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This study was created to determine the differences or similarities between different locations of the National Archives and Records Administration in how they receive and maintain researcher data.

Headings:

Government Archives, Reference Systems

CONSISTENCY IN GOVERNMENT ARCHIVE REFERENCE SERVICES

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1. INTRODUCTION

In the course of regular archival reference exchanges many different types of data are generated. This information documents a multitude of functions of an archive. Some of this data are facts about researchers, what they are looking for and why. It is healthy for an archive and its users to collect and control this data. The larger the established archive and reference section the more information that is generated and needs to be controlled. Different institutions have different mechanisms for determining how to maintain control of their archive. It is difficult to maintain control of this information as technology advances and the volume of reference requests increases along with it. Having multiple facilities under one organization adds another level of challenge to keeping all of this different information in check. Some benchmarks for a larger institution attempting to control its information are: How uniform are policies regarding user information among its various branches, how receptive are these smaller branches to technological change and how does all of this align with users' privacy? This study captures user data retention practices in reference services of one larger institution: The National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) in the United States. It is a prime example of a large agency that has had to adapt to technological changes within their many different facilities. NARA has many different research centers, records centers facilities, presidential libraries and affiliated archives.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Services that archives provide have expanded over time to encompass many different interactions with users. Consequentially the information collected about researchers has expanded significantly. This data can be either a boon or a curse. Archivists and librarians have an ethical obligation to control and maintain this information. At the same time this information can have a variety of different uses that benefit libraries, archives and their users. As technology has advanced and the types of possible interactions with users have increased, so too have the methods of controlling that information. Having an infrastructure that can maintain control of this information is vital to maintaining a functional archive.

Several types of information created in an archive surround the references services researchers interact with. The reference interview is one of the main services in the arsenal the archive can provide. The reference interview is described by Green Rothstein as "personal assistance given by the librarian [archivist] to individual readers in pursuit of information" (Burke, 2008, p. 270, 2008). A reference interview is an in-depth set of questions designed to assist the reference service specialist help a user. The notes and other written material generated during the reference interview contain the user's information interests. This material can be analyzed to learn more about user's interests. Whenever an archivist is interacting with a user to help them clarify or locate material from the archives holdings this type of information is generated.

The other main way this type of information is created is by more mechanical processes as a by-product of a closed stack. A closed stack requires archivists to retrieve documents for researchers instead of an open stack which allows researchers to browse.

These processes track user information internally. These types of processes include: "confirm the identity of the researcher... sign a logbook each day they are in the reference room... complete a call slip for each collection or part of a collection" (Hunter, 2002, p.221-223). Each mechanical action is compliant with a system which will bring a benefit to a researcher they could not obtain on their own. Pull-slips, for example, translate what the user wants to archivists who then pull the material for the user and, after the initial transaction, act as records of requests.

Archivists have a variety of different records that document user activity. Controlling and using this information can be beneficial to users and archivists alike. This information can be used within an archive's reference department to "allocate resources, plan staffing patterns, order equipment and supplies, plan programs to meet identified needs and reward staff" (Pugh, 2005, p. 259). Within the larger organization information can be used to negotiate with management and "obtain adequate space and equipment" (Pugh, 2005, p.258).

The creation of these data must be controlled by policies set in place by the larger organization. Scholarship on the creation, control and use of these data is limited; however there are examples to help guide policy, such as those found at the National Archives and Records Administration. At NARA, "researcher registration forms are usually filed by name of user in an annual file and kept for as long as possible. Request forms are filed and kept as long as possible to provide evidence in case of theft or abuse of records. The National Archives keeps both registration forms and call slips for twenty-five years" (Pugh, 2005, p.255-256). Pugh conducted this study before the explosion of

digital information that started in the mid-1990s and 2000s. The research that Pugh conducted can be contrast with this current practices of NARA found by this study.

