaries and letters—shouldn't we be seeing an increased discussion of these sources by scholars outside of media studies? If these materials are historically significant, shouldn't we see increased use by historians?

HISTORIANS: REAL OR IMAGINARY USERS?

Within the archival community there has long been a preference for the historian and other scholarly users over genealogists, professionals, and enthusiasts. At times this preference is only subtly visible in the archival description and access tools that were created with the historian in mind. At other times, the archival obsession with historians is made more explicit. Recognizing that historians are not the primary archives users, Ian Anderson still justified his own study of academic historians by stating that this particular group is "one of the most important…It is through historians' research that archival data and information becomes knowledge, developing meaning and understanding about ourselves, our past, and our place in the world" (82).[23] It is easy to trace this preference for the historian to the historically close ties between the archives and historical professions, the archivists' desire to maintain a scholarly or academic rather than professional image, as well as grant funding that requires institutions to justify their projects based on scholarly use and the historical significance of their collections. However, there exists no current evidence to support the continued pursuit of the

23 Ian G. Anderson, "Are You Being Served? Historians and the Search for Primary Sources," *Archivaria* 58 (Fall 2004): 81-129.

historical researcher at the expense of other known user groups. In fact, research on archives users suggests that much use is not "serious," "scholarly," or "academic" and that the primary users are a more diverse group including genealogists, professionals, amateur historians, hobbyists, and students.[24] Many studies also suggest that "serious" scholars who do use archives rely more heavily on footnotes, citations, and their colleagues than archivists and archival tools.[25] Despite this unfounded vision of "serious" users, the archives community has continued to study the information-seeking behaviors and needs of scholarly researchers rather than cultivating relationships with existing users.

Many moving image archivists have likewise assumed (or wished for) the presence of academic researchers despite a lack of sufficient evidence of scholarly use. In the 1997 "Manual for Access to Film Collections," the International Federation of Film Archives (FIAF) recommended restricting access to moving image collections based on the following criteria: "seriousness" of research; the relevance of the research to the collection; the researcher's intention to publish; and the researcher's academic or

24 See Gilliland-Swetland, "An Exploration of K-12," 136-157; Dowler, "The Role of Use," 74-95; Richard J. Cox, "Archivists and Public Historians in the United States," *The Public Historian* 8 (Summer 1986): 29-45; and Freeman, "In the Eye of the Beholder," 111-23. For a rare study of the information seeking behaviors of a frequent archival user, see Wendy M. Duff and Catherine A. Johnson, "Where is the List With All the Names? Information-Seeking Behavior of Genealogists," *The American Archivist* 66 (2003): 79-95.

25 Margaret Steig Dalton and Laurie Charnigo, "Historians and Their Information Sources," *College and Research Libraries* (September 2004): 400-425; Anderson, "Are You Being Served?" 81-129; Helen Tibbo, "Primarily History in America: How U.S. Historians Search for Primary materials," *The American Archivist* 66 (Spring/Summer 2003): 9-50; Wendy M. Duff and Catherine A. Johnson. "Accidentally Found on Purpose: Information-Seeking Behavior of Historians in Archives," *The Library Quarterly* (October 2002): 472-496; Paul Conway, "Research in Presidential Libraries: A User Survey," *The Midwestern Archivist* 11 (1986): 35-56; and Margaret Steig, "The Information Needs of Historians," *College and Research Libraries* (November 1981): 549-560.

professional background"(11).[26] Only a few moving image archivists, including Rick Prelinger, have argued for a different perspective of the archives user. Prelinger has suggested that the actual moving image archives users are "members of the public, independent scholars and citizen scientists, an aggressive army of commercial clients, a growing cadre of 'archival fans,' and of course genealogists."[27] Though no research exists to support or refute Prelinger's assertions, the available literature suggests that moving image archives remain preoccupied with cultivating relationships with academic users. In the United Kingdom, researchers at both the National Library of Wales[28] and the Screen Archive South East (formerly the South East Film and Video Archive)[29] embarked on research that questioned why academics were not using their moving image collections and expressed hope that their collections might see greater scholarly use in the future.

Though I was unable to find research that specifically addressed historians' use of moving image media, the growing body of work that addresses the information-seeking behaviors of historians suggests an overall lack of interest and use in these materials as primary sources. In 1981, Margaret Stieg investigated the types of materials used by historians and found low levels of usage of audiovisual materials. Steig noted "even in areas such as twentieth-century United States history, where some relevant material could

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26 "Special Issue: Manual for Access to Film Collections." *Journal of Film Preservation* 55 (1997): 3-3- and Epilogue.

27 Rick Prelinger, "It's Only a Moving Image: Archives, Access and the Social Contract (paper, Digital Library Foundation Forum, Philadelphia, PA, November 2007).

28 Geraint Evans and Jane Del-Pizzo, " 'Look, Hear, Upon this Picture': A Survey of Academic Users of the Sound and Moving Image Collection at the National Library of Wales," *Journal of Librarianship and Information Science* 13 (September 1999): 152-167.

29 Frank Gray and Elaine Sheppard, "Moving History: Promoting Moving Image Archive Collections in an Emerging Digital Age," *The Moving Image* 4.2 (2004): 110-118.

be found, historians are generally not interested in using it for research" (551).[30] Helen Tibbo's 2003 study of historians found that only 20 percent of participants had used analog film and video materials in a recent research project and only two had used digitized moving images.[31] Margaret Stieg Dalton and Laurie Charnigo's 2004 study of primary and secondary sources used by historians found that only 38% of participants felt audiovisual materials were important to their research. These materials were also ranked as the least frequently used primary sources of information.[32] The reported lack of use was supported by their citation analysis of professional books and journals. Though Donghee Sinn's 2012 citation analysis focused on the impact of digital collections on historical scholarship, she found similar differences between the scholarly use of digitized textual and non-textual sources. Sinn found only one article citing digital multi-media materials in comparison to 99 articles that cited digital archival textual materials.[33] Alexandra Chassanoff's 2013 study of the information-seeking behaviors of historians found that although the majority of her participants were studying cultural and social history in the 20th century, no more than ten percent had cited film or video recordings in their research. Consistent with previous research, Chassanoff found that books, correspondence, newspapers, and periodicals were the most frequently cited source materials.[34]

30 Steig, "The Information Needs of Historians," 551.
31 Helen Tibbo, "Primarily History in America," 9-50. Materials rated as most important were newspapers, unpublished correspondence, and unpublished diaries or journals. Materials rated as most used were newspapers, unpublished correspondence and published pamphlets. Though more participants reported using photographic prints and negatives than analog film or video, a low number of respondents (17%) reported using digitized images.
32 Steig Dalton and Charnigo, "Historians and Their Information Sources," 400-425.
33 Donghee Sinn, "Impact of Digital Archival Collections on Historical Research," *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology* 63 (2012): 1521-1537.
34 Alexandra Chassanoff, "Historians and the Use of Primary Source Materials in the Digital Age," *The American Archivist* 76 (Fall/Winter 2013): 458-480.

Unfortunately, little research currently exists to explain *why* historians and other scholars are not more actively engaging with moving images. Research into scholarly use of regional moving image archives in the United Kingdom during the late 1990s and early 2000s uncovered a number of potential barriers to use including lack of awareness of moving image collections, pressures of time, concerns about using audiovisual technologies, lack of expertise in evaluating these materials, and a lack of existing archives-based research from which scholars might draw.[35] A more recent study of the research practices of academic historians and graduate history students suggests similar barriers to use including a lack of comfort with the materials, lack of proper training in use and analysis, and a professional bias toward textual materials.[36] Professional historians in this study discussed difficulties in using new media, including video, as a primary source because it was difficult to capture, view and analyze. They also reported concerns that such sources would not be taken seriously by their colleagues. Graduate students primarily spoke of a lack of training in working with non-textual sources though they expressed an interest in learning how to better use such materials in their research. Surprisingly, no students mentioned their research topics and periods of specialization as a limiting factor.

35 Evans and Del-Pizzo, " 'Look, Hear, Upon this Picture'," 152-167; Gray and Sheppard, "Moving History," 110-118.

36 Jennifer Rutner and Roger C. Schonfeld, Supporting the Changing Research Practices of Historians (New York, NY: Ithaka S+R, 2012, http://www.sr.ithaka.org/sites/default/files/reports/supporting-the-changing-research-practices-of-historians.pdf.

Chapter 3: Methodology

A FAILURE OF METHOD OR A FAILURE OF AUDIENCE?

My initial research design for this study involved addressing the opinions of potential moving image archives users. I planned to engage with graduate students in the history department at the University of Texas at Austin as they viewed a random sample of digitized home movies made available by the Texas Archive of the Moving Image. I believed that this method would be useful for answering my research questions because it would evaluate both actual and potential scholarly use of home movies. By discussing students' opinions regarding the value of home movies before and after interacting with the sample movies, I hoped to not only provide evidence for the current state of use but also provide information about what historians might require of archivists to make these materials more useful.

