

Guest Editorial

Selected Papers from the 2019 Archival Education and Research Institute

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In July 2019, the Archival Education and Research Institute (AERI) took place at the University of Liverpool, in the north-west of England, co-hosted by the Liverpool University Centre for Archive Studies and the UK and Ireland's Forum for Archives and Records Management Education and Research (FARMER): the first time an AERI had been held outside of North America. Around 150 archival scholars came from across North and South America, Africa, Europe, Asia and Australasia, to present new work and work in progress. AERI is an annual residential institute, more a working meeting of colleagues than a conference, where all attendees are expected to contribute and masters and doctoral students, faculty and practitioners share ideas over the course of a week.

Since AERI began in 2009, it has contributed to cohort building across the discipline, increasingly internationally. AERI has contributed to the current activity in and growth of the archival studies field, and in its collegiality it has encouraged us to become more robust in our scholarship and more adventurous, theoretically and methodologically. A strong focus has always been on the utility of record-keeping in and for societies and communities, a concern put into action in its Emerging Archival Scholars Program and the societal grand challenges thread of dialogues, but evident across all the publications and collaborations that have derived from AERI in one way or another.¹

AERI 2019 was charged with energy for change, both within the field of archival studies and in the societies and communities that archives seek to serve and represent. As this special issue of *Education for Information* takes shape a year later, the world is a very different place: the coronavirus has swept the globe, killing hundreds of thousands of people and radically reshaping social norms; and the state-sanctioned murder of Black people in the United States has ignited action for justice in many parts of the world. Activism with and through records, the informational challenges of pandemic conditions, and the memorialisation of lives and deaths all are archival

¹Soyka, H.A., Wilczek, E. Ten years of Archival Education and Research Institutes: a snapshot of scholarship. *Archival Science* 20, 22–244 (2020). doi: 10.1007/s10502-020-09331-2.

imperatives, as the AERI community knows well. The AERI community was attuned to the growing need for research and education appropriate to an environment characterised by threat, violence and precarity already in 2019. As this special issue goes to print in 2021, after an AERI2020 held online, the necessity for scholarship and pedagogy that is resistant in its orientation and person-centred in its teleology should be obvious.

This direction is intimated in the papers presented here. The limitations of peer-reviewed academic publishing prevent an accurate representation of the experimental, dialogical and pedagogical forms of discourse that happen in the AERI space: the articles presented here are restricted to two formal categories. In the first, are full articles developed from AERI2019 presentations, peer-reviewed in the usual way. In the second are position papers that call for action in some form, reflecting conversations that took place at the institute. The papers in this special issue give a sense of the concerns within the field, concerns over power, pedagogy, community, rights, and much more, but they are a small selection from a rapidly evolving and expanding body of work spanning from palaeography to artificial intelligence, work that fabulates the future, digs into the past and acts in the present.