The advent of the internet has increased the ways in which users can interact with archives and libraries. This technological boom has aided libraries and archives reach a larger audience. Reference questions can be sent by email, and users can browse library catalogs, finding aids, and digital collections from the comfort of their home computers. These new access points have facilitated previously unheard of levels of traffic and user data. This new traffic creates digital documentation of researcher questions and interests that archives must take into their calculations. Archives and libraries have started to develop strategies for controlling these new forms of information.

Certain libraries have begun to move away from pencil and paper for tallying reference services in favor of electronic methods (Garrison, 2010). Garrison's library at Indiana University was having difficulty keeping track of the growing list of places of contact for users. "These multiple modes of contact mean that librarians may answer questions from an increasing variety of places—from their offices, at the reference desk, during visits to other locations on campus, or even from home in an online chat session" (2010, p. 204). As the modes of contact with the library continued to increase, librarians were becoming dissatisfied with the type of information that could be gained from the current system. They noted that while the number of reference questions was dropping "it seemed as if the complexity of many questions had increased" (Garrison, 2010, p. 204). The old pencil and paper tally system did not reflect the change in complexity, only the drop in numbers. For all the work that librarians were doing "the once-a-year compilation process restricted access to the information and framed the data as an administrative tool

rather than a professional resource" (Garrison, 2010, p. 206-207). The new electronic system created at Indiana University allowed librarians to create and control statistics easier. As the process was less labor intensive, more and better statistical analysis became available to librarians.

Archival automation has come in many different forms to meet the rising challenges of the Information Age. Archives have begun to switch to using database tools to track user requests in order to be better liaisons between the holdings of their repositories and users who come looking for this information. Switching from paper based finding aids to computer based finding aids has made them "easily updated" and "can be used to create form letters to answer routine reference queries or mass mailings, brochures and newsletters" (Cross, 1995, p. 15). The largest change has not been in tracking requests but has been in digitizing collections and finding aids. The digitization is part of an effort to provide remote access to collections. Libraries and archives are adapting to changes in technology to keep up with the changing world around them. Different sized institutions have reacted to these changes in different ways.

Ideally, the larger an institution is the more money it has to invest in adaptable management practices. In reality, larger management systems tend to adapt slowly to changes that affect only a small portion of the larger whole. The National Archives has record schedules which govern the retention of research room reference service files. (https://www.archives.gov/about/records-schedule/chapter-14.html#preslib,1417-1425) The specificity of the disposition instructions for each type of record varies - some are highly detailed, others have no information – perhaps creating confusion about how much freedom each facility has over its reference room materials.

When discussing privacy, archivists generally concern themselves with the tension between protecting the rights of persons discussed in documents in holdings and providing open access to the materials of an archive. This perspective can be applied to the users who frequent the archive as well, as they leave traces of information about themselves in the archive. This information can have great benefit to the archive if used with the proper respect it deserves. Sharing the personal information of a user or not controlling the information properly and allowing unrestricted access to personal or research information harms both users and the archive. But while archivists are entrusted with the personal information of the researchers, this does not mean keeping completely quiet about such subjects. As Mary Jo Pugh explains on the one hand archivists should not share what researchers are investigating to other researchers to protect their work. On the other hand, introducing two researchers who are researching similar topics could be beneficial for both. Likewise, using data about what has been pulled in an archive to ascertain general researcher interests can be useful, too, when deciding what to process in a backlog. General statistics of use about an archive can be used to justify funding or grant opportunities. However, users have a right to not have their personal information distributed without their consent. Archivists are ethically bound to respect the rights of researchers in their reading rooms just as much as the rights of the subjects in their holdings.

There are many different ways users interact with archives today. The National Archives of the United States combines the task of safeguarding our nation's government documents with opening those records for the public to see. Because of this, there is a massive amount of information that is generated by the users of the National Archives in

all of their various facilities around the country. Controlling and maintaining the records of the users of the National Archives is both ethically responsible and can help the facility and the National Archives as a whole in a variety of ways. This study explores what types of information on users the National Archives keeps and how that information is being used.