I attempted to recruit participants from the history department through a variety of methods, but received just a few responses that expressed regret at being unable to participate. Operating under the assumption that the specialization of history students at this university may have limited the response rate, I expanded the scope to include students in the American Studies department. Unfortunately, I received no responses from these students. There are naturally a number of explanations for the low levels of response including the timing of the recruitment effort relative to course deadlines, the amount of compensation offered, and student specializations. Based on the graduate student profiles, it does seem that many history students at this university are studying historical time periods that precede the development of motion picture technology and amateur moviemaking equipment. However, previous research showed that even historians of the 20th century were not interested in using film or video as source material.

However, I am unable to explain the total silence from the American Studies department. The student profiles of American Studies students revealed widespread interest in the 20th and 21st centuries as well as research interests in areas such as consumer and leisure studies that might be well-matched with home movies as primary sources. It would certainly be interesting to explore in future research whether this discipline also relies heavily on textual documents as primary source material. It is interesting to compare the lack of response from history and American studies students to the high level of response and enthusiasm from the moving image archiving community. The unpaid online survey required only a small time investment, but many participants provided detailed responses to survey items, wrote detailed follow-up e-mails, and offered to speak with me further about the topic of home movies and this research project. This suggests that within the moving image archives community, individuals are highly invested in and passionate about these materials.

SURVEY OF THE ASSOCIATION OF MOVING IMAGE ARCHIVISTS

I was interested in discovering if there was a difference between how archivists *think* home movie collections are being used and how they are *actually* being used. Specifically, I was interested in exploring whether claims about historical and scholarly value were matched with scholarly work citing these materials. Because little previous work has given voice to the opinions and concerns of this unique community, I began by surveying the Association of Moving Image Archivists (AMIA). With more than 750 individual and institutional members from more than 30 countries, AMIA is the largest professional association of moving image archivists.[37] Individual members include

37 The Association of Moving Image Archivists, http://www.amianet.org/about/history.

library, archives, and museums professionals; artists, filmmakers, private collectors, and hobbyists. Institutions include commercial businesses such as equipment vendors and stock footage companies as well as private, public, and non-profit cultural heritage institutions. AMIA's diverse membership represents and advocates for a wide variety of interests and causes related to moving images, including amateur film and video preservation.

I sent recruitment e-mails to subscribers of AMIA's two listservs—AMIA-L (2,293 subscribers) and AMIA-M (846 subscribers). AMIA-L is a public forum that can be used by anyone who wishes to discuss issues pertaining to moving image materials while subscription to AMIA-M is restricted to current members of AMIA. The recruitment e-mail solicited participation from subscribers who had "interacted with home movie collections in any capacity—as an archivist, educator, artist, collector, etc." I developed an anonymous online survey instrument using Qualtrics survey software and the survey was open from January-February 2014. (See Appendix for the complete survey.) Participants were asked to provide information regarding their profession and to identify how they had been involved with home movie collections. Based on their own experience, participants were asked to answer multiple-choice questions about the users and uses of home movies. At the conclusion of the survey, participants were provided the opportunity to make additional comments regarding their experiences with home movie collections.

PUBLICATION ANALYSIS

Because I was unable to undertake my original research design as it pertained to the study of historians, I chose to measure the scholarly impact of home movie

collections by evaluating how they were ultimately "used" in professional journal articles (1990-2012) and professional conference presentations (2001-2014). Data were gathered from two separate sources: (1) twenty journals ranked by five-year-impact factor according to the 2012 Journal Citation Reports (JCR), Social Sciences edition, History subject category; and (2) five history and American studies journals chosen based on their specialty and audience. I chose to evaluate journals with the highest five-year impact factor rather than other metrics offered by JCR because citation activity may not be significant upon initial publication.[38] These twenty international journals represent a broad range of interests and subjects within the field of history including economics, labor and environmental history, and anthropology. Titles include well-established publications such as *The American Historical Review* as well as newer journals such as *Cliometrica* and *Memory Studies*. Three journals were excluded from review due to language (*Scandia* and *Trabajos de Prehistoria*) and financial imitations (*Past Present*). (See Table No. 1 for a complete list of the JCR journal set along with their corresponding five-year impact factor.)

I analyzed a second set of journals (hereafter known as the comparison journal set) because I wanted to determine if journals with a narrower focus or more specific target audience would be more likely to include articles referencing less traditional materials. These five journals–*The Public Historian*, *Journal of American Studies*, *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television, Film History*, and *American Quarterly*—were selected based on a review of the literature and discussions with faculty and graduate students in the Radio-Television-Film, American Studies, and History

[38] Journal Citation Reports (JCR) calculates a journal's five-year impact factor by averaging the number of times articles from a specific journal published in the last five years has been cited in the current JCR year—in this case 2012.

departments at the University of Texas at Austin. Journal titles were identified based on the topic of this study, trends in historical scholarship, and the prestige of these journals as they relate to professional esteem and tenure.

Journal Title	**5-year Impact Factor**
American Historical Review	1.985
Memory Studies	1.221
Cliometrica	1.153
Labour/Le-Travail	0.895
Journal of African History	0.875
Comparative Studies in Society and History	0.786
Journal of Global History	0.775
Environmental History	0.746
History Workshop Journal	0.719
Journal of Modern History	0.659
Journal of British Studies	0.571
Social Science History	0.556
Journal of American History	0.527
Scandia	0.473
Past & Present	0.461
Diplomatic History	0.432
Trabajos de Prehistoria	0.425
Journal of Contemporary History	0.406
Central European History	0.371
Ethnohistory	0.355

Table No. 1: JCR Journal Set

I used a keyword search (“home movie,” “film,” “video,” “movie,” “cinema,” and “moving image”) to locate potentially relevant journal articles. I chose this broad keyword set based on the numerous ways a resource might be identified. Databases used

to search for relevant content (e.g., JSTOR, Project Muse, and Cambridge Journals Online) varied depending on the availability of each history journal through the University of Texas at Austin's journal subscription. Only original research articles were reviewed. I looked for the above keywords within the body of the article as well as the citation because authors might mention a movie within the article while not choosing to list it in the citations whereas a citation alone might not indicate the type of resource used. The decision to do so turned out to be important because, as anticipated, the amount of information in a footnote or bibliography concerning moving image media varied by author and also by publication.[39] At times, a movie was referenced in the body of the article but was not included in footnotes or bibliography. The amount of information provided sometimes made it difficult for me to determine whether the author had viewed all or parts of the referenced movie in its original format, on videotape, or as a digital copy. Furthermore, it sometimes appeared that the author had only read a summary of the movie.

Some databases highlighted my search terms within articles while others simply provided access to the article. This meant that I frequently had to download the article and perform a second keyword search on the downloaded PDF version. After keywords were located within a particular article, I skimmed the article to determine if this was a "false hit" or a potentially relevant article. A false hit was defined as an article that (1) made no mention of home movies, (2) made only passing mention of a commercial

[39] *The Chicago Manual of Style* recommends that an author provide as much detail as possible including the type of format consulted (digital or analog). When a digital file is accessed, it is recommended to include information about the original source, the type of source (e.g., video or document), and the length. However, my publication analysis suggests that authors continue to exhibit idiosyncratic citation styles for these materials. For details on the *CMOS'* recommendations, see "Audiovisual Materials" in *Chicago Manual of Style Online*, sections 14.274-14.280.

narrative work within the body of the article, or (3) used a keyword as an adjective or as part of a larger word. For example, the search term "film" frequently found articles using the word as an adjective to describe a "haze" or as part of the larger word "microfilm." A potentially relevant article was any article that contained any of the keywords and passed the test of not being a false hit. These articles were then reviewed in detail to determine if the author (1) cited home movies or (2) discussed home movies or other amateur moving image media. I also looked at the types or categories of moving image media that were discussed in these articles as well as the author's general tone toward moving image media. Inconsistent citation style sometimes required that I further investigate the title of a movie as well as the archives the author used to locate the materials.

ANALYSIS OF PROFESSIONAL CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS

Because much scholarly work occurs prior to publication (or is never published), I also analyzed conference proceedings of a selection of professional historical organizations: the American Historical Association (AHA), 2009-2013[40], the Organization of American Historians (OAH), 2001-2014[41], the National Council on Public History (NCPH), 2010-2014[42], the Social Science History Association (SSHA), 2007-2013[43], and the American Association for State and Local History (AASLH), 2009-2013.[44] I chose these organizations because of their membership size, professional reputation, and their focus on different specializations within the history profession. The

40 AHA conference programs available online: http://www.historians.org/annual-meeting/past-meetings.
41 OAH conference programs are available at online: http://www.oah.org/?it=meetings-events/annual-conference/past-oah-annual-meetings/
42 NCPH conference programs are available online: http://ncph.org/cms/conferences/
43 SSHA conference programs are available online: http://www.ssha.org/past-conferences
44 AASSLH conference programs are available online: http://about.aaslh.org/am-past-annual-meetings/

same keyword set was used to review conference programs and proceedings. When programs were available as a PDF, they were downloaded, searched, and reviewed. The AHA does not provide downloadable versions of their programs and so I used a Google website search. All components of conference programs were reviewed including individual paper and poster presentations, panels, student presentations, screenings, and exhibits. I was only able to view programs that were available online through the organization's website and thus I reviewed more programs for some organizations than others.