3. METHODS

3.1 PARTICIPANTS

The National Archives Centers (or Regional Archives) and the Presidential Libraries of the National Archive and Records Administration value openness and collaboration to allow public access to public records held by the federal government. The National Archives was created by Congress in 1934 and charged with the preservation of all federal government records. Their mission is:

> *… To provide public access to Federal Government records in our custody and control. Public access to government records strengthens democracy by allowing Americans to claim their rights of citizenship, hold their government accountable, and understand their history so they can participate more effectively in their government. (http://www.archives.gov/about/info/mission.html)*

The National Archives holds United States executive branch and federal court records divided among their locations around the nation. Each location serves the states around it and holds the federal court records for the surrounding states and different federal records groups. The Federal Records Centers' primary function is assisting government agencies with the transfer and control of their records. Federal Record

Centers will provide reference services for the public but that is not their primary function.

The National Archive Centers (or Regional Archives as they are also called) are the archives where the federal records and Federal Court records reside as well as being the primary in-person resource for the public interacting with the National Archives. The fourteen locations of these National Archive Centers are: Washington D.C.; Atlanta, Georgia; Boston, Massachusetts; Chicago, Illinois; College Park, Maryland; Denver, Colorado; Fort Worth, Texas; Kansas City, Missouri; New York City, New York; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Riverside, California; San Francisco, California; Seattle, Washington; and St. Louis, Missouri.

The Presidential Libraries are not traditional libraries; they serve as repositories for the materials of presidents of the United States after they have left office. The Presidential Libraries began when Franklin D. Roosevelt donated his papers as president and a spot of land in Hyde Park to the Federal Government with the instruction to take care of his papers. After him, Harry S. Truman donated his own work. After these donations Congress passed the Presidential Libraries act in 1955 to formalize this process. In the 1950s the donation of presidential materials by a leaving president was considered to be voluntary donations. The libraries were created by private funds but maintained federally. Everything not donated by the president was considered to be the personal materials of that president.

The process of records transfer from the President to the National Archives was amended in 1978. Under the new act "presidential records that document the

constitutional, statutory, and ceremonial duties of the President are the property of the United States Government" (http://www.archives.gov/presidential-libraries/about/history.html). This turned the voluntary process of prior presidents into an official procedure. This was amended again in 1986, to offset the cost of creating libraries by requiring private donations to match the size of the library created.

Currently there are thirteen unique Presidential Libraries covering the materials of Herbert Hoover, Franklin D. Roosevelt, Harry S. Truman, Dwight D. Eisenhower, John F. Kennedy, Lyndon B. Johnson, Richard Nixon, Gerald R. Ford, Jimmy Carter, Ronald Reagan, George Bush, William J. Clinton, and George W. Bush while two libraries, Richard Nixon's and Gerald Ford's library and museum are split between two locations. The Obama library is currently under construction.

The website for each of these libraries listed contacts for a variety of individuals working at these libraries. At each of these facilities the Archives Specialist or Director of the Archive was contacted for this study with the survey.

3.2 PROCEDURES

This study is based on a survey that contains a mix of quantitative and qualitative questions. Specifically, the survey questions how information kept on researchers is handled, stored and used in various NARA locations. The purpose is to determine what degree of control a large, geographically dispersed institution such as this has across its many facilities. Does each facility, with different needs, develop their own standards for this information or is it centrally controlled, and if so, how well? This is a survey of a

single, large institution to judge the consistency, rationale and privacy policies of that one institution.

The survey was distributed to the National Archive Research Centers and Presidential Libraries reference departments around the country which are most likely to have knowledge of researcher data retention policy. The NARA website lists fifty seven facilities that NARA either directly controls and writes policy for or is affiliated with. Fourteen of these facilities are National Archive facilities with walk in reference services, indicating that they deal with the general public. There are fifteen locations for Presidential Libraries. The Presidential Libraries also interact with the public and are controlled by records schedules set by NARA.

The nineteen Federal Records Centers focus on working with other federal agencies; therefore, as this study focuses on the general public, the Federal Records Centers were not contacted. There are also nine affiliated archives that are not controlled by NARA, so these archives were not contacted. Consequently, twenty-six National Archive Centers and Presidential Libraries were contacted in total. The contact person(s) varied at each institution but each facility contacted was asked to deliver the survey to an individual who knew user information retention policies.

The survey is divided into questions regarding researcher questions, pull-slips, and guest books. Each of these sets of questions will gauge consistency of user data retention policies, specifically how these types of information are stored and used, elasticity to technological change and balancing of privacy concerns with usage of information. The survey was distributed electronically through the Qualtrics email distribution system. Only completed surveys were counted in the study.

4 RESULTS

Twenty seven locations were selected to receive surveys. However, only twenty six of these locations had email addresses to receive this survey so only twenty six facilities were contacted. Ten completed survey responses indicated they were from National Archive Centers. One incomplete survey indicated it was from a National Archives Center and was not counted among the results. A contact from the Presidential Libraries sent an email with a completed survey for the collective response of thirteen libraries; however, which of the fifteen libraries the email was responding for was not specified. The Presidential Libraries also sent back three incomplete responses through Qualtrics.

The survey explores the handling of three different types of user data: recorded research questions, pull-slips and guest books. These questions are used to ascertain how well these facilities keep up with technological change, how uniform they are in storage of records and response to users, and in what ways user privacy comes into the equation.

4.1 Researcher Questions

The first set of questions related to questions received from researchers. Each set of responses are broken down by which facilities received them, either National Archive Centers or Presidential Libraries.

Q2 How does your facility receive reference questions?

- National Archive Centers

#	Answer	Response	%
1	Email	10	100%
2	In-Person	10	100%
3	Phone	10	100%
4	Fax	9	90%
5	Other	4	40%
6	We do not receive reference questions	0	0%

*Other

- social media and online order form
- through webpage
- Referral from NARA at [Federal] Record Center (separate branch of our agency)

- Presidential Libraries

Email, In-person, Phone, Fax and Correspondence

Q3: What if any are the reasons your facility does not receive reference questions?

All facilities that responded to the survey marked they receive reference questions so there were no

responses to this questions.

Q4: When you receive requests in the following formats, how long do you keep them for?
- National Archive Centers:

#	Question	Do not store...	Less than 6 months	6 months to 1 year	1 year to 5 years	5 years to 10 years	more than 10 years	Total Responses
x1	Email	0	0	0	6	4	0	10
x2	In-Person	1	0	0	4	3	2	10
x3	Phone	1	0	0	5	4	0	10
x4	Fax	0	0	0	5	4	0	9
x5	Other	1	0	0	0	3	0	4
x6	We do not receive reference questions	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

* The Other choices were not specified in this question

- Presidential Libraries:

The Libraries did not comment on how long research questions are stored.

Q5: Why does your facility not store certain reference questions or certain types of reference questions?

The one response to this question was from one of the National Archive Centers, explaining they received: "Too many. Our office receives approximately 14-15,000 inquires yearly." (pxERBeGruLDn89H)

Q6: How are reference questions stored?