Chapter 4: Results

SURVEY OF THE ASSOCIATION OF MOVING IMAGE ARCHIVISTS

Demographic Information

One-hundred-and-thirty-eight participants began the survey (6% response rate) and 92 surveys were completed (67% completion rate). Only completed surveys were considered in this analysis. It is useful to note that the response rate may actually be higher because many members subscribe to both lists. The majority of participants (50, or 55.6%) identified as archivists and librarians. Reflective of the organization's diverse membership and the nature of moving image archival work, many participants self-identified with multiple roles: "filmmaker, archivist, and collector," "producer, director, writer, distributor, film archivist," and "archivist/collector, filmmaker, and curator/programmer." Consistent with the responses to the question regarding professional identity, the majority of participants (79) reported interacting with home movie collections as either archivists or librarians. A number of participants also reported interacting with home movie collections in other capacities (e.g., as collectors, filmmakers, researchers, exhibitors and curators), which suggests to me that numerous participants may be interacting with these collections outside of their primary occupations (See Table No. 2). This response likewise suggests that they may be employed at institutions that do not collect home movies or do not support this type of work.

	Q1: Which of the response items most accurately describes you?	Q2: In what capacity have you interacted with home movie collections? Select all that apply.
Archivist & Librarian	50	79
Collector	2	25
Educator	3	18
Filmmaker	6	24
Other	9	11
Researcher	9	25
Retired	2	---
Student	5	16
Vendor	4	13

Table No. 2: Demographic Information

The Primary Users and Uses of Home Movie Collections

Based on their own experience, participants were asked to select the most frequent users of home movie collections from a provided list. More than half of the participants (47, or 53%) felt that filmmakers and artists were the primary users of home movie collections. Archivists (18, or 20%) and Historians (10, or 11%) followed rather distantly. One user group represented in this analysis, Families & Content Creators, was created based on the number of participants who wrote in that this group was the most frequent user (See Table No. 3). Reviewing the data, it soon became clear that this significant user group was neglected in my creation of this survey and its exclusion may have affected findings concerning the primary users and uses of home movie collections

Q3: Who are the most frequent users of home movie collections?	
Filmmakers & Artists	47
Archivists	18
Historians	10
Families & Content Creators	7
Students	3
Genealogists	1
Other	3
Educators	0

Table No. 3: The Most Frequent Users of Home Movie Collections

Responses concerning the purpose of use were consistent with the previous questions (See Table No. 4). Participants identified filmmaking and art as the primary purpose of use (46, or 51%) followed by entertainment (16, or 17%) and scholarly research (11, or 12%). Because of the number of participants who identified family and content creators as frequent users in the previous question, I was surprised that only one participant identified genealogy as the primary purpose for using home movie collections.

Q4: What is the purpose for which home movie collections are most frequently used?	
Filmmaking & Art	46
Entertainment	16
Scholarly Research	11
Education	10
Genealogy	1

Table No. 4: The Purpose of Using Home Movie Collections

The Use of Home Movies in Scholarship

More than half of the participants (47, or 53%) felt that home movie collections were being used as primary sources for scholarly research. However, the high number of negative responses (42, or 47%) indicates that a large number of participants disagree with this assessment. Participants on either side of this issue were primarily self-identified archivists who believed that filmmaking was the primary purpose of use. Participants who responded in the affirmative to this question were asked to list up to five academic disciplines that they believed (based on their own experience) use home movies as sources in scholarship. Given the wording of this question ("believed"), as well as the general lack of assessment within moving image archives, it is presumed that participants are responding based on anecdotal rather than statistical evidence of use. The responses to this question seem to reflect the genuine enthusiasm that the community has for home movie collections and their desire for them to be useful in a scholarly capacity. Participants identified a wide range of academic disciplines and sub-disciplines, which I combined into unifying categories when possible. For example, the disciplines film, cinema, and media studies were combined into a single category—Film & Media Studies—for purposes of analysis. While category creation is inherently subjective and there are certainly those who would argue that cinema and media studies are distinct disciplines, such organization was required to efficiently communicate the results. Table No. 5 shows only responses endorsed by more than five participants, but a large number of other disciplines were provided including ethnic studies, linguistics, family and domestic studies, epidemiology, climatology, and labor and class studies. An interesting finding from this question is the participants' ideas about different types of use. While participants identified filmmakers as the primary user group, they identified historians as

the primary scholarly users (34) over film and media studies (26) or art history scholars (13).

Q7: List up to 5 academic disciplines that use home movie collections as sources in their scholarship.	
History	34
Film & Media Studies	26
Art & Art History	13
Anthropology	11
Library, Archives, Information Studies	9
Cultural Studies	8

Table No. 5: Academic Disciplines Using Home Movie Collection

Challenges in Using Home Movies for Academic Research

Participants who thought home movies were not being used as primary sources in scholarship were asked to indicate the primary barriers to scholarly use (See Table No. 6). Responses indicate that participants felt obstacles originated in both the scholarly and archives community. Participants identified issues of awareness, access, and convenience as the primary barriers to use. A small number of participants felt that home movies were not valid sources of scholarship. Others felt that scholars did not think home movies were valid sources and attributed the lack of use to a lack of scholarly vision or imagination. One participant suggested that labeling these works as "home movies" contributed to their low status in the scholarly community and that the use of alternate terms ("family film") might enhance their research status. I was intrigued and dismayed by the number of participants, most archivists, who felt that home movie collections were not valid sources. Future research should consider asking this same question of those who do

believe home movies are used as primary sources because use does not imply efficiency, ease, or satisfaction.

Q6: Why aren't home movies used for academic research or scholarship?	
Lack of awareness of moving image collections	31
It is to difficult to gain access to home movie collections	13
It is too time consuming to use home movies for scholarship	13
Scholars are uncomfortable using moving image collections	10
It is financially prohibitive to use home movies for scholarship	9
Other	6
Home movies are not a valid source for academic scholarship	5

Table No. 6: Barriers to Use of Home Movie Collections

Reflections on Use

When provided with a forum to comment more freely on this topic, participants reflected on the value of home movies, the status of home movie scholarship, and the various barriers to use. As would be expected from this population, most spoke of the significance of home movies and the "wealth of cultural, historic and artistic value" that can be found in them. Regarding their use, they reported movies from their collections had been accessed as source material for television and documentary programs, as evidence to support historic preservation efforts, as components of educational exhibits, and as programming for historical societies and community groups. Interestingly, none mentioned that their materials had been used as a source for scholarly research or publication.

As evidenced by the results of this survey, the majority of participants believe that filmmakers are the primary users. However, many participants are uneasy with the ways in which filmmakers present these materials. They stated, with some amount of resentment, that filmmakers frequently use brief home movie clips as stock footage to support or illustrate storylines. Participants expressed frustration with this use of home movies as "visual wallpaper" that serves to make movies more entertaining "or worse—funny." Participants consistently expressed disappointment with the ways home movies are presented as out of context imagery rather than as meaningful historical documents.

With respect to scholarly use, some participants were frustrated by the fact that the limited amount of scholarly work concerning these collections remained within the domain of cinema and media studies. One participant reported that requests for home movies "almost never" came from history departments. Another participant stated that professors have contacted her institution to view home movies for "general research" and to "illustrate general points," but she was unsure of the extent to which these people were actually citing them in publication. This same participant expressed disappointment that home movie collections were not being used for scholarly use as much as they could be given their increasing availability and the effect this had on their status in the larger community: "They are terribly underused as primary source material, and as such undervalued."

Participants seemed to mostly attribute the lack of scholarly use to failures within the archival profession. Multiple participants reported that their collections were underused because they lacked thorough (if any) description and because they were difficult to access. However, other participants attributed the lack of use to the scholars

themselves. They wrote that home movies had yet to be "discovered" by historians. Perhaps most presciently, one participant attributed the lack of scholarly use to the evolving understanding of home movies as historical documents: "One of the questions that home movies pose is that no one yet knows the kinds of questions that can be asked. We are still in the exploratory phase of discovering the value of this underappreciated—but at least now appreciated—genre."

PUBLICATION ANALYSIS

My broad keyword set ("film," "video," "movie," "cinema," "home movie," and "moving image") combined with a broad time frame (12 years) and the number of journal issues searched (1,668) resulted in a large number of potentially relevant articles and false hits.[45] It would be misleading and uninformative to attempt to quantify the large number of results returned from the keyword search. Instead, I will focus my analysis on pertinent publications and articles. I will look first at specific mention of home movies and then at more general mention of moving image materials within the JCR-ranked and comparison journal sets.