- National Archives Centers

stored in the archives in archival boxes-sent to witness destruction in 2 years (2QhpeOLxCxPh3Gi)
Reference requests are printed and logged to a specific staff member, who had 10 working days to complete the request. The questions are filed in numerical sequence based on the tracking number assigned once the question is logged in. Once logged out, the reference request is filed and transferred to storage at the end of the FY. After 5 years, the requests are destroyed. (2y8va3KwLrtw9RK)
Active year: in a locked filing cabinet. In-Active years: boxed up in the stacks. (2CIMBqYuD6eaaz)
Paper copies kept in storage box.(1H0kjCMgNXefb6c)
file cabinet (eftVHFpDSsaPG5Q5)
Hard copy retained in a lock filing cabinet. (OfKK34ULyZ6retH)
We print out a hard copy of the requests received by e-mail; and transcribe requests received by phone onto an electronic request form which is then printed out in hard-copy format. The requests are date-stamped upon arrival and logged in a request log in the order received regardless of the format in which they are received (i.e., via e-mail, hard-copy letter, fax, phone call, or form forwarded from the NARA's Federal Records Center). Maximum desired turnaround time is 10 days. Staff prints out a hard copy of their written response, attaches it to the original request, and file them together in a file folder. After current year, the files are boxed, labeled, and stored. (tQCDzZueREQlZiF)
When these requests come in, they are assigned a reference number. After they are closed out and audited, they are stored in numerical order according to their reference number. All the requests within a fiscal year are stored together in boxes in the stacks.(1cYu2xhnTuJvfad)
Cabinets for correspondence. Stack areas for pull slips. (3e4B50HXrhf0oMT)
Hard copy- Filing. (pxERBeGruLDn89H)

- Presidential Library:

All permanent records are stored in stack areas with proper security and environmental conditions. Records are retired as called for using agency guidance and retention schedules. Records are stored in each presidential library's stack areas.

Q7: How are retained questions used?

- National Archive Centers:

If a question comes up as to a theft or a researcher is band[sic]-we can use this information to back tract to make sure that what they were looking at was not damaged or stolen. (2QhpeOLxCxPh3Gi)
Mainly as an audit trail, in the event the researcher has a question about what they were sent. General information on trends are tracked in the database used to log the questions in and out. (2y8va3KwLrtw9RK)
Statistical compilations, tracking of records used, follow-up reference questions by researchers(1H0kjCMgNXefb6c)
1. tracking and statistics 2. future backtracking (researcher references past inquiry) (eftVHFpDSsaPG5Q5)
They are only used if the same requester submits a follow up question on a request he/she has already submitted. (OfKK34ULyZ6retH)
We have a database log of the requests (date received and datee[sic] completed) so we can retrieve the correspondence quickly by file date if needed. In practice staff do not often refer to inactive reference correspondence files. We keep them in order to satisfy our agency retention requirement. (tQCDzZueREQlZiF)
Sometimes a question will come in that is similar to a previous question, and we'll go back to see how we responded and what records we might have searched. Also, a patron might contact us with the same question they had before, and we can go back and reference the old response. We can also go back and verify if, and how much, we might have charged a patron for copies of records. I'm not sure what you mean by anonymized here, but we never reveal the names or research topics associated with previous questions to other researchers. If anonymized means redacting names and contact information from retained reference questions, then we don't do that.(1cYu2xhnTuJvfad)
When needed as follow-up from original requester. (3e4B50HXrhf0oMT)
Our office has a retain file for questions that are unique and may be asked again. Otherwise, we use coded paragraphs for routine questions. (pxERBeGruLDn89H)

- Presidential Libraries:

There are times when significant research is conducted on a researcher inquiry and **the information** from that response could be used to update our website or create a reference paper on the subject matter which is publicly available.

Q8: Are retained questions anonymized?

- National Archive Centers

#	Answer	Response	%
1	Yes	0	0%
2	No	6	60%
3	It Varies	4	40%
	Total	10	100%

- Presidential Libraries:

No

4.2 PULL-SLIPS

The second part of the survey inquired about pull-slips from both National Archive

Centers and Presidential Libraries. Pull-slips are records created by a researcher to

requests records from an archive. The archivists will then use this information to pull the

requested records by the researcher.

Q9 Does your facility keep pull-slips?

- National Archive Centers:

Answer	Response	%
Yes	10	100%
No	0	0%
Total	10	100%

- Presidential Libraries:

Yes

Q11 How long does your facility keep pull-slips

- National Archive Centers:

Answer	Response	%
Less than 6 months	0	0%
6 months to 1 year	0	0%
1 year to 5 years	2	20%
5 years to 10 years	1	10%
More than 10 years	7	70%
Total	10	100%

- Presidential Libraries:

1 to 5 years

Q12: How are retained pull-slips stored?

- National Archive Centers:

in archival boxes in archives (2QhpeOLxCxPh3Gi)
4 part pull slip. Yellow copy goes on the shelf, green copy is attached to the box. The white and pink copy stay in the research room. When the researcher is done and the records are returned, the 4 parts are re-united. At the end of the month, if all 4 parts are present, the yellow and green copies are destroyed. The whites are arranged by record group and kept for 25 years. The pinks are arranged by researcher and kept for 25 years (2y8va3KwLrtw9RK)
Active Years: 2 ways--alphabetically as well as by record group. In Active[sic.] years: boxed up and stored in the stacks. (2CIMBqYuD6eaaz)
By record group and by researcher name.(1H0kjCMgNXefb6c)
locked file cabinet (eftVHFpDSsaPG5Q5)
One set of pull-slips are stored alphabetically by surname and the carbon copies are stored by record group number. (OfKK34ULyZ6retH)
We keep a hard-copy original and a hard-copy carbon copy. The original (white) copies are filed by month and date of retrieval of record. The carbon (pink) copies are also filed by date of record retrieval. (tQCDzZueREQlZiF)

The pull slips are audited each month, and then they are stored in a box with the other months in their fiscal year.(1cYu2xhnTuJvfad)
Stack areas and then Federal Records Centers. (3e4B50HXrhf0oMT)
By fiscal year. destroyed after 20 years. (pxERBeGruLDn89H)

Presidential Libraries:

All records are stored in stack areas with proper security and environmental conditions.

Q13 Are retained Pull-slips anonymized?

- National Archive Centers:

Answer	Response	%
Yes	0	0%
No	9	90%
It Varies	1	10%
Total	10	100%

- Presidential Libraries:

No

Q14 How are retained pull-slips used?

- National Archive Centers

same (2QhpeOLxCxPh3Gi)
The pink copies are an audit trail in the event there is a holdings security concern about a particular record. The white copies are for long term research trends. Occasionally they are used to assist returning researchers who did not keep good notes about what they examined. (2y8va3KwLrtw9RK)
They are rarely, if ever, used.(2CIMBqYuD6eaaz)
Statistical compilation, tracking records used, follow-up reference questions by researcher.(1H0kjCMgNXefb6c)
statistics, backtracking, & holdings security (eftVHFpDSsaPG5Q5)
The [sic.] are only used if a researcher wants to request records he/she has already seen and if records are reported missing. (OfKK34ULyZ6retH)
For security purposes: as a backup source of information in case any record item is reported lost or missing. (tQCDzZueREQlZiF)

We use the pull slips to gather statistics about how many pulls we did in a given month and how many items we pulled for researchers. Obviously, if any records ever went missing, we would refer to the pull slips to determine who had last custody of the records. Also, we often get repeat customers who want to see records they looked at previously, so we use pull slips to determine what we previously pulled for them. Again, I'm not sure what you mean by anonymized, but we never release the names or records pulled on pull slips to other researchers. If anonymized means that we redact the names from the pull slips, then we don't do that. (1cYu2xhnTuJvfad)

Legal cases and FOIA responses. (3e4B50HXrhf0oMT)

For auditing purposes. (pxERBeGruLDn89H)

- Presidential Libraries:

The pull slips only serve as a record on use of our materials.

4.3 GUEST BOOKS

Guest books, or guest logs are sign in logs for researchers marking when a researcher comes in and leaves a reading room. What exactly is recorded varies from book to book but generally a researcher's name and research purpose are logged.

Q15 Does your facility have some form of maintained guest book?

- National Archive Centers:

Answer	Response	%
Yes	7	70%
No	3	30%
Total	10	100%

- Presidential Libraries:

* No
*It appears there was some confusion about this question as researchers at Presidential

Libraries are required to complete a researcher application form and there after a log

sheet for on-site research, but the general public is not required to sign in to visit the

museum.

Q16 Why does your facility not maintain a guest book?