My hypothesis that I would find low levels of usage of home movies within the JCR-ranked journal set was confirmed. In fact, only one article clearly and specifically cited home movie. In this 1997 article published in *History Workshop Journal*, Heather Norris Nicholson discusses the historical value of home movie collections as well as the

45 It is worth mentioning that the keyword "video" returned fewer results than the other terms. This word was most frequently found in reference to the availability of movies for home viewing, oral history, and educational media such as CD-ROMs. I believe that the lack of results for this term can be attributed to a number of factors including a general tendency to refer to a moving image source as a "film" or "movie" regardless of the format in which it was created or viewed as well as the lack of respect afforded to this particular format including within the moving image community.

challenges that face custodians and users of amateur moving image media.[46] Notably the challenges she mentions (e.g., quantities of material, financial resources, training in visual literacy, and reliability) are frequently mentioned elsewhere as potential barriers to scholarly use. A small number of other articles published in this journal set (1990-2012) hint at a review of home movies or amateur moving image media without specific citation or reference. A 2001 article (also published in *History Workshop Journal*) cites Robert Nakamura's documentary, *Something Strong Within* (1995), to support statements concerning gendered labor in Japanese-American internment camps during World War II.[47] Though *Something Strong Within* is a documentary, it relies heavily on home movie footage and the citation seems to refer to specific footage contained within the documentary. A 2010 article about Barry Goldwater, published in *Environmental History*, mentions Goldwater's use of home movies in lectures and on the campaign trail, but there is no citation for this material or commentary concerning its use or availability.[48]

My hypothesis that I would find an increased incidence of reference or citation to home movies in the comparison set of journals was confirmed, though most relevant material was published in a single journal, *Film History*.[49] In a 1990 article from this journal, Jeffrey Ruoff analyzed the home movies shot by a Japanese college student

46 Heather Norris Nicholson, "In Amateur Hands: Framing Time and Space in Home Movies," *History Workshop Journal* 43 (1997): 198-213.
47 John Howard, "The Politics of Dancing Under Japanese-American Incarceration," *History Workshop Journal* 52 (2001): 122-151.
48 Brian Allen Drake, "The Skeptical Environmentalist: Senator Barry Goldwater and the Environmental Management State," *Environmental History* 15 (2010): 587-611.
49 Notably, many articles referencing "home movies" in Film History are concerned with what I consider "amateur films" rather than "home movies." For example, Susan Aasman's article, " 'Gladly Breaking Bread': Religious Repertoires and Family Film," published in Vol. 19 (2007), uses the term "home movie" repeatedly to describe a creative collection of home movies that were the deliberate and intentional creation of a family member.

traveling across the United States in 1927.[50] What is most interesting about Ruoff's piece is his detailed discussion of discovery and access. He tells of how he stumbled upon this collection in a footnote of his brother's thesis, contacted the filmmaker in Japan, and paid to have the films transferred to videotape without knowing if their ultimate research value would justify his efforts. Ruoff's work also sheds light on the status of home movie collections in 1990s scholarship. As a student of film history, Ruoff felt able to pursue this material while his brother, a student of East Asian Studies "would not have been permitted to write an honor's thesis about Kyooka's home movies" (238). In 2003, *Film History* devoted an issue to amateur film, including Alexandra Schneider's study of the home movies of expatriate Swiss families in the 1920s-1930s[51] and Heather Norris Nicholson's exploration of "the interpretative possibilities of holiday films" shot in the Mediterranean (152).[52]

In addition to looking at use of home movies as primary sources, I also used the publication analysis to explore historians' use of other categories of moving image media. My analysis indicates that historians are using a variety of other moving image media in historical research though studio-produced and commercial features dominate the discussion. Two publications, *The Journal of American History* and *The American Historical Review*, began publishing reviews of commercial narrative movies and documentaries in the mid and late 1980s. Across multiple publications, popular movies such as Oliver Stone's *JFK* (1991) and Steven Spielberg's *Schindler's List* (1993) and the

50 Jeffrey K Ruoff, "Forty Days Across America: Kiyooka Eiichi's 1927 Travelogues," *Film History* 4 (1990): 237-256.
51 Alexandra Schneider, "Home Movie-Making and Swiss Expatriate Identities in the 1920s and 1930s," *Film History* 15 (2003): 166-176.
52 Heather Norris Nicholson, "British Holiday Films of the Mediterranean: At Home and Abroad with Home Movies, ca. 1925-1936," *Film History* 15 (2003): 152-165.

works of documentarian Ken Burns have resulted in spirited forums concerning historical representation and education of the masses. Within original research articles discussing moving image media, the most common themes are the portrayal of history on screen, the history of film and film production, the relationship between cinema and society, the use of movies as educational tools, and the role of historians in movie-making.

Though relationships between cinema and society were most frequently explored through analysis of commercial and theatrically released works, a large number of articles cited other materials such as government-sponsored propaganda and newsreels.[53] Newsreels were used to explore a wide variety of topics ranging from the role of film in pro-labor movements and the use of the Christmas holiday in promoting German national identity.[54] Government-sponsored propaganda footage was used to explore topics including the role of a propaganda film in colonialism[55], the use of boxer Joe Louis' image to mitigate racial tensions in World War II America[56], and government-sponsored

53 For a small sample of articles that use commercial or studio-produced narrative movies as the basis for discussing the reciprocal relationship between cinema and society, see: Lawrence W. Levine, "The Folklore Industrial Society: Popular Culture and Its Audiences," *American Historical Review* 97 (1992): 1369-1399; Scott Spector, "Was the Third Reich Movie-Made? Interdisciplinarity and the Reframing of 'Ideology'," *American Historical Review* (2001): 460-484; Michael Rogin, "How the Working Class Saved Capitalism: The New Labor History and the Devil and Miss Jones," *The Journal of American History* 89 (2002): 87-114; Penny Summerfield, "Public Memory or Public Amnesia? British Women of the Second World War in Popular Films of the 1950s and 1960s," *Journal of British Studies* 48 (2009): 935-957; and Robert Lifset and Brian C. Black, "Imaging the 'Devil's Excrement': Big Oil in Petroleum Cinema, 1940-2007," *The Journal of American History* 99 (2012): 135-144.

54 Steven J. Ross, "Struggles for the Screen: Workers, Radicals, and the Political Uses of Silent Film," *The American Historical Review* 96 (1991): 333-367. Joe Perry, "Nazifying Christmas: Political Culture and Popular Celebration in the Third Reich," *Central European History* 38 (2005): 572-605. In 2012, the *Historical Journal of Film, Radio, and Television*, devoted a thematic issue to local and regional newsreels as an alternative approach to the history of filmed news.

55 Nicholas Thomas, "Colonial Conversions and Evangelical Propaganda," *Society for Comparative Studies in Society and History* 34 (1992): 366-389.

56 Lauren Rebecca Sklaroff, "Constructing G.I. Louis, Cultural Solutions to the 'Negro Problem' during World War II," *The Journal of American History* 89 (2002): 958-983.

sex education films as a reflection of the development of male heterosexuality.[57] A particularly interesting use of propaganda footage is Elizabeth Lebas' analysis of the films produced and distributed by a regional public health department in the 1920s-1940s.[58] Lebas' analysis of this footage demonstrates how historians can use archival moving images to provide unique perspectives on such topics as region and locality, the history of medicine and technology, the history of film production, audience and spectatorship. Corporate- or industry-sponsored movies (e.g., educational and training movies), which are frequently combined in the literature with amateur moving image media, received very little attention from historians. The limited number of articles that were found appeared in discussions of masculinity and occupational identity in corporate training films, shopping centers and consumerism, and the transformation of Asian agriculture.[59]

Across both journal sets, there has been sustained discourse surrounding the role of moving image media in scholarship and education.[60] However, these articles narrowly focus on the role of moving image media in engaging with students rather than as primary source materials. Historians have also written extensively about their own role in

57 Laura Doan, "Sex Education and the Great War Soldier: A Queer Analysis of the Practice of 'Hetero' Sex," *Journal of British Studies* 51 (2012): 641-663.
58 Elizabeth Lebas, " 'When Every Street Became a Cinema.' The Film Work of Bermondsey Borough Council's Public Health Department, 1923-1953," *History Workshop Journal* 39 (1995): 42-66.
59 Lizabeth Cohen, "From Town Center to Shopping Center: The Reconfiguration of Community Marketplaces in Postwar America," *American Historical Review* 101 (1996): 1050-1081; Erica Arthur, "The Organisation Strikes Back: Rhetorical Empowerment Strategies in 1950s Business Representations of White-Collar Manhood," *Journal of American Studies* 38 (2004): 23-40; and Nick Cullather, "Miracles of Modernization: The Green Revolution and the Apotheosis of Technology," *Diplomatic History* 28 (2004): 227-254.
60 *The Public Historian*'s 2003 thematic issue, "History, Historians, and Cinematic Media," addresses these topics with a focus on how historians might themselves become more involved in the production of history in movies and television. For an earlier example, see the 1983 and 1984 issues of *Journal of Contemporary History* which are devoted to this topic: "Historians and Movies: The State of the Art" part one and two.

the production of history on the screen. Many scholars have called for less criticism and more active participation. Consequently, a number of articles have discussed not only the historian's experience consulting for movies but also their experiences as moviemakers.[61] Matthew Sutton's discussion about working as a historical consultant on a PBS documentary provides an intriguing perspective on the collaboration between filmmakers and historians, evaluating the authenticity of moving image media, and how the availability of imagery influences a storyline.[62] Sutton writes of the documentary's producer discovering a 1927 silent film depicting a reenactment of an event from their protagonist's life. He discusses his own jubilation over the discovery as well as his willingness to accept the authenticity of the footage while the producer was more hesitant.