- National Archive Centers:

Two of the three facilities who do not maintain guest books responded with: "PII related

information" (pxERBeGruLDn89H) and "Privacy" (3e4B50HXrhf0oMT).

Q17 How long does your facility keep its guest books?

- National Archive Centers:

Answer	Response	%
Less than 6 months	0	0%
6 months to 1 year	0	0%
1 year to 5 years	1	14%
5 years to 10 years	3	43%
More than 10 years	3	43%
Total	7	100%

Q18 How does your facility store guest books?

- National Archive Centers:

as tracking on who is in the building and at what times (2QhpeOLxCxPh3Gi)
They are pulled at the end of the month and filed by month. After 1 year they go into storage. After 25 years they are destroyed. Separate logs are kept for each research room (textual and microfilm/public access computer) (2y8va3KwLrtw9RK)
Active year: chronologically in a locked filing cabinet. In Active: in a box stored on a shelf.(2CIMBqYuD6eaaz)
Chronologically(1H0kjCMgNXefb6c)
In a locked filing cabinet. (OfKK34ULyZ6retH)
We call them "Visitor Sign-in Sheets." We have a separate visitor sign-in sheet book for the text research room and the general genealogical search room which offers access to

records on microfilm and public-access PC. We store these hard-copy sign-in sheets in a file drawer in each search room during the current fiscal year, then box and label them and store in stack area. (tQCDzZueREQlZiF)

Like the other records, sign-in sheets are counted and audited at the end of each month and stored in boxes with sign-in sheets from the same fiscal year. We actually maintain 2 different sign-in sheets. We maintain the sign-in sheets for our textual research room, where researchers look at original records, for 25 years. We maintain the sign-in sheets for our public access computer and microfilm research room for 5 years, since there are no original records in that room. (1cYu2xhnTuJvfad)

Q19 how does your facility use the information in its guest books?

- National Archive Centers:

Same (2QhpeOLxCxPh3Gi)
Mainly as an audit trail for security concerns. (2y8va3KwLrtw9RK)
For statistics first and foremost. (2CIMBqYuD6eaaz)
statistical compilation(1H0kjCMgNXefb6c)
They are mostly used for statistical information. (OfKK34ULyZ6retH)
For security purposes, if anything is subsequently reported lost or stolen: we need to have the record of visitors available even though we normally don't have occasion to use the visitor logs for that purpose. On an ongoing basis, we count the number of visitors to both research areas and report the data on a monthly basis to headquarters office. Also, we are sometimes asked to supply a copy of a sign-in sheet to verify a student visit; we would mask out all but that student's name on such occasions. (tQCDzZueREQlZiF)
We maintain statistics about how many people visit, and we also look back to see when a particular researcher might have visited. Again, I'm not sure what you mean by anonymized here, but we never release information about visitors and when they visited to third parties. If you're asking if we redact names from our guest books, then we don't do that. (1cYu2xhnTuJvfad)

Q20 Is the information retained from guest books anonymized?

- National Archive Centers:

Answer	Response	%
Yes	0	0%

No	6	86%
It Varies	1	14%
Total	7	100%

5 DISCUSSION

There are three aspects of the responses to the survey that are critical to this study: 1) responses that indicate how well the respective facilities are reacting to technological change, 2) responses that indicate the level of coordination among the facilities, and 3) responses that indicate how these facilities address privacy concerns for users and how that factors into how this information is used.

5.1 TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGE

What type of questions facilities respond to and how they store them give a solid indication of how well the National Archive Centers (or Regional Archives) and the Presidential Libraries respectively are responding to the changing ways in which users can contact the archive. For the National Archive Centers, almost every respondent indicated they receive every type of question that was asked about on the survey; two respondents went beyond that explaining they receive questions from social media and their webpage. The response did not clarify, however, how they received questions through their webpage, although it could be through use of contact information on the webpage or actual comments on articles written on the webpage that are then responded to. The one respondent who did not receive or store faxes replied there were too many other types of questions to store faxes as well.