> As a historian who usually works with print sources, it was fascinating to watch other scholars wrestle with identifying the authenticity of a different type of source, one that added a completely new dimension to our understanding of the McPherson kidnapping controversy (39).

Sutton also discusses his willingness to sacrifice authenticity and chronological accuracy for the sake of an improved story. It is, undoubtedly, this seduction of imagery and sacrificing of authenticity that caused my survey participants to be uneasy about working with filmmakers. However, I believe that Sutton's transparency should be viewed as a productive beginning to a more open and dialogue between historians, archivists, and filmmakers.

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61 See, for example, the 2003 thematic issue of *The Public Historian*, "History, Historians, and Cinematic Media." See also, Pamela M. Henson and Terri A. Schorzman, "Videohistory: Focusing on the American Past," *The Journal of American History* 78 (1991): 618-627; Craig Heron, "The Labour Historian and Public History," *Labour/Le Travail* 45 (2000): 171-197; and Janaki Nair, "The Historian Film Maker: Slow Pan to the Present," *History Workshop Journal* 53 (2002): 217-231.

62 Matthew Avery Sutton, "Crashing Into Public History with Aimee Semple McPherson," *The Public Historian* 29 (2007): 35-44.

ANALYSIS OF PROFESSIONAL CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS

I hypothesized that there would be an increased incidence of work referencing materials such as home movies at professional conferences because much of the scholarly work presented has yet to be published and these programs include the work of graduate students and other practitioners who may be less frequently published. Unfortunately, I encountered numerous difficulties in my analysis because the limited information available in conference programs made it difficult to determine the types of sources that were used. However, after reviewing abstracts and panel summaries from multiple conferences, it became clear that a presentation that relied on analysis of non-traditional items such as moving image media (especially home movies) would likely highlight the use of these sources.

My hypothesis that there would be increased citation of amateur moving image materials at professional conferences was not confirmed. I found no specific mention of home movies within conference proceedings or abstracts that even suggested their use. My analysis does indicate that historians are actively discussing movies at these conferences. The Center for the Study of Film and History (the publisher of *Film History)* has hosted panels at every AHA meeting since 2010. Most conferences include movie screenings—typically commercial movies or documentaries that focus on the depiction of historical figures and events. The AHA even offers a yearly award for filmmaking the John O'Connor Film Award, which recognizes "outstanding interpretations of history through the medium of film or video."[63] Themes discussed in panels and presentations are similar to those discussed in print publications: reciprocal relationships between society

63 John E. O'Connor Film Award," American Historical Association, http://www.historians.org/awards-and-grants/awards-and-prizes/john-e-oconnor-film-award.

and cinema, the use of film and video in the production of oral histories, the use of movies as educational tools, and the role of the historian in the creation of history in movies. Though it was often difficult to tell from abstracts if presenters were discussing history as reflected in commercial cinematic productions or other sources (e.g., newsreels or government-sponsored propaganda), many made explicit reference to commercial narrative works.

Though I had anticipated that scholars—particularly graduate students—presenting at professional conferences might find this avenue more accepting of works based on less traditional sources, there are a number of reasons why this may not be the case. If we consider the nature or purpose of professional conferences in today's highly competitive job market, we may surmise that many attendees are there on institutional stipends and scholarships for professional advancement not the advancement of professional theory. Additionally, if an established scholar with tenure feels uneasy about using these sources in their work, can we really expect graduate students and junior faculty to pursue them? Can we expect them to push up against the boundaries and expectations of their profession when they have yet to (or may never) secure tenure?

Chapter 5: Conclusions and Limitations

The results of my survey and publication analysis suggest that there does exist a difference between how moving image archivists believe home movie collections are being used and how they are actually being used. Though survey respondents overwhelmingly identified filmmakers as the primary users of home movie collections and filmmaking the primary purpose for which they are used, the majority of participants did feel that home movie collections are currently used as primary sources for scholarly research. Among those who felt that home movies were being used in this capacity, the impression was that historians are the primary scholarly users. The belief that home movie collections are being used as primary sources in historical scholarship was not confirmed by my analysis of history publications and professional conference programs.

The extremely low number of articles and conference papers that mentioned or cited home movies suggest that home movie collections have yet to impact historical scholarship. The widespread historical use of broader categories or genres of moving image media does suggest an increased acceptance of audiovisual materials but also confirmed my suspicion that this discussion remains largely limited to commercial narrative works and documentaries. The majority of articles concerning home movies were also contained within more niche journals such as *Film History*, which suggests that the broader historical community has yet to discover or accept such materials as scholarly sources.

However, my research methodologies—an anonymous online survey and publication analysis—have inherent limitations that should be considered when weighing

the significance of my findings. Anonymous surveys with primarily closed-ended questions limited my ability to follow up with participants regarding their responses. After reviewing the survey data, I became aware of a number of deficiencies in the wording of my questions and response items, which were likely due to my inability to conduct a pilot study of my survey. For example, participants were asked to list academic disciplines they believed used home movie collections as primary sources in scholarship. The variety of disciplines listed suggests that participants responded with examples of potential rather than actual use. I am also unsure if all participants adhered to my definition of a home movie as outlined in the survey or if they widened the definition to include other amateur media. The number of respondents listing anthropologists as scholarly users caused me to wonder if they were identifying ethnographic films and videos as home movies. Early analysis also revealed that a number of questions might have suffered from limited or poorly defined response items. For example, when asked to select the primary users of home movie collections from a list I provided, a number of respondents listed user groups that I had not considered including (e.g. the families depicted in the movies, content creators, exhibitors, and curators). It is possible that including these groups may have affected the responses to subsequent questions. If families and creators had been listed as a response item, a greater number of participants may have chosen genealogy as a primary purpose of use. Finally, questions that asked participants to identify the primary purpose of use may have also benefitted from increased clarity of the meaning of response items such as “entertainment” or “scholarly research.”

Unsurprisingly, the most intriguing responses came from respondents who chose to provide further insight in the final, open-ended survey question. These detailed

responses, the number of participants who provided contact information, and the number of participants who reached out to me by e-mail suggests that this community is passionate about this research topic and would be willing to participate in more detailed qualitative study. Future research into this area would certainly benefit from the expertise of this unique community and I believe researchers would find a very willing audience.

My choice to use a publication analysis to evaluate the impact of home movie collections likewise suffers from a number of limitations. My deliberately broad keyword search resulted in an extremely large data set that contained numerous false hits. Because I was looking within citations and the body of the article across multiple databases, I was limited to my own ability to manually review the content of each article. Such large-scale analysis naturally invites a questioning of whether I was able to accurately review all articles and whether I missed potentially relevant data. While every effort was made to complete an accurate and comprehensive analysis, there is certainly the possibility that something was missed. The use of multiple databases to identify content was necessary, but also presents potential problems. Information is indexed and presented by these databases in a variety of ways that may have affected my results. Some databases presented articles with my key terms highlighted while others required content be downloaded and searched a second time to identify relevant content. These issues pose questions concerning my ability to consistently and reliably identify all potential content.

My analysis also poses questions about quantifying scholarship. Publication and citation analysis cannot measure all types of scholarly use. Researchers may review a number of materials but ultimately choose to not mention or cite them in their final

works. Furthermore, journal publications are not wholly adequate representations of scholarly work. Much scholarship exists outside the pages of high-ranked journals or even print media. Scholars contribute work in the classroom and in the field, through their work at cultural heritage institutions, and through newer avenues such as digital media and digital humanities projects. While future research would benefit from analysis of a wider journal set, scholarly monographs, and digital media, I do believe that journal publication provides insight into the state of scholarly work in the historical profession for a number of reasons. Libraries use citation analysis to identify the types of resources used to support subject areas and to support collection development, thus determining what is available for scholars to use.[64] Tenure is still frequently based on publication in peer-reviewed journal. Studies of historians' information-seeking behaviors have also shown that historians frequently locate potential sources for research within footnotes and citations.

64 Donghee Sinn, "Impact of Digital Archival Collections on Historical Research."

Chapter 6: Implications and Future Directions

The prevailing desire for scholarly users requires archivists to more closely examine core functions of their profession and the daily activities they perform in service of their patrons. Survey participants who attributed the lack of scholarly use of home movies to a deficiency of scholarly vision or imagination may have been flippant, but this response implies a belief that historians and other scholars have infinite time and resources and are simply choosing not to use certain materials. A participant's comment that scholars had yet to "discover" home movie collections places the onus of discovery solely on the shoulders of the scholar and minimizes the very real pressures they face in research and publication. It also minimizes the active role that archivists play in facilitating "discovery." As Terry Cook so eloquently discusses in his 2011 article, "The Archive(s) is a Foreign Country: Historians, Archivists, and the Changing Archival Landscape," the daily choices archivists make when they appraise, preserve, reformat/digitize, arrange, describe, promote, and destroy records determine what will be known about the past and who will be represented in historical knowledge.[65] It is certainly possible that historians are not yet ready to study 20th and 21st century sources like home movies. It is possible that they are not interested in using audiovisual materials at all. I suggest that we must also consider the possibility that the decisions we have made concerning access to and awareness of these materials have resulted in their being left out of history.

Proceeding from this perspective that archivists are active participants in the construction of historical knowledge, I suggest that archivists must make a number of

65 Terry Cook, "The Archive(s) is a Foreign Country: Historians, Archivists, and the Changing Archival Landscape," *The American Archivist* 74 (2011): 600-632.

adjustments in practice if they wish to see increased scholarly use of their home movie collections. Archivists must endeavor to gain a better understanding of the use and impact of their collections as well as the challenges facing scholars using these materials. They must develop new tools and methods of facilitating efficient access to moving image media. They must make marketing a priority rather than something they do in their spare time. Finally, archives must be prepared to learn, through this user research, that scholars are not their primary user group. They must decide whether they are willing to abandon their scholarly self-image and embrace a wider range of "less serious" user populations. Below, I provide more detailed recommendations for each of these areas. Naturally, I pose more questions than answers and more problems than I have solutions. Research into this area is only beginning and it is my hope that this discussion will inspire future work and insight into the topic.

UNDERSTANDING USERS: PROMOTING A CULTURE OF ASSESSMENT WITHIN MOVING IMAGE ARCHIVES

There remains little research into the users of moving image archives or the use of moving image media. If moving image archivists hope to expand the reach of their collections, they need to begin by creating a culture of assessment within their profession. They cannot continue to operate based on anecdotes and impressions. They must instead systematically evaluate the needs, behaviors, and frustrations of current and desired users. If moving image archivists would like to cultivate a relationship with the broader scholarly community and increase scholarly use of home movie collections, they must actively seek out these desired users and ask them some difficult questions: "Do you value these materials?" "What types of tools do you need to use these materials?" They

must become more service-oriented and be willing to ask patrons "How can *we* help *you*?"

Admittedly, archivists are faced with reduced funding and a growing backlog of unprocessed materials. However, there are a number of methods they can employ to easily and affordably study use.[66] Archives and libraries already collect data that can be used in these assessments including entrance/exit interviews, registration forms, reference requests, and transaction logs. A recent example of using existing data in user research is Michelle Reilly and Santi Thompson's study of the use of digital images provided by the University of Houston's Digital Library.[67] Reilly and Thompson used data already available from their digital image request system to determine the impact or "ultimate use" of their digital images and concluded that information provided by actual users would directly influence institutional decisions concerning metadata creation, system design, marketing, and content selection.

Institutions might also measure use and impact of physical and digital collections by soliciting feedback from users through interviews and surveys. They might question actual users about how they discovered these collections, what they used, the purpose of this use, and how satisfied they were with this experience. Cindy Boeke's survey of users of Southern Methodist University's (SMU) Digital Collections is a good example of a project that combines user research with marketing and promotion. Boeke surveyed

66 For a study of archivists' impressions of user-based research, see Duff, "Archivists' Views of User-Based Evaluation,"144-166.

67 Michele Reilly and Santi Thompson, "Understanding Ultimate Use Data and Its Implication for Digital Library Management: A Case Study," *Journal of Web Librarianship* 8 (2014): 196-213. It is worth noting that Reilly and Thompson found more patrons were requesting images for personal uses (including for decoration, genealogical research, and artwork) than for scholarly or academic research or publication.

actual users who had requested permission to use items for research and publication. What is most interesting about Boeke's work is that she not only used this data to quantify use, but she also created a promotional pamphlet that highlights the variety of users and uses of her collections.[68]

A more time-consuming and costly research option is the pursuit of desired user groups. For this approach, archivists might employ a method similar to my planned study of historians. They might recruit user groups with which they would like to establish relationships and conduct interviews or focus groups concerning this group's research practices, needs, and wants. They might also observe these potential users as they interact with home movies and see what types of roadblocks users encounter in their first exposure to these materials. Though this approach is more time-consuming and costly, it has the unique advantage of allowing researchers to more deeply assess existing problems and uncover reasons why users never made it to the archives to begin with. It allows archivists to move beyond questions of usability (though these remain important) to questions about appraisal and value: "Why aren't you using these materials?" "Are these materials valuable to you?" "What is missing in our current approach that compromises the use of these collections?"

UNDERSTANDING BARRIERS TO SCHOLARLY USE OF HOME MOVIE COLLECTIONS

Though there is currently limited research into the needs of historians working with moving image media—especially home movie collections—a review of the current literature combined with my own research reveals a number of acknowledged barriers to

68 Cindy Boeke, *CUL Digital Collections: Making a Difference* (Dallas, TX: Norwick Center for Digital Services, Southern Methodist University, 2013), 2.

use. Participants in my survey identified a number of potential barriers to scholarly use—the majority of which might be attributed to failures on the part of the moving image archives profession: awareness, access, time, comfort, and cost. Studies of historians as well as my own informal conversations with historians revealed similar findings.[69] Historians I spoke with reported a lack of awareness of institutions collecting moving image media and home movie collections; professional biases toward textual materials; a lack of existing historical scholarship using moving image media on which to base their own research; and a lack of training in viewing, analyzing and citing moving image media. Though some guidelines do exist for the citation of audiovisual materials, it is perhaps less clear to historians as to how they might "quote" segments of a movie, particularly one that has been digitized, within their publication. Should they quote time-codes? Embed video when possible? Provide a link to the content? Use still images or screen-shots?

I find it intriguing that neither archivists nor historians mentioned the issue of specialization or "periodization" as a challenge to the scholarly use of moving image media. I had suspected this might be a factor due to the difficulties I encountered recruiting participants for my original study. I was unable to locate current figures regarding trends in specialization in the history profession, but a study of articles published in *The American Historical Review* from 1896-1990 found a very small number of articles devoted to the study of the 20th century.[70] A review of the American Historical Association's *Directory of History Departments and Organizations*, found only 1,334 out of "nearly 22,000" listed members reported specializing in the 20th

69 Rutner and Schonfeld, Supporting the Changing Research Practices of Historians," 3-52.
70 J Jean-Pierre V.M. Herubel and Edward A. Goedeken, "Trends in Historical Scholarship as Evidence in The American Historical Review: 1896-1990," *The Serials Review* 19 (Summer 1993):79-83.

century and even fewer reported specializing in 21st century history.[71] Because home movie making is primarily a 20th and 21st century activity, trends in specialization might be a significant barrier to use.

Another particularly glaring omission in this list of challenges to using home movie collections in scholarship is the actual content and quality of home movies. Though previously mentioned challenges originate with both archivists and historians, the materials themselves have not been subject to similar critique. The content, quality, and context of home movies can make them difficult to both process and view. Though archivists occasionally find "hidden treasures" within these collections—items that for the first time provide visual evidence of a historical event—the majority depict the "banal" details of life punctuated by holidays, weddings, parades, and vacations. These movies, created by individuals more concerned with capturing an event than with production value, contain more shaky over-exposed images and non-linear editing than well-composed shots and clear narratives. Home video in particular can be tiresome to view, as it is significantly longer than films and might feature such exciting imagery as extended close-ups of squirrels and empty chairs. Though the quality of footage can sometimes lend an interesting background to the collection—telling us something about the person or equipment that created the movies—it still presents an impediment to the user who wishes to discern the "story." Though some movies shot on film contain soundtracks, title cards, or other creative methods of explaining time or location, most of

71 American Historical Association, *Directory of History Departments, Historical Organizations, and Historians*, 39th ed. (Washington D.C.: American Historical Association, 2014), http://www.historians.org/publications-and-directories/directories.

these films are silent and thus as confusing and mysterious as Jack Donaghy's tenth birthday party.[72]

FACILITATING EFFICIENT ACCESS: NEW TOOLS AND METHODS

Scholars face significant time constraints when conducting research. If archivists hope to attract scholars and increase use of home movie collections, they must work to make the process of finding and using these materials more efficient. Solving these problems requires that we reexamine a number of interconnected activities involved in providing access.[73] Digitizing and providing online access to collections seems an obvious solution to the conundrum of access, but this process cannot be seen as a panacea. Though digitization of moving image media is vital for purposes of preservation, providing online access does not ensure that materials are found or used. Once home movies are digitized, users still face challenges in efficiently identifying relevant content. Scholars are familiar with the structure of textual documents and are thus able to skim and discard irrelevant content. It is much more time-consuming to determine relevant content in digital and analog moving image media because one cannot effectively skim the material as one might the pages of a book. This problem presents information professionals with an opportunity to develop new tools for access and use. Some areas to explore might include the development of content management systems

72 Families often devised creative ways of showing the date of an event including holding up newspapers or handmade signs for the camera or displaying their age on their hands at a birthday parties. I recently viewed a silent home movie depicting winter scenes in which a clever family member wrote the year into the frosted back window of a car.