The actual storage of all of this information is still in paper form. There is no mention of digital storage when discussing how this information is stored. All

respondents indicated filing pull slips and reference questions in some form of hard copy or filing in a cabinet, regardless of the form of the response. One respondent said when discussing email "we print out a hard copy of the requests received by e-mail" (Response tQCDzZueREQIZiF). The storage system for paper materials is quite impressive. However, how much easier would statistical analysis and tallying be if these materials were stored electronically? The National Archive Centers are able to respond to questions from (more recent formats) email, etc., but have not moved to an electronic system for storage and analysis of this material.

The Presidential Libraries also receive reference questions in all formats covered in the survey. Specifically they receive reference questions in "Email, In-person, Phone, Fax and Correspondence" (Presidential Libraries response). They, too, are keeping up with the changing formats for interacting with users. That said, they did not respond to how long these records are stored, nor did they comment on the storage format, although it can be inferred they are stored in a paper format.

5.2 COORDINATED FACILITIES

The National Archives Center and the Presidential Libraries are both controlled by the National Archives. There is a records schedule which controls retention of researcher related materials. That said, the policy does not cover specifically how to handle all of the material listed there, suggesting for reference requests they are "destroyed when no longer needed for current operations" (https://www.archives.gov/about/records-schedule/chapter-14.html#preslib). The records schedule is extensive but gives each branch the freedom to keep reference materials for as

long as they deem necessary. This freedom is something each National Archives Center takes as there is a fairly even split between keeping references questions for one to five years and five to ten years. The responses appear to show a siloed approach to research questions where each facility handles questions and records questions on their own for their own audit trail. Pull-slips generally are held more than ten years but three of the ten responses indicated their facilities hold them for either one to five years or five to ten. Guest Books were even less coordinated with only seven respondents keeping them. Those who kept guest books were split between keeping them for five to ten and more than ten years with one respondent indicating one to five years. The evidence points to a records schedule having a baseline of control of reference records created by facilities but it is not a uniform policy among all facilities.

5.3 PRIVACY

In what ways does privacy for the individual researcher and researcher's subject come into play when handling researcher information? Several questions from the survey explore this area. When discussing anonymizing pull-slips the respondents from the National Archive Centers generally do not make any of this information anonymous but do on occasion although they did not indicate why they would do this. They use this information mainly "as an audit trail" in case records go missing and as a means to help researchers find related materials. Pull-slips can also be used to help researchers. "We often get repeat customers who want to see records they looked at previously, so we use pull slips to determine what we previously pulled for them… but we never release the names or records pulled on pull slips to other researchers" (1cYu2xhnTuJvfad). This

information appears to be used internally for statistical analysis and the benefit of researchers. There is no indication that this information is made public; in fact, several respondents indicated that they did not have a guest book because of personally identifiable information and privacy. This points to the possibility that while not kept anonymous, it is also not published. The Presidential Libraries are similarly using this information only as "records of use of materials" and nothing more.

6 CONCLUSION

The Presidential Libraries and the National Archive Centers are just two groups of facilities under the control of the National Archives and Records Administration. They are, however, the groups that get the largest amount of interaction with the general public and are the best groups to use to gauge how well the National Archives handles the data generated by interacting with the general public. It seems that for all groups of the National Archives, materials are now held for shorter amounts of time then when Mary Jo Pugh did her survey in 1990. Both the Presidential Libraries and the National Archive Centers are capable of handling reference requests through electronic formats. They continue to rely on a paper storage system for their records which hampers the statistical analysis that can be applied to these records. The variability in retention of materials indicates a flexibility allowed by retention schedules to fulfill the needs of users and facilities. User information concerning reference requests and pull-slips are held as audit trails and memory guides for researchers but not handed out to third parties.

7 FUTURE RESEARCH

This study skimmed the surface of what can be found out about policy regarding user information. A future study could do in-depth interviews with archivists at each of these centers and libraries to compare what is covered in a records schedule versus what is actually done, and focus more closely on how archivists handle user information in large organizations.

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