73 Though I do not aim to exclude home video from this discussion, it should again be noted that much scholarship concerning home movies has focused on film or (more recently) digitized films. Thus much of the research cited concerns providing access to films. Hopefully, some of these suggestions will enable better access to both formats, but it may be the case that home video—with its numerous additional challenges to processing and viewing—may require separate and more specialized attention in the future.

specifically tailored to moving image archives and the creation of improved (and open-source) video-sharing tools and platforms. We can take as inspiration or foundation, tools and websites that have already provided a number of innovations in this area. The Open Video Digital Project tested a variety of digital visual surrogates including brief excerpts, storyboard presentation and "fast-forward" tools (using key frames) with the goal of enabling users to quickly make sense of digital video.[74] In a 2002 study using brief videos (2-7 minutes each) and storyboards available from the Open Video Project, Christine Stachowicz, found that humans indexing videos with storyboards rather than by watching the full video saved significant amounts of time with a small sacrifice in accuracy.[75] Though this points to some interesting directions for future processing and presentation initiatives, it is uncertain if home movie content—with its narrative idiosyncrasies—could be similarly indexed via storyboards and key frames. Home video, in particular, would likely be exceedingly difficult given the length of many recordings.

More recent developments have included Glifos Social Media, a rich media manager that allows users to more efficiently navigate content through the synching of time-codes with transcripts, documents, keywords, and maps.[76] While Glifos provides numerous useful tools to its users, it has many drawbacks including that it is not open-source. In fact, archivists might consider looking at popular video-sharing platforms such as YouTube and Vimeo as more than a means to display their digitized items, but also as

74 For a detailed summary of the history of the Open Video Digital Project, see Gary Marchionini, Barbara M. Wildemuth, and Gary Geisler, "The Open Video Digital Library: A Mobius Strip of Research and Practice, *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology* 57 (2006): 1629-1643. Unfortunately, the Open Video Digital Library does not appear to have been updated since 2007 and it is unclear if it remains an active project.

75 Christine Stachowicz, "The Effectiveness of Storyboard Surrogates in the Subject of Indexing of Digital Video" (master's thesis, UNC, 2002).

76"GLIFOS Social Media," GLIFOS, http://www.glifos.com/wiki/index.php?title=Social_Media.

an inspiration for creating usable and accessible web-video platforms targeted at scholarly users.[77] YouTube offers a number of useful functions, including closed captioning, the ability to synch media segments to transcripts, and the ability to "quote" or share segments of content. Though the ability to share via e-mail and social media segments of video based on time codes seems to be mostly used for purposes of social engagement, enabling similar features in a scholarly tool might allow historians to more adequately "take notes" on moving image media as well as quote scenes within their publications. Another major attraction to YouTube is the ability to "skim or "fast forward" through via thumbnail images, allowing users to quickly evaluate video content and relevance.

Developing these tools is only one step in providing efficient access. Whether analog or digitized, items cannot be found unless they are adequately described. Moving image archivists and custodians of home movie collections must work toward more efficient methods of processing. Many archives facing mounting backlogs of unprocessed collections have embraced "More Product Less Process"(MPLP)—a model that emphasizes minimal handling, processing, and description and the creation of high-level finding aids with the goal of making more materials available to researchers. Unfortunately, MPLP may not be the most useful model for streamlining the processing of home movie collections. Home movie collections frequently lack contextual information or documentation, must be viewed in order to discern their content, and require specialized equipment for playback and digitization. Describing home movies at the collection level might still entail viewing multiple films and time-consuming

77 The possible uses of YouTube continue to grow as moving image archives provide access to all or some of their digitized content on video sharing platforms. For just a few examples, see Northeast Historic Film (vimeo.com/northeasthistoricfilm), the Lynn and Louis Wolfson II Florida Moving Image Archive (youtube.com/user/wolfsonarchive), and the Texas Archive of the Moving Image (youtube.com/user/texasarchive).

research. Collection-level description is likely insufficient to attract researchers outside of the film studies departments. Joshua Ranger of Audiovisual Preservation Solutions provides an excellent analysis of the insufficiencies of the current MPLP model for audiovisual collections and encourages audiovisual archives to begin processing by defining the goals of the processing project, the desired users, and desired uses of the collection.[78] Audiovisual Preservation Solutions is also continuing to develop new tools for streamlining audiovisual processing that are tailored to the unique needs of these types of materials. One such tool, Catalyst Inventory Software, aims to help institutions gain intellectual control over their collections and create item-level inventories of audiovisual records. [79] This process takes advantage of digital photographs, which allow the institution to catalogue collections before or after reformatting and without continually handling items. It also allows institutions to take advantage of off-site cataloguers to process collections.

Crowdsourcing is another option for fast-tracking the processing of moving image collections once they have been digitized. There are clearly a number of areas where crowdsourcing might benefit the processing of home movie collections, especially in regional moving image archives. Though the trend of crowdsourcing has quickly become the new cure-all for cataloguing digital archival collections, I remain skeptical about its long-term benefit. A discussion of crowdsourcing is beyond the scope of the present paper, but I encourage archivists to not cling to this new trend of without first conducting

78 Joshua Ranger, What's Your Product? Assessing the Suitability of a More Product, Less Process Methodology for Processing Audiovisual Collections (New York, NY: Audiovisual Preservation Solutions, n.d.), 1-7.

79 For further details on this software and the process, see Joshua Ranger, "The Things We Do--Catalyst Item Level Inventory," entry posted July 15, 2014, http://www.avpreserve.com/blog/the-things-we-do-catalyst-item-level-inventory/#more-6625. The Catalyst Inventory software is currently only available as part of Audio Visual Preservation Solutions' assessment and inventory services, but provides some interesting ideas on how archives might consider the streamlining of their own audiovisual collections.

a cost-benefit analysis of this method. How many users are contributing accurate and useful information to our collections? Is the amount of time spent reviewing and researching user input resulting in more collections being processed and used? Are we learning how to improve access points to these collections from user-generated metadata or are we spending more time decoding their input into our own metadata standards?

MARKETING AND OUTREACH: PROMOTING HOME MOVIES TO SCHOLARS

Both archivists and historians have listed a lack of awareness of home movie collections as a primary barrier to use. Archives' history of shying away from marketing and outreach has led to numerous ruminations on the role of archivists in the public sphere and a growing belief that archives must interact with their public if they are to stay relevant. Though all archives are at the mercy of funding and public opinion, moving image archives are especially vulnerable because they must compete with the growing number of outlets that provide users with free, unrestricted online access to moving image media. In order to encourage use of their archival collections, moving image archivists must become better promoters of their institutions and advocates for their collections.

At present, the most well known marketing campaign for home movies is certainly Home Movie Day. Home Movie Day (HMD) events are held annually at archives and other venues across the world. Event hosts are free to construct the event in any manner they choose, but they are typically regional events that offer attendees the opportunity to have their own home movies. Home Movie Day is well known within the moving image archiving community, but it seems to have remained an event populated by those who already have an appreciation for the media. The Center for Home Movies

(CHM) encourages Home Movie Day hosts to report data from their events, but it does not appear that anyone has yet measured the impact such events have had on the usage of home movie collections. Even though HMD remains an important event for the moving image archives community, I think that it is still valuable to question whether it is a marketing or education event or if it is a convention of like-minded individuals celebrating a common interest.

I think a more fruitful avenue for exploration involves the creation of curated collections, the publishing of research guides, and the collaboration with historians on the production of new works such as books, journal articles, websites, and blogs. Curated digital collections not only facilitate efficient use of moving image media but also provide a helpful entry point for scholars who are unfamiliar with home movies. This may be especially helpful for institutions that are unable to provide digital access to the entirety of their collections but wish to highlight the research value of their materials. Because historians frequently report locating sources in footnotes and citations, it stands to reason that if historians do not cite home movies then they will likely remain unused. It is therefore of utmost importance to begin establishing a foundation of home movie scholarship from the historian's perspective. Whether through print or digital publications, archivists should begin seeking out and partnering with historians for the production of new scholarship. This collaboration will not only increase scholarly awareness of home movie collections, but also add value to existing archival description of these materials.

TRAINING HISTORIANS TO "SEE" HOME MOVIES

Historians have repeatedly spoken about their perceived lack of visual literacy, specifically their discomfort in viewing and analyzing non-textual materials from a historical perspective. Professors of history urgently need to bring moving image media into the classroom—not just as a way of keeping undergraduates from falling asleep, but also as valid primary sources for research. As increasing numbers of people have the ability to record and distribute history as it happens, it is certainly possible that future historians of the 21st century might rely more on images than on written histories. It therefore behooves professors of history to begin educating their students in how to "see" history. They should consider the value of teaching their students to analyze all potential relevant sources of knowledge by designing coursework that encourages (or mandates) the use of non-textual materials. Just as universities offer information literacy courses from their library faculty, history professors might consider inviting moving image archivists to teach visual or media literacy. This would likewise benefit archivists looking to promote their collections to students.

Moving image archivists might consider taking the helm of this visual literacy effort by offering workshops, professional development courses, and training sessions for faculty, students, and researchers. The Center for Primary Research and Training (CFPRT) created by the University of California, Los Angeles' special collections library is an excellent example for institutions looking to promote collections and archival literacy.[80] By pairing graduate and undergraduate students with unprocessed or "hidden" archival collections that match their research interests, the CFPRT offers students in the social sciences, humanities, and visual arts to engage with archival collections and gain

80 "Center for Primary Research and Training (CFPRT)," UCLA Library Special Collections, http://www.library.ucla.edu/special-collections/center-primary-research-training-cfprt.

training in archival methods of arrangement and description. While educating students, the CFPRT simultaneously helps the special collections library to overcome processing backlogs, make the materials more discoverable for future researchers, and promote the importance of their materials. Though the UCLA Library Special Collections is separate from the university's dedicated Film and Television Archive, they do process collections that contain audiovisual materials. According to Jillian Cuellar, head of the CFPRT program, the Special Collections library worked with UCLA's former Audiovisual Preservation Specialist to conduct workshops and training sessions for program participants, training them to identify and house various audiovisual formats. As a result of this collaboration, a student created a Flickr page that serves as a visual reference guide for analog and born-digital media formats.[81] Though it appears that none of the CFPRT students have focused on audiovisual materials due to the contents of the library's collections, the CFPRT model provides an excellent example for future work in media archives literacy.

Moving beyond more general forms of "visual literacy" or "media literacy," archivists might consider developing methods to teach historians to view and analyze more specific categories of moving image media. Home movies are especially difficult for the novice because one must view many hours of movies from different families, regions, and time periods before becoming expert in their visual motifs and content. When I first began viewing home movies, I was unfamiliar with what was rare and what was common. Early on in my work with home movie collections, I came across a scene of family members slowly walking—first as individuals and then as a shifting mass—

[81] Idedeyan, "Materials from UCLA Library Special Collections," flickr, https://www.flickr.com/photos/124076687@N04/.

toward the movie camera. The younger people smiled and waved while grandparents eyed the camera more suspiciously. I was fascinated by what I thought was a unique sequence. After viewing countless hours of home movies spanning more than 50 years, I can now say that this "moving family portrait" is common to many home movie collections from the early era of movie making when the technology was new and people were still learning how to be themselves on camera. I still look for the "moving portrait," but as a more expert home movie viewer I look for this action in movies from later time periods as possible evidence of a family's socioeconomic and cultural background and their familiarity with moving image technology.

It may also take time and numerous viewings to appreciate what seems at first to be "banal" action or content. While I have always loved viewing Christmas mornings—from the shots of presents in front of the tree to the family-specific rituals and the opening of the presents—I wasn't always so enamored with footage of family trips to the zoo. Once my least favorite material, I became more interested when I learned to look at it differently and began to observe subtle differences in the materials. I began noticing the levels (or lack) of protection from animals that was given to children in the 1950s as well as what animals and environments the different families from different regions found most exotic. I don't love every home movie, however, and I find Easters to be interminably dull. This, too, is changing though as I begin to consider different components of the holiday ritual. Moving past the over-exposed outdoor Easter egg hunts, I am looking at the families that always hold the egg hunts in doors despite what appears to be good weather as well as family's posing uncomfortably in their formal attire.

By establishing a base level of knowledge concerning home movies, moving image archivists might be better equipped to encourage historians to "take the leap" into

the unknown and (at times) fascinating world of home movies. They might encourage scholars to not see the lack of context not as a deficiency but an opportunity for exploration. With their expertise and enthusiasm, moving image archivists can share their knowledge of home movies with the historical profession by continuing to develop the scholarship surrounding home movies rather than focusing exclusively on other amateur works. Such work might to endeavor to explore home movies on a more practical level including methods of identification and historical interpretation of this media and discussions of common actions, themes, and imagery. A significant outcome of the 2010 Center for Home Movies Digitization & Access Summit was the development of home movie taxonomies and the explication of home movie "tropes" as a starting point for exploring the actions, events, and imagery commonly found in home movies (16).[82] Tropes were defined by camera technique, human behavior, and recurring imagery. Though the development of terms for the description of home movies may be of primary use to cataloguing and description, it may also benefit scholars and researchers as a "'way in' to a large undifferentiated mass of material" and a "source of conceptual vocabulary for scholarship" (21).

EMBRACING NEW USERS AND FUNCTIONS

The archival self-image has long been informed by the view that we are first and foremost responsible for facilitating serious historical knowledge. Rick Prelinger is one of only a few archivists who recognize the necessity of engaging with multiple publics and the potential benefits of reaching out to users other than scholars and historians. Prelinger has written about archival access on numerous occasions, but I am most taken

82 Center for Home Movies Digitization & Access Summit, Final Report, 16-21. Genres and tropes developed were based only on film at the exclusion of videotape and digital media.

with his opening remarks at the CHM's 2010 Digitization and Access Summit. Speaking of the need for changes in the moving image archival profession and the responsibility of archivists to garner greater public interest in home movie collections, Prelinger encouraged attendees to use home movies and other amateur film "as monkey wrenches to reengineer practically everything about the modern moving image archives; to use home movies to provoke archives and archivists to cross the barrier that fence us off from the territory of constant growth and change" (6). He asked his colleagues to consider how they might go "beyond simply saving materials and make history and culture pertinent" (7). [83]

It is certainly possible that, at least for the time being, historians are not interested in using home movies. It's a hard truth to swallow for a community that has so tirelessly campaigned for its recognition. This does not mean that there aren't a number of other users and uses for home movie collections. It does mean that archivists must embrace the idea that scholarly use is not the only use. When moving image archives endeavor to gain a better understanding of the actual impact and use of their collections, they may find new and exciting avenues for collaboration.

83 Center for Home Movies Digitization & Access Summit, Final Report, 6-7.

Appendix A. Survey of the Association of Moving Image Archivists

The following survey was created using Qualtrics Survey Software. Participants were provided a link to complete the survey online. In this print version, the skip logic is shown in brackets.

Survey Introduction:
The purpose of this survey is to examine who is accessing and using home movie collections and for what purposes. This survey is exploratory in nature and there are no right or wrong answers. I am interested only in your opinions and experiences. The following survey items are concerned with the use of home movie collections. For the purposes of this survey, *use* refers to the accessing of home movies for a variety of activities ranging from entertainment or education to the production of a new work of art.

For the purposes of this survey, a *home movie* has the following characteristics: (1) it was shot on film or video and (2) it was initially created for screening by a select group of friends and family. For the purposes of this survey, a home movie is *NOT* (1) an item that was created for wide screening or distribution or (2) an item created by corporation or industry.

If you agree to participate in this survey, the survey will take approximately 10 minutes of your time. Your participation is completely voluntary and you may withdraw from this survey at any time. All information provided is anonymous and no identifying information will be elicited. You may contact me directly with any questions about this survey.

Survey items:

1. Please indicate which of the response items most accurately describes you.
    - o Archivist
    - o Collector
    - o Educator
    - o Filmmaker
    - o Librarian
    - o Researcher
    - o Student
    - o Vendor
    - o Retired (Please provide your most recent occupation.)
    - o Other (Please explain.)

2. In what capacity have you interacted with home movie collections? Please select all that apply.
    - Archivist
    - Collector
    - Educator
    - Filmmaker
    - Librarian
    - Researcher
    - Student
    - Vendor
    - Other (Please explain.)
3. Based on your own experience, please select the group that represents the most frequent users of home movie collections.
    - Archivists
    - Filmmakers
    - Genealogists
    - Historians
    - Students
    - Educators
    - Other (Please explain.)
4. Based on your own experience, please select the purpose for which home movies are most frequently used.
    - Education
    - Entertainment
    - Filmmaking
    - Genealogy
    - Scholarly research
    - Other (Please explain.)
5. Based on your own experience, do you believe home movie collections are being used as primary sources for scholarly research?
    - Yes [**If Yes is selected, skip to Question 7]**
    - No
6. Why do you think that home movies are *not* used for academic research or scholarship? Please select all answers that apply.
    - Lack of awareness of moving image collections
    - Scholars are not comfortable using moving image collections.
    - It is financially prohibitive to use home movies for scholarship.
    - It is too time-consuming to use home movies for scholarship.
    - It is too difficult to gain access to home movie collections.
    - Home movies are not a valid source for academic scholarship.
    - Other (Please explain.)

    [**Skip to Question 8]**

7. Please list up to 5 academic disciplines that you believe use home movies as sources in their scholarship.
8. Drag and drop the below response items to indicate which group would most benefit from having access to home movie collections. Groups that would benefit the most should be listed at the top.
    - Archivists
    - Artists
    - Filmmakers
    - Genealogists
    - Historians
    - Students
    - Educators
    - Other (Please explain)
9. Please feel free to provide additional information you may have regarding your experience with home movie collections and their users. If you have any questions about this survey or research project and would like to discuss it further, feel free to contact me.

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